

EMPIRE AND THE GODS

MESOPOTAMIAN TREATY THEOLOGY AND THE SWORD IN THE FIRST MILLENIUM BC

by

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THE FIRST MILLENIUM BC .

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List of Abbreviations

AAA	Annals of Archaeology & Anthropology, U Liverpool
AB	Anchor Bible commentaries, Doubleday, New York
ABRT	J.Craig: Assyrian & Babylonian Religious Texts, Leipzig, 1885/87 .
Adj.	Adjective
AfO	Archive für Orientforschung
AfO Bei.	Archiv für Orientforschung, Beiheft
AGS	J.Knudtson: Assyrische Gebete an den Sonnengott, Leipzig, 1893 .
AHw.	W.von Soden: Akkadisches Handwörterbuch
AKA	L.W.King: The Annals of the Kings of Assyria I, London, 1902 .
Akk.	Akkadian
AM	A.L.Oppenheim: Ancient Mesopotamia, Chicago, 1964 .
AMT	The Ashurnirari V + Mati'ilu Treaty (ET - <u>ANETS</u> , 96/532f)
ANE	Ancient Near East
ANEP	J.B.Pritchard: The Ancient Near East in Pictures
ANET	Ancient Near Eastern Texts relating to the OT, (ed) J.B.Pritchard
ANETS	Supplement to ANET
AnSt	Anatolian Studies
AO/AT	Alter Orient und Altes Testament
AO/OT	K.A.Kitchen: Ancient Orient & Old Testament, Tyndale Press, 1966 .
AOS	American Oriental Series
ARAB	D.D.Luckenbill: Ancient Records of Assyria & Babylonia, Chicago U.P., 1926 .
Aram	Aramaic
Arch&OT	Archaeology and Old Testament Study, D.W.Thomas, (ed), Oxford, 1967 .
ARM	Archives Royales de Mari
AS	Assyriological Studies (U.Chicago)
Asar	R.Borger: Die Inschriften Asarhaddons, Königs von Assyrien, AfO Bei. 9, Graz, 1956 .
Asb.	Ashurbanipal
ASKT	P.Haupt: Akkadische und Sumerische Keilschrifttexte, Leipzig, 1882 .
Ass. Historiog	A.T.E.Olmstead: Assyrian Historiography, Columbia, 1916 .
AT	D.J.Wiseman: The Alalakh Tablets, London, 1953 and the tablet signature

- Atrahasis W.G.Lambert & A.R.Millard: Atrahasis - the Babylonian Story of the Flood, Oxford, 1969 .
- Aynard J-M.Aynard: Le Prisme du Louvre AO 19.939, Paris, 1957 .
- BA The Biblical Archaeologist
- Baal P.J. van Zijl: Baal - a study of texts in connection with Baal in the Ugaritic Epics, AO/AT 10, 1972 .
- Bab Babylon
- Bab Chron Babylonian Chronicle
- BabLaws G.R.Driver & Miles: The Babylonian Laws, II, Oxford, 1955 .
- BAR The Biblical Archaeologist Reader
- BDB Brown, Driver & Briggs: Hebrew & English Lexicon of the OT, Oxford, 1907 reprinted .
- Bei. Assyr. Beiträge zur Assyriologie und semitischen Sprachwissenschaft
- Berger P-R.Berger: Die neubabylonischen Königsinschriften, Teil 1, AO/AT 4.1, 1972 .
- BHT S.Smith: Babylonian Historical Texts relating to the Capture & Downfall of Babylon, London, 1924 .
- Bib&Or Biblica et Orientalia series, Pontifical Biblical Institute, Rome .
- BiOr Bibliotheca Orientalis; Nederlands Instituut voor het Nabije Oosten , journal.
- BKAT Biblischer Kommentar, Altes Testament, eds. M.Noth & H.W.Wolff
- Bkst. Baksteen, inscribed brick
- BM British Museum tablet signature
- BRM Babylonian Records in the Library of J.P.Morgan: BRM 4 - A.T.Clay: Epics, Hymns, Omens & Other Texts, New Haven, 1923 .
- Bu Budge - BM tablet signature
- BWL W.G.Lambert: Babylonian Wisdom Literature, Oxford, 1960 .
- CAD Chicago Assyrian Dictionary, ed Oppenheim, 1956ff
- CAH Cambridge Ancient History, eds. Edwards, Gadd & Hammond
- CBQ Catholic Biblical Quarterly
- CBS Catalogue of the Babylonian Section, U.Philadelphia tablet signature
- CCEBK L.W.King: Chronicles concerning Early Babylonian Kings, II texts & translations, London, 1907 .
- CCK D.J.Wiseman: Chronicles of the Chaldean Kings (626-556 bc), London, 1956 .
- CF K.Baltzer: The Covenant Formulary, Blackwell, 1971; ET Das Bundesformular, Neukirchen, 1960 .

CH	Codex Hammurabi: quoted from Driver: BabLaws, 1955 in transliteration
CM/HE	F.M. Cross: Canaanite Myth & Hebrew Epic, Harvard, 1973
CN	City name; plural - CNN
Col	Column
<u>Corpus</u>	E. Sollberger: Corpus des Inscriptions 'royales' présargonique de Lagash, Genève, 1956 .
<u>Covenant</u>	D.R. Hillers: Covenant - the history of a Biblical idea, Johns Hopkins: Baltimore, 1969 .
CT	Cuneiform Texts from Babylonian Tablets in the British Museum: see HKL, 664 .
CTCA	A. Herdner: Corpus des Tablettes en Cunéiformes Alphabétiques, Paris, 1963 .
DDS	M. Weinfeld: Deuteronomy & the Deuteronomistic School, Oxford, 1972 .
<u>Devils</u>	R.C. Thompson: The Devils & Evil Spirits of Babylonia, vol 2, London, 1904 .
DIOT	N.H. Snaith: The Distinctive Ideas of the OT, 1944 .
<u>Divination</u>	La Divination en Mésopotamie Ancienne, 14th RAI, Presses Universitaires de France, 1966 .
DN	Divine name: plural - DNN .
DOST	
DOTT	D.W. Thomas: Documents from Old Testament Times, London, 1958 .
<u>Dreams</u>	A.L. Oppenheim: The Interpretation of Dreams in the ANE, Philadelphia, 1956 .
D/TOTC	J.A. Thompson: Deuteronomy, TOTC, 1974 .
<u>Dyn. Oracle</u>	P.J. Calderone: Dynastic Oracle & Suzerainty Treaty, Logos I, Ateneo de Manila Univ. , 1966 .
EA	El Amarna; tablet signature
EAK	R. Borger: Einleitung in die Assyrischen Königsinschriften, I, Leiden, 1961 .
Ean.	Eannatum
EB	Early Bronze age
EBT	The Esarhaddon Baal Treaty: Asar, \$69 in transliteration & ANETS, 97/533ff in English translation .
E-I	Eretz-Israel: archaeological, historical & geographical studies
EI/RHW	J. Bright: Early Israel in Recent History Writing, Studies in Biblical Theology 19, SCM, 1956 .
Epi.	Episode
E/POT	F.C. Fensham: Exodus, POT, 1970

Esar.	Esarhaddon
esp.	especially
ET	English translation
EVT	Esarhaddon Vassal Treaty: published by D.J.Wiseman: Iraq 20(1958),1-99; ET by Erica Reiner, ANETS,98/534ff.
<u>Exaltation</u>	W.W.Hallo & J.J.A.van Dijk: The Exaltation of Inanna, YNER 3, 1968 .
Festschrift Albright	Near Eastern Studies in Honor of W.F.Albright, (ed) H. Goedicke, Johns Hopkins, 1971 .
Festschrift Landsberger	Studies in Honor of Benno Landsberger, AS 16, U.Chicago Press, 1965
Festschrift Oppenheim	Studies Presented to A.L.Oppenheim, Chicago,1964 .
Festschrift Speiser	Essays in Memory of E.A.Speiser, (ed) W.W.Hallo, New Haven, 1968 (= JAOS 88/1 Vol. 53) .
Festschrift Volterra	Studi in Onore di E.Volterra, giuffrè editore, 1969 .
fig	figure
frg	fragment
FSAC	W.F.Albright: From the Stone Age to Christianity, Johns Hopkins, Baltimore, 1957 .
G/AB	E.A.Speiser: Genesis, Anchor Bible 1, 1964 .
GAG	W. von Soden: Grundriss der akkadischen Grammatik, Analecta Orientalia 33, Rome, 1952
G/ICC	B.Skinner: Genesis, ICC, 1910 .
Gilg	Gilgamesh: the Gilgamesh Epic cited by tablet.
GN	Geographical name; plural - GNN.
G/OTL	G.von Rad: Genesis, OTL, SCM, 1963 .
G/POT	A.van Selms: Genesis, POT, Nijkerk, 1967 .
<u>Greatness</u>	H.W.F.Saggs: The Greatness that was Babylon, Sidgwick & Jackson, 1962 .
Grk.	Greek
G/TOTC	D.Kidner: Genesis, TOTC, 1967 .
H	Harper: tablet signature of the letters published by R.F.Harper: Assyrian & Babylonian Letters belonging to the Kouyunjik Collection of the British Museum, I-XIV, London: Chicago, 1892-1914 .
HA	A.T.E.Olmstead: History of Assyria, New York:London, Scribner, 1923 (Chicago, 1963) .
Heb.	Hebrew
<u>Hesed</u>	N.Glueck: Hesed in the Bible, Hebrew Union College Press, 1967 ; Das Wort hesed im alttestamentlichen Sprachgebrauch, Berlin, 1927 .
H&G	B.Albrektson: History & the Gods, Coniectanea Biblica, OT Series, CWK Gleerup-Lund, 1967 .

- HI J.Bright: A History of Israel, OTL, SCM, rev. ed. 1972.
- History Begins S.N.Kramer: History Begins at Sumer, Thames & Hudson, rev. ed. 1961 .
- HKL R.Borger: Handbuch der Keilschriftliteratur I, Berlin, 1967 .
- Holladay W.L.Holladay: A Concise Hebrew & Aramaic Lexicon of the OT, Brill:Leiden, 1971 .
- HSV V.Korosec:Hethitische Staatsverträge, Leipzig,1931 .
- HUCA Hebrew Union College Annual
- IAK E.F.Weidner: Die Inschriften der altassyrischen Könige, Leipzig, 1926 .
- IASb. Th.Bauer: Das Inschriftenwerk Assurbanipals, Leipzig, 1933 .
- ICC International Critical Commentary
- IDB Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible, Abingdon,1962 .
- IEJ Israel Exploration Journal
- IHANE R.C.Dentan: The Idea of History in the ANE, Yale,1966.
- Indic Indicative
- IOT R.K.Harrison: Introduction to the OT, TP, 1970 .
- IRSA E.Sollberger & J-R.Kupper: Inscriptions Royales Sumériennes et Akkadiennes, du Cerf, 1971 .
- IT Ishtar Temple inscription: Thompson: AAA 20(1933),80ff.
- ITN E.F.Weidner: Die Inschriften Tukulti-Ninurtas I, AfO Bei. 12, Graz, 1959 .
- JAOS Journal of the American Oriental Society
- JBL Journal of Biblical Literature
- JCS Journal of Cuneiform Studies
- JNES Journal of Near Eastern Studies
- JNSL Journal of North-West Semitic Languages
- JRAS Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society
- JSS Journal of Semitic Studies
- JTS Journal of Theological Studies
- K Kouyunjik Collection BM tablet collection signature
- KAH Keilschrifttexte aus Assur historischen Inhalts: KAH I - L.Messerschmidt, WVD OG 16, Leipzig 1911 ; KAH II - O.Schroeder, WVD OG 37, Leipzig,1922, reprinted.
- K-B L.Koehler & W.Baumgartner: Lexicon in Veteris Testamenti Libros, rev.ed. 1958 .
- LAS S.Parpola: Letters from Assyrian Scholars to the Kings Esarhaddon & Ashurbanipal, I, AO/AT 5/1, 1970 .
- Lat. Latin
- LB Late Bronze age

- LET Large Egyptian Tablets = K.228 etc, Streck, 158ff; ARAB 2, 348ff \$900ff .
- Lie A.G.Lie: The Inscriptions of Sargon II, king of Assyria, Part I: the Annals, Paris, 1929 .
- lit. literally
- LKA E.Ebeling: Literarische Keilschrifttexte aus Assur, Berlin, 1953 .
- Lugal C.Wilcke: Das Lugalbandaepos, Wiesbaden, 1969 .
- LXX The Septuagint
- MAD Materials for the Assyrian Dictionary: see I.Gelb for MAD 1-3 (HKL, 146f) .
- Manuel R.Labat: Manuel d'Epigraphie Akkadienne, Paris, 1948 reprinted 1963 .
- MAOG Mitteilungen der Altorientalischen Gesellschaft
- Maqlû G.Meier: Die assyrische Beschwörungssammlung Maqlû, AfO.Bei. 2, Berlin, 1937 .
- Masc. Masculine
- M. Ass. Middle Assyrian
- MB Middle Babylonian/ Middle Bronze age
- MDP Mémoires de la Délégation en Perse
- MNHK E.R.Thiele: The Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrew Kings, Paternoster Press/Eerdmans, 1965 .
- MT Massoretic Text
- MVAG Mitteilungen der Vorderasiatischen Gesellschaft
- Nab. Chron. The Nabonidus Chronicle: see Smith: BHT, 110ff & ANET, 305 .
- NARG N.Postgate: Neo-Assyrian Royal Grants & Decrees, Studia Pohl:series maior 1, Rome, 1969 .
- N&B A.Parrot: Nineveh & Babylon, Thames & Hudson, 1961 .
- Nbd Nabonidus
- Nbk Nebuchadnezzar
- Nbp Nabopolassar
- NBSt W.J.Hinke: A New Boundary Stone of Nebuchadnezzar I, Philadelphia, 1907 .
- ND. tablet signature for texts from Nimrud excavation
- NEB New English Bible
- Nin. Nineveh
- Nomades J-R.Kupper: Les Nomades en Mésopotamie au Temps des Rois de Mari, Paris, 1957.
- Npl. Nabopolassar
- NPOT J.B.Payne(ed): New Perspectives on the OT, Word, 1970.

Nrg	Neriglissar
OB	Old Babylonian
Obv.	Obverse
OECT	Oxford Editions of Cuneiform Texts: 1,2,6 & 7 by S.Langdon - see HKL I, 668 .
OIP	Oriental Institute Publications: OIP 2 = Senn.
Or.	Orientalia
OT	Old Testament
OTI	O.Eissfeldt: The Old Testament, an Introduction, Blackwell, 1966; ET from 3rd German edition .
OTL	Old Testament Library, SCM .
OTS	Oudtestamentische Studiën
OTWSA	Die Ou-Testamentiese Werkgemeenskap in Suid-Afrika
OUP	Oxford University Press
PAPHS	Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society
PDK	E.F.Weidner: Politische Dokumente aus Kleinasien, Boghazköi-Studien 8&9, Leipzig, 1923 .
PEA	R.C.Thompson: The Prisms of Esarhaddon and Ashurbanipal found at Nineveh, 1927-8, London, 1931 .
<u>Peake</u>	Peake's Commentary on the Bible, (eds.) M.Black & H.H. Rowley, Nelson, 1963 .
PEQ	Palestine Exploration Quarterly
<u>Piep.</u>	A.C.Piepkorn: Historical Prism Inscriptions of Ashurbanipal I: editions E, B 1-5, D & K, Chicago, 1933 .
pl.	plate
<u>Plaidoyer</u>	J.Harvey: Le Plaidoyer Prophétique contre Israël après la Rupture de l'Alliance, Studia 22, Paris: Montréal, 1967 .
plur.	plural
PN	Personal name; plural - PNN .
POS	Pretoria Oriental Series
POT	De Predeking van het Oude Testament, Callenbach .
<u>Prolegomena</u>	J.Wellhausen: Prolegomena to the History of Israel, ET A & C Black, Edinburgh, MDCCCLXXXV, reprinted .
PRT	E.G.Klauber: Politisch-religiöse Texte aus der Saronidenzeit, Leipzig, 1913 .
PRU	J.Nougayrol: Le Palais royal d'Ugarit; PRU IV - Mission de Ras Shamra 9, Paris, 1956 .
R	H.C.Rawlinson: The Cuneiform Inscriptions of Western Asia; 1R - Norris, 1861; 2R - Norris, 1866; 3R - G.Smith 1870; 4R ₂ - T.G.Pinches, 1891 (see HKL I, 365ff, 484ff & 402ff)

RA	Revue d'Assyriologie et d'archéologie orientale
RAI	Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale
Rassam	Pinches: 5R, pls. 1-10; Ashurbanipal (A) Edition
RB	Revue Biblique
RCAE	L. Waterman: Royal Correspondence of the Assyrian Empire, Ann Arbor, 1930-36 .
rev.	reverse
SAHG	A. Falkenstein & W. von Soden: Sumerische und akkadische Hymnen und Gebete, Zurich-Stuttgart, 1953 .
<u>Sargon</u>	H. Winckler: Die Keilschrifttexte Sargons, Leipzig, 1889 .
SBH	G. A. Reisner: Sumerisch-babylonische Hymnen, Berlin, 1896 .
SCM	Student Christian Movement press
SD	Studia et documenta ad iura Orientis Antiqui
<u>Sefîre</u>	J. A. Fitzmyer: The Aramaic Inscriptions of Sefîre, Bib & Or. 19, Rome, 1967 .
Senn.	Sennacherib
<u>Senn.</u>	D. D. Luckenbill: The Annals of Sennacherib, OIP 2, Chicago, 1924 .
Sg	Sargon; the text of Sargon's 8th Campaign report.
SGL	A. Falkenstein: Sumerische Götterlieder I, Heidelberg, 1959; J. J. A. van Dijk: SGL II, Heidelberg, 1960 .
Shal.	Shalmaneser
Sing	Singular
SKT	H. Winckler: Sammlung von Keilschrifttexten: I - Die Inschriften Tiglat-pileasers, Leipzig, 1893; II- Texte Verschiedenen Inhalts, Leipzig, 1893/4; III - Die Keilschrifttexte Assurbanipals, Leipzig, 1895 .
SLA	R. H. Pfeiffer: State Letters of Assyria, AOS 6, New Haven, 1935 .
<u>Splendeur</u>	E. Cassin: La Splendeur Divine, Civ. & Soc. 8, Paris: La Haye, 1968 .
SRT	E. Chiera: Sumerian Religious Texts, 1924 .
STC	L. W. King: The Seven Tablets of Creation, London, 1902.
<u>Streck</u>	M. Streck: Assurbanipal und die Letzen Assyrische Könige, VAB 7, Leipzig, 1916 .
Subj.	Subject: Subjunctive
Sum	Sumerian
<u>Sumer</u>	A. Parrot: Sumer, Thames & Hudson, 1960 .
TB	The Tyndale Bulletin
T&C	D. J. McCarthy: Treaty & Covenant, Analecta Biblica 21, Rome, 1963 .

TCL	Textes cunéiformes du Louvre
TCOT	Tyndale Commentaries on the Old Testament
TC/OTP	D.R.Hillers: Treaty Curses & the OT Prophets, Bib. & Or. 16, Rome, 1964 .
TCS	Texts from Cuneiform Sources
Th	Thompson: Museum tablet signature .
Th.Z.	Theologische Zeitschrift, Basel .
TI	S.Langdon: Tammuz & Ishtar, Oxford, 1914 .
Tigl	Tiglath-pileser
TIPE	K.A.Kitchen: The Third Intermediate Period in Egypt 1100-650 bc, Aris & Phillips, 1973 .
<u>Titles</u>	W.W.Hallo: Early Mesopotamian Royal Titles, AOS 43, New Haven, 1957 .
Tkn	Tukulti-ninurta
TM	Museum tablet signature
TP	Tyndale Press
TuL	E.Ebeling: Tod und Leben, Berlin: Leipzig, 1931 .
U	University
UET	Ur Excavation Texts: 1 & 6/1 under Gadd .
Ugar	Ugaritic
UMBS	Tablet signature U.Pennsylvania
VAB	Vorderasiatische Bibliothek: 4 - Langdon: Die Neubabylonischen Königinschriften, Leipsig, 1912 (NBK); VAB 7 - <u>Streck</u> .
VAT	Berlin Museum tablet signature
Vol	Volume
VS	Vorderasiatische Schriftdenkmäler (see HKL, 671).
VT	Vetus Testamentum
VTSupp.	Supplement to VT
WO	Welt des Orients
WVDOG	Wissenschaftliche Veröffentlichungen der Deutschen Orient-Gesellschaft
WZKM	Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes
Y/GC	W.F.Albright: Yahweh & the Gods of Canaan, London, 1968.
YNER	Yale Near Eastern Researches
YOS	Yale Oriental series
YUP	Yale University Press

Preface.

In 1967 Bertil Albrektson published a monograph with the title History and the Gods¹, which was sub-titled 'an Essay of the Idea of Historical Events as Divine Manifestations in the Ancient Near East and in Israel'. It was an important piece of work designed as a corrective to commonly held views about the Old Testament and Hebrew thought which had come to state the distinctiveness of Israel's concept of divine action in history in a manner which gave too little attention to parallels in the documents of her contemporary religious cultures. Aware of what had become axioms in the stream of Old Testament and Biblical Theology, Albrektson began to question them on reading the Mesha stone and other extra-biblical texts. In his own words: 'I began to study parallels to the Israelite idea of a divine rule and a divine revelation in historical events in the literature of the neighbouring peoples'².

This led to the organisation of the diverse Ancient Near Eastern documents pertinent to the theme under six headings for discussion in relation to biblical material: (1) the Divine Sphere of Activity (2) Historical Events as Divine Actions (3) Kingship and Divine Rule in History (4) The Divine Word and the Course of Events (5) the Divine Plan in History, and (6) Historical Events as Divine Revelation. The documents used were mainly Assyrian and Babylonian, though Sumerian and Hittite texts appear as well.

1. B.Albrektson: History and the Gods, Coniectanea Biblica, OT Series 1, CWK Gleerup-Lund, 1967.

2. *ibid.*, 7. That the question of history and revelation is still the subject of lively debate among OT theologians is reflected by the recent publication of G.H.Hasel: Old Testament Theology: basic issues in the current debate, Eerdmans, 1972 Chaps. 1 & 2 'The Question of Methodology' & 'The Question of History, History of Tradition, and Salvation History', though significantly he is unaware of Albrektson's monograph. Not so B.S.Childs: Biblical Theology in Crisis, Westminster Press: Philadelphia, 1970 who quotes Albrektson's opinion that 'the OT idea of historical events as divine revelation must be counted among the similarities, not among the distinctive traits', page 77.

A comment on methodology needs to be made here. Firstly, the principle of studying the Old Testament documents in synopsis with the documents of Israel's contemporaries is fundamental to arriving at any fruitful or enduring appreciation of what may be considered distinctive to Israel's faith during the long course of its existence. Neither the Creation narratives in Genesis, proclamation of the Holy One of Israel in Isaiah, nor the apocalyptic visions in Daniel were generated in a vacuum, and indeed much of the Old Testament reflects a creeping syncretism which the spokesmen of normative Yahwism sought to combat. Israel's belief in Yhwh was as a matter of history either contaminated by or opposed to the pantheons of her contemporaries. Hence the construction of Old Testament theology today cannot ignore the concepts of deity held by Israel's neighbours which impinged on her thinking in one way or another.

But secondly, the danger of synoptic study is oversimplification. There is a diversity as well as a unity within the Old Testament, and this should alert scholars to the possibility that within the other cultures of the Ancient Near East beliefs about their gods may have undergone modifications during the course of their histories. Indeed, this is the case - one need only mention the names of Akhenaten and Nabonidus to recall their biased devotion to the Solar Disc and Moon god respectively. Sweeping statements about Sumerian, Hittite, Assyrian or Babylonian beliefs, not to mention 'a common theology of the Ancient Near East'¹, can only result from an abuse of the synoptic methodology.

The dangers of ranging to and fro across cultures and centuries in the Ancient Near East is that of obscuring the social and political context of the theological documents being quoted, as well as

1. The phrase comes from a paper by Morton Smith: JBL 71(1952), 135ff "The Common Theology of the Ancient Near East", which resorts to gross oversimplification and an abuse of the synoptic methodology.

the tendency to make sweeping statements and generalisations as already mentioned.¹ The methodology employed in this study, therefore, is a combination of width and depth, whereby it is hoped that a sufficiently large body of material will be covered to ensure that it is representative and will bear the weight of limited chronological and cultural generalisation, while at the same time the textual material will be subjected to a detailed exegesis which pays attention to its language, literary framework, general historical setting and the specific context of its theological themes. At several points the exegesis will cover passages quoted in Albrektson's monograph, and while the conclusions he has drawn will not necessarily need correction, it will be apparent that the quotation of isolated passages tends to miss much of the text's framework and character.

It is, of course, no part of this study to go into the wider philosophical and theological controversies in which the nature of history and historiography, the validity of religious language and the concept of revelation are debated, though the writer's pre-suppositions will doubtless become visible. This is a defensible omission since the study belongs within the orbit of Ancient Near Eastern studies whose conventions require no delineation of a scholar's religious and philosophical beliefs concurrent with the publication and discussion of Ancient Near Eastern theological documents. Ultimately, of course, empire and the gods cannot be discussed without reference to the Kingdom of God and *vice versa*.

1. The tendency to unqualified sweeping statements is Albrektson's complaint against certain proponents of Biblical Theology, but he makes his own, eg. regarding divine election and rule through the king: 'naturally this idea of kingship as a divine rule was not restricted to Mesopotamia but common to the entire Ancient Near East' (op.cit.,50). Old Testament scholars, Sumerologists, Assyriologists, Egyptologists and the like might regard the differences in royal ideologies between cultures and within the historical period as more significant than the supposed similarities. Hosea, Jeremiah and others in the OT seem not to have correlated the rule of Yhwh with the rule of contemporaries !

There is one striking omission from the discussion of History and the Gods which links both Old Testament and Ancient Near Eastern worlds, that is, the organising principle of the covenant in Israel and of the treaty in other contemporary cultures. Ancient Near Eastern studies have provided the most stimulating impetus to Old Testament scholars to review the covenant, regarded, rightly in the writer's opinion, as the pivotal centre of Israel's understanding of history and Yhwh's activity.

The debate about the relationship between the Second Millenium Hittite treaties and the Sinai covenant continues, while the publication of the First Millenium Aramaic Sefire treaties and the Esarhaddon vassal treaties has complemented the Second Millenium material from Alalakh, Mari and elsewhere and served to broaden the discussion from the question as to where historically the covenant traditions of the Pentateuch should be located to the issue of Israel's understanding of the covenant traditions in dynastic and prophetic circles, and the relation this has with early and late Ancient Near Eastern material.¹

Yet the First Millenium Mesopotamian material has never been fully exploited, despite the clear pointers to its value in early studies such as that of Hillers, who, alluding to the campaign of

1. Two noteworthy recent contributions in book form to the discussion are M. Weinfeld: Deuteronomy & the Deuteronomistic School, OUP, 1972 and E. W. Nicholson: Exodus & Sinai in History & Tradition, Blackwell, 1973. The work of Korosec, Baltzer, Mendenhall, McCarthy, Beyerlin, Huffmon, Fitzmyer, Wiseman, Frankena, Fensham, Hillers, Moran and Harvey (see bibliography for details) will be referred to frequently and constitute fundamental precursors to the present work.

Ashurbanipal against the Arabs, reported in Column 9 of the Rassam Prism, remarked in a footnote:

It seems quite clear that the language of treaties was very much in the annalist's mind as he wrote. This is not only the case where the Assyrian historians seem to have been influenced by terminology associated with treaties, and *it is even possible to reconstruct what might be called a 'covenant-theology' from the annals of Sargon II and his successors.* 1

This proves to be something of an understatement since a thorough study of the royal war annals material plus the letters and prophetic oracles which tell the story of empire and the gods in First Millennium Mesopotamia reveals that the sword was not wielded without prayer, prophetic oracles and appeal to judicial-theological justification on the basis of the adê .

1. D.R.Hillers: Treaty Curses & the Old Testament Prophets, Bib. et Or. 16, Rome, 1964, page 86 footnote 27 (italics mine).

The purpose of this study will therefore be to test the thesis that in 1st Millenium Mesopotamia there was what we may justly term an 'imperial theology' and to ascertain what part the treaty played in this hypothesized account of the relation between the gods and the empire. We shall attempt to prove that though Mesopotamia produced no 'systematic theology' in an occidental sense we may discern in the historiography of the royal houses of Nineveh and Babylon a coherent apologia in theological terms for the imperial wars and the subsequent dealings with conquered peoples and territories.

To this end we shall select from the Neo-Assyrian royal inscriptions one campaign record from Sargon II's day (the 8th Campaign *Gottesbrief*) and one from Esarhaddon's reign (the Esarhaddon *Gottesbrief*) and subject them to a careful theological analysis. Building on the theological concepts prominent in these war records, we shall study Ashurbanipal's war records under ten headings revolving around the adê or treaty. In Part II, we shall move south geographically and forwards chronologically to the royal records emanating from the Neo-Babylonian empire to study the theology of the sword such as there is in what are primarily dedicatory records of royal temple building. We shall then be able to compare and contrast the Neo-Assyrian and the Neo-Babylonian theological interpretations of their respective empires. Conclusions will be offered in Part III. In Part IV in a number of Excurses there will be the opportunity to study in greater depth several features associated with treaty and covenant encountered in the Neo-Assyrian material but by no means limited to it.

At this point it will be convenient to set out the constituents of an Ancient Near Eastern treaty for easy reference during the detailed discussion which follows. Following Korosec's analysis of the Hittite treaties, Baltzer has set out the composition according to the following six phase structure:

- (1) Preamble
- (2) Antecedent History
- (3) Statement of substance concerning the future relationship
- (4) Specific stipulations
- (5) Invocation of the gods as witnesses
- (6) Curses and blessings

Among others Kitchen and Weinfeld have applied this analysis of form to some of the biblical covenants, the latter treating Exod 19-24, Josh 24 and Deut according to the following schema:

Preamble
 Historical Prologue
 The basic stipulation of obedience
 Covenant clauses
 Invocation of witnesses
 Blessings and curses
 The oath-imprecation
 The deposit
 The periodic reading
 Duplicates and copies

and the former noting that associated with the written document are:

A formal oath of obedience
 An accompanying solemn ceremony
 A formal procedure for acting against rebellious vassals

We shall argue that in the Sargon 8th Campaign report we encounter the solemn ceremony of covenant meal accompanying a treaty renewal, while the 'procedure for acting against rebellious vassals' will be represented in the study of Ashurbanipal's records by section C: The Royal Threat, section E: Indictment before the Gods and section H: The Fate of the Adê Violator in particular. It will be necessary to bear in mind, however, that we shall be analysing 1st Millenium war records and not 2nd Millenium treaty documents. Many allusions will be made to the 1st and 2nd Millenium treaty documents and the biblical covenants in both the body of the thesis and the Excurses, and the hypothesis put forward in this dissertation stands or falls on the validity of these allusions to treaty and covenant documents and their accompaniments.

1. See Baltzer: CF, 10; Weinfeld: DDS, 66; Kitchen: AO/OT, 90ff. Frankena gives an analysis of the EVT - which is a loyalty-oath to guard his son's succession - under the four headings of (A) Introduction, (B) Treaty Stipulations, (C) Curses and (D) Colophon (OTS 14, 124); other 1st Millenium adê documents from Assyria are unfortunately broken, and none are extant from Babylon.

PART I: TREATY THEOLOGY AND THE SWORD IN SELECTED NEO-ASSYRIAN
ROYAL INSCRIPTIONS.

Introduction.

For an analysis of the theological framework of the Neo-Assyrian Royal Annals, material from the extant corpus of three important kings has been selected. Sargon II, Esarhaddon and Ashurbanipal, whose reigns fall between the last quarter of the Eighth Century and the last quarter of the Seventh Century BC¹, represent the Neo-Assyrian empire in the full vigour of its imperialism. Sargon and Esarhaddon are linked in this study by the preservation of campaign records each in the form of a *Gottesbrief*, while Esarhaddon and Ashurbanipal are linked not only by their father-son relationship but also by the Esarhaddon Vassal Treaty so-called,² a document of primary theological significance.

The historical details of the three kings' reigns may be left to the standard history books and periodical literature, which will be cited in the footnotes from time to time. A detailed introduction to the Neo-Assyrian Royal Inscriptions is not called for either, but it will be of value to briefly consider the nature and purpose of the inscriptions, or rather those bearing war annals, in the light of their own testimony. This is consistent with the attempt of this study to let the primary documents speak for themselves, and to distinguish as far as possible between occidental presuppositions and Ancient Near Eastern concepts. The quotation of a sizeable amount of primary material will be a safeguard in itself, while the method employed throughout will be that of exegetical analysis with regard

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1. The dates according to J.A.Brinkman's chronology are: Sargon II, 721-705 bc; Esarhaddon, 680-669 bc; Ashurbanipal, 668-627 bc - set out in A.L.Oppenheim: Ancient Mesopotamia, 1964, 3rd impression 1968, U Chicago Press, page 347.
 2. Henceforward abbreviated EVT, published by D.J.Wiseman: Iraq 20 (1958), 1-99 with improved readings by R.Borger: ZA 54 (1961), 173-196, and an improved translation by E.Reiner: ANETS, 98/534ff .

for context. Cross references to comparative Ancient Near Eastern material and to comparative biblical material will be used throughout to strengthen or elucidate the analysis of Sargon, Esarhaddon and Ashurbanipal's records.

Commenting on a statue of Shalmaneser III inscribed with war records in the form of summaries of the campaigns of his eighteenth to twentieth years of reign,¹ J.V.Kinnier Wilson writes:

it stood in antiquity in a probably rather ill-lit temple building, and was for the eyes only of Adad in what was a personal relationship between god and king ... the Mesopotamian gods were not omniscient and they had to be informed of the affairs of men. Shalmaneser could not thus presume that Adad necessarily knew much about his recent campaigns; and considered from this point of view it is clear that the statue falls into the same general category as the 'Eighth Campaign of Sargon' with its long informative address to Ashur and the gods of Assyria on the king's recent exploits and achievements.²

By way of contrast, we may quote Oppenheim's study of the Eighth Campaign in which he convincingly argues that this form of report to the gods, the *Gottesbrief*, was 'not to be deposited in silence in the sanctuary, but to be actually read to a public that was to react directly' to its contents.³

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1. Shalmaneser III's reign ran from 858-824 bc (Brinkman, *AM*, 347).
 2. *Iraq* 24(1962), 90ff "The Kurba'il Statue of Shalmaneser III", p. 96 .
 3. A.L.Oppenheim: *JNES* 19(1960), 133-147 "The City of Ashur in 714bc", p. 143. He discusses the *Gottesbrief Gattung* exemplified by Shal. IV and Esarhaddon in this article, and in *AM*, 279f and the literature of p. 374 notes 69 & 70, to which add the remarks of E. Speiser in his essay 'Ancient Mesopotamia' in *The Idea of History in the Ancient Near East* (henceforth *IHANE*), ed. R. Dentan, Yale U Press, 1955, Yale paperback 1966 pages 63-67 with the further literature cited there, plus *JAOS* 88.1 Vol. 53(1968), 71-89 "Individual Prayer in Sumerian - the continuity of a tradition" by W.W. Hallo, ed. *Festschrift Speiser* with K.R. Veenhof's extended review, *BiOr.* 28.5/6 (1971), and R. Borger's article in *RLA* III, 574f.

If the war record material itself is homogeneous in these two kinds of royal inscription, as Kinnier Wilson suggests by his comparison of statue inscription and *Gottesbrief*, is its purpose altered by its context? Were the Assyrian Royal Annals composed in order to 'inform the gods' or to inform the people? Were the clay foundation prisms buried for the gods or for posterity? Was the primary motive for compiling campaign narratives the glorification of the gods or the glorification of the king? Or are such alternatives false antitheses arising from occidental perspectives rather than those of their compilers?

As regards the inscription of war narratives on statues, we may note the remark of G. van Driel that

the constant petitioning of the gods for a long life is one of the few preoccupations of the ancient Mesopotamians which we can follow from the beginning of their civilization down to the very end, from A'anna-padda to Antiochus III¹

and Ashurbanipal's statement that he set up his statue before the gods his helpers (maḥar ilāni tiklīja) so that it should intercede for his life - ana muterrišu balāṭija: 'in order to continually beseech for my life', using the Gtn Participle of erēšu II - 'to long for, desire, request'. This may or may not have been inscribed with war records, but it gives the clue to the purpose of placing an image of the king before the gods, i.e. to serve as a visual-aid - enūma Adad ṣalmu šuātu ina ēnišu kēniš lippardā: 'whenever Adad may be pleased to light up that statue with his dependable eye'², i.e. may contemplate it, look favorably upon it, it would ensure the gods' blessing by reminding them of the king's pious devotion exemplified by the dedicatory object before them. Thus the inscription of the war records might serve the dual purpose of reporting back to the gods and dedicating the valorous deeds the king had performed to them.

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1. G. van Driel's review of R.S.Ellis: Foundation Deposits in Ancient Mesopotamia, YNER 2, 1968 in JAOS 93.1(1973), 67-74 in which he stresses the dedicatory nature of the deposits, including the building inscription.
 2. Prism Th. 1929-10-12,2 Col 3:49ff published by R.C.Thompson: PEA, 33 but corrected in reading; see AHw., 240.

The same dual purpose may characterise Sargon's Eighth Campaign report in addition to the informing of the population, but if Sargon wrote war records for the people of Ashur, he seems to have had a wider audience in mind at other times. The walls of his palace were decorated with scenes and script, and foreigners entering on business or bringing tribute would have seen the evidence in stone of the might of Assyria and its gods. In Sargon's own words:

Ornamented great slabs of limestone - the peoples whom my hands had made prisoners on them I had carved - their walls I caused to line and *for admiration* (*ana tabrâti*) I made. Peoples from all countries whom from the region where the sun is rising to the region where the sun is setting through the power of Ashur (*ina emūq DN*), my lord, I had made prisoners, through the art of sculpture in the midst of those palaces I fashioned as a decoration¹

The sculptured reliefs still function *ana tabrâti*: 'as a spectacle' for contemporary museum visitors, and just as they are impressed without being able to read the cuneiform campaign records, so too the severed heads, impaled victims, burning cities and forlorn deportees spoke eloquently enough to the foreign vassal whose eye was not intended to miss the symbols of the gods hovering above the scenes of victory. The reliefs with inscriptions were part of imperial publicity, then, despite being indoors, and their association with the king must have made a powerful psychological, if not theological, impression on the beholder.

Whom did they glorify? Two further quotations on the same theme highlight this question.

tanatti qardūtiĵa ŝa pirik ħuršāni mātāti
tāmāti attalaku kišitti ŝa mātāti kališina
ina zagindurê ina igārātišina ešir

1. A.G.Lie: The Inscriptions of Sargon II - the Annals (henceforth abbreviated Lie), Paris, 1929 page 78f, lines 4-7 in his translation. On the last phrase, aštakkana simāti, see AHw., 1046 simtu (9) 'überall das Erforderliche durchführen'.

danān DN bēlija epšēt ina mātāte nakrātē
ēteppušu ina šipir urrakūti ēsiqa qerebša

My glorious valour (wrought) in the regions of
the mountains and seas which I had traversed
and the conquest of all their lands I drew in
glazed work on their walls.

The might of Ashur, my lord, the deeds which
he/I performed in hostile lands through the
art of the sculptor I cut within it.

Ashurnāširpal's lines emphasise his own achievements - qardūtija: 'my heroism', and omit any reference to the national gods. But who is the subject of ēteppušu in the second quotation, and where does the emphasis fall? Strictly speaking the Gtn Pret. Subj. is ambiguous and the subject might be 3rd Masc. Sing, ie. the god Ashur, or 1st Sing. ie. Esarhaddon. The correct reading is likely to be the 1st Sing.², and this accords with other inscriptional summary passages in which a dual motivation is evident. The might or *Macht-handeln* are the god's (danān DN), which the king continually performs or carries through. Piety and imperial grandeur are fused together.

Firstly, then, war records are laid up in dedication to the gods inscribed on dedicatory statues, and secondly, the *Gottesbrief* brings the deeds of gods and king before the citizens of the capital as well as reporting them to the gods, while thirdly, the sculptured and inscribed palace reliefs transmit their impressions to vassals and merchants. Fourthly, Sargon made a custom of erecting

1. ND 1104, Col 1:30f published by D.J.Wiseman: Iraq 14(1952),24ff "A New Stela of Ashurnāširpal II"; R.Borger: Die Inschriften Asarhaddons, AfO Bei. 9, Graz,1956 (henceforth Asar)p. 62 EpI. 22:28f.
2. See AHw., 227 epēšu Gtn - 'danān(Machthandeln) GN ...ša ...e/i-tep-pu-šu (ich !)', and cf. Borger's translation of the equally ambiguous passage, grammatically speaking, referring to the inscription of records on clay:

mušarê epuš-ma danān DN bēlija epšēt ēteppušu
šērussu ušaštir-ma ina qerebšun aškun

(Asar, 34 lines 56f, \$21)

On the use of the Sumerian loan-word mušarû, musarû see AHw., 681f.

stelae in conquered lands far and wide. For example, in the land of the Manneans

A statue of my majesty (šalam šarrūti) I made and the victory/power of Ashur (līti DN), my lord, I wrote upon it, and in the city of Izirtu, the royal city of the Manneans, I set it up. 1

Another of Sargon's stelae was found as far afield as Cyprus, and is referred to by the king in prism fragments from Nimrud, as follows:

ina emūq ilāni rabūti ša eli kullat nakīrija
lītu kišitti qātiḫa ...] ina narī ušaštir-ma
ina qereb GN nagī ša māt GN 2 ēziba aḫrātaš

The victory and conquests of my hands which by the strength of the great gods, [I achieved] over all my enemies, I caused to be inscribed upon a stone monument and left it (to stand) unto the future in the land of Ia', a district of the land of Iadnana 2

The stela itself³ records not only the submission and tribute of Cyprus, but also gives a general account of Sargon's activities at home and abroad, in warfare and in construction, ending off with a tribute to the aid of Ashur, Nabu and Marduk who had secured victory for the king. Injunctions to future rulers to read and respect the stele were reinforced with the customary curses. But whether subject peoples could decipher the cuneiform or not, the portrait of the king and the divine symbols, combined with the location far from

1. Lie, 18f lines 108f.

2. C.J.Gadd's translation from his publication in Iraq 16(1954), 173-201 "Inscribed Prisms of Sargon II from Nimrud", page 192f Col. 7:39-44 .

3. The Cyprus Stele - L.Messerschmidt: VS 1, No. 71 = H.Winckler: Sargon, Band I, t. 46-47 (see R.Borger: Handbuch der Keilschriftliteratur, Band I, Berlin, 1967 - henceforth HKL - p. 351 & 632); English translation in D.D.Luckenbill: Ancient Records of Assyria & Babylon (henceforth ARAB) 2, \$179-189 with excerpts in ANET, 284.

Assyria would have told the tale well enough.¹

Were there doubts about the purpose of these stelae erected on foreign soil, they are dispelled by the explicit statement of Esarhaddon's Zinjerli stele, which reads as follows:

narâ šitir šumiya ušēpiš-ma tanitti qarradūti
DN bēlija danān epšētija ša ina tukulti DN
bēlija attallaku-ma u līti kišitti qātēja
šēruššu ušaštir-ma ana tabrât kiššat nakirī
ana šāt ūmē ulziz ... rubû arkû narâ šitir
šumiya līmur-ma liltassu-ma ... zikri DN
bēlija lutta'id

A stela with the inscription of my name I had made and I had inscribed upon it the praise of the valour of Ashur my lord (and) the might of my deeds, how I marched hither and yon with the help of Ashur my lord, and the victories of my conquering hand, and I set it up as a spectacle for my enemies worldwide unto distant days ... May a later prince see the stele inscribed with my name, have it read to him and ... may he give continual praise to Ashur my lord. ²

The key words are ana tabrât kiššat nakirī: 'as a spectacle for my enemies worldwide'. In other words, the stele was directed horizontally rather than vertically, metaphorically speaking, and fur-

1. The erection of victory stelae in foreign countries was an ancient practice continued down a long line of Assyrian kings - eg. by Shamshi-Adad I (1813-1781 bc), a stele in Lebanon beside the Mediterranean (ARAB 1, \$45 = KAH 1, No. 2 cuneiform; E.F. Weidner: IAK, Herrscher 8); Shal. III (858-824 bc), a plethora of references to sites all over the empire, and see the excellent photographs in A. Parrot: Nineveh & Babylon, Thames & Hudson, 1961 p. 122A No. 138 'Dedication of Royal Stele', Armenian Campaign 860bc & p. 123F No. 143 'Sacrifices & Erection of a Stele', campaign at the sources of the Tigris 853bc, both from the Bronze Gates of Balawat; Esarhaddon (680-669bc) - see the photographs of stelae found at Til Barsip and Zinjerli, op.cit., 77 No. 86 & 34 No. 39C, with a larger print of the latter well reproduced in H.W.F. Saggs: The Greatness that was Babylon (henceforth Greatness), Sidgwick & Jackson, 1962, plate 37. The latter two stelae are particularly graphic with knee-high figures of the Sidonian king Abdi-milkuti and a kneeling Nubian king on leashes through their lips held by a giant-sized Esarhaddon, attended by the gods mounted on beasts and in symbol above his head. In MacCluhan's jargon, the medium (an Assyrian stele) is the message.

2. Asar, 99f \$65, rev. 50ff; ARAB 2, 227 \$580f .

thermore was intended for posterity - ana šāt ūmē , whether the future prince (rubû arkû) was foreign or Assyrian. Esarhaddon presumes that in the royal entourage there will be a scribe conversant with cuneiform to read the stele aloud to the prince, and its intended effect is piously expressed as not only the recollection of Esarhaddon's fame or name - the two are very much linked in Semitic parlance¹ - but of elicited praise of Esarhaddon's gods.

When the war reports form part of a foundation deposit in dedication of a building or its renovation, the concluding section of the inscription takes the following form:

- A: (i) work completed
(ii) better than ever before
- B: (i) reference to the record
(ii) summary of its contents
(iii) its deposit
- C: (i) ritual instructions to posterity based on pious example
(ii) blessings for fulfilment
(iii) curses on violators
- D: (i) Date Colophon

1. See 2 Sam 7:9 and the discussion of it by P.J. Calderone: Dynastic Oracle & Suzerainty Treaty (DOST hereafter), Logos 1, Ateneo de Manila University, 1966 pages 44ff, and by K.A. Kitchen: Ancient Orient & Old Testament (AO/OT hereafter), TP, 1966, p. 110f. Note too Saul's erection of a victory stele at southern Carmel: hinnēh maššîb lô yād, 1 Sam 15:12, and compare it on the one hand with the Ebenezer monument glorifying Yhwh after victory (1 Sam 7:12) and on the other with Absalom's maššebet/yad PN (2 Sam 18:18), called 'after his own name' (wayyiqrā' maššebet 'al-šēmō) to keep his name in remembrance (ḥa'cābūr hazkîr šēmî), and with Yhwh's promise of 'an everlasting name (šēm cōlām) 'a monument and a name' (yād wāšēm) attached to Yhwh's dynastic claims ('in my house and within my walls' - cf. the palace reliefs) for the prospectless eunuch who was a covenant servant ('who keep my sabbaths'), Isa 56:4f .

An example of this is the Prism D edition of Ashurbanipal's campaigns in a recently published reconstruction.¹ The concluding section occupies 39 lines if taken from the point ina ūme šu-ma, or 29 lines if taken from the notice of completion (ušaklil), and is divided as follows: A(i) 1 line, A(ii) 1 line, B 5 lines including a list of 10 Assyrian gods, C(i) 12 lines, C(ii) 2 lines, C(iii) 6 lines, D 2 lines. Twenty out of the 29 lines are devoted to the proper treatment of the records and the consequences - an indication of how important it was to the Assyrian kings, who thus provided themselves with three witnesses the building, the record and the gods.

In conclusion, the Assyrian kings have told us their motives for burying inscribed prisms as foundation deposits, for erecting stelae in foreign lands, for carving reliefs around their palace walls and for presenting statues of themselves to stand in their chosen shrines, and all of these bear the war records of our study. Their stated motives have been to inform their enemies and to preserve their names for posterity, and additionally to bring glory to the gods, while the *Gottesbrief* itself appears to carry at least a dual motivation, that is to inform the citizens of the capital to whom it is being read, and to dedicate the victory to the gods who are also addressed in the opening lines. This does not rule out the concept of informing the gods. Prayer in most religions would seem to accommodate telling the deity what the intercessor might reasonably believe the deity already knew,

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1. A.R. Millard: Iraq 30(1968), 98-111 + plates "Fragments of Historical Texts from Nineveh: Ashurbanipal", p. 102ff lines 64-102 with a date colophon of the 8th Ab, 648bc. This piece may be taken as typical of the conclusions of foundation deposit prisms dedicating temple renovations, and its summary statement (B (ii)) contains parallel phrasing to that of the other inscriptions quoted above, eg. phrases such as: musarû šitir šumija u tanitti qarradūtija (line 76); ina tukulti DNN (line 77); ina mātāti attallaku, ašunu danānu u litu (line 79); ana ahrāt ūmē ēzib (line 80); musarû šitir šumija līmur (line 84) .

for ritual has its own logic.

But we are justified in concluding from what Esarhaddon has stated in his Zinjerli stele that there is an element of calculated politico-religious propaganda in the public presentations of the Assyrian king's doings in war, an element which was nevertheless quite compatible with, nay even necessary to, a worship of their gods. The mistake to make would be to dismiss the war annals as solely imperialistic propaganda perpetrated by megalomaniac monarchs - too cynical a verdict since it ignores all the phrases attributing power and victory to the gods, or to assess them only in terms of the personal relationship between Ashur and his high-priest, the king - too naïve an evaluation which ignores the conscious purpose expressed of achieving an effect on posterity and foreigners to bolster the monarch's name. A balance must be preserved, and this we shall endeavour to maintain throughout the detailed exegesis which is to follow.

PART I: A: Sargon II's Eighth Campaign Report.A.1: The Theological Structure of the *Gottesbrief*.

The *Gottesbrief* reporting Sargon's Eighth Campaign offers an excellent point of departure for a theological study of the Neo-Assyrian war annals. It is some 430 lines in length, well preserved, and exactly dated to the year 714bc with the scribe's name and pedigree attached.¹ As an *Erstbericht*, it has not passed through the torturous process of excision, compression, elaboration and rearrangement which was applied to the annals as the reign of the king lengthened and comprehensive editions were prepared for clay prisms and display inscriptions. Such modifications tell their own story, but the historian and theologian alike benefit from having this *Erstbericht* before them to compare with the end product. This study will first consider the religious tone and framework, and then focus attention on the theological presentation of the two main incidents of the campaign, namely, the Ullusunu and Rusas incident, and the sack of Muṣaṣir and Haldia shrine incident.

Religious terminology runs throughout the inscription, but is found at the beginning, the middle and the end forming a framework designed to keep the religious aspect of the campaign before the hearers. The first concentrated theological section follows on from the opening address to Ashur, the gods, the temple, to the city, the people, the palace, and to the king (lines 1-5 ana ...). It quotes the directions of an ancient tablet (ina tuppi maḥri) written by Nin-izi-agag, the lord of wisdom (bēl nimēqi) to prove Sargon's conformity to the divine will in the timing of the campaign. Then the king is

1. The text is edited by F.Thureau-Dangin: Une Relation de la Huitième Campagne de Sargon, TCL 3, Paris 1912 plus the fragments which were broken off in transit, published by O.Schroeder: KAH 2 No. 141 now reprinted as WVDOG 37, p. 90f ; ARAB 2, 73-99 \$139-178 provides a consecutive English translation.

represented as dedicating himself to put down the wicked in a ceremony on the third day before Enlil and Ninlil:

ūmu 3 aššu ḥaṭām pī muštarḥē kas puriddē
qardammē ana DNN palḥiš uškin-ma (line 9)

On the third day, before Enlil and Ninlil I
reverently pledged to muzzle the mouth of the
arrogant, to bind the legs of the evil

No clearer statement of the religious nature of the campaign could be wished for. The scribes will now be able to unfold the events within this framework showing how the king and the gods worked hand in hand for the victorious outcome.

In the next lines, a complementary picture is drawn of the forces as the army of Shamash, god of justice, and of Marduk¹ on the march with the strong support of Ashur, Shamash, Nabû and Marduk (ina tukultišunu rabīti ša DNN: line 13) preceded by the standards of the gods (ša Nergal Adad urimgalli ālikut maḥrija ušatriša nīršun: line 14).² This acknowledgement of the role of the gods more than balances the description of the king in action. The king wages war in obedience to, on behalf of, and with the help of the gods.

If the above lines set the religious tone of the inscription in a conscious literary manner, the lines 415-425, which are set between ruled lines on the tablet, close off the account in a summary primarily of a theological nature, designed as a final tribute to the gods, completing the acknowledgement at the beginning. The key lines are worth quoting:

ina emūqi širāte ša DN bēlija ina lite danāni ša
DNN ilāni tiklīja ina anni kēni ša DN diqugal
ilāni ša ṭūdi iptū-ma šululu iškunu eli ummānija
ina nīrbi ša DN dandan ilāni ālik idīja nāšir
karāšija ultu GN ... kīma labbi nadri ša puluḥtu

1. ummānāt DNN (line 10); cf. line 110: ummān^d Enlil Aššur^{ki} & line 127: ummānāt Aššur & line 256.

2. See TCL 3, page 4 note 8 on urimgalli - 'ce terme n'est pas à distinguer d'uri-gal qui est employé (avec le déterminatif de dieu) pour désigner les emblèmes divins, portés au bout d'une hampe et servant d'enseignes ou d'étendards aux armées'.

ramû etilliš attallak-ma lā āmura munihhu
 (lines 415-427 & 420)
 In the exalted might of Ashur my lord, in the
 strength and power of Bel and Nabu, the gods my
 helpers, through the true affirmative of Shamash
 the great judge among the gods, who opened up
 the route and spread his protecting shadow over
 my army, by the greatness of Nergal, the all-
 powerful among the gods, who goes at my side and
 guards my camp, from GN ...like an enraged lion
 which spreads terror with sovereign-power I
 marched up and down and encountered(saw) no one
 to subdue me

Overt acknowledgement is accorded to five named deities, two of whom, Shamash and Nergal, receive specific credits for what they did on the campaign, while the remaining three all lent their support. Because the acknowledgement of divine aid opens the sentence, it seems fair to say that the emphasis falls on the gods rather than on the king, though one must admit that the description of him is vigorous and arresting.

In the body of the inscription, bracketed as it were between the passages quoted above, lies a central section of royal theology which portrays the harmony between the king and the gods, and serves also as a remarkable apologia for a 'just war', if one may use that phrase without imposing occidental concepts upon Ancient Near Eastern thought patterns.

Lines 112-122 break into the narrative to give character sketches of Sargon and the god Ashur. Lines 112-115 are introduced by the phrase anāku Šarrukēn, followed by the stylised phrase šar kibrāt arba' rē'î māt Aššur. This is not followed by a genealogical titulary, but instead there is a list of attributes which embody the righteousness of this god-fearing monarch, who 'carefully observes the laws and

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1. Borger is certainly right when he points out (Asar, 96 note 24) that the word kal-bu (line 420) should be read with the alternative syllabic value lab- : kīma labbi - 'like a lion' and not 'like a dog' with TCL 3, ARAB 2 §176 and CAD E, 381 etilliš 'like a terror-laden wild dog'. Other similar instances are quoted by Borger. Note the identical metaphor used of the Devil in 1 Pet 5:8 .
 2. Munehhu - D Part. of root nē'u - 'to overturn' ; AHw., 673 'der umwendet, überwindet'; CAD E, 381 - 'to tame me'; CAD A2, 10 amāru lc 'to calm me' .

decrees of the gods', 'reverently waiting upon their word' and 'never overstepping the bounds they lay down', and who 'sustains religion' and 'has an aversion to perversity'.¹ Such are a few of the characteristics of the man who waged the Eighth Campaign.

This important section of royal theology then shades into a description of the national god, Ashur, which begins at line 116. Before looking at this portrayal in more detail, we may note the way that it is integrated into the theme of the campaign. The divine attributes which are stressed constitute the basis for Sargon's prayer for victory. Indeed, lines 112-122 could be construed as a single sentence, albeit of torturous syntax: anāku Šarrukēn (line 112) ... ana Aššur (line 116) ... qāti aššišu (line 124). The prayer itself was for retribution through battle:

ina qereb tamhāri sikiptašu šakāni u iriḥ pišu
elišu turrim-ma annašu šušši (line 124)

to cause his overthrow in the midst of battle,
to bring down his insolent words upon himself,
and to make him bear his sin/penalty for sin.²

A positive answer to this prayer could be expected in the light of Ashur's character, described in lines 116-122. Besides epithets which convey the omnipotence of this national god of Assyria, he is described in relation to the proud and to the humble in a way that is in many respects reminiscent of the Old Testament's description of Yhwh who champions the poor and weak, but humbles the proud. Since the passage is fundamental to the theology of the Eighth Campaign, it is given in full from line 117-122.

bēl DN dandannu ša ina uzzat tēgimtišu rabīti
malkē ša kiššati etinnu-ma uštašila lanāte kabtu
qarrādu ša ina gišparrišu ēpiš lemutti lā
ipparšiddu-ma lā pāliḥ māmītišu innassaḥu šurussu
ana lā pāliḥ zikrišu ša ana emuqqi ramānišu taklu
narbī ilūtišu mēšu-ma idabbuba tašriḥtu ina šitnun
ašgagi aggiš irriḥušu-ma kakkēšu ušabbaru-ma ellassu

1. Paraphrase of phrases in lines 112-115.

2. Sins of the lips and the penalty it brought are discussed under the indictment of Rusas after the quotation of lines 93-95, see below section I.A.2 page 28 .

kaširtu utarru ana šārī u ana nāšir mēšar
 ilāni ša ana damqi dīn DN taklu-ma ša DNN
 ilāni pitluḫu ilussu ul mīšu šerūti iduššu
 ušallakšu eli ajjābī u zāmānī ušzašu ina
 līti (lines 117-122)

(Ashur), lord of Assyria, the almighty, who in the fierceness of his great fury used to turn against the rulers of the entire world and [??], the revered (and) very heroic one, from whose trap the evil-doer does not escape, and he who does not fear (ie. respect, honour) oaths made to him (ie. Ashur) has his root torn out, (and) as regards the one who does not reverence his (ie. Ashur's) name/ command, who trusts in his own strength, despising the greatness of his deity, and who utters blasphemy, he (Ashur) rushes against him furiously in the clash of battle and shatters his weapons, and drives his serried troops to the winds; but as for him who observes the just decree of the gods, who for his good relies upon the arbitration of Shamash, and who reveres Ashur, the Enlil of the gods, who does not despise his deity, he (the god) causes his šerūti-weapon to go at his side, and over his enemies causes him to stand in victory. 1

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1. Line 117b is vexing since the general sense can be ascertained well enough from the context, but an exact translation of the phrase uštašila lanāte is elusive. Thureau-Dangin, the original editor attempted no translation and simply left gaps for this and the previous phrases, while Luckenbill offered 'who in the fury of his great anger *humbled* the princes of the regions (of the world) and *made the ignoble their equal*(?), ARAB 2,81. The former phrase is cleared up by CAD E, 164 enēnu B: 'to punish' e-ten-(ni)-nu-ma: ... 'used to turn against..' cf. AHw., 217 enēnu II - 'bestrafen', our passage not listed. The latter phrase appears to be 3rd Masc. Sing. Ventive St with a plural feminine noun. Luckenbill appears to have taken uštašila to be derived from mašālu - 'to be like' (AHw., 623f 'gleichen') with assimilation -mš to -šš (GAG, 32 §31f). CAD L offers no help with lanāte, and a solution may lie in another reading based on an alternative syllabic reading for the cuneiform signs or on correction of a scribal error.

Of course this type of passage is not unique to Sargon and the *Sitz im Leben* of the Eighth Campaign, for similar descriptions of the king and his gods pervade the Assyrian annals, giving them a fundamental theological unity. Often such a passage may follow on from the royal titulary.¹ In other words, it is a blanket statement there covering all the king's deeds. Here the context is a little different for the passage definitely interrupts the flow of the narrative, and is not so much a routine scribal device in the manner of the lists of phrases appended to royal titularies. Here it serves a specific purpose and behind the generalised phraseology such as malkē ša kiššati, ēpiš lemutti, and ša ...dīn DN taklu, we are intended to see two historical persons, Rusas and Sargon, each exemplifying one of the two contrasting theological portraits.

The passage is nothing less than *an exposition of treaty theology* following the pattern of blessings and curses which are so often associated with treaties in the Ancient Near East. The blessing enumerated is the defeat of enemies by divine aid. This is the thinking behind the concept of ordeal by battle.² Oath-breakers (lā pāliḫ māmitišu) by contrast could expect the curses of capture in the Divine Net, deracination and the shattering of their weapons. We could trace these curses over hundreds of years and among different peoples such as the Sumerians, Assyrians, Babylonians, Hittites, Arameans and Hebrews. The curse of the Divine Net is of such interest that it will be treated at length in an Excursus, while some basic references will be given for the other two documenting their distribution in curse material and its incorporation into treaties.³

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1. Eg. Sennacherib - OIP 2, 23 & ARAB 2, \$233; Esarhaddon - Asar, \$65 & ARAB 2, 224 \$574-579.
 2. On this topic, see V.Korosec: Iraq 25(1963),159-166 "Warfare of the Hittites from the Legal Point of View", and F.C.Fensham: Festschrift Volterra, vol 6, 1969, 127-135 "Ordeal by Battle in the ANE & the OT".
 3. See Excursus 1: The Divine Net; Excursus 2: The Divine Net & Adê Theology of the Tukulti-Ninurta Epic; and Excursus 3: Deracination & Shattered Weapons - a Reference Profile of Two Treaty Curses , p. 310ff .

A.2: The Ullusunu and Rusas Incident.

This is the first section of the *Gottesbrief* to be analysed in detail for its theological structure, but before this a brief historical sketch will set the scene.¹

In the third palû, 719bc², Sargon marched to support his vassal Irzanu, the Mannean king, against an alliance of Rusas and Mitatti the Zikirian, deporting some Urartians. This measure proved ineffective, for in the sixth palû of 716bc, Bagdatti of Uishdish joined the other two allies, killed Irzanu's son Aza, and left his corpse unburied on Mt. Uash. Aza is described as 'son of their overlord' (māri bēlišunu)³, which could well be a technical phrase for 'vassal', if bēlišunu refers to Sargon - which seems likely - rather than to Irzanu. Technical usage prevails in describing Ullusunu as 'brother' of Bagdatti,⁴ meaning that he was in alliance with Bagdatti against Sargon. Bagdatti was flayed, whereas Ullusunu was pardoned and instated as vassal-king of the Mannans.⁵

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1. Sargon's Urartian problem is described in the following standard history books: CAH 3, 50ff; Greatness, 112-116; Olmstead:HA, chap. 18 & 19. Primary sources additional to the Annals are letters such as H 101,123,145,148,251,380,381,424,444,515 and the Nimrud Letters from Sargon's military correspondence published by H.W.F.Saggs: Iraq 20(1958),182-212, of which ND 2759 letter No. 39 has been republished by J.N.Postgate: Iraq 35(1973),21-34 with improvements. It attests treaty formation and divine action with the following terminology - pīšu ittannanaši ana salmini ittūar: '(Midas) has given us his word and become our ally', line 9f; isseni issilim: 'he has made peace with us', line 38; cf. dibbi tabūti šupraššu: 'send him friendly messages (lit. words of good/good relations)', line 14; bāsi libbusu isseni ippaššar: 'soon his heart may be appeased towards us', line 18 (see Ahw. 1016 salmu & 1014 salāmu II; 702, pī nadānu II, 3d; 842f pašāru N,9). This political *volte-face* is attributed to divine intervention: 'My gods Ashur, Shamash, Bel and Nabu have now taken action' (line 7f), and carries promise; 'Let Ashur, Shamash, Bel and Nabu give the word and all these kings will polish your sandals with their beards' (line 28ff); 'My gods ... have taken action now, and this land will be trodden under your feet' (line 51f). For basic details, see Sargon's Annals for the 3rd, 6th & 7th palû's.
 2. For a detailed discussion of the chronology of Sargon's reign, and the dischronologised nature of some inscriptions, see H.Tadmor: JCS 12(1958),22-40 & 77-100 with a convenient table, p. 94-97 "The Campaigns of Sargon II of Ashur"
 3. Lie, 12 line 80.
 4. ibid., 14 line 83 Ullusunu aḫūšu
 5. ibid., 14 line 83ff.

The seventh palû saw Rusas the Urartian king active again in 715 bc, this time against his former ally, Ullusunu, from whom he took 22 fortresses. Sargon moved to support his vassal, but Rusas needed the more effective deterrent of the following year's campaign, as reported by the *Gottesbrief*.

Accordingly, the theme of the Ullusunu and Rusas incident is protection of a vassal and vengeance, and this is unfolded in the following episodes in the course of lines 30-162. Firstly, there is Ullusunu's joy at the approach of his avenger, Sargon. He and his officials hurry out from the capital, Izirtu, with tribute from the Manneans and arrange to meet the king at the Sirdaku fortress, where they duly arrive ina tagmirti libbi ša ēpiš ardūti: 'whole-heartedly disposed to vassal-obedience', line 52. This phrase recalls the stipulations of the EVT, and finds parallels in other Assyrian and Hittite treaties, as well as in many biblical passages dealing with Israel's need for a heart-obedience to the covenant of Yhwh.¹ Suzerains were acutely aware of the difference between formal ratification of a treaty and a whole-hearted intention to honour the treaty-oaths.

1. R. Frankena: *OTS* 14 (1965, 122-154 "The Vassal-Treaties of Esarhaddon and the Dating of Deuteronomy" has drawn attention to these parallels, p. 140f, citing such OT passages as Dt 4:29, 6:5, 10:12; 2 Kgs 23:3, Jer 29:13, Psa 78:36, 119 passim. Akkadian expresses sincerity as truth of heart (kittu) or wholeness of heart (various abstract nouns from the root gamāru, see *AHW*, 278). Among Assyrian treaties, note the following references: *EVT*, 51, 53, 98, 152, 169, 310, 386; *AMT*, 3:14 & 4:3. Close to the Heb. bēkol lēbabēkā is the Akkadian ina kul libbišu found in the Hittite treaties (eg *Suppiluliuma + Tetti* (19.3) & *Aziru* (13.20); so too the treaties from Ugarit, eg *J. Nou-gayrol*: *PRU* 4, 89 line 20ff. Not cited by Frankena is an Aramaic treaty parallel in *Sefīre II*, Face B, line 5: hn t'mr bnbwk wt cšt blbbk- 'if you say in your soul and think in your mind' (*Fitzmyer*: *Sefīre*, 80). *Weinfeld* has provided a convenient appendix of biblical terminology including a section on 'Loyalty' where references to 'Deuteronomic Phraseology' are given; see, bēkol lēb ūbēkol nepeš No. 9 & 9a (*DDS*, 334).

At this juncture a treaty renewal ceremony takes place, as we shall argue, for it warrants special attention. The sequel to this is in two episodes, the first of which deals with the tribute of minor regions and the advance against Matatti. The second episode reaches its climax in the battle against the combined forces of Mitatti and Rusas on Mt. Uash. It is this episode which is so effectively interrupted and held in suspense while the theological section praising the king and the gods is inserted (lines 112-124), and the action, when resumed, is the outworking of the prayer offered to Ashur at that point. The section is rounded off with a contrast drawn between the misery and lamentation of the enemy and the music and rejoicing in Sargon's camp.

As mentioned, Ullusunu was set on the vassal throne by Sargon, and so would have been bound by a vassal treaty which has not survived. We can be sure that such a treaty included a stipulation regarding the supply of forces and provisions when Sargon was on campaign in the area. With satisfaction Sargon notes compliance: 'As though they were officials of mine, governors of Assyria, he heaped up supplies of flour and wine for the feeding of my army', line 53. Obligation to fight the overlord's battles as their own was a constant feature of vassal treaties, and the provision of supplies can be documented from treaties too.¹

Having established his vassal loyalty by these steps, Ullusunu went further and handed over his son to Sargon in order to secure the succession. It would appear to have been a voluntary move:

1. Cf. the following references:

- EVT, §21 (ANETS, 100/536) - to fight
- AMT, (iv) (ANETS, 98/534) - to fight
- Mursilis + Duppi-Teshub §12 (ANET, 204) - provisions
- Bir-Ga'yah + Mati'el Face B, 38: Sf. I. (Sefire, 18f; note p. 71 - 'The stipulation must deal with the furnishing of food and provisions for Bir-Ga'yah's army'.)

māršu rabû itti igisê šulmani usatlimanni-ma
ana kunni šarrûtišu ipqidda narâšu (line 54)

his eldest son together with a peace-offering
he delivered to me, and to ensure his succession
to the throne (lit. his kingship) he made pro-
vision (for this) on his stele

The education of the sons of vassal rulers at the suzerain's court was a common practice in the Ancient Near East, and in theory offered a two-way guarantee of political stability. The son inherited his father's throne without the threat of revolution, and the suzerain had a vassal imbued with his culture and a worldly respect.

The second clause above is very interesting, for it apparently refers to the drawing up of an agreement between Sargon and Ullusunû enshrining a guaranteed succession, an agreement then cut on a stele.¹ We should then presumably think of something similar to the Sefire stelae, rather than of a clay tablet, though it is nearly certain that copies were drawn up on clay to take back to Assyria.

A point may be raised here to be developed later concerning vassal protection. No extant Assyrian treaty provides an example of clauses for the protection of the vassal. This fact in relation to Hittite treaties and to various parallels in the Old Testament has been discussed by F.C.Fensham,² and his summary there is worth quoting in full:

It is immediately clear from the treaties of Esarhaddon and those of Sefire that no clauses of protection of the vassal are inserted. Both the Assyrian and Aramean treaties are one-sided and have no humane attitude to the vassal. The lack of clauses of protection in these treaties, as is the case in

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1. Thureau-Dangin hesitates to translate: 'il chargea son ... du soin de son royaume' (op.cit., 11), but presumably wants na-ra-a-šû to be an official of some sort. Luckenbill sees no difficulty: 'he provided (for this) in his stele inscription' (ARAB 2, 77 \$148), and gives narû, a Sumerian loan-word (na₄ na.rû.a), its usual connotation, with which von Soden agrees - AHw, 749 narû 2a & 825 paqādu (I.5.a).
 2. VT 13(1963), 133-143 "Clauses of Protection in Hittite Vassal Treaties and the OT". The paper is fully documented with references to the relevant sections of the specific treaties, so that these references need not be repeated here.

some of the Hittite treaties, might be due to the rigid attitude of the head partner against his vassal. Especially the Assyrian treaties show on the one hand, a lack of consideration for the minor partner, and on the other hand, strict commandments and rigorous maledictions.

While further discoveries are unlikely to affect the severity of the pro-Assyrian clauses, it seems possible that a treaty might be unearthed with a vassal-protection or succession clause in view of Ullusunu's narû and Sargon's vigorous action on behalf of his vassal.

The episode continues with an oral plea to Sargon made by Ullusunu and his officials for vassal protection:

aššu turri gimillišu ilbina appu šēpē Kakmē
nakrē limnē ultu qereb mātišu parāsim-ma ša
Ursa ina dabdi šēri suhūrtaša šakāni māt
Manaja saḫḫu ana ašrišu turri eli nakrišu ina
līti uzzuzim-ma mašē mal libbi šū adi rabānnī
šakin ṭēm mātišu ušallūni-ma ina pānija eli
irbi' rittišunu iptāššilū kīma kalbē (line 55b-58)

that I would avenge him he prostrated himself,
that I would cut off the inroads(feet) of the
Kakmi, evil enemies, from his land, and that in
respect to Rusas I would accomplish his overthrow
in open battle, and restore the scattered Mannans
to stand victoriously over their foes to attain
full satisfaction, he together with the high func-
tionaries, the guiding spirit of his land, implored
me and upon all fours they crawled about like dogs.

No doubt this display of subservience and utter dependence gratified the Assyrian - it was something of a body-language convention in the Ancient Near East for it appears in literary form in the Amarna letters to the Pharaoh.¹ Sargon gave their request gracious consideration, pronouncing the myal ahulap, line 59. His reply has a theological cast:

1. For the use of the dog metaphor indicating subservience used in Second Millenium Palestine and First Millenium Mesopotamia, see the references supplied by CAD K, 72 kalbu (j), eg EA 61:3 'Thus speaks Abdi-Ashirti, your vassal-slave, and the dust of your feet, the dog of the house of the king my lord'. The verbal cliché for prostration to the Pharaoh ran: 'At the two feet of the king, my lord, the Sun-god of heaven, seven times and seven times I fall, both prone and supine' (EA 298; ANET, 490). This background makes the undignified terror of the gods at the Flood all the more striking: 'The gods cowered like dogs crouched against the outer wall' (Gilg. 11:115; ANET, 94) ! This epitome of abjection is anything but conventional !

aššu danāni šutūri ša DNN išrukūni-ma eli
kullat malkē ša kiššati ušarbû kakkēja sakāp
GN turri mišrišun nišē māt Manaja dalpātē
šupšūhi aqbišunūti-ma

Because of the supreme power which Ashur and Marduk had bestowed upon me, and because they had exalted my weapons above the kings of the entire world, I promised them the overthrow of Urartu, to restore their borders, and to bring calm to the disquieted Manneans.

When viewed as an occasion for glorifying the king and the gods who made him all powerful, protection of the vassal gains a real dignity, and one can see no *a priori* reason why a vassal-protection clause should not have found a place in an Assyrian treaty. No humanitarian motive need be ascribed, but the ends of political expediency and the demonstration of arms would be served by such a clause. Sargon certainly makes a great deal of his benevolence towards Ullusunū and his purpose of confirming his vassal powers.

The next step in the narrative is the banquet spread for Ullusunū - we are not intended to reflect that it was the latter who supplied all the items on the menu. The magnanimity of Sargon is intended to impress the listeners:

ša PN šarri bēlišunu paššur takbitti maḥaršu
arkusu-ma eli ša PN2 abi aliddišu ušakki kussāšu
šašunu itti nišē māt GN ina paššur ḥidāte ušēšib-
šunūti-ma maḥar DN u ilāni mātišunu ikrubū
šarrūti (lines 62f)

Before Ullusunū the king their overlord a laden table I spread, and above Irzanu the father who begot him I elevated his throne. Himself together with the Assyrians I seated at the table-of-rejoicing (joyous banquet). Before Ashur and the gods of their land they pronounced blessings upon my majesty.

This is a noteworthy passage, unmatched, so far as we know, in the Assyrian royal inscriptions for its pro-vassal tone. As remarked, the magnanimity of Sargon is prominent, but having said that, the honour shown to Ullusunū impresses modern readers as somewhat out of character compared with traditional Assyrian bombast. Of course, the *Gottesbrief* as a whole displays an unusual interest in and respect for foreigners and foreign customs, as Oppenheim has pointed out,¹ but one gains the impression that the exaltation of Ullusunū

1. art. cit., JNES 19, 139ff.

is part of a deliberate scheme to show what an advantage it was to be an Assyrian vassal, or alternatively, if it be supposed that there was a treaty with a vassal protection clause, the *Gottesbrief* is consciously presenting Sargon as a king who honoured the oaths.¹

The status of Ullusunu is underlined; he is a 'king' and 'overlord' - šarri bēlišunu². Absent is any qualifying phrase such as ardu dāgil pānija to emphasise his subservience, but instead the Mannean's rise in status and authority is stressed. Not only has he inherited his father's throne despite insurrection, but that throne is now more glorious. The accord with Assyria is exemplified by their intermingling at the banqueting table.

The meal may have a deeper more formal significance than would appear at first glance, for sharing a meal was very much a part of treaty/covenant ceremonies among certain groups. The best extra-Assyrian examples come from the Old Testament, where a meal is shared formalising and exemplifying the covenant between Isaac and Abimelech (Gen 26:26ff), Jacob and Laban (Gen 31:44ff), Joshua and the Gibeonites (Josh 9:3ff), as well as between Yhwh and Israel (Dt 27:7).³ These examples are of course a long way removed from Sargon and Ullusunu in Armenia in locality, culture and date, but the legitimacy of the comparison is upheld by the EVT which post-dates Sargon's reign.⁴ Various treaty ceremonies are named there in a clause forbidding the Medean

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1. Esarhaddon had his scribes present him in this light in respect to a parity treaty with Urartu. See the discussion on the phrase aššu adê našārim in Esarhaddon's *Gottesbrief*, section I:B.1, p. 49ff .
 2. Cf. Lie, 12 line 80: itti RN itti Aza māri bēlišunu: 'against Sargon and Aza, son of their overlord'. 'Son' would be biological usage, and 'verlord' would be referring to Irzana, not Sargon, if a similar dignity is given to an Assyrian vassal as in Sg 8:62 .
 3. Broadly speaking, the Semites; specifically Israel's ancestors and the Arabs. On the latter group even to modern times, see J. Pedersen Der Eid bei den Semiten, Studien zur Geschichte und Kultur des islamitischen Orients 3, Strassbourg, 1914, page 24ff .
 4. Colophons delineate the gap at 42 years, the *Gottesbrief* dating to 714bc, the Ramataja treaties (EVT) to 672bc .

princes from entering into other alliances.

(If) you establish this treaty before the gods who are placed (as witnesses) , and swear by the laden table, by drinking from the cup, by the glow of fire, by water and oil, by touching one another's breast, and (still) do not come and report to the crown prince designate, Ashurbanipal¹

The pertinent words in the original are: ina KEŠDA GIŠ.BANŠUR ša-te-e ka-si (line 54), which give the reading ina rikis paššūri šatê kāsī, and seem to belong together describing a meal involving eating and drinking, and not 'drinking from the cup' as a separate ceremony.

It would be interesting to know how many of these various ceremonies were used in Assyria during the Sargonid period, and which were mentioned because they were known to the Assyrians as treaty ceremonies in use amongst their vassal neighbours. If our interpretation of the Sargon-Ullusunu banquet holds good, then the covenant meal was used as well as known, by the Assyrians.²

The same passage from the EVT provides a parallel to the prepositional phrase of Sg 8:63b: maḥar^d Aššur u ilāni mātišunu, for in the context of treaty-making ceremonies EVT, 153-154a reads:

ša DINGIR.MEŠ³ u-še-]ša-bu-u-[n]i a-de-e ina
IGI DINGIR.[MEŠ-ni] [ta-ša-kan-u]-ni

(If) you establish this treaty *before the gods*
who are placed (as witnesses)

In the Sargon text, we have a vassal present, a meal and the prepositional phrase drawing in the gods. In the EVT, we have the vassal present, the explicit mention of a treaty, a meal and the prepositional phrase referring to the gods.³ It occurs again equally characteristically earlier in the EVT :

adê RN šar māt GN ina IGI ilāni rabûti ša šamê
eršeti issikunu iškunūni (line 41f)

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1. Erica Reiner's translation, *ANETS*, 100/536 lines 153-157.
 2. For a more detailed treatment of the OT material relevant to the Sargon-Ullusunu banquet, see Excursus 4 : Covenant & Covenant Meal, section IV, p. 399-451 .
 3. The ideogram IGI can be read either as maḥru or pānu. Further important corroborating material drawn from the OT use of the parallel prepositional phrase lipēnēy Yhwh in covenant contexts is dealt with in Excursus 5 : The Phrases lipēnēy Yhwh and ina IGI DN in Covenant/Treaty Contexts, section IV, p. 452-464 .

The treaty (which) RN king of Assyria has established with you *in the presence of* the great gods

Ina IGI DNN also appears at the beginning of the solemn document (EVT, 13), setting the scene. Similar usage may be adduced from Assyrian letters. Thus the king is informed about men 'who sinned against the oaths' after making them 'in the presence of' the gods: adê ša šarri ina pān^d Aššur u ilāni rabūti issi ardānišu iškunūni.¹ Certain Elamites assembled, spoke evil words against their king, and 'in the presence of their gods confirmed them': ina pān ilānišunu iltaknū.² One Kabtia could have taken the oath of the king 'when in the midst of your gods': ina libbi ilānika u adê ša šarri bēlija aššabat.³

These passages and the cumulative evidence favour a technical connotation for Sg 8:63b maḥar^d Aššur u ilāni mātišunu ikrubū šarrūti, rather than it meaning that Sargon was praised by Ullusunū.⁴ The mention of the foreign deities - ilāni mātišunu - must have been deliberate, and would indicate that both Assyrian and Armenian gods were referred to here as witnesses of the renewed treaty-oaths,

1. H 584:9-12.

2. H 460:3-6.

3. H 202:5-7.

4. H 878: rev. 11f ūmussu ina maḥar^d Marduk ... šarrāni bēlēni iktar-
[rabu] - this shows the non-technical use of the root karābu used with the phrase ina IGI DN, and this sense of blessing or praising is the most frequent. It is the context which supports a treaty interpretation of Sg 8:63, and the phrase which allows it. For other translators renderings, cf. TCL 3, 13; ARAB 2, 77; AHw., 446 karābu II, 3b) 'segnend grüssen'; CAD K, 195 karābu, 2b '... did homage to me as king in the presence of (the images of) Ashur and their own gods'.

just as the Tyrian gods were involved in Esarhaddon's treaty with Baal of Tyre.¹

Whether Sargon bound himself by document to protect his vassal or only by word of mouth, it heralded a fierce confrontation with the opposing alliance of Rusas and Metatti, but before this took place, and as if to demonstrate the alternative way of submission to Assyria, the tribute mission of Gizilbundu is recorded. Zizi and Zalaja paid tribute to Sargon, and he paid tribute, metaphorically speaking, to his god:

ina zikiršu rabî ša DN bēlija ša šuknuš malkē ša šadē u maḥar igasēšunu išruqū širiqti ... puluḥtu melammēja iktumšunūti ina qereb mātišunu imqussunu ḥattu madattašunu ... adi maḥrija ūblūni (lines 68-71)

At the potent word of Ashur my lord who bestowed as a gift the submission of the mountain kings and the reception of their presents ... the fear of my awesome splendour overwhelmed them and terror overcame them in their own land so that their tribute ... they brought before me.

The point that stands out is that imperialism was wedded to theology in a productive and inseparable union.

The main thrust of the Ullusunu incident now unfolds with a brief description of the opposing alliance:

PN ... ša nīr islū-ma šēṭūtu RN šarri bēlišu ilqū imišu ardūssu ana Ursa ... ša kī šāšuma tašīmtu lā idū nīrāri lā ēṭir napištišu ittakil (lines 80-82)

PN .. who had thrown off the yoke and slighted Ullusunu the king his overlord, who had scorned his vassaldom and begun to trust in Rusas, who like himself was a stranger to understanding, a helper unable to save himself

Again, the dignity accorded Sargon's vassal Ullusunu is notable; he is Metatti's 'overlord' and 'king' (šarri bēlišu), and the slight² is recorded as being against him not Sargon; nīru is left unqualified

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1. Asar, 109 \$69 Col 4. Dogmatism as to the customary Assyrian inclusion or omission of foreign deities in treaty documents is ill advised in view of their paucity and fragmentary nature, eg. the Asb.-Qedar treaty is broken at the point of the god list. McCarthy gropes for an impossible generalisation - T&C, 73, 79 notes 36,37 & 93 note 50.
 2. mēšu + ardūtu ; on the use of mēšu - 'to scorn, disregard, neglect', see ANw, 649 .

where normally would stand nīrija or nīr DN, though too much need not rest on this since it could also be a scribal shorthand or error.¹ Again this passage highlights the adê as the framework of the action and the theology.

Rusas, the other ally, is given a damning indictment too in terms of adê violation using its technical language:²

Urartaja lā nāšir zikir DNN lā pālihu māmīt
bēl bēlē (line 92)

Ursa mālikšunu ša itê DNN ētiqū-ma ša DN šar
ilāni lā ukabbidu māmīssu (line 148)

The Urartian who did not guard the word of Ashur and Marduk, who did not fear the oath/ban of the lord of lords

Rusas their counsellor who transgressed against (lit. crossed the bounds of) Shamash and Marduk and who did not honour the treaty-oath of Ashur king of the gods

The indictment is then put in more specific terms in the continuation of line 92:

dabāb tušši nullāti tišpura šaptašu ša DN
diqugallu ilāni zikiršu kabtu lā našru-ma
šattišam ana lā egê ētettiqu ušurtašu arki
ḫitātē maḫrāte gullultu rabītu ša ḫepê mātišu
u šumqut nišēšu ēpuš (lines 93-95)

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1. Thureau-Dangin and Luckenbill both supply 'of Ashur' in their translations after nīr, though the text does not.
 2. Discussions of treaty terminology have multiplied in the wake of material published from Boghazköy, Mari, Ugarit, Sefire and Assyria. Relevant to the passages cited below is R. Frankena's discussion of tāmītu, māmītu & arratu (art. cit., 134ff), which concludes that it is not possible to differentiate clearly between the first two, and that "bath" and 'curse', māmītu and arratu ... are two sides of the same thing", arratu referring to the curse in action subsequent to the breaking of the oath, adê, māmītu. "The tāmītu, māmītu and arratu belong together and are in many respects comparable to the Hebrew terms šēbûcāh, 'ālāh and qēlālāh". He cites Josh 9:15, Gen 26:28, Dan 9:11, Neh 10:30, Josh 9:21, 1 Sam 14:26, Dt 28:15, 29:27, 38:45, Ps 109:17ff & Num 5:11-28 in illustration.

speaking lies, his lips uttered vulgarities, and he did not keep the weighty word of Shamash great judge among the gods, but yearly without cessation he used to transgress his bounds: after his former sins, he committed a heinous crime which (led to/ earned) the destruction of his land and the felling of its peoples

Granted the translation given above,¹ we have a clear example of a 'just war' apologia in which the Assyrian king acts on behalf of the offended gods in executing the punishment for adê sin. The treaty framework allows the religious interpretation: crime is sin; violation of geographical frontiers is transgressing divine ordinances. The roots galālu and etēqu are eminently suited to convey both shades of meaning.

Interesting too is the weight given to sin of the lips. Formal declaration of war by letter, or threat of retribution, played a part in Ancient Near Eastern warfare.² Here and elsewhere in the Assyrian annals, replies to messages from the king which rejected his terms are regarded as insults to his gods, and add to the gravity of treaty-stipulation breaking. The king would point out to the gods how they had been insulted by the enemy, for this was not only legal procedure, but also, one suspects, a psychological lever designed to goad them into action. How could they allow such insults to go unanswered?

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1. Reading gullultu - 'misdeed, crime, sin' (CAD G, 131); (AHw., 297) 'feindseliges Handeln', and keeping apart the roots galālu D and qalālu, while understanding the 3rd Masc. Sing. suffix attached to mātu & nišē as referring to Rusaš, and as attached to ušurtu as referring figuratively to Shamash, against Luckenbill - '...the great offence of destroying this(!) land and overwhelming its people' (ARAB 2, 79 §152), we prefer to understand the ša phrase by supplying 'which (led to/ resulted in/ merited, etc) ...' with the editor (mēritait, TCL 3, 95) and with the CAD translators sub gullultu & sub hitītu (CAD H, 209).
 2. See Korosec: Iraq 25(1963), 159-166 "Warfare of the Hittites from the Legal Point of View", and the discussion of the Ashurbanipal material section C: The Royal Threat, page 108ff. The following four examples may be given mention here:

- Sg 8:111 - Rusaš' invitation to join battle
- Asar, §69 - Esarhaddon's warnings to Shupria
- ARAB 2, §878 - Asb.'s warning message to Indabigash
- H 1260 & 295 - threats of Ashur's wrath on the Rasheans

Thus Sargon's prayer to Ashur for Rusas' defeat included the request for the punishment of his insolent words - iriḫ pīšu elišu turrim-ma annašu šušši (line 124). The purpose of the campaign as a whole was similarly expressed - aššu ḫaṭām pī muštarḫi (line 9). Ashurbanipal's annals provide other clear examples in parallel. Thus he prays for vengeance on Teumman who did not esteem the gods (lā mušākir ilāni):

šūt mēriḫti annīti ša PN iqbū amḫur šaqūte
DN azziz ana tarṣiša akmis šapalša ilūssa
ušappa illakā dīmāja

Those insolent words which Teumman had spoken I
took, and stood before exalted Ishtar. I bowed
before her and implored her deity, my tears
flowing down 1

Punishment for sin of the lips was then fitted to the crime, as two passages from Ashurbanipal indicate, the first incident following the quelling of the Babylonian rebellion led by his brother Shamash-shum-ukin, while the second belongs to the eighth campaign against Gambulu which had supported Elam:

šābē šātunu šillatu pišunu ša ina eli DN iliḫ
šillatu iqbū ... pišunu ašluk

PNN ... ša eli ilānija iqbū šillatu rabītu qereb
GN lišānšun ašlup

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1. šillatu - 'seditious speech, blasphemy', mēreḫtu - 'insolence, presumption, aggressiveness', nullātu - 'vulgarity, baseness', irḫu - 'insolence, aggressiveness' and tuššu - 'lies, untruth' do not exhaust the vocabulary for sins of the lips in Akkadian, and because it is so rich precise renderings are difficult to determine, the lexical series not being all that helpful. For an extended note on the Akkadian terms for sinful speech which includes comment on magrītum, parītum, lā qabītu, taššītu, lā amātum, miqtu & atirtu as well as the words already cited, see W.G. Lambert: Babylonian Wisdom Literature, OUP, 1960, page 312 note 28. Cf.

amāt tašqirti ṭapilti Ullusunū ana PN šākin māt
Mannaja idbub? (Rusas) uttered perverse and slanderous words against Ullusunū to PN governor of the Mannean land' (Lie, 18 line 102)

As for those men and their seditious speech
(lit. mouths) who spoke against Ashur my god
with blasphemy - I slit their mouths

PN & PN who spoke the greatest of blasphemy
against my gods, their tongues I tore out in
GN
1

So far, then, we have been presented with the active vassal relationship between Ullusunu and Sargon, and the religious-legal indictment of the enemy, followed by the praise of king and god with a prayer for victory which was studied separately. Now comes the answer to that prayer in the battle. Sargon wields the sword, but behind him determining the outcome, are the gods of Assyria.

kakkēšu ezzūti ša ina āšišunu ištu šit šamši
adi erib šamši lā māgiri imiššu iduja uma" ir
(line 126)

His(Ashur's) fierce weapons which in their
procession from the sun's rising to its setting
despoil the unsubmissive, he sent at my side

With this assurance Sargon joins battle ferociously, plunging into the ranks of the enemy like a frightful javelin, slaughtering them like lambs and dyeing the terrain red like anemones. Some he deliberately allowed to escape so that they would spread the tale of the invincible might of Ashur, but these too were overwhelmed by the intervention of the storm god Adad:

sitāt nišē ša ana šušū napišti ipparšidū līti
DN bēlija ana dalāli umaššerusunūti DN2 gašru
mār DN3 qardu rigimšu rabītu elišunu iddi-ma
ina urpat riḥši u aban šamē uqatti rēḥa (lines 146f)

As for the rest of the people who had fled in
order to save their lives, whom I had let go so
that they would praise the might of Ashur my lord
- Adad, the powerful, son of Anu, the valiant,
hurled his mighty roar after them and made an end
of the remainder with cloudburst and hailstones₂

1. Rassam 4:66-69 & Prism B 6:85f .

2. Umaššerusunūti, D of wašāru/mašāru + 3rd Masc. plur. suffix, is taken as 1st Sing. Subj. following ša + Relative clause, with ša also governing ipparšidū. Cf. TCL 3, 'et que j'avais laissés' in contrast to ARAB 2,82f - 'whom he had abandoned' (= 3rd Masc. Sing. Subj.), referring to Metatti deserting his army, which removes the apparent discrepancy between the intentions of Sargon and his gods' action, but if it referred to Metatti one would expect umaššerusunūti to follow either nišē or ipparšidū .

The biblical parallels are too striking to be passed over, and it is surprising that Albrektson has apparently missed this passage and its biblical counterparts in his study of the parallels between the intervention of the Ancient Near Eastern gods in history and what is in like manner attributed to the activity of Yhwh, God of Israel, by the Old Testament.¹ Nor is this comparison irrelevant to the study of the sword and adê theology which is our central concern. But for convenience the discussion is set out in an Excursus which obviates interrupting the flow of the Eighth Campaign narrative.²

This continues with the short-lived escape from death of Rusas. In a line already quoted (148), his adê guilt is brought to the attention of the listeners so that the point of his grisly end will not be missed. He flees the battle like the prey of an eagle or of a hunter, or like blood streaming from a wound. Prostrate on his bed he lies like a woman in labour, unable to take food or drink, and finally he succumbs to a fatal 'sickness'. Parallel accounts specify suicide by means of iron dagger,³ which as Olmstead remarks belongs to the category of editorial improvements of the kind whereby booty expands immensely in later versions. This might be termed the Evil Destiny genre, a literary fiction embracing the suicide or madness of defeated enemies.

Treaty curses might conceivably be responsible for colouring the account, for hunter and prey curses in simile form are known, as well as those of famine and thirst and sickness, while the womanisation of warriors was a common curse and might be adapted here. On the other hand, no verbal parallels come to mind, and the labour-pains reaction to bad news is common Ancient Near Eastern idiom, though it is true

1. 'The Idea of Historical Events as Divine Manifestations in the Ancient Near East & the OT', Albrektson's sub-title, should certainly include the likes of this incident.

2. See Excursus 7: An Extended Note on Sg 8:146f & the Phenomena of Electrical Storms, section IV, page 468-490.

3. *murūṣ lā tebê ēmid ramānšu* - Sg 8:151 (cf. 411-413)

*ḥattu ramnišu imqussu-ma ina paṭri parzilli šibbišu
napiṣṭaṣu w qatti* - Iraq 16(1954), 177 line 40f.

*ina [paṭar parzil] li ramānišu kīma šaḥi libbašu
iṣḥul-ma napiṣṭaṣu [uqat]ti* - Lie, 28 line 165.

Cf. *šanī ṭēme iṣbassunūti PN ibquma ziqnašu PN2 ina
paṭri parzilli šibbišu iṣḥula karassu* (Asb. B 6:63f;
cf. ARAB 2, §815 & 1028)

Olmstead:HA, 242.

that the Old Testament prophets use it in connection with invading armies which are given a theological, covenant-curse interpretation.¹

The narrative which concludes this section of the campaign has two purposes, one to portray the misery of the defeated, the other to laud the victor. The moral drawn is all too obvious for it has been drawn from each detail of the narrative *en route*, yet the scribes succeed well enough with the contrast they draw between the celebrations in Sargon's camp and the state of the enemy, spattered with the venom of death (imat mūti). The advantage of loyal vassaldom is underlined again:

šēp nakri lemni ultu qereb GN aprus-ma libbi
RN bēlišunu uṭīb-ma ana nišēšu dalpāte ušēši
nūru (line 155)

The foot of the wicked enemy I cut off from the land of the Mannans; the heart of Ullusunu their lord I made glad; on his harassed people I caused light to shine forth

This takes up Ullusunu's plea to his overlord (line 55ff) without emphasis being laid on his status as an Assyrian puppet, for there is dignity in bēlišunu minus reference to Sargon, while parāsu šēpu ultu refers back to the vassal protection plea in words that are customarily used for describing the defence of the Assyrian fatherland.²

The scribe is working along a theme of promise and fulfilment within an adē framework - a pattern familiar from the Old Testament.³ This makes the 'Messianic' parallels explicable in the light of their being the reversal of treaty curses, in Ullusunu's case their opposite,

1. See Hillers: TC/OTP, 64-68 on the Incurable Wound and Womanisation curses. Compare Isa 13:8, Jer 6:24, 30:6, 49:22,24 & 50:43 for the labour-pain figure of speech. Jer 49:22 is especially interesting in that Eagle & Travail imagery are combined in a parallel manner to the Sg 8 passage. See further the remarks on Sg 8:411-413 in section I:A.3, page 44 below.

2. Eg. by Sargon & Tiglath-pileser as follows:

ina eršet māt Šumerî u Akkadê ana šēpē Kaldî nakri
limni parāsim-ma ušarba kakkēja (Lie, 42 line 270f)

šēpē nakirē ina mātija lū aprus (AKA, 84 line 53f)

3. See F.C.Fensham's study "Covenant, Promise & Expectation in the Bible", ThZ 23.5(1967),305-322 for an exposition of the OT material in the light of recent ANE studies.

namely the blessings of liberty and light, bringing gladness of heart (line 155).¹

Granted that lines 155ff consciously present the fulfilment of the vassal plea of line 55ff, and that both plea and expedition are historically placed within an adê framework, can we go further and infer that a vassal protection clause was actually written into the adê document? The difficulty with this is that no Assyrian treaty with such a clause is extant, though the fragmentary nature of the extant treaties of Ashurbanipal, Sennacherib, Ashur-nirari V and Shamshi-Adad V, not to mention the huge gaps in documentation, excludes dogmatism about the absence of the vassal protection clause.

What can be said is that this clause offering the blessing of protection from enemies by the overlord was present in some Hittite

1. Cf. the liberation of Chaldea in Sargon's annals:

mārē CNN ša ina lā annišunu ina qerbišun kamû
 šibittašunu ābut-ma ukallimšunūti nūru eqlātišunu
 ša ultu ūmē ullūti [ina] išīti māti Sutī [ēkimū]-ma
 ramānašun utirrū [ša(?) Sutī] šāb šēri ina kakkē
 ušamqit [kisurrē]šunu mašūti [ša ina dilliḫ māti
 ibbaṭlū [ušadgil] pānuššun

The citizens of Sippar, Nippur, Babylon and Borsippa who, for no fault of theirs, were bound among them, I ended their imprisonment and showed them light. Their fields which for many days past the Sutu had annexed and appropriated to themselves, (now as for those) Sutu desert-folk I overthrew (them) with (my) weapons, and their (the citizens') forgotten boundaries [which, in the confusion of the land, had ceased to exist, I [put in] submission to them (again).

Text and translation by C.J.Gadd: Iraq 16(1954), 186f .

- Cf. Isa 42:6ff & 61:1ff in respect both of the concept of divine election and of liberty and light under the covenant brought about by the Elect One. Gladness instead of mourning is also present in both sources.
- Cf. F.C.Fensham: ZAW 75(1963), 170ff on the curses of Light turned into Darkness & the Taking away of Joy (cf. TC/OTP, 57f)

treaties¹, and that Assyrian kings did mount expeditions in aid of vassals² and make a point of mentioning this in their records because it exemplified their righteousness as well as the benefits of loyal vassaldom. Sargon's annals in particular record vassal protection campaigns, though examples from earlier and later monarchs are not lacking. For example, from Shalmaneser's records comes the following:

ina tarši RN šar GN PN aḡušu ittišu ibbalkit RN2
 šar māt GN ana nārārūte ša RN1 allik PN ina kakki
 ušamqit RN1 ina kuss[^] abišu ukīn

In the time of RN king of GN PN his brother re-
 volted from him; I, Shalmaneser, king of the land
 of Ashur, marched to the help of RN; I struck down
 PN with the sword, (and) established RN on the
 throne of his father. 3

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1. See F.C.Fensham: VT 13(1963), 133-143 "Clauses of Protection in Hittite Vassal Treaties & the OT", especially section B, page 140ff. The Suppiluliuma + Niqmadu accord exemplifies two-way protection, from which the following lines may be quoted:

mā ^dšamšu šarru rabû bēluja ištu qāti nakri lušēzibanni
 mā anāku ardu ša ^dšamši] šarri rabī bēlija mā itti nakri
 ša bēlija nakraku ul itti šalami ša bēlija šalaku
 mā šarrānu usaḡhatūninni

May the Sun the Great King my lord from the hand of the
 enemy bring me forth,
 For I am the vassal of the Sun the Great King my lord;
 for with the enemy
 of my lord I am hostile, and with the friend of my lord
 I am friendly;
 Indeed the kings oppress me (PRU 4, No. 17.340, lines 11-14)

2. Eg. Lie, 8, 12, 18, 24, 32, 38, 74: the last instance records immediate vassal protection following Ispabara's plea for alliance and military aid:

[PN kakkē]šu ēdufr-ma ana elṭēr [napišti]šu ina supê]
 [u tleme]qi ušallanni-ma] ērišanni kitrū 7 šūt]rēšija
 bēl paḡāti ana turri gimillišu ašpur

PN feared his [weapons ?] and in order to save his life
 he implored me with prayers and entreaties and begged
 for an alliance with me. Seven of my officers,
 governors I despatched to avenge him.

3. Text and translation by P.Hulin: Iraq 25(1963), 48ff .

From Esarhaddon's records comes an illustration of the king's righteousness in this vein:

PN šimtu ūbilšu-ma PN2 mārušu ina kussišu ušēšib-ma
... arka PN3 ana epēš šarrūti Aribū kališu eli PN2
ušbalkit-ma anāku RN šar GN šar kibrat erbetti ša
kittu irammu-ma šalip̄tu ikkibšu šābē tāhāzija ana
nārārūte PN2 ašpur-ma Arubū kališu ikbusū

Hazael fate carried off and I seated Jata' his son on his throne ... after that Uabu in order to make himself king of all the Arabs revolted against Jata' but I Esarhaddon king of Assyria, king of the four quarters, who love truth and to whom crime is an abomination, dispatched my battle troops to the help of Jata', and they trod down all the Arabs₁

It is in terms of vassal protection that Ashurbanipal relates his 1st Egyptian campaign, making much of the loyalty of the 22 sea-coast kinglets he met *en route*, and naming a further 20 Egyptian kinglets, princes and governors, including Necho, who part he took after they had been displaced by Tirhakah's invasion. This campaign is summarised by the statement of motivation, which runs thus:

ana nārārūti hamāt ša šarrāni qipāni ša qereb GN
ardāni dāgil pānija urruhiš ardi-ma allik adi CN

In order to hurry help to the kings my governors in Egypt, vassals beholden to me, I advanced swiftly and came to CN₂

Nor is this Ashurbanipal's only campaign coloured by a vassal protection motif, for the 7th is expounded similarly:

PN šēpa šarrūtija unaššiq-ma qaqqaru ušēšir ina
ziqnišu manzaz magarrija iṣbat-ma ana epēš ardūtija
ramānšu imnu-ma aššu epēš dīnišu alāk rešūtišu ina
qibit DNN ušalla bēlūti ina maḥrija izzuzu-ma idallalu
qurdi ilānija dannūti ša illikū rešūti anāku RN libbu
rapšu lā kāšir ikki mupassisu ḥiṭāte ana PN rēmu aršišu
... adki ummānāteja šir PN2 šar GN uštēšera ḥarrānu
ūbil ittija PN šar GN ša lapān PN2 ardišu innabtu-ma
iṣbata šēpēja ... PN ša innabta iṣbata šēpēja qereb
CN ušērib aškunšu ana šarrūti

1. Asar, 54 lines 19ff; ARAB 2, 208 \$518a .

2. Rassam 1:75ff .

Tammarithu kissed my royal feet and smoothed the ground with his beard; he took up position at my (chariot) wheels, and reckoned himself to be my vassal. That I should support his cause and go to his aid, he implored my suzerainty in the name of Ashur and Ishtar, and stood in my presence praising the valour of my gods, the powerful, who came to my aid. I, Ashurbanipal the generous hearted, who do not harbour a grudge, who forgive sin, showed mercy to Tammarithu...I mustered my forces; against Ummanaldasi king of Elam I set them en route. I took Tammarithu king of Elam with me, who had fled before Ummanaldasi his slave and had laid hold of my feet...Tammarithu who had fled and laid hold of my feet I brought into Susa and established as king

1

It is true that Ashurbanipal emphasises what he did for his vassals to highlight their perversity and ungrateful behaviour afterwards, underlining the enormity of subsequent sin against the adê. Yet the point remains that in practice the Assyrian kings did often act in support of their vassals, claiming a righteousness in so doing, and the approval and support of the gods in their wielding of the sword. This falls short of proof that the treaty blessing of vassal protection was written into the adê document, but if it had been in the case of Sargon and Ullusunu it would explain why Sargon was at pains to have his scribes present him as Ullusunu's champion, clothed in righteous dignity when the action in far away Medea-Iran was read aloud in the capital city.

1. Rassam 4:28-39 & 112-115 & 5:21 .

A.3: The Haldia Shrine Incident.

This part of the campaign is reported in lines 309-404, the majority of which (55 lines) consists of lists of booty. Historically and strategically, the blow dealt to the city of Muṣaṣir and its shrine forms a separate unit, a grand finale to the campaign, all the more splendid since victory was achieved with a small detachment of shock troops while the main Assyrian army was homeward bound. Theologically it is important for the light it throws on Assyrian attitudes to foreign gods whose existence was not denied. As with the remainder of the campaign, the narrative is given a consistent theological framework which deserves detailed study.

In summary form, the narrative runs as follows:

- A: indictment of Urzana for vassal rebellion
- B: oracles given to Sargon assuring him of divine support in battle
- C: description of environment of Muṣaṣir and its coronation customs
- D: conquest and deportation of its citizens
- E: booty list
- F: the reaction of Rusas and the state of Urartu after the campaign

Sections A, B, D and F carry the theological apologia, and no further reference will be made sections C and E here. Of great value for its penetrative literary and historical analysis of the whole incident is Oppenheim's study which will be drawn on at various points.¹

Section A, the indictment, is a mixture of theological, vituperative and factual clauses set at the beginning of the move against Urzana who is later described as 'king and counsellor' (šarru mālik-šunu) line 346).

ina tajjārtija PN Muṣuraja ēpiš anni u qillati ētiq
māmīt ilāni lā kānišu bēlūti ekṣu šaddāju ša ina adē
DNN iḥṭū-ma ibbalkitu ittija (line 309f)

On my homeward journey, Urzanu the Musasirean, a perpetrator of sin and wickedness, a transgressor of the oath of the gods, who did not bow to authority, a stubborn mountain-dweller (ie. barbarian), who sinned against the treaty-oath of Ashur, Shamash, Nabu and Marduk, he rebelled against me.

1. A.L.Oppenheim: JNES 19(1960),133-147 "The City of Ashur in 714bc", especially 135ff.

To rebel against the king (nabalkutu itti) is to sin against the gods because the adê was sworn to in their name. Besides the phrases etêqu māmītu and ḥaṭû ina adê, a third phrase which is used in the annals refers specifically to the vassal-treaty background of the rebellion - 'to scorn vassal status': ardûtu mêšu.¹ Factual proof of the theological indictment lay in Urzana's failure to send tribute, kiss Sargon's feet in symbolic submission, or to send his messenger with salutations and good wishes for Sargon's well-being (ana ša'al šulmēja, line 312).

Following the indictment comes the second step of discerning the will of the Assyrian gods by means of three specific divine signs. Oppenheim has commented extensively on these signs since the emphasis laid upon them seems to indicate that

Sargon offers here an argument in his defence, an argument that anticipates a human reaction which the reference to a divine encounter is meant to counter.

He suggests that in his destruction of the Haldia shrine, Sargon may have

committed a crime against *ius gentium*, against some unwritten but effective restriction on total war among adversaries of equal status

Be that as it may, Sargon used not only the regular bārû for extispicy, but also an astrologer to interpret the eclipse of the moon, and 'a legal argument conveyed to the king through a tukultu, an encouraging sign of a mysterious nature' all in order to ensure the gods would give victory in the surprise attack on Mušašir. Oppenheim comments

Sargon asserts that Marduk had given from of old to Ashur, his own deity, the right to bring into Ashur's temple not only all foreign gods, that is their images, 'in order to demonstrate their (the foreign gods') respect for him(Ashur)', line 315, but likewise all the treasure of their sanctuaries. This elsewhere unheard of divine regulation which made it Sargon's religious duty, so to speak, to pillage the temple of Haldia in Mušašir, and to bring his and his consorts images to Assyria, is given here a stress and importance that should arouse our suspicion. ²

1. The Display Inscription, Winckler: Sargon, 110:73 .

2. art. cit., 136f .

'Un-heard of' appears too strong an adjective to use, for it seems that what is assumed elsewhere in royal inscriptions is simply stated explicitly here.¹ Judging by Sennacherib's threats beneath the wall of Jerusalem and the apologia for his deportation of Marduk from a devastated Babylon, it may be presumed that it was standard practice for a conqueror to represent his conquests as the will of the gods indigenous to the conquered territories.²

In the Old Testament we have the example of the prophet Jeremiah concurring with Nebuchadnezzar's destruction of the Temple and the carrying off of its holy vessels, while Ezekiel similarly upheld the justice of Babylonian action against oath-breaking Judean vassals.³ Both these Old Testament oracles are framed within a double covenant context - the adê between Judah and Babylon and the bērît between Yhwh and Israel. It is true, of course, that the Old Testament prophets are without parallel in their criticism of their own people's and king's behaviour. This is due to their rigorous application of covenant theology to Israel, for the Old Testament prophets stood as expositors of the covenant maledictions when they commented on contemporary events. Nevertheless, Jeremiah and Ezekiel do not condemn the suzerain king for his looting of the Temple as though this broke a *ius gentium*. No doubt the reason is mainly that they regarded the Temple ritual as corrupt and worthless, yet both support the treaty right of the suzerain to wreck vengeance on Jerusalem following its rebellion.

Is Sargon's theological apologia strange in the Ancient Near Eastern context, then? In the light of his treaty theology, which is offered before mention of Marduk's *carte blanche* for the looting and capture of deities, it is perhaps not so strange. Is there any attempt to present the sack of the Haldia shrine as the will of the

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1. Compare, for example, the theological imperialism of Tukulti-Ninurta (ARAB 1, 52 \$148) or Tiglath-pileser I (*ibid.*, 7 \$226 ^dAššur bēlu kakka danna mušikniš lā māgirē qāti ušatmeḥu-ma mišir mātišu ana ruppiši iqbâ, AKA, 47f lines 97ff); the latter presented 25 gods from captured lands to the gods of Assyria (ARAB 1, 80 \$234 = AKA, 62f, lines 32-39). Cf. Sg 8:68.
 2. See Isa 36:10 and compare ARAB 2, 243 \$642 & 151 \$339-341. See too TnEp. (Afo 18, 42ff BM 98730, lines 38ff) for Tkn's version of his removal of Babylonian gods to Assyria. Compare Frankena's comment on the EBT Deportation curse (Asar, \$69 Col 4:18f) in OTS 14(1965), 131 quoted later below.
 3. Eg. Jer 7:1-15, 38:17-23, 27:1-22 & Ezek 17:11-21 .

Urartean gods ? When there was any question of justifying conduct this would be standard Assyrian practice . There may be evidence for this here in the description of the deportation of the city population, though there is ambiguity in both the translation and connotation of certain key phrases. The passage in a literal translation runs thus:

aššu ša PN šarru mālikšunu ana zikir DN lā išhutu-ma
nir bēlūtija islū-ma imišu ardūti ša nišē āli šuāti
šalālšunu akpid-ma ša DN2 tukulti GN aqtabi šūšašu
miḫrit abullišu šalṭiš ušēšib-ma aššassu mārēšu
mārātešu nišēšu zēr bīt abišu ašlula (lines 346-348)

Because Urzanu the king their counsellor did not fear the word of Ashur, and cast off the yoke of my overlordship, and scorned vassaldom, I decided to make booty out of the people of that city, and concerning the god Haldia, the strength of Urartu, I decreed his exodus. Before his gate victoriously I seated (him); and his wife, his sons, his daughters, his people, the seed of his father's house I carried off as booty₁

For what purpose did Sargon set Haldia down at the city gate ? Captives were humiliated by display in chains at the city gate, but this was the city gate of the conqueror's capital. Sargon may, on the other hand have intended the exiled citizens to regard their god as concurring with him in the deportation sentence upon them, and one might recall in this connection the sculptured scene of Sennacherib

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1. Šalṭiš - 'victoriously' is coupled with Sargon, as frequently elsewhere; the 3rd Masc. Sing. pronouns refer to Urzana, with the exception of šūša-šu - 'his (ie. Haldia's) exodus': CAD A2, 405 ašābu blunders in naming Urzanu as the one seated, when in fact Sargon tells us that he had made good his escape ! Olmstead:HA, 238 by his translation of šalṭiš ('Haldia ... as a conqueror') supports the concurrence-in-verdict interpretation; so too Luckenbill:ARAB 2,95 'As victor I caused him to sit before (his) city gate' if the English is so construed, but more likely he intends 'I, as victor, ...'. A possibility, entirely speculative, is of a scribal error whereby the Š-theme was written for the G - ušēšib for ūšib: 'I sat', 1st Sing. Pret. of (w)ašābu - 'to sit, be seated'.

sitting on his throne outside Lachish to pass sentence on the rebels and revue the spoils.¹

Two other Assyrian documents might be referred to in support of the interpretation of a joint sentence by Haldia and Sargon. The EBT carries a curse of Conquest & Deportation which is made in the name of the vassal's gods:

DNN mātkunu ana ḥab[āt]ilm nišēkunu ana šalāli
liddinū ultu mātikunu []

May Melqart and Eshmun deliver your land to
destruction, your people to be deported; from
your land [.....] 2

As Frankena points out, the implication is that these foreign gods will pass sentence on their own people for breach of the treaty stipulations, and in so doing will concur with the gods of Assyria and with Esarhaddon.³ The parallel which could be drawn with Sargon's deportation of the Mušaršireans is striking.

The validity of the second document is strictly speaking questionable since it is fragmentary and the argument rests on a reconstruction which must remain hypothetical, nevertheless it is worth mentioning the suggestion of Tadmor that at the pertinent point the Eponym Chronicle may be restored in a manner that indicates that the restoration of the statue of Haldia to Mušaršir took place subsequent to its deportation, and 'can be viewed as a sign of the temporary reconciliation with Urartu'.⁴

1. ^dSin-aḥḥē-eriba šar kiššati šar māt Aššur ina kussī
nīmedi ušib-ma šallat āl Lakisu maḥaršu ētiq

See the good photograph on the cover and on p. 63 of D.J. Wiseman: Illustrations from Biblical Archaeology, TP, 1958.

2. Text: Asar, 109 Col 4:14f ; translation, ANETS, 98/534.

3. R. Frankena: OTS 14(1965), 131.

4. H. Tadmor: JCS 12(1958), 85ff Eponym Chronicle, Rm 2,97(Cb4)

[ta-a-a-rat ^dḤal-di-a a-nla URU Mu-ša-sir

(rev. 11)

Was Haldia considered a vassal of the god Ashur, subsequently being returned to a position of authority after appearing in the presence of his Suzerain, just as loyal vassals paid periodic visits to the capital, or even as Ashurbanipal re-installed Necho in his vassal position after his rebellion and the time spent in detention in Nineveh? Perhaps the interpretation which discerns a parallel between the vassal relationship and the relationship between 'suzerain gods' and 'vassal gods' comes closest to explaining the Assyrian attitude to foreign deities. There is other material from the Assyrian annals which might be quoted by way of elaboration, but this will be discussed at a later point so as to avoid duplication.¹

Whatever difficulties lines 346-348 present as regards Sargon's attitude to the Urartian god, on the human level the adê theology is prominent and unambiguous. Three phrases add to the indictment of Urzana already given (lines 309ff), two of which relate Urzana's reaction to Sargon - 'casting off the yoke of overlordship' and 'scorning vassaldom' - while the third relates his discounting of Ashur. Irreverence towards the national god comes first, then in parallel that towards his high-priest. This parallelism is fundamental to the theology of the royal annals, for reaction to the king is reaction to his gods. A significant difference to the theology of Israel turns on precisely this point, that whereas David's attitude to Saul as the Lord's anointed and the election theology of the Royal Psalms have affinities with Ancient Near Eastern concepts, the theological rejection of some of Israel's monarchs and the bitter theological criticism of them belongs to the very heart of the Old Testament. Assyrian palace revolutions and provincial insurrections show that no amount of theological propaganda could render the king inviolable, and that the official theology could not accommodate a split between true service of the gods and loyalty to the king. No spokesman of Ashur would have dared to say what Jeremiah said about Jehoiakim, nor was there room for it in the populace-king/priest-pantheon web of relations. The Assyrian monarch was not subject to adê indictment like his enemies.

Returning to the narrative, the deportation of the livestock and populace is numerically described and may be compared with the account

1. See Part I:C, Ashurbanipal, section A: The Vassal Oath & Vassal Status and section J: The Renewed State of Submission, pages 83ff

in the Annals¹. Deportation was a policy of the Assyrians before Tiglath-pileser III (774-727 bc), but he seems to have been more thorough in its application than many². In Sargon's *Gottesbrief*, deportation seems to be given a definite theological twist both by the ordered deportation of the national god (ša Ḫaldia ... šūsašu aqtabi) and the wording of lines 346f, for immediately following the triple phrased adê indictment comes the king's decision to deport the populace: ša niše āli šuāti šalālšunu akpid. Sargon does not record the deportation in an abbreviated note - nišē ašlula - as a passing detail of the victory, but seems to record the deportation as his *verdict* and sentence (kapādu, a conscious act of the will in determining, planning, deciding) flowing from the crime of treaty breach.

This interpretation finds support in actual treaty curses involving the threat of deportation into exile. Thus Esarhaddon's Median vassals had to issue this warning to their offspring:

mā adê annûte ušra mā ina libbi adêkunu lā
taḫaṭṭê napšatkunu lā taḫallaqā-ma aṭmatkunu
ana ḫapê nišêkunu ana šalāli

Saying : "Keep this treaty, do not sin against
this treaty with you, lest you lose your lives
deliver your land to destruction, and your people
to be deported" 3

This compares with the Deportation & Exile curses which form so prominent a part of the curse lists of Deut 28 and Lev 26, and which are expounded by the prophets.⁴

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1. The sheep have apparently multiplied from 1235 to 100,225 - proportions that would have made Jacob envious ! See Olmstead: Ass. Historiog, 41.
 2. The policy of deportation and resettlement is attested as early as the Mari archives; for collected references to the practice in Mesopotamia, Hatti, Egypt and Palestine, see K.A.Kitchen "Ancient Orient, 'Deuteronomism' & the OT" New Perspectives, 5-7 section (v) The Concept of Exile.
 3. EVT, 291-295; ANETS, 101/537.
 4. Lev 26:33,36ff, Dt 28:36ff,48ff,63ff. Cf. Amos 5:5,27, 6:7, 7:11,17 & 9:4 and Hos 8:13, 9:3,17 & 11:5. A variety of words are used to denote exile: the noun šēbî, the verbs zārāh, pûš & gālāh. Cf. further the EBT Deportation curse (Asar,109 §69 Col 4:14f already quoted above) and Asar, 105 Gbr. II, 2:35 deportation decree of the gods.

Section F, lines 411-414, rounds off the incident and is separated from the remainder of the report by a ruled line after line 414. In content, it parallels lines 150-154 since both picture the wretched state of Rusas and his land. Previously we were told that Rusas inflicted on himself 'a sickness without recovery' (muṣuṣ lā tibê ēmid ramānšu, line 151), and now his reaction to the sack of the Haldia shrine is presented in the most graphic terms. His death in the Annals, as mentioned, was by suicide by iron dagger, which can be reconciled with the *Gottesbrief* only if an historical parallel with the defeated and wounded Saul is allowed. The graphic stylus portrait runs thus:

išmi-ma PN qaqqariš ippalseḥ naḥlapātešu ušarriṭ-ma
 wuššera idēšu išpuṭ kubussu pērassu ihsip-ma udannin
 libbašu ina kilallišu buppāniš issaḥip izziz-ma ṣurrušu
 iḥmuṭa kabattuš ina pīšu ittaškunu qubbê maršūte
 (lines 411-413)

Rusas heard and threw himself on the ground, his garments he rent, he bared his arms, he tore off his turban, pulled out his hair and smote his breast with both hands, he was cast onto his back and his heart stopped, his liver burned, in his mouth were cries of pain

If the three accounts of Rusas after his defeat - his distress and psychological collapse as above, his fatal sickness, and his suicide by iron dagger - are not the literal truth but are at least coloured by Assyrian literary conventions, a distinct possibility to explain the colouring would be the influence of treaty curses which involve the dagger and sickness, such as the following from the EVT:

DN qurad ilāni ina patrišu lā gāmili napšatkunu
 liballi ... DN patru parzillu ḥanṭu ittikunu
 lirkusu ... DN azugallutu muršu tāniḥu simmu lazzu
 ina zumrikunu liškun kīma mē ina libbikunu dāmi
 lirmuk

May Nergal the warrior among the gods extinguish your life with his merciless dagger... May Ninlil (who resides in Nineveh), ... (lit. may they tie with you) a swift dagger May Gula the great physician put illness and weariness [into your hearts], an unhealing sore into your body, so that you bathe in [your own blood] as if in water 1

1. EVT, 455f, 457f & 461ff; ANETS, 102/538.

The curse involving the iron dagger seems also to appear in the EBT and the Asb. + Qedar treaty, though both are fragmented at that point, while those involving psychological breakdown are best illustrated from verses in Deut 28 and Lev 26, and are discussed in connection with Isa 51:19f in the Excursus 'The Divine Net' .¹

1. If the EBT is restored according to the EVT, line 457f, which seems almost certain to be correct in view of the gods named and the order of the curses in the immediate context outside the lacuna - see R. Frankena: art. cit., 130 and Erica Reiner, ANETS, 98/534. The fragmentary Asb. + Qedar treaty reads as follows:

4' [...]x ^mJa-ú-ta-a' la MUIIN ...]
 5' [...G]IR AN.BAR a-na ha-lu-[qi-ku-nu]
 6' [...]x gab-bu id-din-[u] -[ka-nu-ni]
 7' [...pi]-fi] GÍR AN.BAR iš-kun-u-ka-nu-ri]
 4' [] Jauta' the not godā]
 5' [a]n iron dagger for your ruīn]
 6' [] all they have give[n you]
 7' [the edge of an iron dagger they have set for you

Bu 91-5-9,178 Obv. 4'-7' (Or 37,1968, p 464ff)

See Lev 26:36 and Dt 28: 65b-67 on psychological breakdown. Cf. Isa 13:6-8 which links the imagery to the yôm Yhwh :

Wail, for the Day of Yhwh is near;
 as destruction from the Almighty it will come !
 Therefore all hands will be feeble (tirpênāh)
 and every man's heart will melt (yimmas)
 and they will be dismayed (wēnibhālū)
 Pangs (sîrîm) and agony (hābālîm) will seize them (yō'hēzûn)
 they will be in anguish (yēhîlûn) like a woman in
 travail (kayyôlédāh)
 They will look aghast (yitmāhû) at one another
 their faces will be aflame (pēnēy lēhābîm)

In both cases, the reaction is to news of invasion (verses 4f).

Finally, there is the summary rounding off the effect of the campaign on Urartu which can be taken in synopsis with the identically motivated passage concluding the Ullusunu section.

ina GN ana pāt gimrišu sipittu ušasliḫ-ma
gerrānu ša dūr ūmē ina GN ušaškin (line 414)

ina kullat šadê kalâšu šaḫrartu atbuk-ma
qūlu u dimmatu ēmida nišē nakrati ina ḫūd
libbi u rišāti itti nārē sammê u tabalī ana
qereb ušmānija ērub (lines 158f)

In the land of Urartu to its farthest border
mourning I spread, and in the Nairi land lam-
entation to distant days I imposed

Over each and every mountain I poured out
paralysing fear, and caused silence and
misery to the enemy peoples. With joy of heart
and amidst jubilation accompanied by singers,
harps and drums I entered my camp.

In the lines preceding the second quotation above, Sargon has set out his reasons for victory and they are thoroughly theological. In contrast to the perfidiousness of Rusas, his sin against the Assyrian gods, his pride and blasphemy, Sargon is the guardian of truth who adheres to the law of his gods, whose humble and continual worshiper he is. As a result, we are to infer, the gods have given their positive oracular response, a decree granting him victory. The blessings of 'joy of heart' and 'jubilation' and victory over enemies flow out of his right relation with the gods, his righteousness. This is familiar from the Old Testament,¹ and so too is the fate of Urartu conceived in terms of the treaty curse of the Removal of Joyful Sounds, the replacement of lyre and harp with wailing and lamentation. This

1. Cf. Dt 28:7, the covenant blessing of victory over enemies:

If you obey the voice of Yhwh your God, being careful to do all his commandments

Yhwh will cause your enemies who rise against you to be defeated before you; they shall come out against you one way, and flee before you seven ways

Cf. Lev 26:7f .

common Ancient Near Eastern treaty curse has been competently discussed.¹ Once more we find that a narrative section of the war record has more to it than at first meets the eye. The lines just quoted may be a factual account, but more importantly they carry a theological message in the idiom of the systematic adê theology which characterises the whole *Gottesbrief*.

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1. See F.C.Fensham: *ZAW* 75(1963), 171f on 'Taking away of Joy'; D.R. Hillers: *TC/OTP*, 57f on 'Removal of Joyful Sounds'. The references discussed there include:

Sefire I, A:29

AMT, rev. 4:19

Rassam 6:101-103

Asar, 107 Rand 1; letter.

Era Epic (*Or* 27,1958, p. 141 & 146 note 3)

Ludlul Bēl Nīmēqi (*BWL*, 36)

Amos 8:10, Isa 24:8, Jer 7:34, 16:19, 25:10, 33:11,

Ezek 26:13

A.4: Conclusions.

In summing up what has emerged from the detailed analysis of the two incidents in the Eighth Campaign, a generalised scheme for the constituents of an adê theology in their historical sequence may be set out as follows:

- A: Vassal Oath & Status
- B: Report of Rebellion
- C: Royal Threat by Letter or Emissary
- D: Reply insulting to Gods & King
- E: Indictment before Assyria's Gods
- F: Divine Verdict & Victory Oracle
- G: Battle & Divine Intervention
- H: Capture, Sentence, Execution & Display of Rebels
- I: Renewed State of Submission

Of course not all these steps need necessarily be recorded in the campaign narrative, and others may not take place, such as when the rebel in question managed to make good his escape, leaving point H unfulfilled. Yet each of these situational reflections of adê theology may be detected in the two historical incidents analysed in this study of the Eighth Campaign. The situational context therefore supports our thesis that the *Gottesbrief* of the Eighth Campaign is a document of adê theology.

Support also comes from the specifically religious statements made in the report, especially lines 112-122, which in describing the gods of Assyria portray them as the guardians and executors of treaty oaths and curses.

Finally in a number of different passages, it was found that the language of the report could be related to the language and idiom of curses, especially treaty curses. Literary expressions in the narrative were found to be neither free creations nor literal factual accounts, but theological historiography based on an adê theology.

For these reasons we may conclude that Sargon's *Gottesbrief* is a document of treaty theology.

PART I, B: The Esarhaddon *Gottesbrief* .B.1: Theological Analysis of the Narrative.

The *Gottesbrief* extant from Esarhaddon's reign covering a campaign to the Lake Van area north-west of Assyria in 673 bc is not so well preserved as the Sargon *Gottesbrief*, but betrays its form by a list of fatalities identical to those of the latter, and shares with it a vivid literary presentation, in this instance achieved by the use of speeches to convey the dramatic plight of the rebellious king of Shupria who appears on the walls of his city acting out his submission in a dumb-show.¹ Disjointed though the record may be in its preservation, it reveals a coherent theological schema - that of an applied adê theology, as we may now go on to consider.

The account advances from Esarhaddon's statement of complaint against the Shuprian king, namely his failure to put the Assyrian's extradition order into effect, to the Shuprian's desperate confession of sin from the walls of his besieged city Uppume, to the verdict of retribution to be exacted upon him. Then follows the attack, temporarily unsuccessful, and a renewed plea for forgiveness which is rejected with a re-iteration of the divine verdict upon him. The details of the successful breach of the city lead to a description of the fate of the Shuprians, and the fate of the fugitives from the land of Assyria which they have been harbouring. The righteousness of Esarhaddon is underlined by recounting his fidelity to the terms of the oath, and hence his diligence in interrogation of the Shuprians to bring to book fugitives from the king of Urartu besides those from Assyria.

Extradition of fugitives constitutes the legal dispute between Esarhaddon and the Shuprian king. In the first fragment (Gbr. I), we learn that Esarhaddon had written demanding the return of various fugitives, some of whom seem to have been fairly important officials who apparently thought that Assyria's days were numbered. They may of

1. Text, notes and commentary are found in Borger: *Asar*, 102-107 \$68 plus "Nachträge und Verbesserungen" AfO 18, p. 118. Note the re-arrangement of the tablets as presented in translation by Luckenbill: *ARAB 2*, \$592-612 . Brief literary comments are made by Oppenheim: *JNES* 19, *art. cit.*, 144. For historical treatment in Olmstead's paraphrastic style, see *HA*, 364-368 .

course have been involved in the turmoil of the internal insurrection when Sennacherib was murdered, and Esarhaddon's brothers were at daggers drawn with him and with each other. Esarhaddon describes the fugitives as sinners who have shed blood (Gbr I:2), and their rank as that of officers, governors, overseers, leaders and commanders (Gbr I:3). His demand for their extradition was twice more repeated without compliance. "What powerful king ever repeats a command?", he asks, "Yet I a mighty king have sent thrice without your compliance!" (Gbr II:1, 29-30).

The Shuprian specifically confesses failure to extradite as his treaty sin:

šarraqāku-ma ina hīṭi aḥṭū 50am imbe lumalli
 aššu išten ḥalqu munnabtu mār māt GN 100am
 ribišu lurīb ... ḥalqu munnabtu ša GN ana bēlišu
 lā utarru ina qātēja lēmur...ḥiṭṭu dannu ana DN
 aḥṭī-ma amāt šarri bēlija ul ašme mārē GN ardānika
 ul utirrakam (Gbr II:1; 15,19,21f)

I am a thief and for the sin I have committed will I compensate fifty-fold; for a single runaway fugitive who is an Assyrian will I restore one hundred fold ... he who does not return the escaped fugitive from Assyria to his overlord, let him learn by my example ... a grave sin against Ashur have I committed by not heeding the command of the king my lord and not returning your Assyrian subjects to you

We can be certain that a specific treaty stipulation had been broken by the Shuprian king, for the clauses dealing with the extradition of fugitives are one of the most constant features of our extant treaties, and are to be found, for example, in the Hittite treaties of Hattusilis + Ramases II, and of Mursilis + Duppi-Teshub, as well as in the Akkadian treaties from Alalakh between Niqmepa + Ir^dIM, and between Idrimi + Pilliya, as well as in the Aramaic treaty Sefire III.¹

Because these treaties were sworn to in the name of the gods, they were not only international legal documents but were theological documents, so that the breach of the extradition clause by the Shuprian king was a theological matter, a sin against the gods as well as an offence against his human overlord. This accounts for the use of the root ḥaṭū - 'to sin' with both Esarhaddon (māt Šubria māt iḥṭūka, line 12) and the god Ashur as offended parties (ḥiṭṭu dannu ana DN aḥṭī, line 21). In the petition for his life, the Shuprian king wisely

1. See conveniently, ANET, 201-205; ANETS, 95f/531f; Sefire, 96f .

expressed his desire to praise both god and king, and dissociated himself from those who fail both god and king:

ana napšāti mušširanni-ma tanitti DN lušāpa ladlula
qurdika ša ana DN šar ilāni egû amāt RN šar
kiššati bēlišu lā išemmu (lines 17 & 18)

Let me go with my life that I may reveal the glory
of Ashur and praise your valour ... whoever is
lax regarding Ashur king of the gods or does not
obey the word of Esarhaddon ...

Furthermore, in a sentence which is central to the study of this *Gottesbrief* as a document of adê theology, the Shuprian confesses that retribution has overtaken him just as it was written into the treaty :

māmīt ilāni rabūti ša ētiqū amāt šarrūtika ša
amēšu ikšudanni jāti (Gbr II, 1:23)

the oath(curse) of the great gods which I have
transgressed, (and) your royal decree which I
despised have overtaken me

For our purposes it makes no difference whether these were his actual words or whether they have been placed in his mouth by the royal scribes - a point impossible to determine - for in either case we are confronted with a theological reading of historical events in conformity with the religio-political framework of the adê. Here the root etēqu - 'to transgress' is coupled with māmīt ilāni representing the religious aspect, while the root mēšu - 'to despise' is used in parallel coupled with amāt šarrūti representing the human, political plane of the treaty.

In this instance the maledictions of the treaty were put into effect by the king himself. From our point of view this was the obvious way for religious sanctions to be effective, and hence gain respect, but undue scepticism in regard to the serious light in which the ancients regarded the treaty oaths and their maledictions should be avoided. No doubt the king of Assyria was able to enforce the treaty stipulations most of the time as the imperial power, but he did so as the highpriest (šangu) of the god Ashur and his earthly representative (šakkanakku), besides which the maledictions were thought to be made operative by the gods directly, or by their arbitration by means of the ordeal by battle, or by the onslaught of an

enemy from some other quarter. When Mursilis II offered his Plague Prayers,¹ he was admitting the reality of direct divine intervention for breach of treaty. Nature curses such as sterility, drought, pests, diseases and the like were thought to be made operative by this direct kind of divine action. When Hattusilis III as governor fought his brother as king, and committed the outcome to the gods, this was an ordeal by battle, a combination of human and divine agencies, as was supposed by the victory of the weaker party, namely Hattusilis.² Retribution exacted through a third party is best illustrated from the Old Testament when the enemy, be it Assyria or another power, was thought to have exacted the penalty for Israel's infidelity to the covenant with Yhwh.

Though Assyrian kings were usually in the position to exact the most frightful retribution on rebellious vassals, not infrequently a vassal was pardoned - no doubt in accord with political expediency. Ullusunu pardoned by Sargon, Manasseh reinstated by Esarhaddon, and Neco II forgiven and reinstated by Ashurbanipal come to mind immediately. The Shuprian king was not so fortunate, for his appeal was turned down, his confession to no avail in the light of his triple disobedience. He was told that guilt incurred by the breach of adē stipulations and retribution were indissolubly linked together:

qablu u tāhāzu tušaranni-ma kakkē DN ezzūti tadka
ina šubtišun (Gbr II, 1:32)

Strife and battle you have initiated, and the fierce
weapons of Ashur you have aroused from their resting
place

Details of the initial attack now follow and need not detain us except to observe the way in which the scribes turn a reversal in the siege operations into a proof of divine support for Assyria. Under cover of darkness the defenders of Uppume issued forth and set fire to the Assyrian siege ramp. That even this set-back should have occurred is explained on the grounds of its being an ill-starred day, a devil

1. See conveniently, ANET, 394-396.

2. This battle was certainly preceded by a breach of the treaty which regulated the relations between the two brothers. See V. Korosec: Iraq 25 (1963), 159-166 "Warfare of the Hittites from the Legal Point of View", and F.C. Fensham "Ordeal by Battle in the ANE & the OT", Festschrift Volterra, Vol 6, 127-135.

of a day (ūmu lemnu ilitti asakki, Gbr II, 2:3). Yet Marduk's swift intervention revealed that the gods were on the side of the great siege engines:

ina qibīt DN Šar ilāni izīqam-ma iltānu manīt
bēl ilāni ṭābu lišān DN2 munnahzi ana CN
usahḫir (Gbr II, 2:5-6)

At the command of Marduk king of the gods, the north wind blew, the pleasant breeze of the lord of the gods, (and) it turned the mounting tongue of flame against Uppume¹

Clearly Sargon was not alone in his efforts to put the treaty maledictions into effect.

The Suprian made a final attempt to have the verdict against him set aside by sending out his sons with an image of himself clothed in sackcloth and fetters, signifying his total submission to Esarhaddon.² But the decision was a verdict of the gods:

iqabbi amāt Anūti adi 2-šu ūmēka imlû xxx ka
ikšudam-ma ukkiba adanka x ... libšâ ina pî ilāni
šūt šamê eršetim ...x ittaša sāpaḫ mātika ...
uttakkaru iqqabbi šālal nišēka (Gbr II, 2:31-35)

Is the divine decree twice pronounced? Your days are full, your [fate?] has overtaken you, near is your appointed time [.....] may it be, from the mouth of the gods of heaven and earth [...] went forth (the decree for) the overthrow of your land; [by the word of Ashur which] is not altered is decreed the carrying off of your people

Despite the lacunae, it indisputably relates a divine verdict on the oath-breaker.³

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1. This passage was discussed by Albrektson: *op.cit.*, 59, and aptly compared with Exod 14:21, where Yhwh intervenes to drive back the sea before the hemmed in Israelites by means of a strong east wind, thereby turning seeming defeat into a singular victory.
 2. The words of their plea are unfortunately broken, but contain a plea to set aside the verdict albeit in an idiom which rather escapes us:
lā amāta ana irti asakki šukna (Gbr II, 2:24)
lege das Unwort an die Brust des Teufels
 3. The šit pīšun of line 35 should probably be taken as a reference to the divine decree with amāt Anūti & ina pî ilāni. On the divine verdict following breach of treaty, see the discussion in Ashurbanipal section F: 'The Divine Pronouncement', and compare Marduk's verdict against Babylon (Asar, 13 §11 Epi. 5, B & G, 10f).

The fall of Shupria follows in the narrative, and Esarhaddon makes a presentation of the spoil to the gods who 'go at his side and slay his foes and cause him to attain to his heart's desire' (Gbr II, 3:10-13). The account then harks back to the fugitive question which initiated the campaign, and we are informed of the retributive justice wrecked upon them, involving bodily mutilations:

ḫalqū munnabtū malja bēlēšunu umašširū-ma ana
 GN innabtū x [xxx qātēšunu ukarrit appū ēnū uznū
 ēkimšunūti x[xxxxx] ana māti šanītim lā innabtū
 ēmissunūti ḫītu (Gbr II, 3:23-25)

As for the missing fugitives as many as had left their masters and fled to Shupria [..... their hands] I severed, I deprived them of noses, eyes and ears [.....] I laid a punishment on those who had not fled to another country

Esarhaddon would not have regarded this as arbitrary cruelty but as a just sentence upholding the dignity of the gods of the treaty oaths, as the ḫītu of treaty breach. This may be simply illustrated from actual treaty clauses which have bodily mutilations as their theme:

w'k zy y^cr gbr s^cwt' kn y^cr Mt^cll]

Just as a man of wax is blinded, so may Matī^cll
 be blinded

ēnāšu lunappil - May his eyes be blinded 1

This was the fate suffered by Zedekiah after sentence for rebellion against his vassal status had been passed by Nebuchadnezzar.² Interestingly, Ashurbanipal mutilated the statue of an Elamite king, chopping off its hands, cutting out its tongue and piercing its lips in a posthumous sentence to honour his gods.³

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1. Sefire I, A:39 & AMT, 6:2. Cf. the Hittite Soldier's Oath (3:2ff, ANET, 354) and clauses of the EVT which apparently refer to mutilation (ANETS, \$40, 84 & 95) and the AMT mutilation of the spring lamb (1:10ff). Cf. too the metaphorical (?) blindness curse of Dt 28:28.
 2. 2 Kgs 25:7 = Jer 39:7 = 52:11. Cf. F.E.Deist: JNSL 1(1971),71f "The Punishment of the Disobedient Zedekiah".
 3. Streck, 214 = ARAB 2, 363 \$937, K 3062 .

Subsequently, Esarhaddon's righteousness with respect to the adê is affirmed:

ultu GN ina tukulti DN bēlija akšudu-ma nišēšu
 amnu šallatiš aššu adê našārim-ma kittu u mišari
 išrukinni ilāni rabūti ina muḫḫi nišē šuātunu
 ašāl uššiṣ aḫiṭ abīr (Gbr II, 3:31-35)

After I had conquered the land of Shupria with the help of Ashur my lord, and reckoned its people as booty, in order to keep the treaty oaths, and (because) the great gods had bestowed on me truth and justice, among those people I questioned, enquired, examined and tested

The striking phrase is aššu adê našārim - 'in order to fulfill the treaty oaths', for the scribes intend to draw a contrast between the scrupulousness of Esarhaddon and the Shuprian king's deviation. No less than four verbs are used for describing Esarhaddon's effort to return to Urartu any fugitives harboured by Shupria.¹ All this implies that a mutual agreement on extradition had been reached by Esarhaddon and Rusas. In other words, here is an allusion to a parity treaty - remarkable indeed when Urartean-Assyrian relations of Sargon's day are recalled, though it is explicable in terms of political expediency in the face of barbarian incursions of Cimmerians and Scythians north of Assyria.

Ashurbanipal confirms this background of a parity treaty when he records an Urartean embassy in his day in terms flattering to himself, for he recalls that the previous 'brotherhood' was replaced by subservience:

RN šar GN ša šarrē abbēšu ana abbēja ištānapparūni
 aḫḫūtu eninna RN danānu epšētu ša ilāni rabūti
 išīmūinni išme-ma kīma ša mār ana abišu ištānappara
 umma lū šulmu ana šar bēlija palḫiṣ kanšiṣ tamartašu
 kabittu ušēbala adi maḫrija (Rassam, 10:40-50)

Ishtar-duri king of Urartu whose royal fathers had repeatedly sent (embassies of) 'brotherhood' to my fathers - at this time Ishtar-duri heard of the mighty deeds which the great gods had decreed as my lot, and like a son addressing his father as lord so he too in like manner sent off (a dispatch) which read: May it be well with the king, my overlord. With reverent submission he directed his weighty tribute (present) to my presence

1. The roots are ša'ālu, ussusum (D-theme of ešēšu), ḫiātu/hādu & bēru/be'āru.

Ishtar-duri addressed him as bēlija and not as aheja, whereas his royal fathers had 'sent brotherhood repeatedly' - the Gtn-theme of šupāru with the feminine abstract ahhūtu, which belong to the technical vocabulary of treaty relations. By itself this phrase would be open to more than one interpretation,¹ but coupled with Esarhaddon's phrase aššu adê našārim and deeds in the *Gottesbrief*, it points to the existence of a parity treaty in Esarhaddon's day with mutual extradition obligations.

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1. In her fundamental study "Diplomacy in Western Asia in the Early Second Millenium BC", *Iraq* 18 (1956), 68-110, Ms. J.M. Munn-Rankin has discussed the connotation of the terms used to describe interstate relations (see p. 76-84), and her conclusions are worth quoting regarding ahūtum, marūtum, arbūtum & wardūtum, for they may be fairly applied to the 1st Millenium as well:

This examination of the circumstances under which the terms 'brotherhood' and 'sonship' were used in royal correspondence shows that they are not reliable guides to political status. 'Brotherhood' was employed between sovereign rulers and between vassal and overlord, perhaps when the latter was not fully subject. In all probability it was also invoked between an independent ruler and the vassal of another state.... and between vassals of the same overlord 'Sonship' and 'service' expressed the dependence of a vassal on his suzerain, but the filial relationship was also assumed out of deference by a vassal to the ally of his overlord, and possibly by a sovereign ruler to an older and more experienced monarch. As in the 14th century, 'fraternity' was established by the conclusion of a treaty. In every case in which one ruler calls another 'brother' in the Mari, there is either direct evidence that they were in treaty relations or that they were jointly engaged in military operations, which presuppose the existence of a treaty. (p, 84)

Further evidence for study may be found *sub voce* ahhūtu in CAD A.1, 188.

There are a further two telling lines from the *Gottesbrief* to be cited as evidence for the treaty background of its literary and theological expressions. They are written on the edge of the tablet but seem most appropriæly to belong to the description of the devastated city in contrast to others which Esarhaddon restored and resettled under his own officials (Gbr II, 4:1ff).

ina sūqēšu ḥadû ul ibā' ēpiš nigûti ul ipparik
 [...] šēpēšu aprus [...] šūti šelabû u būšû]
 iqnunû qinnû

[...] in its streets joy did not travel, the
 maker of music was not encountered [...] his
 feet I barred [...] there foxes and hyenas
 made their lairs 1

Two distinct witnesses to the operation of treaty curses are here juxtaposed. There is the removal of joyful sounds, and there is the occupation of the ruins by wild animals, both very familiar features of treaty curse material within and without the Old Testament.²

1. Asar, 107 Rand 1-3 ; not translated by Luckenbill.

2. The 'Habitation of Dragons' curse is discussed by F.C.Fensham: ZAW 75, 166-168 and by D.R.Hillers: TC/OTP, 44-54 and so need not be repeated here, except to supply a list of references from the discussion for convenience:

Sefire I, A:32f
 Rassam, 6:104-106
 Isa 34:11-17, 13:19-22, 17:1f, 27:10, 32:14
 Jer 10:22, 49:33, 50:39, 51:37
 Ezek 25:5, Mic 3:12, Zeph 2:13-15

The 'Removal of Joyful Sounds' curse is likewise competently treated in TC/OTP, 57f and ZAW 75, 171f with reference to

Sefire I, A:29
 AMT, rev. 4:19
 Rassam, 6:101-103
 Era Epic, Or 27, 141 & 146 note 3
 Ludlul Bel Nimeqi, BWL, 36
 Amos 8:10, Isa 24:8, Jer 7:34, 16:19, 25:10, 33:11
 Ezek 26:13

Cf. Sg 8:158f & 414 which is omitted by the above studies but discussed in the analysis of the Sargon *Gottesbrief*, A.3, page 46f .

B.2: Conclusions.

In conclusion, analysis of the Esarhaddon *Gottesbrief* reveals it to be a document of treaty theology at the following points:

- A: Esarhaddon's indictment of the Shuprian vassal
- B: The Shuprian king's confession of sin
- C: The reiterated verdict sentencing retribution
- D: The intervention of the Assyrian gods in the attack
- E: The adê righteousness of Esarhaddon *vis-à-vis* Urartu
- F: The realised treaty curses of deportation, blinding/mutilation, removal of joy, and reversion to wilderness

Albrektson has used a passage from the Esarhaddon *Gottesbrief*¹ to illustrate his thesis that Mesopotamian gods were thought to direct the course of historical events by their divine word, apart from their decrees discerned by divination. This is correct as far as it goes, but he has not explored the theological framework of the incident he has chosen with the result that he has missed the whole context of theological exposition of the treaty and its curses. His point stands that Mesopotamian gods were believed to act in history directing events by their word and by direct action, but the parallels between the covenant theology of Israel as applied to history and the adê theology of the Assyrians reflected in their historiography require a more detailed contextual study.

1. Albrektson: H&G, 58f where the igniting of the ramp and Marduk's use of the north wind to turn the flames on the city are discussed and compared with Exod 14:21 .

PART I, C: The Annals of Ashurbanipal.C.1: Introduction.

Approaching the Annals of Ashurbanipal in pursuance of the theology of the sword in the war narratives, we are confronted with an embarrassment of riches on the one hand, but with the difficulty of no comprehensive edition of the material to work from such as that provided by Borger for Esarhaddon's inscriptions. The length of Ashurbanipal's reign, the functioning of his scribal staff and the fortunes of excavation have yielded a wealth of material. There are more than half a dozen recognised editions of the Annals extant, compiled between his first year of reign in 668 bc and his thirtieth year in 639 bc.¹ In addition, there is much similar material or abbreviated

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1. The editions, which are foundation deposits in the form of inscribed prisms (see Part I, Introduction, page 3 & note 1), run in chronological order as follows: E (c. 667 bc), B (649 bc), D(648 bc), K = G (? 647 bc), C (? 646 bc), F = A (645 bc), T (645 bc) and H (639 bc). For discussion of the inter-relations of this material see the introductions to the major publications of Ashurbanipal's inscriptions, which are in order of appearance:

- M. Streck: Assurbanipal und die letzten assyrischen Könige bis zum Untergange Nineveh's, VAB 7, Leipzig, 1916.
 Th. Bauer: Das Inschriftenwerk Assurbanipals, Leipzig, 1933.
 A.C. Piepkorn: Historical Prism Inscriptions of Ashurbanipal I, AS 5, Chicago, 1933.
 J-M. Aynard: Le Prisme du Louvre AO 19.939, Paris, 1957.

Other important texts appear in -

- R. C. Thompson: The Prisms of Esarhaddon & Ashurbanipal found at Nineveh in 1927/28, London, 1931.
 ibid.: Iraq 7(1940), 98-109
 ibid.: AAA 30(1933), 79-109
 A.R. Millard : Iraq 30(1968), 98ff

excepts inscribed on tablets, barrel cylinders and epigraphs, as well as considerable files of correspondence and oracular texts covering the same events as are recorded in the Annals.

Yet there are gaps both chronological and literary. The end of the reign from 639-627 bc is obscure for want of extant Annals,¹ and the corpus for the whole reign contains only one very fragmentary treaty text,² and not a single *Gottesbrief* specimen.³ The absence of treaty texts and *Gottesbriefe* is a real loss to the study of our theme, though ascribable only to excavation hazard, for the Annals reveal that many treaties were concluded which must have been committed to writing in duplicate copies, and it is a legitimate inference from the *Gottesbrief* specimens of Sargon and Esarhaddon that Ashurbanipal too employed this literary form, and that the Annals with their often inexplicable omissions had precursors in the form of an *Erstbericht* for each campaign. This is the direction of Aynard's argument - though she does not specify the *Gottesbrief* form when she infers from the omission of the Shamash-shum-ukin incident in Prism F and its appearance in the

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1. The latest Annals text is Edition H of 639 bc, on which see A.R. Millard: *Iraq* 30(1968), 106ff. On the chronological problems of the succession, see Joan Oates: *Iraq* 27(1965), 135-159 "Assyrian Chronology, 631-612 bc" and J.Reade: *JCS* 23(1970), 1-5 "The Accession of Sinsharishkun". Oates, Reade and others accept the identification of Ashurbanipal with Kandalanu, king of Babylon on date-lists and formulas.
 2. Bu. 91-5-9, 178 Asb. + Qedar published by K.Deller & S.Parpola: *Or* 37 (1968), 464-466 "Ein Vertrag mit dem arabischen Stamm Qedar". To this could be added the Zaqtu *Vereidigung* text H 1239, and H 1105, the internal equivalents of treaties.
 3. K. 3408 (*IASb*, 83f) is not a *Gottesbrief* in the form and style of the Sargon and Esarhaddon specimens, but rather a prayer for victory mentioning a number of different historical victories attributed to divine aid.

slightly later Rassam text that the latter was copied from a detailed report made prior to Edition F of the Annals.¹

Since there are no *Erstberichte* to work from, the edited accounts of the royal campaigns must serve as source material. Unfortunately scribal principles are imperfectly understood, if indeed they did work to any standard pattern of omission and inclusion, censorship, abbreviation and exaggeration. A pitfall to be avoided is the attribution of theological significance to omissions which may not have been theologically motivated at all. Aynard suggests, for instance, the very simple reason of limited space allocation by pre-ruled lines to account for abbreviation in Prism F, noting that the script becomes smaller and more cramped prior to the ruled line in contrast to the larger, wider spaced script beginning sections.² On the other hand, variant phrasing

1. Aynard comments:

... sans doute, un autre prisme, légèrement antérieur au prisme F, avait relaté de façon détaillée cet événement. C'est sur ce texte que le Rassam a vraisemblablement copié le récit correspondant
(Aynard, 22)

E.A. Speiser in his essay 'Ancient Mesopotamia' (*IHANE*, 65f) also argues for *Gottesbrief* precursors to the prism editions of the war records.

2. Il n'est impossible que, avant même décrire son texte le scribe ait délimité par ces traits la longueur de l'emplacement réservé à chacune des parties de son texte; ce qui expliquerait que souvent, les premières lignes d'une campagne sont largement écrites tandis que celles de la fin sont très denses; le scribe ayant mal calculé sa place se voyait contraint de serrer la fin de sa texte pour pouvoir le faire tenir en entier... C'est peut-être aussi ce simple détail matériel qui explique les variantes, les ajoutés ou les raccourcis, les membres entiers de phrases omis, qui font différer une rédaction d'une autre (Aynard, 9)

Olmstead: *Assyrian Historiography*, 1916 remains a useful study dealing with scribal editing. More recently L.D. Levine: *JNES* 32 (1973), 312-317 "The Second Campaign of Sennacherib" has attempted to explain the scribal process behind the three recensions of one campaign in which abbreviation and then harmonisation characterise the later accounts in relation to the 'primary source, written soon after the conclusion of the events described, and the only source which makes sense internally'.

in congruent passages is a compensatory benefit of multiple versions such as we have in the various Annals editions and related texts.

In previous chapters a single campaign was followed through in its narrative sequence, but with Ashurbanipal's numerous campaigns for theological analysis this method is not suitable since the results would be repetitive and tedious, and so a comparative and thematic method will be adopted. Not only will the variant accounts of the same campaign be viewed synoptically, but one campaign report will be compared directly with another where they exhibit similar situational theology. Historical, chronological and geographical questions must be largely ignored in the interests of focusing on the theology of the Annals.¹

The thesis we wish to expound by analysis of Ashurbanipal's Annals is the same as that propounded for the *Gottesbrief* reports from Sargon and Esarhaddon already studied, namely that the sword appears in an explicit theological framework such that the narratives of the military campaigns may be understood as the exposition of an adê theology of history. This adê framework has largely been overlooked in studies of Mesopotamian historiography to date.² Though some studies have

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1. For information on these questions, the standard historical works and specialised studies should be consulted, such as the following:

CAH III, 1929 reprinted 1965

Olmstead: HA, 1923

Saggs: Greatness, 1962

S.S.Ahmed: Southern Mesopotamia in the time of Ashurbanipal, 1968

ibid.: ZAW 79(1967), 1-13 "The Causes of Shamash-shum-ukin's Uprising"

A.Spalinger: JAOS 94.3(1974), 316-328 "Ashurbanipal & Egypt: a source study"

M.Weipert: WO 7.1(1973), 39-85 "Die Kämpfe des assyrischen Königs Assurbanipal gegen die Araber"

2. Eg. E.A.Speiser's essay 'Ancient Mesopotamia', IHANE, 35-73. Contrast the many theological studies of OT historiography - eg. H.W.Wolff: ZAW 73(1961), 171-186 "Das Kerygma des deuteronomistischen Geschichtswerks" and R.North: JBL 82(1963), 376-380 "The Theology of the Chronicler".

touched on an aspect of this adê theology, eg. the treaty curses, no systematic theological study of Ashurbanipal's Annals has been made which attempts to expound the entire adê framework of the narratives.¹

The comparative study of the Ashurbanipal war material may be organised according to a ten phase schema linking the history and the theology. Historical observation reveals a much repeated sequence of events relating Assyria to her empire. The internal loyalty oath and the external treaty oath constitute the primal point for this sequence. Thereafter the activity of the king corresponds to the loyalty or disobedience of his subjects *vis-à-vis* the oath taken; in the event of disobedience, there is a punitive campaign, while a vassal protection campaign may be launched on behalf of a loyal vassal.

A: Vassal Oath	U: Vassal Oath
B: Rebellion	V: Attack on Vassal
C: Royal Threat	W: Plea to King
D: Reply	X: Promise of Aid
E: Prayer	Y: Defeat of Enemy
F: Divine Pronouncement	Z: Restoration
G: Divine Intervention	
H: Fate of the Adê-Violator	
I: Victory and Spoil Ceremony	
J: Renewed Vassaldom	

For the loyal vassal the king takes the place of the gods. The plea of the vassal (W) corresponds to the king's prayer to the gods, his promise of aid (X) to the divine pronouncement (F). Restoration (Z) replaces retribution (H), that is, the blessing replaces the curses. The Kirbit campaign, the 1st and 2nd Egyptian campaigns, the Ummanaldasi campaign and the Amu-ladi campaign all represent actions after the vassal protection paradigm.

As regards the ten phase schema, it must be pointed out that there is no means of knowing whether the full sequence of phases occurred each and every time, since the Annals are at one remove from the actual events and are not chronicles compiled with the intention of meticulous and scrupulous attention to detail but are edited accounts with abbreviations and omissions. Thus, for example, the

1. As examples of previous studies touching on the thesis developed here, see for example the work of Hillers: TC/OTP, 10 & 86 note 27; Frankena: OTS 14 (1965), 150; Fensham: Festschrift Volterra 6, 132f; Albrectson: H&G, 104-106 .

the Rassam prism (Edition A) abbreviates the campaign which resulted in Teumman's decapitation to such an extent that the elaborate prayer (E) as well as the oracle and vision (F), which find a place in the B Edition, are entirely missing.¹ Had they not been preserved in other Editions, or had the Rassam prism been the only extant source, there would have been no means of knowing whether Ashurbanipal went through the phases E and F in connection with Teumman's breach of oath. In other words, the evidence produced from the extant sources to be studied is not as full and complete as we may reasonably suppose it once was. There is the possibility that further discoveries may augment the passages to be marshalled under headings A-J. With these observations in mind, attention may be directed to the ten phase sequence step by step.

1. Compare the Prism B 7th campaign, Piep, 60-71, Col 4:87 - 6:16 with Rassam's 5th campaign, Col 3:27 -47, Streck, 26 .

C.2: A - The Vassal Oath and Vassal Status.

We are considering under this heading not simply the swearing of the oath but its implications for internal and external affairs, and the manner in which it introduced theological sanctions to the subject-sovereign relationship. The same theology governed native Assyrians and foreign peoples alike because they both lived under the divinely elected king whose status the oath defined in practical as well as theological terms. The commonality of adê theology to native and foreign subjects is clearly demonstrable from the contents and vocabulary of extant treaties, the Neo-Assyrian letters and the Annals. The following examples serve by way of illustration.

As their point of departure both the Esarhaddon and the Ashurbanipal Annals use the adê ceremony, or ceremonies, if we think in terms of first the mār šarrūti followed by the sovereign status. Esarhaddon relates how his father assembled the people of Assyria small and great, and in particular his brothers and members of the royal household, to accept his divine election on oath. Subsequently the brothers, but not the people, broke this oath:

nišē GN ša adê māmīt ilāni rabūti ana našār šarrūtija
ina mē u šamni itmū ul illikū rešūssun

The people of Assyria who had sworn the oath, the
curse of the great gods, by means of water and oil
to preserve my sovereignty, did not go to their aid 1

This is directly comparable to the EVT, lines 153ff, which preclude foreign vassals from making a treaty (adê šakānu) by means of water and oil (45 D: A.MEŠ Ì.MEŠ).² It is also comparable to the opening of Ashurbanipal's Annals, Edition A:

ana našār mār šarrūtija u arkānu šarrūtu GN epēš adê
niš ilāni ušazkiršunūti udannina riksāte

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1. Th. 1929-10-12,1 Col 1:50-52, Asar, 43; cf. the variant phrasing of Col 1:80 adê niš ilāni rabūti ina muḥḥija izkurū.
 2. On this ceremony, see D.J.McCarthy: VT 14(1964),215-221 "Hos 12:2 - Covenant by Oil"; K.Deller: Biblica 46(1965),349-352 "Šmn b11(Hos 12:2) - Additional Evidence"; K.Veenhof: BiOr 23(1966),308-313 in review of E.Kutsch: Salbung als Rechtsakt.

To stand by my crown-princeship and later my kingship over Assyria, he made them swear, taking oath by the life of the gods, (thus) making the treaty secure ¹

The subjects here are 'the Assyrians, young and old, from the Upper to the Lower Sea', a description which would seem to embrace both native and foreign subjects. Ashurbanipal, like his father, invoked the adê against his brother 'who did not keep the oath sworn to me', but who 'broke brotherhood' (ša lā iššuru adêja, iprusa aḫḫūtu)², and it is in connection with civil war that the internal adê concerns us in this study.

The text K 85-2-22,130 published as H 1105, though fragmentary and therefore unclear as regards its exact form, may nevertheless be fairly taken as a specimen of what Zakutu refers to in H 1239 as adê [ma-am-me?te].³ In this declaration of loyalty, central concerns are loving the king, fighting his battles and reporting conspiracy -

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1. Rassam 1:20; Streck, 4 (ARAB 2,291 \$766). For commentary on this passage and comparison with the dual covenant procedure related to coronation in Israel, see Weinfeld: DDS, 81ff & 87f; Baltzer: CF, 78ff on 2 Kgs 11; Calderone: DynOracle, 21ff .
 2. Rassam 3:97,108 Streck, 30 .
 3. R.F.Harper: Assyrian and Babylonian Letters belonging to the Kouyunjik Collection of the British Museum I-XIV, London, 1892-1914 as edited by L.Waterman: Royal Correspondence of the Assyrian Empire, Ann Arbor, 1930-1936 , H 1239:9-10. Selected letters from this corpus are published with improved sense by R.Pfeiffer: State Letters of Assyria, AOS 6, New Haven, 1935 (hereafter SLA), but further advances will be due to the completion of the work by S.Parpola: Letters from Assyrian Scholars to the Kings Esarhaddon and Ashurbanipal, AOAT 5 Part I: Texts, Part II: Commentary.

exactly the concerns of the EVT.¹ The Zakutu adê is similarly concerned with heart loyalty and with conspiracy.² Neo-Assyrian letters quote clauses from such adê texts about reporting as a preface to their contents. Internal and external affairs turned upon the adê

1. ultu ūmu annī adi ūmu mala [balṭāni RN] šar GN amēli
ra'mānišu ... šar GN bēlini nira'amu (H 1105:17f,32)
qašātē nidekku (line 23)

mušadbibu ša amāt lā ṭābti ana muḥḥi [RN] iqabbu ...
šemīrē ninamduši-ma ana RN [...] (lines 13 & 16)

From today to the end of [our lives, Ashurbanipal] king
of Assyria will be the man we love ... the king of Assyria
our lord we shall love

We shall mount arms

The plotter who speaks evil words against [Ashurbanipal]
we shall cast into irons and [bring] to Ashurbanipal

Cf. EVT, § 4,6,8,10 & 21 (ANETS, 99/535ff)

2. H 1239, RCAE, 360ff.

3. [ina libbi ? ina tuppi ?] adê iššatir umma mala tammara
u tašemma' šuprani (H 831:rev.2, RCAE, 78)

[in the text] of the treaty it is written, thus: "Whatever
you see and hear, send off to me ! "

Cf. appitti amēlu ša bīt bēlišu ira'amu ša immaru u ša išimmu
uzna ša bēleša upatta (H 288:9ff, RCAE, 200)

Verily, the man who loves the house of his lord discloses
to his lord whatever he sees and hears (Belibni to Asb.)

ruddû māmītu ikarraba u šarru ūda anīnu ammar ša anīnu
ammār idi ussibil (H 1385:rev. 2-6)

The addition to the oath is gracious and the king knows
that as many as we are and as much as we learn I report
(Shamash-shum-ukin reporting his suspicions of the Elamite
crown prince to Ashurbanipal prior to the civil war)

Cf. H.472:1-4 & H.1110:19-21 .

document, and so it is natural that the sovereign should interpret the events of his reign according to his peoples' loyalty or disobedience to the document defining his status with divine sanctions.

The opening lines of the adê of Zakutu specify those people and classes with whom the treaty of loyalty was concerned, naming Shamash-shum-ukin, other brothers and seed royal, then various classes of civil servants and finally broadening out to include 'the Assyrians ... male and female' (H.1239:8f). From other letters it seems that the loyalty oath could be administered locally, for city elders and various classes of experts are specifically mentioned as entering into the oath (ina libbi adê erēbu)¹, and this adê and the travelling adê document (itti tuppi adêja)² can hardly be separated theologically from the adê of Zakutu, of the Annals, and of the Assyrian vassals.

1. tupšarrē bārē mašmāšē asê dāgil iššūrē manzaz ekalli
āšib āli araḥ Nisannu ūmu 16 ina libbi adê errubū
umā iššiāri adê liškunū (H.33:6ff)

The scribes, the haruspicians, the exorcists, the physicians (and) the augurs staying in the palace palace (and) living in the city will enter the treaty on the 16th of Nisannu. They should now take the oath tomorrow (see LAS II, 2f)

Cf. H.202 regarding the adê of Babylon, which the writer missed, and those in Nippur and Erech where he could have participated:

ina libbi ilānika u anāku adê ša šarri bēlija ašabbat
u anāku ana adê ša šarri ul ḥamāku (H.202:rev. 4-9)

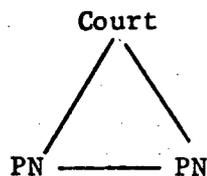
[He led me] into the midst of your gods and I was able to take the loyalty oath to the king my overlord, but I did not have confidence in (that) oath ceremony

He was going to take the oath in Babylon following the instructions of the royal despatch at the same time as the elders of Babylon swore allegiance

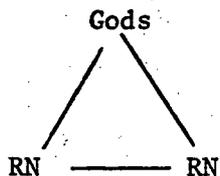
šibūtu kī illikū ana libbi adê ša šarri bēlija im CN
īterbū: the elders when they have come to enter into
the oath of the king my lord (rev. 15-19)

2. H.539:15. The tuppu is entrusted to three high-ranking officials.

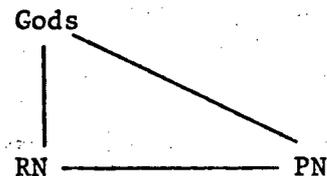
The adê may be thought of as a triangle. Instead of two parties related to each other by legal clauses of promise and obligation with the courts standing over and above them,¹ we have a tripartite relationship with the gods at the apex:



(Contract)



(Parity Treaty)



(Vassal Treaty)

In a parity treaty, the triangle is equilateral with the gods above equidistant from the two human partners to the adê in horizontal relationship to each other below along the base line. In a vassal treaty, the triangle becomes lopsided with the divine apex moving to a vertical position above the king's base angle with the vassal's corner removed to a distance indicating his inferiority in standing *vis-à-vis* the suzerain and the suzerain's gods.

1. G.M. Tucker: VT 15(1968), 487-503 "Covenant Forms and Contract Forms" compares and contrasts the use of an oath in contracts (optional) and covenants (essential), concluding that the two 'have little in common beyond the very general fact that both are agreements' (p. 501). His emphasis on the oath in covenants is valid, yet too rigid a categorisation of forms cannot be maintained in the light of overlaps between covenant-treaties, covenant-grants, royal edicts, and testamentary documents. Haphazard omission and adaptation must be allowed for too. See further M. Weinfeld: JAOS 90(1970), 184-203 "The Covenant of Grant in the OT & the ANE", esp. p. 184 and note 38 regarding a Hittite document falling between a treaty and a grant.

Von Soden's decision to translate adû narrowly as 'oath' may be etymologically justified,¹ but semantically it does duty for the entire tripartite relationship. Thus Ashurbanipal refers to the theological contract as adêja, emphasising his rôle, or as adê rabûti ša d Aššur emphasising the rôle of Assyria's national deity.² It appears as adê māmīt ilāni rabûti,³ emphasising the retributive action of its sponsors inherent in it and activated by its breach, and finally it appears as the phrase adê niš ilāni rabûti,⁴ which does lay emphasis on solemn swearing by 'the life of the gods' .

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1. AHw., 14 adû I - 'Eid'. Frankena contrasts this 'original meaning of the word adê' with 'a broader sense, denoting also sworn agreement, the treaty between king and vassal or between king and official' (OTS 14, 1965, p. 134). Wiseman, commenting on various scholars' translations, argues that adê 'implies something more technical than "Bestimmung" ... "Satzung, Gebot, Vertrag" ... or "agreement" The more exact meaning is of a law or commandment solemnly imposed in the presence of divine witnesses by a suzerain upon an individual or people who have no option but acceptance of the terms. It implies a "solemn charge or undertaking on oath" ...' (Iraq 20, 1958 81 note 1). Cf. other discussions by Gelb:BiOr 19, 159-162, by Deller: WZKM 57, 31f and by CAD A.1, 131ff adû A .
 2. Rassam 1:118, 3:97, 7:18,85,93, 9:54, 10:89 etc.; Rassam 9:72 .
 3. Piep., 76 B, 7:6.
 4. Rassam 1:21, 8:45; LET, 54 (cf. Piep., 80 B, 7:97 šulm ilāni rabûti l ušazkiršu); Rassam 8:50 niš ilāni rabûti lā iplaḥ (minus adê). On the oath by the life of the gods, cf. Hammurabi's Code - Driver & Miles: BabLaws 2, 18f \$20 Col ixa:5-13, p. 86f \$249 Col xxib:36-43, p. 157f the philological note on \$20, and further AHw., 797f nišu II .

The difference between the vassal treaty and the parity treaty emerges from the vocabulary of the Ashurbanipal Annals themselves. In a brief passage, the king claims a change in Assyrian-Urartean relations in the direction of Assyrian ascendancy where formerly parity relations had existed.¹ 'Brotherhood' (ahhūtu)² is replaced by subservience expressed through the son to father imagery (aplu ana abišu), the concept of suzerainty (bēlūtu, bēlija), and the paying of tribute in the spirit of submission (palhiš kanšiš). Divine decree lay behind this submission for Ashurbanipal was destined for great deeds (išimūinni).

Several armed coalitions hostile to Ashurbanipal appear in the Annals. Shamash-shum-ukin who literally and politically 'broke brotherhood' (parāsu ahhūtu, Rassam, 3:108) was supplied by troops in this manner - supply of troops being a characteristic of parity treaties.

emūqē iddinšunūti ana rēšūtu PN ahi nakri išpuram
ištakan pišu (Rassam, 7:98-101)

He supplied troops to them (the Arab king to princes) and despatched them to the aid of Shamash-shum-ukin (that) hostile brother, and he made an alliance (lit. set his mouth)

The phrase itti PN pī šakānu describes the Arab-Nabatean alliance (Rassam, 8:48); a parallel phrase itti PN izuzzu is used about the Arab brother coalition (Rassam, 10:1), while Nabu-bel-shumate's reliance on Elam is expressed by takālu and ana dannūtu šakānu (Rassam, 7:20-22). Gyges sent troops to Pharaoh's coalition (ana kitri PN, Rassam, 2:114). Of these phrases kitru and the verb katāru I are especially tied to the military aspect of treaties, whether coalitions of equals or troops sent for vassal protection.²

1. The passage has already been quoted, see page 55 above; Rassam, 10:40-50, Streck, 84 & ARAB 2, 320f \$834.

2. See CAD A.1, 186ff ahhūtu, 3) brotherhood (referring to a political relationship) for further references; Munn-Rankin: Iraq 18(1965), 76ff; Fensham: Festschrift Albright, 121-135 "Father & Son as Terminology for Treaty & Covenant"; H. 301:15 & Rassam, 3:108; cf. Amos 1:9 wēlō' zākērū bērit ahhīm; 1 Kgs 9:13 - Ḥhī Hiram to Solomon; J. Priest: JBL 84(1965) "The Covenant of Brothers".

3. For further references, see AHW, 465 katāru I & 494, kitru especially 2.) 'Bundgenossen'; CAD K, 467f kitru A 1.) (military) aid, 2.) auxiliaries, auxiliary force, ally.

The coalition most vividly described in the Annals is that between the Egyptian kinglets and Tarku the Ethiopian. This is explicitly called an adê, and some of its terms are defined. It is also explicitly condemned in terms of the adê and māmītu of the Assyrian gods.

eli RN šar GN ana šakān adê u salimē uma'erū
rakbēšun umma sulummû ina bīrinni liššakin-ma
nindaggara aḫāmeš mātu aḫenna nizzuzma â ibbašši
ina bīrinni šanumma bēlum (Rassam, 1:123-126)

To Tarku king of Cush they sent their messengers to establish treaty relations (lit. treaty-oath and friendship/friendly relations): "Let friendly relations be established between us; let us come to terms and divide the land between us, and let there be no other suzerain over us".

The friendly relations (sulummû), the division of the land which means the recognition of territory and the fixing of borders, and the exclusion of other possibilities of fealty are all characteristic of treaties, parity or vassal. It is the 1st Plural Precatives which mark this as a parity treaty.

Though the word adê is not used in the Annals of the other coalitions referred to, it is a fair inference that some formal agreement was made before members of the coalition went into battle together. This is supported by the explicit example quoted above, and an insight from a Neo-Assyrian letter reporting a hostile tribal move. Belibni informs Ashurbanipal that Nabu-bel-shumate was in collusion with the Pukudeans:

šumu ili¹ ana aḫāmeš ultēlû umma kī adi ṭēmu
mala nišimmû nišapparakka (H.282:rev. 4-6)

1. The phrase šumu ili, which is written here syllabically šu-mu and so cannot be confused with niš ili (the ideogram MU is used for nišu as well as for šumu), is an interesting variant on the more common niš ili. For a parallel use of the name of Yhwh in concluding a covenant between human partners, see 1 Sam 20:42 -

wayyōmer Yēhōnātān lēDāwid lēk lēšālōm 'āšer nišba^cnū
šēnēnū 'ānaḫnū bēšēm Yhwh lē'mōr Yhwh yihyeh bēnī
ūbēnekā ūbēn zar^{cē}. ūbēn zar^{cākā} cad cōlām

In 1 Sam 18:3 & 20:8, this relationship is described covenantally (kārat bērit, bērit Yhwh); in the above passage, the phrase šāba^c bēšēm Yhwh, and the description of the state created by the swearing of the oath, namely šālōm (cf. sulummû), especially invite comparison with Mesopotamian pacts. See further Dt 6:13, 10:20, 5:11, Exod 20:7, 23:13, Lev 19:12, Josh 23:7. On the grammatical use of kī adi in clauses of positive promises, see GAG, 240 §185,(1).

They took a mutual oath in the name of the god (lit. they made high, Št-theme of elû) in these terms: "We shall despatch to you as much information as we hear"

If the agreement to supply information was sealed with an oath, then the supply of troops would almost certainly have involved an adê sulummû in each case as well. In a real sense, therefore, the sword was wielded within an adê system, be it parity treaty or vassal treaty.

Turning to the vassal treaties recorded in Ashurbanipal's Annals, one finds a suzerain-orientated vocabulary interwoven with a divine action vocabulary. Broadly speaking, three situations generate vassal treaties. There is the forced oath after military conquest; there is the submission motivated by fear of Assyrian reprisals; and there is a diplomatic vassaldom entered into spontaneously for its defence benefits.

The Gyges incident illustrates the third category admirably and is valuable for our study because the historical events have been fully clothed in theological dress.¹ The account first highlights

1. The official scribes worked up a story which was as notable for its purple passages as for its lack of historicity (Olmstead:HA, 420)

the influence of the oracles in introducing a highflown and slightly bombastic style may be seen in the historical inscriptions, which develop from simple statements of events into highly coloured and imaginative literary documents; an interesting example may be found in the account of Ashurbanipal's narrative of his relation with Gyges (Sidney Smith: CAH III, 111)

The above quotations are both overstatements and somewhat misleading. The basic historical events are readily discernible, for one thing ... a Lydian initiated alliance leading to a Cimmerian defeat. For another, Smith's evolutionary theory of historiography, which is highly suspect, fails to emphasise the theological nature of ANE historiography from earliest times. See, eg. The Stele of Vultures of E-ana-tuma (2454-2425 bc, Middle Chronology) or the En-temena Cone (2404-2375 bc) of which Kramer says:

the archivist ...strives to fit the historical events into the accepted framework of his theocratic world-view, and evolves a unique literary style which constantly interweaves the deeds of men and gods and often fails to distinguish between them (S.N.Kramer: IEJ 3, 1953, 217-232 "Sumerian Historiography", p. 221)

The scribal embellishment found in the Annals seldom obscures the

the remoteness of Lydia, unknown to previous monarchs so Ashurbanipal alleges, and whose language was unintelligible in the multi-racial capital. What prompted the distant envoy's journey? The Annals see divine initiative behind Gyges' diplomatic initiative:

nibīt šumiĵa ina šutti ušabrišu-ma DN ilu bānūĵa
 umma šēpē RN šar GN šabat-ma ina zikir šumišu
 kušud nakrūtika (Rassam, 2:97-99)

umma ša RN šar GN hišipti DN šar ilāni bēl gimri
 šēpē rubūtišu šabat-ma šarrūssu pitluḥ-ma ṣulla
 bēlūssu ša epēš ardūti u nādin mandatti lillikūš
 suppūka (LET, rev. 16-18 Streck, 166)

The god Ashur my begetter caused him(Gyges) to see the writing of my name in a dream, with the message: "Seize the feet of Ashurbanipal king of Assyria and you will conquer your enemies under the aegis of his name"

"Seize the feet of his highness Ashurbanipal king of Assyria, the darling of Ashur king of the gods, lord of totality, and revere his suzerainty; implore his overlordship that you may become his vassal and give tribute; let your supplications come before him"

The moral is then heavily drawn, attributing Gyges' instant military success to his new vassal status and the support of Assyria's gods. A variant text adds that the two captured chieftains sent to Ashurbanipal plus tribute were proof of the gods' prowess.

Some texts, being earlier accounts, stop there, but the Rassam prism adds another incident further enlarging the scope of suzerain orientated vocabulary, for afterwards Gyges broke his vassal oath, sending troops to Egypt. His son in renewing the Assyrian alliance after military setbacks is alleged to have written:

historical events irrevocably, especially when multiple Editions are extant, and presents us with a gain of insight into contemporary theological orthodoxy. While literary skill is not absent (see eg. the Sg 8 *Gottesbrief*), it is only occidental thought which wishes to fit the royal Annals into categories marked 'History' or 'Literature' or other Western genre. 'Royal Propaganda' or 'Theological Exposition' would appear to be somewhat less erroneous tags.

1. atammaru danān DNN : 'so that I might see the might of Ashur and Marduk', Piep, 48 B,3:4 .

šarru ša ilu idūšu atta abua tārur-ma lemuttu
iššakin ina pānišu jāti ardu pāliḥka kurbanni-ma
lašūta abšānka (Rassam, 2:123-125)

You are the king whom the gods acknowledge/know. You cursed my father and evil befell him. But as for me, a slave who reveres you, bless me and let me draw your yoke.

As a second example of diplomatic submission to vassaldom, the occasion of Tammaritu's flight from Elam and reception at the Assyrian palace may be cited. Following Indabigaš' coup, the nobles and seed royal fled for protection to Assyria, counting on their re-installation when Assyria or fate deposed the Elamite usurper.

PN šēpē šarrūtiya unaššiq-ma qaqqaru ušēšir ina
ziqnišu manzaz māšariya iṣbat-ma ana epēš ardūtiya
ramānšu imnu-ma ... ina mahriya izzizu idallulu
qurdi ilāniya dannūti ša illikū rēšūti (Rassam, 4:28ff)

Tammaritu kissed my royal feet and smoothed the ground with his beard; he took up his place at my chariot and counted himself as my vassal ... (while) he stood in my presence praising the valour of my powerful gods who came to (my/his) aid

ana katārišu ušalla bēlūti (Piep, 80 B, 7:72)

He implored me as overlord to be his protective ally

Taking these two narratives alone, something of the richness of the vassal vocabulary is evident, and also the interweaving of the gods, vassaldom and victory. Vassaldom consists of paying respects (the rôle of Gyges' envoy: ana ša'al šulmēja, Rassam 2:101), doing homage (šēpē RN šabātu, našāqu), reverencing the suzerain (šarrūtu palāḥu) and his gods (qurdi ilāni dalālu), being a slave (ardu, ardūti epēšu), drawing the yoke (abšanu šātu), addressing prayer to the overlord as though he replaced the native gods (šullū, suppū alāku), and more materially the paying of tribute (mandattu nadānu).

Illustrating the submission to vassaldom for fear of Assyrian reprisals is the account of Natnu the Nabatean to whom one of the Arab rebels had fled for protection:

PN iplaḥ-ma irša naquttu mār-šiprēšu ana ša'al šulmēja
iṣpuram-ma unaššiqā šēpēja ana šakān adē sulummē epēš
ardūtiya ušanalla bēlūti anāku ḥadiš appališšu-ma pāniya
damqāti elišu aškun biltu mandattu šattišamma ukīn
šēruššu (Streck, 144 C, 9:37-49)

išme-ma danān DN ša utakkilanni ... ina puluḫti
kakkē DN kāšidūti issanqamma (Rassam, 8:59 & 63f)

Natnu was afraid and prostrate; he despatched his messenger to pay respects to me; he kissed my feet and prayed my lordship that treaty relations, namely vassaldom, might be established. I looked favorably upon him and directed my beneficence towards him. A tax of yearly tribute I imposed upon him.

He(Natnu) heard about the might of Ashur who supported me ... he was compelled by the fear of the conquering weapons of Ashur

Fear of the king and fear of the gods run parallel. The concept of blessing through servitude to Assyria is marked by the phrases adê sulummê, ḥadīš palāsu and damqāti. To the blessings of vassaldom we must return presently.

As a second example of the reprisal generated submission, the case of Indabigash the Elamite usurper suggests itself. The parallel with Natnu's submission is marked, for it too turns on the question of extradition. In Edition C, there is a record of a threatening letter Ashurbanipal sent to Indabigash, demanding the extradition of the defector Nabu-bel-shumate or the consequence of the invasion of Elam. Prism C then recounts a popular revolt against Indabigash sparked off by Ashurbanipal's despatch, but Edition B indicates that prior to this revolt which cost Indabigash his life, he made submission to Assyria. Indabigash freed from detention certain Assyrian soldiers not party to Nabu-bel-shumate's defection and returned them to Ashurbanipal with assurances of non-aggression:

kī šabat aḫutti qabī damiqtīšu lā ḥaṭī mišir mātišu.
ina qāt mār-šiprišu ša ṭūbi u sulummê ušēbila adi
maḥrija (Piep, 80 B, 7:89-92)

That I would take (his) side, declare (my) benevolence towards him and not cross over the boundary of his country, he conveyed to me by the hand of a messenger of good will and peace.

Here we find a new phrase šabātu abbuttu - 'to take the part of, to intercede (lit. to seize hold of fatherhood)'¹ coupled with others (damiqtu, ṭūbu u sulummû) to emphasise the benefits and desirability of vassaldom. Again, the question of territory and invasion is promi-

1. See CAD Š, 24 šabātu abbuttu - 'to intercede, further a person's cause' for further references.

ment, requiring the formal legal act of the adê contract to settle it. Were it not for the instability of Elam at this time which in fact led to Indabigash' murder, one might translate the Akkadian slightly differently and suppose that Ashurbanipal was concealing the fact that he concluded a non-aggression treaty of a parity rather than of a vassal nature.¹ The translation above seems preferable.

Before discussing examples of the vassal oath following military action, it will be worth quoting one of Belibni's letters to Ashurbanipal which describes the capitulation of certain tribes after a successful Assyrian razzia in their area. What is interesting is that a relatively low-ranking Assyrian officer can apparently administer an on-the-spot vassal oath:

nasikati ša CN u PN ultu muḫḫi ša imurū-ma
 ḫijālanija ana aḫišunu ulli ittenibbū kī
 iplahū pišanu idannunū adê itti PN mār aḫātija

1. Piepkorn's translation tends to turn the lines into an Elamite concession which goes against the grain of the Annals' style:

To take *my* side, to express *his* friendly regard, that *he* would not overstep the boundary of his land - (this *assurance*) by the hand of his messenger of good faith and friendship he transmitted to me (Piep, 81) (read tūbi u sulummê for tu-[ub līb-bil] u sulummê, line 91, with von Soden, AHw, 1057 sulummû, 2c)

There are other interesting Annals' passages which use the verb ḫatû with mišru in a treaty context. Two are quoted below, the first being a direct parallel in subject and ambiguity of translation from Esarhaddon's Annals.

aššu ana mišir mātātēšunu lā ḫaṭê mār-šiprēšunu ša tūbi u sulummê ana Ninua adi maḫrija išpurūnim-ma niš ilāni rabūti izkurū (cf. CAD H, 157 ḫatû 2a & Thompson's translation, PEA, 24)

[ana lā ḫaṭ]ī mišir māt Aššur niš ilāni rabūti [bēlēja(?)]
 [aštaklan māmīt šū māmīt ilāni rabūti bēlēja iprus
 (BM 123410, 22'-24'; Iraq 30, 109f restored by the Ishtar Temple inscription, IT:156ff, AAA 20, 1933, p 89)
 Dugdamme's submission to Ashurbanipal

With some justification Weinfeld remarks that the 'notion of not trespassing beyond the fixed boundaries goes back to the Sumerians and actually constitutes the origin of the treaty form in the ancient Near East' (DDS, 73; see his discussion, p. 72ff) .

ardu ša [šarri] bēlija ša ina muḥḥi kādi apqidu
iṣṣabtu umma ardāni ša šar GN anīni (H.280:19-rev. 4)

The chieftains of the Lahiru and Nagu' tribe, when they saw my warriors advancing on their rear, became afraid and coming to a decision they took oath under Mushezib-Marduk, my nephew, the servant of [the king] my lord, whom I had appointed to the garrison. They said: "Slaves of the king of Assyria are we."

Together with the technical phrase adê šabātu is the clearly technical use of ardu meaning 'vassal', and the simple six word confession indicating the new political situation.¹ Presumably this field oath was replaced by a more elaborate oath written up on durable material and kept in the capital where vassals were expected to put in regular appearances, and bring their imposed tribute.

The two examples of vassaldom associated with conquest are interesting in different ways. The first under discussion concerns the shifting relations with the Arab tribes, while the second is bound up with Assyria's policy towards Egypt. The Arab campaigns of Ashurbanipal are now the subject of a recent paper by Weippert who has approached the subject from the angle of *Redaktionsgeschichte*, examining the Rassam account in the light of the other extant sources.² Our concern is with the theological dimensions of the accounts, meaning with the treaties and their expositions in the narratives.

The Arabs were not a unified ethno-political entity, of course, so that relations between the tribes themselves were fluid as well as with the imperial power. We have already seen how Natnu chose to become an Assyrian vassal rather than throw in his lot with an abortive rebellion of tribal groups. A certain continuity is provided for us

1. Cf. the Confession of Gyges' son : jāti ardu pāliḥka (Rassam, 2:125); the Testimony of the Sealanders *vis-à-vis* Elam's seduction: PN bēli-ani baliṭ u ardāni ša šar māt Aššur anīni (H.576:15f, SLA, 18f §20) .

2. M.Weippert: WO 7.1(1973), 39-85 "Die Kämpfe des assyrischen Königs Assurbanipal gegen die Araber; Redaktionskritische Untersuchung des Berichts in Primsa A " .

by the character variously named as Uwaite' / Jauta' / Jaute',¹ for he links the reigns of Sennacherib, Esarhaddon and Ashurbanipal, and besides being mentioned in the Annals is also featured in our sole surviving treaty document, the very broken Asb. + Qedar treaty published by Deller and Parpola.² He is given the title 'king of Qedar' and elsewhere 'king of Arabia' by the Assyrian sources.³ The end of his career as an Assyrian protegé is marked by the account of Abijate' being made vassal king in Jauta's place following a savage reprisal campaign to avenge the breach of vassal oath - and to a study of this campaign's explicit adê theology of retribution we must return.

PN mār PN2 ana CN illikam-ma unaššiq šēpēja adê ana
epēš ardūtija ittišu aškun kūm PN3 aškunšu ana šar-
rūti (Piep, 84 B,8:32-35)

Abijate' son of Te'eri came to Nineveh and kissed my feet. I drew up a vassal treaty with him and appointed him as vassal-king in the place of Jauta'.⁴

The editors of the Qedar treaty fragment, from which only 36 very broken lines out of an estimated 64 line original remain, identify this tablet as the tuppi adê of Abijate'. Certainly its attitude to Jauta' fits this period, for he seems to be described in the fragment as 'Jauta', the not-good' (Jauta' lā MUCN], line 4'), if 'not-good' is taken as being in apposition to the personal name. Then there appears

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1. On the variants, see Weippert: art.cit., page 40 note 6 .
 2. Bu.91-5-9,178 published by K.Deller & S.Parpola: Or 37(1968),464-466 "Ein Vertrag Assurbanipals mit dem arabischen Stamm Qedar" ; see too A.F.Campbell: Biblica 50(1969), 534f "An Historical Prologue in a Seventh-Century Treaty" .
 3. šar māt Aribi - eg. Rassam, 7:83, 8:93, 10:21; šār KUR.Qa-da-ri, B, 7:94. See Weippert: art.cit.,66 .
 4. Compare the phrasing in the parallel account in the Rassam prism:
rēmu aršišu-ma adê niš ilāni rabūti ušazkiršu
(Rassam, 8:44-46)

to be a mention of the disastrous war, the 'edge of the iron dagger' that has ruined them,¹ and this is followed by the promise of grace and the forbidding of any contact with Jauta' who must be presumed to be still at large.

[RN šar] GN bēlkunu šamnu iškunakkanūni pānēšu
damqu ina muḫḫikunu iškununi šumma attunū itti
PN ana ṭābtu taqarribāni (Bu. 91-5-9, 178 : 8'-13')

[Ashurbanipal king of] Assyria your overlord has set out oil for you; he has displayed his good favour towards you. If you approach Jauta' with a view to establishing good relations

Even this fragmentary piece bears the stamp of the vassal treaty vocabulary with its use of damqu to express the graciousness of the suzerain, the reference to the ceremonial oil, and the technical use of ṭābtu referring to friendly treaty relations.

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1. Line 5' reads: [. . . GJĪR AN.BAR a-na ḫa-lu-[qi-ku-nu] ; the patru parzilli (GIR AN.BAR) occurs again in line 7' . It is the 3rd Masc Sing form of the verbs in obv. 4'-11' , as opposed to the 2nd Masc Plur. in obv. 13' , which leads Deller and Campbell to see lines 4'-11' as a narrative description, in other words an 'Historical Prologue'. See Campbell: art.cit., 535 note 3. The šumma of line 12' introduces the Stipulations with the impending curses.
 2. On the use of oil in treaty ceremonies, see the articles by McCarthy, Deller and Veenhof cited previously on page 65 note 2. For discussion of ṭūbtu/ṭābtu/ṭabuttu as technical treaty terms, see W.L.Moran: JNES 22(1963), 173-176 "A Note on the Treaty Terminology of the Sefire Steles"; D.R.Hillers: BASOR 176(1964), 46f "A Note on Some Treaty Terminology in the OT"; A.R.Millard: TB 17(1966), 115-117 "For He is Good"; M.Weinfeld: JAOS 93.2(1973), 190-199 "Covenant Terminology in the ANE & its Influence on the West"; M.Fox: BASOR 209(1973), 41f "ṭōb as Covenant Terminology" .

Jauta's career previous to his replacement by Abijate' is a chequered one, punctuated by periods of peaceful submission to Assyrian overlordship. Sennacherib had subjugated his father Hazael and held the tribes' gods in custody in Nineveh; Esarhaddon returned them and on Hazael's death installed Jauta' on the vassal throne, subsequently launching a vassal protection campaign on his behalf against a potential usurper, one Uabu.¹ Jauta' defected despite this, but was defeated in battle, once more losing the tribal gods to Assyrian captivity.² After Ashurbanipal's coronation, Jauta' renewed his vassal oath, and the tribal gods were returned,³ only to be seized in the battles preceding Abijate's installation as the vassal king, recorded in the Qedar treaty fragment.⁴

This raises the question of the relation of the vassal's gods to the suzerain's gods in the vassal relationship, though a systematic theology is most unlikely. From the Babylonian Chronicle and the royal Annals, we know that the movement of gods from their own temples to others was highly significant, whether in ritual or of necessity or

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1. Th. 1929-10-12,1 Col 4:1-31. (On the technical use of rēmu rašû, Col. 4:9, see the Additional Note: rēmu, re'āmu/rēmu, rēmūtu/rḫm). Compare ARAB 2, 207f & 214, \$518a & 536 (= Asar, 53; K.3087, Streck, 216f = ARAB 2, 364f \$940; K.3405, Streck, 222f = ARAB 2, 365f \$943).
 2. Prism B, 7:93ff, Piep, 80 = ARAB 2, 337 \$869; VAT 5600, Streck, 376 = ARAB 2, 367 \$946 = Weippert: WO 7.1, page 75.
 3. Prism B, 7:98 .
 4. Rassam, 8:124; Streck, 72 = ARAB 2, 317 \$824 .

through conquest.¹ It demanded a theological explanation - and there are many extant examples. It is at this point that the distinctive nature of Yahwism manifests itself, for few, if any, scholars would contest that the prophets of Israel released *a priori* explanations of the sack of the Temple in Jerusalem and the transference of its cultic equipment to Babylon.² Mesopotamian theology could accommodate no such *a priori* doom prophecies about the indigenous cult, and

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1. See, for example, BM.25127:15ff & rev. 19ff - Nabopolassar's return of gods to Susa previously captured by the Assyrians and settled in Erech, and the emergency withdrawal of the Shapazzu and Sippar city deities to Babylon; BM.21901:6ff - Babylonian capture of Assyrian gods; BM.21946:rev. 9f - Nebuchadnezzar's removal of the Arabs' gods; BM.96273:1,4,9 & 22 - confiscation and return of and reports on cultic equipment (Wiseman: CCK, 50ff, 78 note 19, 54f & 70f; A. R. Millard: Iraq 26(1964), 15f). Compare the scenes from Assyrian reliefs showing the demolition of captured idols (Botta & Flandin: Monuments de Ninive I, pl. 65 which is reproduced in Olmstead: HA, fig. 102), and Tiglath-pileser III's removal of idols from a captured town (Layard: Monuments of Nineveh I, 36 which is reproduced in F.F. Bruce: Israel & the Nations, Paternoster Press, 1969, pl. 6) .
 2. W.F. Albright comments on the prophets, the sack of Jerusalem and OT prophecy in general that

It is wholly unnecessary to reckon with 'prophecies after the event': we have exceedingly few cases of *vaticinium ex eventu* in the Hebrew Bible before the third or second century B.C.

(FSAC, 18)

The deep cultural significance of the exile of idols is played upon in the taunts of Hosea against the Calf of Ephraim (Hos 10:5f), and of Jeremiah against Kemosh of Moab (Jer 48:7,13 & 49:3). The OT Chronicler in common with his Mesopotamian counterparts placed great significance on the removal and return of Yahwistic cultic equipment (2 Chron 36:7,10,18 & Ezra 1:7-11) .

theological explanations were left to the apologists of the royal Annals writing *post eventu*.¹ This was a delicate task when Assyria and Babylon with their overlapping pantheons were the two combatants.

Leaving aside this special context, we may consider the suzerain in relation to the gods outside his own pantheon. It is interesting to notice that even when the Assyrians are described in the Annals as desecrating an enemy's shrine with particular ferocity including the smashing of their gods that evidence from later Annals or Chronicle texts seems to indicate that not all the idols were destroyed, but that some were 'held captive' in Assyrian temples to be returned at a subsequent date determined by royal policy.² The general rule seemed

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1. The so-called 'Akkadian Prophecies' which speak of the sack of indigenous shrines and sacred cities must, in the words of an editor, 'be considered simply a peculiar part of the vast Mesopotamian omen tradition' (R.D. Biggs: Iraq 29(1967), 117-132 "More Babylonian 'Prophecies' ", page 117. Note lines 18 & 27 of the text which predict the obliteration of the shrines of the great gods, slaughter in Nippur, and Amorite attacks extending to the shrines). Cf. A.K. Grayson & W.G. Lambert: JCS 18(1964), 7-23 "Akkadian Prophecies", Text A, ii:10ff (=ANETS, 170/606), and a newly published text Warka 22307/7: rev. 4, 13 (H. Hunger & S.A. Kaufman: JAOS 95.3(1975), 371-375 "A New Akkadian Prophecy Text"; note the discussion of the literary genre there and in Kaufman's yet unpublished paper 'Prediction, Prophecy & Apocalypse in the Light of New Akkadian Texts' delivered to the Sixth World Congress of Jewish Studies, Jerusalem, 1973 .

The Hebrew prophets were also innovators in their use of the *qînāh* with reference to future events - see Eissfeldt: The OT, 94ff. and compare the theological explanations of the *post eventu* Sumerian lamentations, on which see entries No. 44-46, 54 & 55 in the Ur literary catalogue (S.N. Kramer: RA 55(1961), 169-176 "A New Literary Catalogue from Ur", and M. Lambert: ibid., 190ff "La Littérature Sumérienne à propos d'Ouvrages Récents", and the translations by Kramer in ANET, 455ff 'Lamentation over the Destruction of Ur', and ANETS, 175/611ff 'Lamentation over the Destruction of Sumer & Ur'; cf. too the historiography of 'The Curse of Agade', ANETS, 210/646ff) .

2. Compare Sargon's destruction of the Haldia shrine (Sg 8:346ff ; Olmstead: HA, 240 fig. 101 & 102) and the likely return of the chief idol according to Tadmor's reconstruction of the Eponym Chronicle (see the previous discussion, page 41 and note 4 above); compare Ashurbanipal's desecration of the Susa shrine with Nabopolassar's return of the Susa gods (Rassam, 5:126ff ARAB 2, 309 §809ff; BM. 25127:15ff, CCK, 50f); compare Sennacherib's 'complete devastation' of Babylon, shrines and gods with Esarhaddon's return of Babylonian deities (Luckenbill: Senn, 83f, lines 48 & 53f 'the gods dwelling therein, - the hands of my people took them, and they smashed them'; Asar, 45 = ARAB 2, 203 §507). In the absence of idols, the seizing and return of the Judean cultic equipment may be cited as a parallel, noting the complete devastation of the Temple complex.

to be confiscation of gods as a punishment which was suspended if the vassal showed signs of remaining loyal. Within his own cult he had to make provision for the suzerain's gods.¹

The smashing of idols and the repair and return of idols appear to be contradictory actions on the surface, but the assertion of the supremacy of the suzerain's pantheon over the conquered pantheon provides a theological constant applicable to both. Vassaldom of the conquered deities would parallel vassaldom on the human plane, for just as the suzerain might execute, display in the capital, retain as hostage or enthrone the conquered vassal, so the victim's idols might be smashed, carried in the victory march and reckoned among the spoils, held in Assyrian temples or returned to their indigenous shrines. An earlier Assyrian king, Tiglath-pileser I (1115-1077 bc) speaks of bringing kings bound into the presence of the Assyrian gods where they were made to swear the vassal oath before the deities, and were then reckoned as subjects of the god Ashur, and were released as worshipers of the great gods, in other words as living testimonies to the supremacy of the Assyrian pantheon.² Captive gods were also

1. 'Exile of the deity was an act of retribution inflicted upon enemy or rebel cities as a mark of complete subjugation' - A.R. Millard: Iraq 26(1964), 18 commenting on Chronicle Text BM.96273:1. Accommodation of the suzerain's Assyrian deities in vassal cults is attested for example by 2 Kgs 16:10ff and by Esarhaddon's Zinjerli Stele (Asar, 99 = ARAB 2, 277 \$580).

2. šallūsunu u kamūsunu ina maḥar ^dŠamaš bēlija aṭṭur-ma
māmīt ilānija rabūti ana arkat ūmē ana ūm ṣāte ana
ardūti utammišunūti
PN ša ana ^dAššur bēlija lā kanšu šallušu u kamušu ana
ālija ^dAššur ublašu rēma aršašu-ma ištu ālija DN dalīl
ilāni rabūti ana dalāli ana napišti umašširšu
nīr bēlūtija kabtu elišunu ukīn pān ^dAššur ušadgilšunūti
(AKA, 69f, 70f & 57 Col 5:12ff, 5:22ff & 3:87; ARAB 1,
82 & 79, \$236, 237 & 231 respectively)

Cf. Tammariu's submission - idallalu qurdi ša ilānija dannūti (Rassam, 4:35, Streck, 36 = ARAB 2, 303 \$793), and the sparing of captured kings from execution ... ana dalāl tanitti DNN u ilāni rabūti bēlēja rēmu aršišu-ma uballiṭ napšassu (Rassam, 9:112-114, Streck, 80 = ARAB 2, 319 \$830; cf. Prism B, 6:82 ana dalāl aḥrāte - 'for future obedience'; 'so that they might proclaim (my might) for ever' (CAD D, 47); 'damit die Späteren preisen' (AHW, 153).

presented to 'the great gods' by this king, though the impression given is that they remained in the Assyrian temples along with the campaign booty.¹ If so, they were comparable to the hostages retained when the Nairi kings were bound over on oath and released.² In any case, the parallel idea of bound captives and helpless idols both appearing before the victorious Assyrian gods is apparent.³ It is only a short step away from conceiving of the foreign deities as vassals of the 'great gods'.⁴

If the presentation of captured gods and kings runs parallel as we have shown, so too does their release. Passages from Esarhaddon's and Ashurbanipal's Annals are informative here. When Esarhaddon returned the Arabs' gods, he first inscribed them, which is recorded in

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1. GN ana siḫirtiša akšud 25 ilānišunu šallašunu
 bušašunu namkuršunu ušēša ...arimšunūti ... dāgil
 pān Aššur bēlija amnušunūti ina ūmišuma 25 ilāni
 ša mātāti šinātina kišitti qātija ša alqa ana utu'ut
 bīt Bēlit ḫirte rabite namaddi DN bēlija DNN ekurrāt
 ālija DN u Ištārāt mātija lū ašruk
 (AKA, 60ff Col 4:22ff = ARAB 1, 80 §233f)

They may, of course, have been returned at a later date.

2. Royal sons were held as hostages - AKA, 70 Col 5:17f = ARAB 1, 82 §236 .
3. Curiously, Ashurbanipal does not record the presentation of captive idols to the Assyrian gods in the extant inscriptions, so far as the present writer is aware, though subjugated kings were forced to draw his chariot to victory thanksgiving ceremonies at the temple - see Rassam, 10:17ff, ARAB 2, 320 §833; cf. LET, 34ff, Streck, 168 = ARAB 2, 353 §913 .
4. Compare the use of šarru rabû = 'Great King' for the Suzerain *vis-à-vis* the lesser kings, his vassals in the Hittite treaties. The ilāni rabūti could carry overtones of dominance in relation to the gods of conquered lands, as well as being a term used to distinguish them from the multitude of lesser Assyrian deities and personal gods.

a manner which speaks for its significance. The details of the vassal oath are passed over with the generalised but probably technical usage of rēmu rašû, whereas the details about the idols are spelled out:

ilāni ša Aribi anḫūssunu uddiṣ-ma danān DN bēlija
u šīṭir šumija eliṣunu aštur-ma utīr-ma addinšu

I repaired the damaged gods of the Arabs, inscribed
on them the might of Ashur and my titular, returning
and handing them over to him,

When Ashurbanipal returns the Arabs' gods, the emphasis falls on the vassal condition of their devotee rather than that of his idols. The broken passage is restored by Piepkorn following George Smith:

[PN] mār PN2 šar GN [epēš ardūtiija [aššu ilāni]šū
imḫuranni-ma [uṣall]la šarrūti šum ilāni rabūti]
ušazkiršu-ma DN utīr-ma addinšu arkānu ina] adēja
iḫṭi (Piep, 80 B, 7:93-99)

[Jauta'] the son of Hazael king of Qedar as my
vassal came to implore me as (his) suzerain about
his gods, and I made him take oath by the great
gods, and returned Atarsamain, handing (the idol)
over to him. But afterwards he violated the vassal
oath sworn to me

Taken together, these complementary passages reveal a close connection between the adē, the vassal's idols and the suzerain's claims. The nature of the suzerain's inscription on the idols merits attention. It can not be considered as a votive dedication requesting that the gods should remember him favourably. This is true for Ashurbanipal's return of Babylonian cultic equipment on which he wrote his name, but the context for that action is the special inter-related-

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1. Th.1929-10-12-1 Col 4:12-14. Compare Esarhaddon's dealings with Lailê of Jādî'. He receives the royal rēmu, and has a district set under him in one account, while another adds that his gods were returned with the 'might of Ashur' inscribed on them (*ibid.*, 4:76f; *Asar*, 56f = *ARAB* 2, 214f \$538). Omission of mention of Esarhaddon's titular on the images is no doubt simply scribal hazard and not of theological significance, so too the omission of the return of the gods in the Thompson prism, and the omission of explicit reference to the imposition of the adē. This is a warning against theological conclusions based on abbreviated accounts, and encourages a judicious use of cross references within the homogeneous corpus of the Annals.

ness of the Assyrian and Babylonian pantheons; and the covert acknowledgement by Esarhaddon and Ashurbanipal that Sennacherib had overstepped the bounds of piety in his looting of the sacred city.¹ The Arab idols bear not only the name of the Assyrian suzerain but a description of the 'might of Ashur' (danān DN bēlija), which might arguably be considered the more important since it precedes šitir šumija, which the A Edition omits. The danān DN is a might made explicit in Ashur's power over Jauta' and over the very gods whose images bore these words.

An analogy to the king's name being inscribed on vassal idols is found in Ashurbanipal's inscription of his name on the dagger given to the re-instated Necho. The dagger and other items of dress invest him with royal authority, and in this context Ashurbanipal's titulary functions in two ways. It legitimates Necho's authority by indicating its source - that is, Ashurbanipal underwrites his vassal in this symbolical and ceremonial manner besides any guarantee which might have been given in Necho's vassal treaty document. At the same time, the

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1. The Chronicle text BM.96273:4 (Iraq 26, 1964, p. 15) notes the return of 'the original couch of Bel' from its resting place as booty from Sennacherib's sack of Babylon, from the Ashur temple in Nineveh to Babylon. Ashurbanipal erased Sennacherib's dedicatory inscription to Ashur and Ninlil thereon, and added an inscription of his own. The colophon of K.2411, restored by Millard, mentions the inscription of Ashurbanipal's name on the couch:

dabābu ša ina muḫḫi erši ša ina muḫḫi kussi ša DN ša
ina bīt DN2 karratuni paššutuni šumu ša RN ina muḫḫi
šaṭiruni (Iraq 26, p. 21)

The text which was upon the couch, which was upon the throne of Bel which were in Esharra was cut away and erased. The name of Ashurbanipal was written upon it.

That this writing of Ashurbanipal's name was as part of a votive inscription is clear from the standard votive formula recorded in K.2411 - ana napištija arak ūmēja ana širiqti ašruq: 'I gave as a present for my life and length of days' (art.cit., 21 note 36), and the requests for the blessing of his kingship, for attaining the desires of his heart and for the overthrow of his foes (see ARAB 2, 387ff §1010ff = Streck, 292ff).

inscribed titulary is an indication of 'ownership'.¹ The royal name exerts authority as well as granting authority, and Necoḥ bears the name in a manner roughly analogous to a slave bearing his master's brand.² A possible analogy to this comes from a letter appealing to

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1. The use of Hebrew seals seems to offer an analogy, for they appear to have been used both as guarantees and as marks of ownership. A. R. Millard estimates that 'as many as one third of the Hebrew seals' - for which he gives a round number of 250 extant - 'are engraved solely with the owner's names and patronyms', and he goes on to describe their usage as follows:

It is clear that the seals were applied to clay in sealing letters and legal deeds and also to large jars and other objects. In the first case they served as seals, authenticating and securing documents which would contain the names of the parties and the witnesses in the text proper (cf. Jer 32). In the latter case when applied to jars and the like, they seem to have acted as marks of ownership and identification

BA 35(1972), 98-11 "The Practice of Writing in Ancient Israel", page 104; cf. Millard: BASOR 208(1972), 5-9 "An Israelite Royal Seal?", p. 8 where the author points out the freedom of royal vassals of Assyria under their suzerains, quoting Necoḥ and Bar-Rakib of Sam'al as examples, the latter who spoke of his enthronement by his national deity and Tiglath-pileser his suzerain, and who like the Edomite king of the 7th century Qos-g[abr], was free to use a personal royal seal, which seems to underline the authority designated by the Assyrian suzerain.

2. If the mark of a slave was by tonsure or brand in the earlier periods, the Neo-Babylonian period attests the practice of branding the owner's name on the back of the slave's hand. Compare the abuttu mark of slavery in Hammurabi's Code §146, 226 & 227 with the discussion of terminology and references to the branding of the owner's name given by BabLaws, 271ff; cf. CAD A.1, abuttu & CAD J, ittu, idatu; cf. I. Mendelsohn: BAR 3, 127-143, "Slavery in the ANE", especially p. 134f. For comparative biblical material in which the Suzerain-Vassal relationship seems to be implied in connection with marks on the vassal, note the mark of Cain ('ōt, Gen 4:15) with D. Kidner's comment: 'God's answering pledge, together with his mark or sign (the same word as in 9:3 & 17:11) - not a stigma but a safe-conduct - is almost a covenant, making Him virtually Cain's gō'ēl or protector (Genesis, TCOT, 1967, p. 76). Cf. the taw on the forehead of those within the covenant in Ezek 9:4 & 6; those in the regenerated covenant community writing Yhwh's name on their hands (Isa 44:5 - so RSV, NEB against C.R. North: The Second Isaiah, Oxford, 1964, p. 134); cf. Isa 49:16; cf. the mark of the Beast in name or cipher on the right hand or forehead (Rev 13:16f) in contrast to the redeemed bearing the Lamb's or Father's name (Rev 14:1 & 22:4).

the king for re-instatement as a trusted servant against the background of an allegedly slanderous charge of misconduct. The writer protests that 'Indeed I long for the king's service', and continues

šarru itti ardāni limnanni-ma idāti ša ardūti ša
šarri ina muḥḥija tabbašši-ma ...idāti ša šarri
bēlija lūmur (H.283:8ff= SLA 201)

May the king reckon me among his servants and may the sign of the service of the king be upon me ... the sign of the king my lord may I see

Pfeiffer's translation - 'I bear on my body the marks of the service of the king' (SLA, 148) - reminiscent of Gal 6:17 and Paul the bond-slave of Christ, is probably misleading, and instead we should think of a request that the writer should carry royal credentials.¹ While this might be a written proof of instatement as a loyal official, it might also be some visible badge of office worn on his person, or even a royal seal.² Perhaps Assyrian civil-servants and military officers carried a dagger inscribed with the king's name too. Whatever the idati ša ardūti ša šarri was, it is analagous to the visible emblems borne by Pharaoh Necho.

In summary, then, we have evidence of an Assyrian practice associated with the status of vassaldom imposed after military conquest, namely, the inscription of the suzerain's name on the vassal's gods or on the symbol of authority. The parallel suggests that the gods of the vassal were thought of as being vassals to the Assyrian great gods, having an existence but exercising power only within circumscribed limits. The psychological effect on the vassal of the capture of his gods and their return bearing the marks of subservience must have been considerable.

1. Cf. the CAD translations: 'so that the mark (showing) that I am a servant of the king may be upon me'; 'so that I have proof of my status as servant of the king' (CAD I/J,304ff ittu, idatu; ittu l. 'mark, sign, feature, characteristic' & 4. 'notice, acknowledgement, written proof' & CAD A.2, 249 ardu 9⁷; cf. AHW, 406 ittu 4.) n/spB 'besondere(s) Zeugnis, Bezeugung usw'.

2. Cf. Nabu-shum-lishir's need for royal assurances - 'I have been a dead man; but if I were to see the golden signet (unqu ḥurāši) of the king my lord, I would come back to life', H.259:rev. 3ff SLA §22 .

The second example of vassaldom following military conquest is the subjugation of Necho already mentioned, the background to which lies in the reign of Esarhaddon, who summarises the outcome of his Egyptian policy in the Zinjerli Stele, where he claims to have torn out the root of Kush - but it was to sprout again during his son's reign. Esarhaddon's measures following his conquest of Egypt fell into three parts - organising the administration by appointing a whole series of officials from kinglets to scribes; planting Assyrian religion by ordering the cult of Ashur and the pantheon to be kept, a move which highlights the inseparable link between the sword and the gods in Assyria's theologically orientated imperialism; imposing yearly tribute to add economic gains to the political and religious advances.¹

Ashurbanipal outlines his father's achievements in Egypt, and adds some interesting details, especially the re-naming processes.²

1. The Zinjerli Stele, Asar, 99 = ARAB 2, \$580 = ANET, 293 . For a recent study with good bibliographical footnotes written after the Egyptologically orientated treatment of K.A.Kitchen: The Third Intermediate Period in Egypt, 1100-650 bc, Aris & Phillips, 1973 page 391ff, see A.Spalinger: Or 43(1974), 295ff "Esarhaddon & Egypt: an analysis of the 1st Invasion of Egypt" .

2. [mātu] šuātu ina sihirtiša ibēl-ma ana mišir GN utīr
[šumē] ālāni maḥrūti unakkir-ma ana eššūti iškuna
nibīssun (Prism E, 1:12-15, Piep, 10; restored from
K.3083, Streck, 216)

Sais, for instance, became Kār-bēl-mātāte ; Athribis became Limir-iššakku-Aššur (LET, 61 & 64f; Streck, 164. The Egyptians, Necho's son and another bear Assyrian names - Šarru-lū-dāri & Nabû-šēzi-banni (LET, 64). Change of name associated with vassal status is familiar from the OT and the NT, eg Eliakim-Jehoiakim (2 Kgs 23:34), Mattaniah-Zedekiah (2 Kgs 24:17); cf. Abram-Abraham (Gen 17:5) and Simon-Cephas (Jn 1:42). For the history of this period, see also Olmstead: HA, chaps. 29 & 32; CAH III, 280ff chap 13 .

He himself was forced to re-organise Egypt as a vassal territory under local dynasts after his first Egyptian campaign:

GNN ša abu bānua ikšuda ana eššūti ašbat mašarāti
eli ša ūmē pāni udannin-ma urakkisa riksāte
(Rassam, 1:114-116)

The lands of Egypt and Kush which my father begetter had conquered I re-organised and strengthened the garrisons to a greater degree than previously, and made binding the bonds

The phrase riksu rakāsu might be understood as referring to details of organisation, but on the other hand the way riksāte is used with danānu D-theme in parallel with epēšu adê niš ilāni in the opening ceremony of the Rassam prism suggests that here too we may have an explicit reference to the vassal treaties in general terms. In paraphrase, Ashurbanipal re-swore the vassals to obedience, laying upon them stricter measures. ¹

Events proved these measures ineffective, and another military conquest was required during which Necho was taken prisoner and sent in chains to Nineveh. Following political dictates, Ashurbanipal spared Necho the retribution inherent in his vassal oath, instead re-installing him with no little dignity. The Annals make Necho the paradigm of fortune, the epitome of Assyrian grace and the parade example of the felicity of vassaldom under the imperial aegis.

1. Rassam, 1:20-22 ; Streck, 4. For riksu in treaty contexts, see the references given under AHw, 985 riksu C. It is most common in the Hittite treaties in the hendiadys riksāte u māmīte - see V.Korosec: Hethitische Staatsverträge, 1931 p. 31ff, and M.Weinfeld: JAOS 93 (1973), 190-199 "Covenant Terminology in the ANE & its Influence on the West", p. 190 & note 3. He states:

In the Akkadian of the 1st Millenium adê replaced the riksu/riksāte of the 2nd Millenium, and in accordance with this change the old riksu māmītu has been transformed into adê māmīte

In the light of the Ashurbanipal references above, we see that riksu was still used singly or in parallel with reference to treaties, and that urakkisa riksāte denotes a tightening up of the stipulation clauses. Cf. Weinfeld: DDS, 66f & 87 plus note 2.

ana PN ultu bīrišunu rēmu aršišu-ma uballiṭ.
 napšāssu adê eli ša maḥri ušātir-ma ittišu
 aškun ... tābtu damiqtu eli ša abi bānija
 ušatir-ma ēpuššu

To one of their number, Necho, I showed mercy,
 sparing his life; I made the oath more severe
 than previously and concluded it with him ...
 the beneficence and favour I showed him exceeded
 (even) that of my father begetter 1

Royal grace was selective as well as elective, for of the twenty kinglets re-installed after their displacement by Tarku, only Necho is mentioned after the abortive rebellion, and he received the added grace of guaranteed dynastic succession for his son Nabu-shezibanni, as may be inferred from the latter's appointment to office at the same time as Necho's re-installation. Indeed the securing of the local dynasty was a major advantage and motivating factor in becoming an imperial vassal king.² Ashurbanipal gives an example of the way a

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1. Rassam, 2:8f & 18f. LET,53 provides a variant: rēmu aršišu-ma kitti [ad?]-di-is-su-ma - 'I showed him mercy and dealt loyally with him (?)', Streck, 162 & note (e). Ad-di-is-su-ma for addinšuma from root nadānu - 'to give' is the more usual form as Streck notes. His suggestion is not listed by AHW. or CAD, but see CAD K, 471 2' e. for Amarna and Ras Shamra references to treaty-making using kittu + epēšu. Kittu nadānu might be added to the treaty-making vocabulary if other textual support were forthcoming.
 2. On the guarantee of Dynastic Succession to the vassal in the Hittite Treaties, see V.Korošec: HSV, 90f. Compare further the implications of the Aramaic treaty, Sefire I, Face C, VII:1-8 (Sefire, 18f), and the Davidic Dynastic Oracle of 2 Sam 7 - on which see the thoroughly documented comparative study of P.J.Calderone: DynOracle, an outstanding piece of work, which underlines the glaring inadequacies in the standard OT Commentaries on such passages as 2 Sam 7, 1 Chron 17, 22:10, 28:7, 1 Kgs 2:4, 8:20, 9:1-9 due to the passing over of ANE data. Weinfeld: JAOS 90(1970), 184-203 points to the concept of continuity enshrined in royal grants and their affinities with the Abrahamitic and Davidic covenants, noting too the guarantees of royal succession in the former covenant at Gen 17:6 & 16 and 35:11. The continuity of the weaker party in biblical covenants, expressed in the continuity of mankind on the earth in the Noah covenant (Gen 9: 8ff), of Abraham's seed (Gen 15 & 17), of the royal and priestly lineage (Jer 33), and of the nation (Exod 19:3ff, Jer 31:31-37 + Rom 9-11) culminates in the New Covenant people (Matt 26:26ff) granted eternal life under the reign and mediatorship of the eternal Son, King and High-priest according to NT theology; cf. Weinfeld's remark that 'the promise of the dynasty in the Davidic covenant is connected with the image of the son of God, a feature found also in the promise of dynasty in the Hittite treaties' (DDS, 79) .

suzerain settled the vassal succession question in his account of the death of Jakinlu of Arvad. Ten of Jakinlu's sons came to Nineveh, one to be elected as the new vassal king to return to Arvad with his suzerain's authority behind him, and nine to apparently remain in Nineveh serving as courtiers, where they would be unable to upset the *status quo* in Arvad with intrigue and insurrection, and where they might become hostages if Arvad rebelled.¹

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1. Azibaal I regarded with favour (ḥadîš appalis) and installed as king of Arvad; (his nine brothers) I clothed with fine raiment and rings of gold for their hands, and allowed them to serve as courtiers (Rassam, 2:88-94)

The technical legal significance of ḥadîš naplusu is discussed in connection with contracts and royal donations such as kudurru texts by Y. Muffs: Studies in the Aramaic Legal Papyri from Elephantine, p. 128ff where it is shown to convey the uncoerced, fully volitional aspect of the grant or contract. Muffs does not discuss the use of ḥadîš naplusu in treaty contexts, nor does Weinfeld (art.cit. JAOS 90) who draws on Muffs at points in his comparative study of grants, covenants and treaties. The *overlaps* between treaty, grant and contract should not be overlooked in the wake of the studies by Weinfeld and Tucker (art.cit., VT 15) which draw distinctions between them. With the phrases ḥadîš naplusu/ ina ḥūd libbi nadānu and the Aramaic semantic equivalents, compare the idea of the uncoerced, non-obligatory, ie. gracious granting of a vassal treaty to Natnu by Ashurbanipal:

He sent to pay respects (ana ša'āl šulmēja), kissed my feet and begged me as suzerain to grant (him) a vassal treaty of good relations (ana šakān adê sulummê epēš ardūtija). I was gracious to him (ḥadîš appalissu) and bestowed my favour upon him (panija damqāti elišu aškun)

(Prism C, 9:42-48; Streck, 144 = ARAB 2, 342 §880 : ḥadîš naplusu is literally 'to look at joyfully')

Splendid garments and rings of gold were granted to the Arvad king and his brothers alike, as to Necho, but the latter also received the iron dagger already discussed, royal transport and a 'golden chain emblem of his kingship'. It is probably only coincidence, but this parallels the investiture of Joseph as šallîṭ over Egypt in respect of ring, robe, golden chain and chariotry.¹ We should like details of Necho's investiture. Was the ceremony performed in Nineveh without a ceremony in Egypt according to local rites? This seems unlikely. Did Necho wear the crowns of Egypt, or did Ashurbanipal, like David *vis-à-vis* the Ammonites², retain this usual emblem of kingship, allowing Necho only the golden chain of high office? Our sources fail us here, and we can only repeat that Necho was simultaneously king and vassal, just as on another plane the occupants of the Davidic throne were bearers of royal insignia and vassals of Yhwh.³

1. Compare Rassam 2:10-14 with Gen 41:42f -

• lubultū birmē ulabbissu	wayyalbēš 'ōtō bigēdēy-šēš
• allu ḥurāši simat šarrūtišu	rēbid hazzāhāb Cal-šawwā'rō
• semirē ḥurāši urakkisa	ṭabba ^c tō mē ^c al-yādō
• rittēšu + nibit šumija	
• narkabāti sisē parē ana	wayyarkēb 'ōtō bēmirkebet
rukub belūtišu	hammišneh 'āšer-lō

(Note CAD A.1, allu B (piece of jewelry) Since neither Egyptian nor Mesopotamian customs know of such a use of the hoe, the old translation 'chain' seems preferable)

Cf. the gifts and royal riding provided by the Hittite suzerain for his vassal Mattiwaza - Weidner: PDK, 42ff No. 2 Mattiwaza + Suppiluliuma, lines 31ff .

2. 2 Sam 12:30. For convenient discussion of coronation procedure in Israel, Egypt and Assyria, see eg. R. de Vaux: Ancient Israel, 2nd ed, 1965, chap. 5, p. 102ff; P. Montet: Eternal Egypt, 1964, chap. 3, p. 37ff; K. Kitchen: AO/OT, 106ff; Oppenheim: AM, 97ff; Saggs: Greatness, chap. 11; all provide specialised bibliography.
3. See R. de Vaux: Bible et Orient, du Cerf, 1967; ET, 1971 Chap. 9, p. 152-166 "The King of Israel, Vassal of Yahweh"; Calderone: DynOracle, 70f and his conclusion:

Assembling OT parallels from the historical books, the Psalms and the Prophets, this scholar concludes that the divine choice, the quality of 'servant' especially applied to David, the coronation anointing, and the divine covenant which binds him and guarantees eternal protection would all justifiably define the king of Israel as Yahweh's vassal

(p. 71)

To summarise, we have seen that the adê was normative for both Assyrians and subjugated peoples, putting the king into a theologically grounded relationship to his subjects. Both parity treaties and vassal treaties are known from Ashurbanipal's inscriptions, and a very rich vocabulary is used to describe entering into the state of vassaldom, whether this was done spontaneously for diplomatic reasons, or through fear of Assyrian reprisals or brought about by outright conquest. A number of changes took place when a country was subjugated. It may have been turned into a province of Assyria with Assyrian appointed officials or local dynasts in charge. Local names including the king's were changed, and the cult expanded to include the Assyrian deities. Tribute was imposed, hostages were held in the capital, including the subjugated gods. Obligations were written into the vassal documents, such as the supply of information, troops and provisions, and the extradition of fugitives. Assyrian prisoners were to be released, and territorial boundaries strictly observed. No diplomatic relations with other tribes or countries were allowed without sanction from the suzerain.¹

The king and his gods act in unison throughout and this is reflected in narrative descriptions and in the variations of phrasing in which now the king and now his gods take the commanding rôle. In support of this fundamental thesis we may add an examination of one of Ashurbanipal's letters, and of a semantic field widely associated with vassaldom.

1. The Qedar Treaty, for example, forbids any contact with the fugitive king Jauta', and the despatch of diplomatic messages:

If you should approach (taqarribāni) Jauta' to make a pact (lit. 'for good relations': MUN)

(If) you should send off a message [to them] :ina qāt memēni tašapparāni (šuni)]

Bu 91-5-9,178: 12f & rev. 4⁷

The wording of one of Ashurbanipal's letters to Belibni tallies with what we have learnt from the reports of submission to vassaldom in the war records about the Arabs and Egypt. Prior to ordering the arrest of an important enemy in the Nippur area to be sent dead or alive to the palace, the king moralises about the fruits of divinely granted victory:

attunu tīdā ša ina libbi patar parzilli DN ilēja
māti ullīti gabbiša išātu tušākila u mātu kī taḥḥisa
tattakbas u pāniša ana muḥḥija tuttirra

You know that by means of the iron dagger of Ashur
and my gods you sent that entire country up in flames
and that the land has again become submissive and has
turned its face towards me (ie. looks to me)

1

Credit is divided between the general in charge of operations and the gods. Noteworthy is the phrase, which one might call a cliché, 'the iron dagger of the god Ashur'. The GĪR AN.BAR appears twice in the Qedar Treaty fragment without the divine qualification, but it can hardly be separated from the divine weapon in battle and hunting narratives² and in treaty curses.³ The Qedar fragment, the narratives relating the imposing of the adē, and the Neo-Assyrian letters present a coherent theological picture of vassaldom.

Divine/royal parallelism is expressed very clearly in the variant phrasing observable is the use of the yoke metaphor. The plea of Gyges' son - 'let me draw your yoke': lašūṭa abšanka in parallel with ardu pāliḥka: 'I am your worshipful slave' - already encountered is but one example of the metaphor's widespread use, whose origin may

1. H.292:5-9 = SLA \$35; H.297 with identical wording is addressed to the people of Uruk; cf. H.350:6 = SLA \$24 ša lapān patar parzilli ušēzibū ina bubūti imāti .
2. eg. kakki ^dAššur (Rassam, 2:20 ARAB 2,295 \$775); ^dIštar šalpat namšāru zaqtu ša epēš tāḥāzi (B,5:55 Piep,66); tilpānu ezzētu ša ^dIštar bēlit tāḥāzi & patar parzilli šibbiya (Jagdinschriften, (a):2 ARAB 2,39f \$1021 & \$1024 (d):4)
3. eg. (^dNergal) ina patrišu lā gāmili ; patru parzillu ḥanṭu (^dNinlil); (^dSibitti) ina kakkē ezzūti našpan[tkunu liškun] - EVT,455f,458 & 464f (ANETS,102/538f, \$49, 50 & 53) .

lie in agriculture or possibly in the treatment of prisoners.¹ Those beyond the bounds of Assyrian imperialism were described as 'the un-submissive who did not bear the yoke' (Rassam, 2:77). A synonym for vassaldom (ardūtu) used frequently is 'the yoke of my overlordship' (nīr bēlūtija, Prism B,4:60, 8:1, etc). This is modified in a typical manner by variants which lay emphasis less on the king and more on the gods, as the following passages show:

danān DN 12 ilāni rabūti bēlēja ēmur-ma iknuša
ana nīrija

(islâ) nīr bēlūtija ša DN ēmeduš išūtu abšāni

PNN ... ša ina emūqi DNN bēlēja ušakniša ana
nīrija

DNN ša lā kanšūtija ušaknišu ana nīrija

nīr DN ša islū ēmissunūti

He perceived the might of Ashur (12 gods) the great
gods my lords and submitted to my yoke

(He threw off) the yoke of my suzerainty which Ashur
had laid upon him (commanding) that he should bear
my yoke

(Three kings) whom I had subjugated through the power
of Ashur and Ishtar my lords

The yoke of Ashur which they had cast off I laid upon
them ₂

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1. I.J.Gelb points out that the Sumerian sign ERĪN represents a yoke or neckstock, and is employed in reference to 'enemy warriors at the time of their capture, and as "soldiers" or "workers" when it refers to them at the time of their employment in Babylonia' (JNES 32, 1973, 70-98 "Prisoners of War in Early Mesopotamia", p. 84). He quotes evidence of use of the yoke on human beings from Sargonic times (MAD 5, 56:rev. 5) and early Mari (RA 46, p. 187 No. 1f), with which compare the use of wooden neckstocks (Sum. GIŠ SI.GAR = Akk. šigarum) on captives in the early period (art.cit., 73 for references) and in the 1st Millennium Assyrian art, eg the bronze gates of Balawat of Shalmaneser III, 9th century bc (excellent quality photograph in Saggs: Greatness, fig 33a & in Parrot: N&B, 123 fig 1). From the OT compare the yoke metaphor as a covenant curse (Dt 28:48), and its breaking as a covenant blessing and promise (Lev 26:13 & Ezek 34:27), and as a threat and promise in the Prophets (Jer 27:28, Isa 10:27, 14:25, Nah 1:13). Cf. Persian bandaka - 'subject, servant' derived from banda - 'bond, fetter' (Gelb:art.cit., 85); NT Grk. synzygus (Phil 4:3) - 'fellow servant'; Lat. subjugare - 'to subjugate'.
 2. Rassam, 3:12-16, 7:87f, 10:17ff, 10:33ff & 4:103; Streck, 24, 64, 82, 84 & 40; ARAB 2, 299, 313, 320, 320 & 305, \$786, 817, 833, 833, 798.

The phrase varies from being the king's yoke to being the god's yoke, with the king as the active agent in the last example and the gods in the one previous to it. The verbal forms vary correspondingly with both king and gods standing as subject of the causative theme of root kanāšu- 'to bow'; Š-theme - 'to cause to bow, to subjugate'.¹

Finally, this description of the status of vassaldom may be rounded off by some quotations from the letters of loyal subjects which illustrate the theoretically ideal position of king's vassal which should have made rebellion undesirable. The letters used stem from subjects rather than the subjugated, but as we have seen both were regulated by the adê, and the royal grace extended to vassals such as Azibaal and Necoh legitimises the comparison, as does the overlap in vocabulary.

Ashurbanipal's general Belibni describes himself as the 'dog of the king', and consciously echoes his loyalty oath in promising to report whatever occurs, concluding that his life is entirely dedicated to his suzerain (napšâteja ...lū paqda, H.795:rev. 16f = SLA \$38). After receiving a royal favour, he extols his sovereign's beneficence in words appropriate to a vassal:²

By the numerous favours (ṭābāte ma'adāta) which the king my lord has bestowed from the beginning and awarded me who am a dead dog (kalbi mīti), the son of a nobody (mār lā manma), the king my lord has given me life (uballiṭanni). Their plenitude is more than I can comprehend (alla mullišini ul mašāka) (H.521:4-8=SLA \$39)

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1. In addition to the references above, compare ardāni dāgil pānija ša tušakniša ana šēpēja: '(the Amurru kings) vassals of mine whom you (the god) subdued before me' ('Letter to Ashur', Col 2:38, ed. M.Weippert: WO 7.1(1973),76 = Streck, 202 line 19; Rassam,5:35, 2:55, Streck,46 & 18 = ARAB 2,307 & 296, \$803 & 779. For further references in the royal Annals, see AHw. kanāšu, kanšu, kanšiš, 435f, 438; nīru, 793f; abšānu, 7.
 2. Note the use of ṭābtu and kalbu common to suzerain-vassal descriptive vocabulary. On ṭābtu, see the articles cited on page 80 note 2; on kalbu as a subject's humble self-reference, see page 21 note 1 and CAD K, 72 kalbu, 1(j); cf. 1 Sam 24:15 & 2 Sam 9:8.

Daily prayer for the king and the blood of sacrificial lambs were the cultic expression of his gratitude, but perhaps this was part of the reason for vassals accomodating the Assyrian cult too. Belibni continues:

Now the king my lord is going to see the loyalty of his servant (kinūtu ša ardišu) ...to the house of his lord. What am I when I am keeping the watch of the king my lord ? A loved slave (ardu rāi'annu) and a blade (ziqqi) in the hand of the king my lord am I. My lord the king has raised me to the skies (ina šamê iltaknanni). May Ashur (etc) cause my lord the king's hand to attain to whatever the king my lord desires. (H.521:18-25 = SLA \$39)

Other letters are equally humble and pious, and one makes an interesting use of the imagery of light and darkness relating to the king's rule and favour. Mardi, probably addressing Ashurbanipal when he was crown-prince, prays that he may succeed to his father's throne - a practical blessing sometimes guaranteed to vassals - continuing:

anāku arassu kalbišu u haṭṭūšu ina šillišu lāmur
nūru DNN šullêka kī išmuni šarrūti ša dārâta palê
arkūte ana šarri bēlija iddannu u kīma šeta ^dšamši
mātâte gabbē ina šētika namrū u anāku ina libbi
eṭūti kīrāk (H.916:11-15 = SLA \$177)

I am his slave, his dog and his penitent. Under his protection may I see light. The gods, when they hear your prayers, will bestow on the king my lord an eternal kingship and an enduring rule, for just as at the rising of the sun/Shamash, all lands are lit up at your appearance, whereas I remain in darkness.

Darkness and light representing royal displeasure and royal favour, the two states in which a subject might stand to his suzerain, are related to the adê as curse and blessing respectively. Darkness may be inflicted by the gods in retribution for breach of treaty, while

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1. DN nūr šamāmē u qaqqari dīn kitti mēšari aj iddinkunūni
ina ēnēkunu lišlimma ina eklēti tallakā // ūmūkunu lū
eṭū šanātukunu lū eklā eklētu lā namāri ana šīmti lišimū
May Shamash the light of heaven and earth not give you a fair and equitable judgement, may he take away your eyesight; walk about in darkness ! // Your days should be somber, your years dark, may they decree for you an unrelieved darkness

(EVT, 424 & 485f; ANETS, 102/538f, \$40 & 56)

See F.C.Fensham: ZAW 75(1963), 155-175 "Common Trends in Curses of

there is a lengthy Mesopotamian tradition associating the king with Shamash as the one who blesses his people with light, that is, with justice. The sculptured scene and the text of Hammurabi's Code exhibits this light/justice-Shamash/king association. The king is 'to rise over the black-locked people like the Sun and light up the land' (kīma dŠamaš ...wāšîm ..nuwwurim, CH, Col. ia:40ff); he is 'the Sun of Babylon who makes the light shine over Sumer and Akkad' (dŠamaš šū CN mušēšî nurim ana GNN, *ibid.* iv:4ff); 'I beam light upon them' (nūram ušēšîšinā-šîm, *ibid.* xxivb:21). The Hittite kings were known as 'the Sun'; David as 'the lamp of Israel' (nēr Yiśrā'ēl, 2 Sam 21:17); Ashurbanipal as 'the Sun of the people' (šarru dŠamaš ša nišē, H.923:rev. 8' = LAS \$117).¹ Mardi's words, accordingly, (na šillišu lāmur nūru) are a plea for justice and royal blessing, lest he fall from favour judged to have lapsed from adē loyalty and be subject to royal and divine displeasure like a rebellious vassal.

the Near Eastern Treaties & Kudurru-Inscriptions compared with Maledictions of Amos & Isaiah", 170f (i)The Turning of Light into Darkness for other references, and the suggestion of a link with the imagery of the yôm Yhwh. For a possible extenuation of this imagery into the Qumran literature where those excluded from the Covenant 'are ruled by the Angel of Darkness and walk in the ways of darkness' and destined to angelically executed plagues and damnation and 'calamities of darkness', see Baltzer:CF,99ff & G.Vermes: The Dead Sea Scrolls in English, rev. 1968, p. 75f; cf. the comment on 'outer darkness' and references given by Albright & Mann: Matthew, AB 26, 1971, p. 93.

1. A possible background for some of the OT Messianic language could be investigated in connection with reign and light. The reign of Ashurbanipal hoped for devoutly by Mardi is šarrūti ša dārāta palē arkūte which echoes language of the Messianic oracle of Isa 9 where the Messiah's reign is to be 'without end', 'from this time forth for evermore' ('ēn qēš, mēcattāh wēcad-cōlām), bringing 'light' and 'justice' to 'the people who walked in darkness ... those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness' (hācām hahōlēkîm baḥōšek rā'û 'ôr gādōl yōšēbēy bē'ereš šalmāwet 'ôr nāgāh cālēyhem); cf. the Servant of Yhwh given librît cām lē'ôr gōyim (Isa 42:6); cf. Mal 3:2 MT .

Belibni's letter previously cited spoke of his overflowing gratitude for Ashurbanipal's beneficence (ṭābāte ma'adāta). Another writer gives a broader view of royal blessing:

Šarru bēlija qātaja kī iṣbatu uballiṭanni Šarru
rāmānū atta ana kippat irbitti ṭābti tētepuš
(H.499:10ff = SLA \$172)

When the king my lord took my hand he gave me life.
A merciful king are you. You have done good to the
four quarters (of the world)

While on the one hand this is hyperbole, a striving for phraseology to please the royal recipient and indicate the writer's due appreciation, from another point of view it captures the spirit of Assyrian imperialism as it was idealistically conceived of in Assyria. This will be substantiated from the charges laid against rebellious vassals with their note of indignation and affront at the vassal's despising of the good will and grace extended to him from Nineveh. The letters just quoted portray the king as suzerain, as source of life and light and welfare. From this perspective we turn to study the political reality of Assyrian suzerainty rejected by rebel vassals.

C.3: B - Rebellion: its Character and Vocabulary.

mannu bēl ṭābtī lā irām ina zamāri ša Akkadi mā
 aššū pīka ṭābu rē'ūa gabbū ummānē upaqqūka
 (H.435:rev. 9ff = SLA \$64)

Who does not love a benefactor ? - as the Akkadian
 song says, "Because of your gracious lips, O my
 Shepherd, all men pay attention to you"

The idealised image of the Assyrian king as a beneficent world ruler did little or nothing to avert rebellion among Assyria's vassals. Neither fear of the gods nor of the Assyrian sword quenched the opportunism which turned conspiracy into open defiance of the suzerain and his imperial machine. Ashurbanipal's Annals record more than nine major rebellions, yet none is as striking as the bid for independence made by the king's own brother, Shamash-shum-ukin. Using this rebellion as a framework, we shall outline the features and vocabulary associated with the rupture of the adê .

Speaking of his brother as he might of any vassal, Ashurbanipal claims to have been his benefactor in adê associated terminology - ša ṭābtu ēpušūš aškunuš ana šarrūt CN (Rassam, 3:71f Streck, 28; ARAB 2, 301 \$789). The concrete benefits are listed, and the charge is laid:

u šū damiqtu annītu ēpušūš imšī-ma ištēni'a lemuttu
 But he forgot this favour which I had bestowed upon
 him and persistently pursued evil (designs)

That the context for the ṭābtu and damiqtu is the adê, and that they are used in their technical sense is clear from Ashurbanipal's reference to his father's decree - eli ša abu bānija iqbū addinšu, 3:77 .

The charge of rebellion is framed in terms of the ṭābtu and damiqtu inherent in the adê many times in Ashurbanipal's Annals. Various verbs are used: 'not to guard the good' (našāru), 'not to give thought to the good' (ḥasāsu), 'to forget the good' (mašū), 'to sin against the good' (ḥatū).¹ Or again, the king 'seeks from the hand of

1. Uwaite: ṭābtu + lā našāru - Rassam, 7:86; Streck, 64; ARAB 2, 313 \$817
 - Prism B, 8:1; Piep, 86
 Abiate: ṭābtu + lā ḥasāsu - Rassam, 8:65; Streck, 70; ARAB 2, 315 \$822
 Urtaku - Prism B, 4:19f; Piep, 56

the rebel the good done him by grace' (ba''û).¹

The next description of Shamash-shum-ukin is also an indictment based on the adê :

eliš ina šaptēšu itammâ ṭubbāti šaplānu libbašu
kašer nērtu (Rassam, 3:80f)

Outwardly with his lips he was swearing to good relations, meanwhile under cover his heart was designing murder

Treaties are much exercised by the dangers of double-dealing, and are well aware that sinful action was preceded by sinful thoughts and a corrupt heart - a thoroughly biblical concept, as underlined by studies of Deuteronomy and the EVT.²

In contrast to the treaty injunction to stick to the complete truth (kettu šalimtu kullu/ka''ulu : EVT, 96), and not to slander the king (karšu akālu, abassu lā ṭābtu lā damiqtu qabû: EVT, 323ff),³

Egyptians: tābtu + mašû : Rassam, 1:119; Streck, 12; ARAB 2, 294 \$772
Tammartu: damiqtu + mašû: Rassam, 5:23 ; Streck, 44; ARAB 2, 306 \$802
Arabs: tābtu + ḥatû : Rassam, 9:73 ; Streck, 78; ARAB 2, 318 \$828

1. The Egyptians: tābtu/dunqu + ba''û - Rassam, 1:133; Streck, 12; ARAB 2, 294 \$773
2. See the EVT, 51, 53, 98f, 152, 183f, 310f: the roots malāku, dabābu, qarrabu +

ina kitti ša libbikunu	abutu lā damiqtu... ina
ša gammurti libbikunu	libbikunu tašakkanani ina
libbakunu issišu lā gammurūni	muḥišu

Cf. Frankena: OTS 14(1965), 140f and Weinfeld: DDS, 81ff & 334 No. 8ff.

3. Compare Esarhaddon's adê indictment of his rebellious brothers:

They forsook the (will) of the gods and turned to their own violent ways, plotting evil. Evil tongue (lišān lemuttim) slanderous lies (karši tašqerti) quite contrary to the divine will (kī lā libbi ilāni) they perpetrated against me, and with lies/crimes (surrāti) contrary to perfect relations (lā šalmāti) they were conferring together treacherously (idanabbubū zirāti). (Th. 1929-10-12, 1 CoL 1:24ff)

Cf. 'the spreaders of rumours': mušadbibūtū liḥšu (EVT, 500) and the censure of slanderers (EVT, 166, 329, 331, 364), if von Soden's translation is followed (AHw, 269 ezāru- 'beschimpfen'; 772 nazāru Š - 'Beschimpfungen veranlassen'). But see Reiner: ANETS, 101/537 note 10 who favours a meaning 'to instigate' for nazāru Š, and another root at 166 'to hold prisoner' (Wiseman, 'hate') (presumably reading roots esēru, eš/zēru & zēru respectively).

Shamash-shum-ukin slandered Ashurbanipal before his subjects and succeeded in subverting them:

mārē GN ša ina eli GN amrū ardāni dāgil pānija
ipruš-ma dadāb lā kitte idbuba ittišun (3:82ff)

The Babylonians, who looked to Assyria as my
subject servants, he subverted by distortion of
the truth when he addressed them

He stirred revolt (š-theme nabalkatu, 3:100), created hostility to Ashurbanipal (š-theme nakāru, 3:105), persuading the population groups to join his anti-Nineveh coalition (šakānu pī itti, 3:106). The confederates are described as uttering seditious speech blasphemous to the gods (šatunu šillatu pīšunu ša ina eli DNN ilīja šillatu iqbū, 4:66).

Rebellious speech is conveyed by the additional phrases - pīšu erḫu (B,5:2 Teumman; IT,149 Dugdamme) 'a rebellious aggressive mouth'; qabū mēreḫtu - 'to talk violence' (B,7:59 Tammartu); dekū ina pīršāti - 'to incite with lies' (B, 4:32 Beliqisha); dabābu dašāti itti - 'to speak treachery against' (A, 2:69 Mugallu); dabābu surrāte (itti) - 'to plot insurrection, speak lies against'¹ (A,1:120 Egyptians & 8:68 Abiate); samū dabāb surrāte - 'to listen to lies' (A, 7:91 Jauta'); qabū qul(?) - la-tu rabītu eli abi bāni RN - 'to utter a great curse against the father begetter of RN' (TM.1931-2,26:19 Iraq 7,p. 107 Shamash-shum-ukin). An explicit theological interpretation is offered of Tammartu's reaction at the execution of Teumman:

eli amāte annāte ša ilzenu DNN ēreḫūšu (A,4:21)

Because of these words (mēreḫtu iqbū: 4:14)
with which he mocked Ashur and Ishtar, they
attacked him

1. Ahw., 1062 & 1028f, surrātu - 'Lügen, Verbrechen' & sarāru - 'unbeständig, falsch, unwahr, lügnerisch sein'. Weinfeld aptly compares the Hebrew of Dt 13:6 dibbēr sārāh - a prohibition against covert collusion in idolatry - with its Akkadian cognate in Ashurbanipal's Annals and in the EVT, which censures listening to and concealing (šamū, pazāru) knowledge of 'agitators, plotters, whispers of evil, wrong, unseemly acts, rebellious and disloyal speech against the crown-prince designate Ashurbanipal: mušamḫiṣūtū mušadbibūtū liḫšū ša amāt lemutti lā ṭābtu lā banītu dabāb surrāte lā kēnāti, EVT 500ff; ANETS, 103/539 \$ 57). However, Weinfeld does not draw the conclusion we propose about the Annals, namely that they are adē-historiography (DDS, 99).

Complementing the verbalised element of rebellion is the vocabulary of military coalition, from the putting out of diplomatic feelers to the marshalling of armies against the imperial forces. Included are such phrases as kapādu lemuttu - 'to plot evil' (A,1:120 Egyptians), mu"uru ana šakān adē u salīmē - 'to despatch (envoys) to establish an oath-bound alliance' (A,1:123f Egyptians), tarū ana ištēn pī - 'to unify' (A,4:99 Shamash-shum-ukin), izuzzu itti - 'to take a stand with' (A,10:3 Aimua), maḥāru da'tu - 'to take a bribe/mercenary payment' (A,3:137 Ummanigash), šapāru ana kitri - 'to send(hire) for military aid' (A,3:138 Ummanigash; B,7:49 Tammariu; A,2:114 Gyges), nadānu emūqē - 'to give troops to' (A,7:98 Jauta'), alāku/šapāru ana rēšūti - 'to go/send to the aid of' (A,4:6 Tammariu; A,7:99 Jauta'), šakānu ana dannūtu - 'to rely for strength upon' (A,7:21 Nabu-bel-shumate), tebū lemuttim ana mišri - 'to evilly attack the border' (A,8:72 Natnu) and ḥabātu ḥubut nišē - 'to plunder Assyrian subjects' (A,7:103 Jauta').

The bid for independence is marked by such attitudes and actions as rāmānšun milik lā kušīr malāku - 'to adopt their own inept council' (A,1:120 Egyptians), gapāšu libbi - 'to swell with pride' (A,2:113 Gyges), rašū š baṭiltu rakbu ana ša'al šulmē RN - 'to cease (sending) the treaty envoy' (A,2:111f Gyges), takālu ana emūq rāmāni - 'to trust to his own strength' (A,2:113 Gyges), lā kanāšu - 'to be unsubmitive' (A,9:120 people of Akkū), lā sanāqu ana paḥātišunu - 'to be disobedient to governors' (A,9:117 people of Ushu), kalū tamarti mandatta kabittu - 'to cease paying the heavy tribute levy' (A,7:90 Jauta'), parāsu šēpē ana ša'al šulmē RN - 'to withdraw from paying respects' (A,7:89 Jauta') epēšu sīḥu (u) bārti - 'instigating insurrection and rebellion' (Iraq 7, 107 TM.1931-2,26:22; cf. EVT,498), ekšu bārānū - 'to be an obdurate rebel' (A,5:31 Tammariu), ekēmu māḥāzi šubat DNN - 'to take away the shrines of the gods' (A,3:115 Shamash-shum-ukin), kalū epēš niqē RN - 'to stop royal libations' (A,3:112 Smskn), and baṭālu š nadān zibē RN - 'to prevent royal offerings' (A,3:114 Smskn). The latter three phrases belong to the secession of Babylon and lay bare the fundamental theological character of rebellion by the emphasis they carry in Ashurbanipal's listing of his brother's crimes. The rebel's actions are an offence against the king and against his gods.

Suzerain-centred vocabulary includes the phrases lā našāru amāt šarrūti - 'not to observe the word of the king' (A,5:21 Baali), lā šamū

zikir šaptē RN - 'not to obey the utterance of the king's lips (ibid.), lā palāḫu bēlūti RN - 'not to reverence RN's suzerainty' (A,3:4 Ahshe-ri), parāsu ahhūtu - 'to break the bond of brotherhood' (A,3:109 Smskn), lā našāru ibrūti - 'not to maintain friendly relations' (B,4:20,54 Ur-taku), mašāru RN - 'to forsake RN' (A,7:96 Jauta'), ḥaṭū ina tābti RN - 'to sin against the grace of RN' (A,9:73 Arabs), lā ša'āl šulum šar-rūti RN - 'not to pledge homage (lit. ask after royal welfare)' (A,4:5 134 Tammartu; people of Bit Imbi).

Some of these phrases find exact parallels related to the gods or generally similar phraseology, including lā našāru amāt DN - 'not to observe the word of Ashur' (A,2:112f Gyges), salū nīr DN - 'to cast off the yoke of Ashur' (A,4:103 Smskn's confederates), mašū danān DN - 'to forget¹ the power of the gods' (A,1:56 Tarku), and lā nakādu zikir DN - 'not to tremble at the divine word' (Streck,280:22 Dugdamme).

The explicit reference to the adē in the record of rebellion is of course fundamental to our thesis, also confirming as it does the more oblique allusions such as those pointed out above. The rebel may 'sin against the treaty-oath of the king': ḥaṭū ina adē RN (A,1:118 Egyptians; A,7:18 & AAA 20,85 IT:108 Nabu-bel-shumate; A,7:85 Jauta'), 'not observe the treaty-oath of the king': lā našāru adē RN (A,1:133 Egyptians), and 'not observe the curse of the great gods': lā našāru māmīt ilāni rabūti (A,1:119 Egyptians; A,8:67 Abiate). Other phrases used include 'not fearing the oath by the life of the great gods': lā palāḫu nīš ilāni rabūti adē DNN (LET:34 Necoh), 'rupturing the curse of the gods': parāšu/parāsu (Neo-Ass.) māmīt DNN (LET:34 Necoh; Iraq 30,109 BM.123410:24 Dugdamme), 'not paying respect to the curse of the gods': lā dagālu māmīt DNN (AAA 20,89 IT:158), and 'to despise the oath by the life of the gods': mešū nī[š ilāni] (Streck, 280:22 Dugdamme).

This survey of the vocabulary of rebellion shows that 'sin' included the whole range of thought, word, deed and cultus. Though parallels to the Old Testament concepts of sin may be sought else-

1. Von Soden lists A,1:56 under two different verbs: mašū II, 3(c) 'to forget' (AHw.,631) and mēšu, 2(c) 'to despise, scorn, disregard'. The Rassam text reads im-šī-ma (R.Borger: Babylonisch-Assyrische Lesestücke, II, Roma, 1963, p. 81) from mašū, but under the middle weak mēšu, von Soden gives a reading e-me-eš¹⁵. Either verb fits well.

where in the Mesopotamian tradition - eg in Babylonian 'Penitential Psalms'¹ - the most fruitful field for study lies in the sphere of the adê, for sin in the Old Testament is essentially rebellion against Israel's Suzerain in analogy to the 'sin' of the rebel against adê stipulations, king and gods in Mesopotamia.

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1. See for example, S.H.Langdon: Babylonian Penitential Psalms, OECT 6, Paris, 1927 ; E.R.Dalglisch: Psalm 51 in the light of ANE Patternism, 1962. Unwitting sin, though acknowledged in the OT, is hardly the powerful psychological factor that it is in Mesopotamian prayers, eg 4R², 10 = Langdon: op.cit., 39f ; ANET, 391f. Compare the remarks of W.H.Ph.Römer, 'The Religion of Ancient Mesopotamia', section 4.B: Ethics (a) Sin & Guilt in Historia Religionum I, Religions of the Past, eds. C.J.Bleeker & G.Widengreen, Brill, 1969, page 154f .

C.4: C - The Royal Threat.

Writing about warfare as practised by the Hittites, Korošec sees a progression towards norms of law governing inter-state relations. He notes the attempts of Mursilis II to 'justify his numerous wars by indicating reasons for their outbreak' such as 'the punishment of a rebellious city; reaction to aggression by the adversary; or reprisal for the refusal of a previous Hittite demand for restitution of Hittite refugees'. Significant too were the concepts of 'ordeal by battle', and that 'the breach of a sworn treaty can lead to evil consequences'. Whether the Assyrian Annals which overlap chronologically with the end of the Hittite Empire are characterised by 'the lust for torture and cruelty' only, and lack all trace of the religious and legal norms present in the Hittite Annals is debatable. That is too wide an issue for discussion here, but most pertinent is the overlap of one definite concept singled out by Korošec as marking an advance in the Hittite idea of warfare. Speaking of the time of Mursilis II, he notes that 'the declaration of war was often drawn up in writing and forwarded to the enemy'.¹ In the later 1st Millenium, at any rate, we have evidence that the Assyrians sent letters with dire warnings from the king, ultimatums, that he would attack their recipients if they made certain moves indicating aggression or disloyalty. These letters were sent, it seems, in the hope that a campaign would not be needed. As such, they were a deterrent, despatched after whispers of rebellion reached the king via his intelligence service, or at a later stage than that when anti-Assyrian coalitions had already formed and taken up arms. In either case they fall into the category of imperial power politics, their motivation hardly being humanitarian, yet they were a declaration of intent and offered the possibility of repentance before reprisals were wrecked.

1. V.Korošec: Iraq 25(1963),159-166 "The Warfare of the Hittites from the Legal Point of View", 163ff. Compare Sg 8:110ff where the Urartian coalition sends Sargon a messenger declaring its readiness for battle (ARAB 2, 80 \$152).

The message of the Rabshakeh to Jerusalem was grim enough but held out the possibility of peaceful resettlement. Hezekiah also received a war letter from Sennacherib, written as a deterrent against reliance on the coalition with Tirhakah.¹ From the Esarhaddon *Gottesbrief*, when the king is laying seige to Uppume, we gather that the Shuprian's repentance is unacceptable at that stage because he had twice ignored Esarhaddon's messages, which by implication would have allowed for his forgiveness.²

More impressive are two letters from Ashurbanipal justifying himself against the treaty and threatening dire consequences should the recipients side with Elam in armed aggression:

mīnamma anāku ina ra'āmi ša GN arām bēl ṭābtija
u bēl ṣaltija ul ubāša ana gabbi ṭābti ēpuš u
šunu lemutte ētipšuni // ja'nu kī ša DNN ilēja
uṣallu inneppuš mimma libbātija lā imallu
(H.295:4-9 & rev. 7-10)

ultu rēšu ṭābti ana GN kī ēpušu u šunu ṭābtaja
ul utirrūni maqtūtešunu ultu libbi šarrāni adi
rubē aḥtešin akalē u mē attadin u ana mātišunu
altaparšunūti u šunu mārē-šiprēja ša ana šulmē
ašpuru iktesū u ana kitri ša ardiya ša iḥṭā ...
ja'nu kī ša DNN uṣallūinni ippuš arkāniš libbātija
mala imallū adu kī ašpur uznakunu aptette
(H.1260:5-16 & rev. 16ff = SLA §28)

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1. See Isa 36 & 37. Isa 37:9ff has the specific mention of a written threat:

wayyiqqaḥ RN 'et-hassēpārīm miyyad hammal'ākīm
wayyiqrā'ēhū

Note too the parallel in theological justification between Isa 36:10 and Ashurbanipal's justification of himself in adē terms and the conviction which emerged from this that an attack on the Rasheans and Elam would be made with divine backing. On the campaign of 701bc by Sennacherib, see now K.A.Kitchen: The Third Intermediate Period in Egypt: 1100-650 BC, Aris & Phillips, 1973, pages 157ff with details on Tirhaqa's participation.

2. Asar, 102ff §68, Gbr II,1:25ff; ARAB 2, 232f §596 .

Why have I displayed love for Elam ? I love my ally and do not put my opponent to shame.¹ To all I have shown favour/been loyal (lit. done good) but they have repaid with evil.... truly, when I entreat Ashur and Marduk my gods, will they not carry out whatever is in my mind ?

From the beginning I have indeed dealt loyally with (lit. done good to) Elam, but they have not returned my beneficence. Their refugees from kings to princes I have granted protection. Food and drink have I given them and allowed them to return to their country but they have bound my peace-envoys whom I have sent them, and to the military aid of my vassal who sinned [.....] ... Truly, when I entreat Ashur and my gods they will subsequently carry out whatever was in my mind. Hence I have written to make you understand this.

Both letters address the Rasheans, a tribe conquered and reconquered in the struggles with Elam, and at that point liable to give its backing to Elam against Ashurbanipal. Links with treaty texts

1. This translation of bēl ṣaltija ul ubāša is supported by Pfeiffer: SLA, 25 and CAD Ṣ, 89. It sounds unusually chivalrous on an Syyrian king's lips when elsewhere the moral drawn is good fortune to his friends who are loyal and destruction to his enemies, making the normal royal ethic to read '... and my adversary do I not put to shame ? '. Here the following phrase ana gabbi tends to support the CAD translation. If this is correct, we are witnessing the civilising effect of the adê, which creates an objective 'righteousness' somewhat beyond the subjectivity of royal whim, and somewhat comparable to the ethics of Prov 25:21f:

If your enemy is hungry, give him bread to eat;
and if he is thirsty, give him water to drink;
for you will heap coals of fire on his head, and
the LORD will reward you

Ashurbanipal too looked to the gods to reward his goodness to Elam, even if divine retribution - a rather literal 'coals of fire' - was in his mind.

appear in the concepts of showing love and loyalty,¹ favour and peace supported by particular acts such as the giving of food and protection, and the re-installation of the local dynasts. The treachery of Elam is thus exposed, and the gods will exact retribution on the king's bidding. The Rasheans must be made aware that any disloyalty would send king and gods into action against them. One presumes that they had not committed themselves to Elam at the time of the letter though their position seems to be compromised.

At this point, we may point out the parallel that the Royal Threat provides to biblical prophecy in that both are based on the accusation of breach of treaty or covenant. The Old Testament prophet is the Suzerain Yhwh's messenger coming to the covenant people with an accusation and an announcement of judgement based on the covenant stipulations and its curses.²

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1. W.L.Moran: CBQ 25(1963),77-87 "The ANE Background of the Love of God in Deuteronomy" has pointed out the common idea of love=loyalty in treaty texts and letters, including H.1105:32, which he regards as an oath of loyalty sworn to Ashurbanipal on the eve of the war with Shamash-shum-ukin. He did not mention the first letter above (H.295), where noun and verb (ra'āmu, rāmu) carry the technical sense with allusion to treaty oaths, further supporting Moran's thesis.
 2. On the *Botenstil*, see Claus Westermann: Grundformen prophetischer Rede, Munich,1960; ET, Basic Forms of Prophetic Speech, Lutterworth, 1967, page 98ff plus J.Harvey: Biblica 43(1962),172-196 "Le 'Rîb-Pattern' Réquisitoire Prophétique sur la Rupture de l'Alliance", expanded in his book Le Plaidoyer Prophétique contre Israël après la Rupture de l'Alliance, Studia:travaux de recherche 22,Paris,1967. The latter stands out in its fruitful use of ANE comparative material combined with attention to detail; see Chap 5 'Parallèles Extra-biblique du Rîb', and Chap 6 'Conséquence et Corollaires', section A: Le Prophète comme Messenger, p. 145ff. Note the antiquity of the antecedent to Ashurbanipal's letter,A.1314 (G.Dossin: Syria 33, 1956,63-69 "Une Lettre de Iarîm-Lim Roi d'Alep à Iasûb-Iahad Roi de Dîr") comprising the following features: (A) Identification of addressee & author, who describes himself in terms of the treaty relationship (aḥuka), and the implied commissioning of the messenger (qibi-ma), lines 1-4, (B) Invocation of Shamash,god of justice, to judge the controversy, lines 5-6a, (C) General Accusation of treaty breach in characteristic treaty terminology (abu,aḥu,ajjābu), lines 6b-9, (D) Accusing Question recalling *Heilsgeschichte* and using the Contrast Motif, lines 10-18, (E) Parallel Accusation of Sin-Gamil for sin against treaty benefits to reinforce by means of warning example, lines 19-24, (F) Reiteration of Accusation against addressee in terms of his obdurate conduct, lines 25-26, (G) Unconditional Announcement of Judgement in the form of a threat of annihilation,

Other details emerge. For example, within the first section of the two-part Accusation + Announcement of Judgement, there is a recital of *Heilsgeschichte* in both sources.¹ Ashurbanipal's salvation of Elam from famine parallels Yhwh's deliverance of Israel from Egyptian bondage and likewise constitutes a legitimate claim on their loyalty. Rhetorical questions are found in both sources in the Accusation, and so is the Contrast Motif : 'Wherefore have I displayed love for Elam ? To all I have done good, but they have repaid with evil' (H.295).² The motive for the Assyrian Royal Threat and for Yhwh's threat via His messenger is identical - to secure repentance and hence to avert the use of the sword, restoring good relations and renewed obedience.³

which is the central message of the letter. Harvey sets his analysis out under the following five headings: (1.) Adresse et Introduction, 1-5, (2) Accusation, 5-9, (3) Interrogatoire, 10-14, (4) Réquisitoire historique: a bienfaits, b. ingratitude, 15-26, (5) Menaces, 27-33. Compare this with his lists and tables (op.cit., 53ff,80f) for the OT samples of the prophetic rîb .

1. Westermann:op.cit., 129ff on the two-part form Accusation + Announcement, noting that the Assyrian material here is variously addressed to the individual king or to the tribal group collectively; ibid, 125f & 182f on the use of *Heilsgeschichte* and divine self-predication; also H.B. Huffmon: JBL 78(1959),285-295 "The Covenant Lawsuit in the Prophets", p. 294 .
2. On rhetorical questions, see Westermann:op.cit., 142ff; on the Contrast Motif, 155ff & 182f .
3. Compare Hos 11:8ff, 14:1ff with his covenant indictment, eg. 4:1ff. Clearly the intention of this covenant messenger is to secure Israel's repentance and so to avert its downfall; Cf. Jer 18:7 & Ezek 18:23,30ff which deal with repentance after proclamation of doom.

Further, both the Annals and the Old Testament historiographers make a point of recording the way in which the suzerain's messenger was received. The mistreatment of the messenger is the last straw, and after this only retribution can follow. Compare the treatment of Ashurbanipal's messenger sent to warn the onetime refugee Ummanigash against siding with Shamash-shum-ukin with the Chronicler's note on the prophets:

šūt amāte annāte mār-šiprija uma''ir šēr PN
 šūt-rēšija ša ašbu ina [CN] iklā-ma lā utirra
 turti amātija (Prism B, 7:36-39 Piep, 76)

Concerning these words I despatched my messenger to Ummanigash. My officer in [...] he restrained and did not send a reply to my message.

Yhwh, the God of their fathers, sent persistently to them by his messengers (malākāyw), because He had compassion on his people and on his dwelling place; but they kept mocking the messengers of God, despising his words, and scoffing at his prophets (nēbi'āyw), till the wrath of Yhwh rose against his people, till there was no remedy. (2 Chron 36:15f)

We therefore agree with Harvey in locating the *Sitz im Leben* of the Rīb-Pattern texts, and more generally of the prophetic threats against Israel, in the Royal Threat rooted in the adê/berît, and delivered by the Suzerain's messenger.¹ The 1st Millenium Ashurbanipal texts are of great importance both in revealing the continuity from the 2nd Millenium texts, and in attesting the vitality of the adê as a judicial-theological institution.

The actual message of another Royal Threat, this time directed against Indabigash, is recorded in Prism C of the Annals editions. It is most explicit as regards retribution, and the possibility of repentance is omitted from the message for greater effect just as it is

1. Harvey: art.cit., 180 - 'il ne s'agit pas ici d'une forme littéraire adaptée tardivement à un nouveau contenu, mais que l'on a plutôt devant soi un formulaire intimement rattaché à l'alliance dès le départ'. Compare W.Brueggeman: Tradition for Crisis, John Knox, 1968, p. 88f anchoring Hosea's judgement-speech, indictment, sentence, salvation-oracle, warning-speech in the covenant : 'in each case the point of immediate reference for the prophet is not in the courtroom, nor the holy war crisis, nor wisdom circles. Each of these forms in one way or another has been taken into the covenant tradition of Israel' .

from the prophecies of unconditional judgement in the Old Testament.

ina qāta mār-šiprišu ana PN kiam ašpuršu-ma
 aššu nišē šātunu lā tušabila umma allakam-ma
 ālānika anaqqar [nišē] CNN ašallal ulți kussī
 šarrūtika adakkika [šalnamma ina kussika ušēšib
 eplšet ina pān PN ušapriku ušamhirka kâta
 (Prism C,8:53-61 Streck, 142; ARAB 2,341 §878)

By the hand of his messenger I sent off the following despatch: " Because you have not sent back these people, I am going to come and devastate your cities. I shall carry off the inhabitants of Susa, Madaktu, and Hidalu. I shall cast you from your royal throne and enthrone another. What (evil) I brought upon Teumman, I will inflict upon you too.

While these threats are contextually determined by their relevance to the historical situation, the general background of treaty curses may be supposed without the specific mention of the gods as the agents of retribution.¹ Devastation of cities and the exile of their population were common not only in history but in curse material,² while the return of wanted persons was a prime concern of treaty stipulations being dealt with by clauses in the Hittite and Egyptian treaties (eg. Hattusilis III + Rameses II; Mursilis II + Duppi-Teshub), in the Alalakh treaties (eg. Niqmepa + Ir^dIM; Idrimi + Pilliya) and in the Aramaic Sefire III treaty.

That Ashurbanipal reacted theologically as well as by military alert is evident from the knowledge of his general behaviour pattern and from the continuation of this particular narrative. It recounts divine intervention - in answer to a prayer to the gods not recorded - before the messenger in question had arrived. The gods instigated a

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1. That an adê document governed the relations between Ashurbanipal and Indabigash may not be assumed, since Indabigash was not an Assyrian protegée, but previously Ummanigash was, and Ashurbanipal was probably protesting against the background of the previous adê relations with Elam such as is evidenced by the letters quoted above, and which it would suit him to regard as normative for Elamite conduct towards Assyria.
 2. Compare, for example, Sefire I, A:32ff & C:21ff; EBT, 4:14f ; EVT, 295; Deut 28:36ff,48ff & 63ff; Lev 26:33 & 36ff. See Hillers: TC/OTP, 44ff & 61; Fensham: ZAW 75, 165ff .

revolt among the Elamites which brought Indabigash down (C,8:62ff). The reference to Teumman in the letter consolidates the argument, for turning to the Prism B 7th campaign, one finds an elaborately theological narrative which includes prayers and divine oracles as the prelude to divine intervention in retribution upon Teumman,¹ certainly constituting a paradigm for the compressed threat in this royal despatch. Furthermore, if one compares the truncation of the Teumman campaign in the Rassam Prism from which all the major theological trappings have disappeared, there is every reason to believe that the text of the Royal Threat preserved in Prism C is deceptively 'secular' because it is only an excerpt. Despite this brevity, the Prism C despatch reveals its adê framework, as we have argued above, and that of the Royal Threat in general.

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1. Prism B, 5:25ff Ashurbanipal's prayer to Ishtar; 5:46ff - Ishtar's speech in response; 5:49ff - the seer's vision of Ishtar and her speech with the king; see the discussion of the prayer under section E: Prayer to the Gods, page 119ff below, and of Ishtar's response under section F: The Divine Pronouncement, page 142ff .

C.5: D - The Insulting Reply.

Although this sub-division somewhat overlaps that of B: Rebellion, and in particular the sins of the lips discussed there, and is documented by only one narrative in a clear manner in Ashurbanipal's Annals as we now have them, it seems warranted to note this as a step in adê relations which forms a link between the adê and the sword with the accompanying theological overtones.

The heading assumes that a point in the historical development of relations between Assyria and the nations round her has been reached namely, that the Assyrian monarch has despatched a warning message indicting the recipient in terms of the inter-state relations which previously obtained between them, whether suzerain-vassal or mutual coalition. Since the Assyrians would tend to represent states neutral or on a par with Assyria as secondary in importance or as bound by ties of tribute and vassalage, one cannot always make a rigid categorisation between vassal and parity relations based on the presentation in the Assyrian Annals. Parities fluctuated, for instance, between Assyria and Urartu, Assyria and Elam, and Assyria and the Cimmerians and Lydians, as well as with Egypt.

In the narrative recounting the exchanges between Ashurbanipal and Teumman which is apposite to this sub-division, it is not clear in exactly what relation Elam stood to Assyria from a legal point of view, since Teumman had dethroned what Ashurbanipal apparently regarded as the legal though rebellious dynasty. Certainly in the time of Urtaku's early reign, relations with Elam were good. Ashurbanipal describes how he 'grasped his hand' (ašbat qāssu, B,4:23 Piep,58) and supplied grain in the famine, also allowing temporary immigration to Assyria. He alleges that no thought of Elamite hostility had crossed his mind. This changed as rebellion and revolution occurred in rapid succession, leaving Teumman on the throne and the Assyrian palace filled with Elamite refugees whose extradition was rudely demanded.¹

1. 'Their extradition I did not grant him on the grounds of the insolence (mēreḫēte) which he kept on monthly despatching via PNN' (B,4:96ff). Compare the use of mēreḫtu at B,5:25 and the parallel phraseology of B,5:1ff - atkil ana DN ša utakkilanni qibīt pišū erḫu ul amgur ul addinšu munnabtē šātunu: 'I trusted in Ishtar who came to my aid, and did not concede to the demand of his insolent mouth and give back those refugees to him' (Piep,62).

Teumman followed up his demands and the written refusal, which we must assume Ashurbanipal sent him in the form of a Royal Threat, with a military advance. This was communicated to the king by intelligence reports transmitting Teumman's words to his generals, or perhaps more likely in the form of a declaration of war by the Elamite. If so, this is another example of an exchange of notes before battle. Perhaps Teumman couched his extradition demands in terms of the treaty-oath with Urtaku, for by regarding himself as the rightful king of Elam in Urtaku's place he could bring the gods of the previous adê into his threats if his demands were not met. At any rate, Ashurbanipal regarded Teumman's reaction as a reply insulting to his sovereignty and to that of his gods:

ina CN nāram libbiša aššu tibût PN ša balu ilāni
itbâ ušannūni tēmu umma PN kiam iqbi ša DN ušannu
milik tēmešu umma ul umaššir adi allaku ittišu
eppušu mithušutu šūt mēreḫti annīti ša PN iqbū amḫur
(šūt mēreḫēti PN šar māt GN ištappara amdahar)

When I was in Arbela, city beloved of her(Ishtar's) heart, they brought me intelligence of the Elamite's advance - who had gone into action contrary to the will of the gods (lit. without the gods) - saying: 'Thus spoke Teumman whom Ishtar has deranged in mind: "I will not leave off until I have come and fought a battle with him." ' This insolence which Teumman uttered I noted (or: received) (This insolence which Teumman king of Elam despatched I received) 1

Ashurbanipal exploits his position when the insulting reply was received. Teumman's impiety contrasts with his celebrations in Arbela devoted to Ishtar. The very fact that he should be interrupted in worship by the 'insolent message' underlined its character as being abusive to Assyria's gods.

1. Prism B, 5:18-26 Piep, 64 with a variant in brackets from K.2652:9, Streck, 190; ARAB 2, 360 \$929. The use of the root šapāru - 'to send, despatch' in the variant, as opposed to qabū - 'to speak' in Prism B, lends weight to the supposition that a written message in the form of an ultimatum or an outright declaration of war passed between Elam and Assyria before battle was joined. However, the question as to which variant is closest to the *Erstbericht* remains.

The concept of an insult against the national deity is shared by the makers of Hebrew history. It was in these terms that Sennacherib's Royal Threat was regarded by king and prophet in Jerusalem (Isa 37:4 hrp, gdp), and there is the promise of punishment for Assyrian arrogance,¹ conceived of as an insult to Yhwh's sovereignty. A similar association of deity and king in the context of hostility expressed against the anointed being hostility against the deity is again evident in Hebrew thought about their dynastic covenant², but it also extends to the true worshiper of Yhwh who personally feels the insults directed against Yhwh.³

It is very clear, then, that inter-state relations must involve theological as well as judicial implications not only because the Assyrian king was the high-priest of his national deity but because the territory of Assyria was Ashur's special realm and because the question of boundaries and military action were covered by treaty documents to which Assyria's gods were both witnesses and executors, so that when the monarch sent an ultimatum invoking the treaty and that ultimatum was rejected aggressively it constituted a declaration of theological dimensions involving the elect representative of Ashur, the gods' home territory and their ability to act as guarantors of treaty oaths, in short an insulting reply to the king called into question the ability of Assyria's gods to be gods. The next step was for the king to lay this outrage before his pantheon so as to effect the maximum divine involvement in the political solution.

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1. When Yhwh has finished all his work on Mount Zion and on Jerusalem, he will punish the arrogant boasting of the king of Assyria and his haughty pride (Cal-pērī-gōdel lēbab melek GN wēCal-tip'eret rūm Cēynāyw) (Isa 10:12)
 2. eg. Psa 2:1ff where the hostile coalition attempting to throw off the 'bonds and cords' of suzerainty are said to be acting 'against Yhwh and against his anointed'. The Psalm is an ultimatum embodying a Divine Pronouncement supporting the king and threatening total destruction on his enemies, concluding with a warning that vassal obedience should be forthwith renewed; cf. Cībdū DN bēyir'āh (Psa 2:11) with phrases from the Annals such as lū šulmu ana šar bēlija palhiš kanšiš tamartašu kabittu ušēbala adi mahrija(A,10:50).
 3. kī-qinē'at bēytēkā 'ākālāni wēherpōt hōrēpēykā nāpēlū Cālāy (Psa 69:10 MT)
For zeal for thy house has consumed me, and the insults of those who insult thee have fallen on me.

C.6: E - Prayer to the Gods.

The narrative recording Ashurbanipal's reception of Teumman's insulting reply continues with the king's prayer to Ishtar in a passage of great importance for the formulation of the Assyrian concept of history, the gods and the sword. Ashurbanipal relates how he stepped into the divine presence, bowed in worship and with tears flowing entreated the goddess.

This is immediately reminiscent of Hezekiah's reaction to Sennacherib's threats, for he rent his garments, donned sackcloth and went into the Temple, and in the language of the Chronicler 'prayed because of this and cried to heaven' (2 Chron 32:20, cf. 2 Kgs 19:1,14). Comparable too is Jehoshaphat's proclamation of a fast in the face of Moabite and Ammonite attack, and his prayer in the Temple along covenant lines (2 Chron 20). Fasting, sackcloth and tears express the humble dependance of the king before his gods with whom the victory lay, though the connotation of repentance would not seem to be applicable to the Assyrian monarch's tears¹ in the same way that repentance for failure to keep the bērît belonged to Hebrew intercession (cf. Ezra 9, Neh 1 & Dan 9), for the whole tenor of Ashurbanipal's prayer is his righteousness based on his election by Ashur (B,5:30ff), and his fulfilment of all its religious duties:

anāku ašreki aštene”i allika ana palāh ilūtiki
 u šullum paršiki u šū PN šar GN lā mušaqir ilāni
 kuššur kali ana mithuṣ ummānāteja umma atti bēlit
 bēlēti ilat qabli bēlit tāhāzi mālikat ilāni ša ina
 maḥar DN abi bāniki damiqtim taqbi ina nīš ēnēšu
 ellēti iḥšuhanni ana šarrūti aššu PN šar GN ana DN
 šar ilāni abi bāniki iḥṭû biltu [lā ūbila] idka
 ummānšu ikšura tāhāzi uša'ala kakkēšu ana alāk GN
 umma atti qaritti ilāni kīma bilti ina qabal
 tamhāri puṭṭirušu-ma dekissu meḥû šāru limnu inḥija
 šunuḥūti DN išme (Prism B,5:33-46 Piep, 64)

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1. At the Babylonian Akitu-festival, the king made a confession of righteousness, and his tears after the Sheshgallu-priest had struck him were considered a good omen of divine favour; see conveniently, Saggs: Greatness, 386f .

I have sought out your sanctuary, coming to do reverence to your deity and to fulfill your rites. But as for Teumman king of Elam who does not honour the gods, he has mustered his resources for an onslaught on my army. O Queen of ladies, Goddess of battle, Mistress of war, Queen /Counsellor of the gods, who before Ashur the Father who begot you spoke favourably (about me so that) by the lifting of his pure eyes (upon me) he designated me for the kingship - because Teumman king of Elam who sinned against Ashur king of the gods your Father begetter, and [did not bring] tribute but mustered his army and drew up his battle array and invoked his weapons to march on Assyria - now therefore O Heroine of the gods, rip him open like a bundle in the fray, mount a tempest and evil wind against him ! Ishtar heard my groaning sighs.

The prayer is built from an identification of the speaker, a description of the circumstances with a denunciation of the enemy, a listing of the appropriate divine attributes on the basis of which approach to the deity is made, and the request for specific divine action. Though the tears and the lifting of the hands identify the king as suppliant, his words are in fact a list of attributes - his merit - on the basis of which he expects Ishtar's response. The indictment of Teumman is two-fold - the general charge of impiety which contrasts him starkly with Ashurbanipal, and the specific charge of treaty breach. The former is expressed by lā mušaqir ilāni (5:35), which links with ša balu ilāni itbā (5:19), indicating conduct which is divorced from the divine will. The specific charge is failure to pay tribute and armed aggression against Assyria, described theologically as 'sin against Ashur'. This involves the goddess, for Ishtar is his daughter, and furthermore was the one who advised Ashurbanipal's election. Her warlike titles are invoked, and her intervention in battle requested to enact a curse in the tradition of the simile curses appended to treaties, which begin kī ša ..., or in Aramaic 'yk zy¹

1. For example, EVT,530ff; Sefire I, A:35ff; cf. the Hittite Soldier's Oath, ANET, 353f; cf. Neh 5:13 kākāh .. .

Was the spoken curse accompanied by ritual action as it was in treaty ceremonies ? Evidence for this is lacking, though it cannot be ruled out on the grounds of the apparently personal entry into the goddess' presence by the king, as though this would exclude his accompaniment by priests performing magical rites. To interpret the account as a private act of religion would be to neglect the cultural setting which is not individualistic, though the occasion may have been less public than for treaty making. It is relevant to note that in the two biblical incidents mentioned for comparison the setting for Jehoshaphat's prayer was a publically proclaimed fast and ceremony during which all the people were 'standing before Yhwh' with priests present, one of whom uttered the responsive oracle (2 Chron 20:3,13, 14 & 18), while in the Hezekiah narrative his apparently solitary entry into the Temple for prayer (2 Kgs 18:14ff) must be modified by picturing him accompanied by those mentioned at 2 Kgs 18:18 and 19:2, namely, the comptroller of the household, the adjutant-general, the secretary of state and the senior priests.¹ That priests were present during Ashurbanipal's prayer is indicated by the responsive oracle of Prism B, 5:47ff.

In effect, therefore, the prayer is an indictment of Teumman couched in terms of the adê and culminating in a curse which relates to treaty curses either by allusion back to those in a treaty with Elam, or by further ritual activation of them or of similar curses during the prayer. Furthermore, Ishtar is invoked both as witness and executor, as are the gods in treaty texts. The prayer and the treaty belong together within the same theological framework.

It has often been remarked that in Assyrian hands the curse section of the treaty was greatly elaborated. Congruent with this emphasis on the curses in the adê is its emphasis in Ashurbanipal's prayer against Teumman, and also the form in which his prayer against Gyges has been preserved. The earlier Edition E had a fuller narrative of the Gyges episode than do later editions, but for the prayer

1. Compare too Naaman, the commander in chief of the Syrian army, as the king's regular escort in worship - 2 Kgs 5:19 .

The four curses which appear in the two brief prayers of Ashurbanipal cited are interesting in that those directed against Gyges appear to be appropriate in being personal, involving his death and desecration, the latter pursuing him beyond the grave, since improper burial and neglect of the shade was thought to cause the ghost to wander unhappily,¹ whereas the two directed against Teumman appear to have been selected at random from the wide range of traditional material. The denial of proper burial is widely attested as a curse, and there is evidence in Ashurbanipal's own behaviour and statements of his subscription to these beliefs.² These references will be discussed under section H: The Fate of the Adê Violator, while here we may note the significant extension of retribution from this life to the afterlife - a point not discussed by Fensham and Hillers in their sketches of the curse of No Burial and Desecration of Corpse, which also omit references to the Gyges episode and the curse in Ashurbanipal's prayer.³ Significant too is the fact that while the Old Testament reflects the traditional curse of desecration, there is no reflection of the restlessness beyond death, and this despite general

1. Compare the curse in the Middle Babylonian boundary stone of Merodach-baladan I - Šalamatašu ina eršeti aj iqebbir [eṭemmušu] ana eṭemmē kintišu aj isniq: 'may his corpse not be buried in the earth, his spirit not join the spirits of his kin' (V. Scheil: MDP 6, 1905 pl 10, 6:22), and the Shamash curse of Hammurabi's Code - awātum maruštum ša DN arhiš likšussu eliš ina balūtūtim lissuhšu šapliš ina eršetim eṭemmušu mē lišašmi: 'may the ominous word of Shamash quickly overtake him, may it uproot him from among the living in the (world) above, and cause his spirit to thirst for water in the nether world' (CH 27b:31-40, BabLaws, 102). For the types of death and the fate of the corpse in relation to the spirit's existence in the afterlife, see CT 16, pl 10, 5:1-14 = Thompson: Devils I, 30ff; Gilg 12:151ff = ANET, 99; Ebeling: LKA, No. 84:23ff = ibid.: TuL, 144ff - all conveniently reproduced under CAD E, 398f eṭemmu

2. Eg. Rassam, 6:70ff, Streck, 54ff; ARAB 2, 310 §810 .

3. ZAW 75(1963), 161ff; TC/OTP, 68f .

similarities between the Hebrew concept of Sheol with its wraith-like existence and Assyrian concepts.¹

There seems to be no exact equivalent to the 'bundle curse' in other extant lists, nor has biltu in the sense of 'bundle, baggage pack' generated other similes according to the listings of the dictionaries. The simile here equates the victim's body with the bundle wishing for it to be strewn dismembered like the contents of a load, pack or bundle whose lashings have been loosened and whose contents have fallen out on the ground. The simile relates in conception to the dismemberment similes which are ritually enacted with animal victims such as the spring lamb and ewe of the Mati-ilu and Ramataja treaties (AMT & EVT).²

The curse of tempest and evil wind (mehû šāru limnu) is at first sight somewhat odd in this context, unlike its setting in the EBT text where the Phoenician gods are exhorted to raise a šāru lemnu to wreck the Tyrian fleet.³ A suitable background other than the maritime may

1. The biblical taunt against the king of Babylon mocks his desecration - 'but you have been flung out unburied, mere loathsome carrion ... a corpse trampled under foot' (Isa 14:19 NEB), but suggests that he is now the equal, no better nor worse than the previously deceased kings who greet him - 'So you too are weak as we are, and have become one of us' (Isa 14:10 NEB). The contrast is in his glory in life and his weakness in death, and not in his plight after desecration compared to the ease of properly buried kings. Ezek 32: 27 is most dubious as regards the relation between violent death and the afterlife, for the distinction between the honorably buried warriors 'who have gone down to Sheol with their weapons, their swords under their heads and their shields over their bones' (NEB), and Meshech and Tubal does not appear to be the point, and is certainly not so if the negative is omitted after the Greek, or the NEB rendering of it as a question ('Do they not rest ?) is followed.

On the afterlife in Hebrew and Mesopotamian thought, see A. Heidel's carefully documented essay 'Death & the Afterlife', chap. 3 of The Epic of Gilgamesh & O. Parallels, U Chicago Phoenix edition, 1963, p. 137-223; Ebeling: TuL, 1931; S.N. Kramer: Festschrift Woolley, Iraq 22 (1960), 59-68 "Death & the Netherworld according to the Sumerian Literary Texts"; *ibid.*: JCS 21 (1967), 104ff "The Death of Ur-Nammu & His Descent to the Netherworld"; M. Bayliss: Iraq 35 (1973), 115-125 "The Cult of the Dead in Assyria & Babylonia"; H.W.F. Saggs: Faith & Thought 90 (1958), 157-182 "Some Ancient Semitic Conceptions of the Afterlife" plus the studies cited in Greatness, 522f (c) Texts & Studies on the Underworld & Ideas on the Afterlife; R. Martin-Achard: From Death to Life, London, 1960; N.J. Tromp: Primitive Conceptions of Death & the Nether World in the OT, Bib & Or. 21, Rome, 1969 with some discussion of Ugaritic material.

2. ANETS, 96/532f, AMT, i:10 & 103/539 EVT, \$69 & 70 .

3. ibid., 98/534, iv:10.

be found, however, in the heroic epics such as Enuma Elish and the Myth of Zu, where the champion of the gods defeats an unruly and monstrous enemy of the gods with the assistance of the four winds, storm, tempest, and evil wind. From Enuma Elish in Speiser's translation come the following lines by way of illustration:

The four winds he stationed that nothing of her
might escape,
The South Wind, the North Wind, the East Wind,
the West Wind.
Close to his side he held the net, the gift of
his father Anu.
He brought forth Imhullu, 'the Evil Wind', the
Whirlwind, the Hurricane,
The Fourfold Wind, the Sevenfold Wind, the Cyclone,
the Matchless Wind;
Then he sent forth the winds he had brought forth,
the seven of them.
To stir up the inside of Tiamat they rose up
behind him.

The Evil Wind, which followed behind, he let loose
in her face.
When Tiamat opened her mouth to consume him,
He drove in the Evil Wind that she closed not her lips,
As the fierce winds charged her belly,
Her body was distended and her mouth was wide open.
He released the arrow, it tore her belly,
It cut through her insides, splitting the heart.

A similar passage from the Myth of Zu describes Ninurta's attack on evil Zu as follows:

My lord hitched the Seven-of-the-Battle,
The hero hitched the seven ill winds,
The seven whirlwinds which stir up the dust,
He launched a terrifying war, a fierce conflict.
While the gale at his side shrieked for strife,
Zu and Ninurta met on the mountain side. ¹

Oppenheim discussed the poetic language of the Assyrian Annals in relation to the poetry of the Epics, comparing the report of Sennacherib's battle at Halule with Marduk's battle in Enuma Elish with respect to the vividness of language in the former source.² Here we

1. Enuma Elish, 4:42-48, 96-102 by Speiser & Zu, 2:30-35 by Grayson; ANET, 66f & ANETS, 79/515 respectively .

2. To the detriment of the Epic - Oppenheim: AM, 253 .

are not concerned with stylistics but the reflection of theological ideas from the Epics to the historiographic sources by means of allusive imagery. The case for allusion is further strengthened by the appearance of the Divine Net in Ashurbanipal's Annals, which, as we argue in the Excursus: The Divine Net, has a long history including appearance in the passage from Enuma Elish quoted above.¹ Ashurbanipal's prayer might more appropriately have been made to a deity other than Ishtar, it might be argued, were the association of his curse and mythical battles direct. However, the rôles and attributes of the Mesopotamian gods were not rigidly designated, and the Assyrians, for instance, felt free to substitute Ashur for Marduk in their version of Enuma Elish. As goddess of war, Ishtar could be credited with the qualities of the epical gods of battle, and in this case with those of the god of thunderstorm.² She is certainly addressed in heroic terms (mālikat ilāni, qaritti ilāni) which stress her ferocity (ilat qabli bēlit tāhāzi) and Teumman would be appropriately cast in the rôle of a rebellious monster.

As noted the curse of tempest and evil wind has not yet turned up in Assyrian treaty texts, and by coincidence it is likewise missing from the curse lists of Deut 28 and Lev 26, but present in a Hebrew prayer directed against a hostile coalition threatening the nation. God is invoked because an alliance of Israel's enemies has taken a vow to wipe her out. Divinely aided victories of Israel's past are recalled with the wish that God would treat the present enemies likewise, and a number of vivid requests for their doom by divine retribution

1. See the Excursus I: The Divine Net, especially page

2. On Marduk as MAR.UTU.(A)K = 'Son of the Storm', see T.Jacobsen: JAOS 88.1 (1968), 104ff "The Battle between Marduk and Tiamat"; for the early association of storm imagery with Ishtar identified with Sumerian Inanna, see Enheduanna's poem Nin-me-šār-ra, section (iv) Inanna & Ishkur, lines 26ff, esp. 28-31:

In the guise of a charging storm you charge
 With a roaring storm you roar
 With Thunder you continually thunder
 With all *the evil winds* you snort
 (Hallo & van Dijk: Exaltation, 18f & 51 notes; cf. ANETS, 144/580 by Kramer)

Cf. M.Lambert: RA 55(1961), No. 20 'Inanna & Ebiḫ' and No. 55 'Inanna of Battle'.

are uttered:

Scatter them, O God, like thistledown,
 like chaff before the wind.
 Like fire raging through the forest
 or flames which blaze across the hills,
 hunt them down with thy tempest (běsaċărekā)
 and dismay them with thy storm-wind (běsûpătěkā)

1

The combination of curse and context - prayer in similar circumstances to Teumman's military aggression - makes the parallel with Ashurbanipal's Annals most striking. Alongside this we may lay parallel prophetic curses such as the malediction of Amos against the Ammonites, a traditional enemy of Israel.

Therefore I will set fire to the walls of Rabbah
 fire that shall consume its palaces
 amid war-cries on the day of battle
 with a whirl-wind on the day of tempest
 (běsaċar běyôm sûpāh) (Amos 1:14 NEB)

The yôm sûpāh is in parallel with the yôm milhāmāh, which draws together the literal fighting with divine intervention (Yhwh speaks in the 1st Person in the Oracles against the Nations) which may be literal as is the fire and battle cry, but seems more likely to be used as imagery for terror, violence and divine wrath. Certainly, the saċărat Yhwh conjures up divine wrath elsewhere in the prophets, this time in a malediction directed against Israel:

Behold, the storm of Ywh ! (saċărat DN)
 Wrath (hēmāh) has gone forth,
 a whirling tempest (saċar mithôlêl);
 it will burst upon the head of the wicked.
 The anger of Yhwh ('ap-DN) will not turn back
 until he has executed and accomplished
 the intents of his mind.

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1. Psa 83:13-15 NEB. Opinions are very divided on the historical background of this psalm, ranging from regarding it as a visionary experience of a threatening 'Völkersturm' and the names as 'dichterisch frei zusammengestellt' (eg. H-J.Kraus: Psalmen II, BKAT, 576f), or dating it in the Maccabean period, to those commentators taking Ashur as Assyria giving it a pre-exilic date (eg. M.Dahood: Psalmen 51-100, AB, 1968, p. 273) with earlier or later periods in mind (eg. Maillot & Lièvre: Les Psaumes 2, Labor et Fides, 1966, p. 199f for a date c. 850-730 bc; or 650 bc following Shamash-shum-ukin's revolt and supposing Manasseh's simultaneous revolt and the inevitable Assyrian reprisal following - see de Liagre Böhl & Gemser: De Psalmen, Callenbach-Nijkerk, 1968, p. 149f .

In the latter days you will understand it clearly.
(Jer 23:19ff = 30:23)

The curse of scattering in exile (cf. Deut 28:36,64 & Lev 26:33) is expounded in relation to 'great wrath' (qesep gādōl) from Yhwh by Zechariah using the tempest imagery: 'I scattered them with a whirlwind (wē'ēsā'ārēm) among all the nations which they had not known' (Zech 7:14). Hosea too, who is so rich in his use of covenant ideology¹ and traditional curse material, employs the tempest malediction :

For they sow the wind (rūāḥ)
and they shall reap the whirlwind (sūpātāh)

The wind shall sweep them away, wrapped in
its wings (Hos 8:7 & 4:19 NEB)

The passages quoted do not exhaust the comparative biblical material,² but are quite sufficient to reveal the parallels in Assyrian and Hebrew concepts of realised divine wrath in historical circumstances. The question of Hebrew borrowing may be left open. Is the tempest imagery naturalistic and independent of mythological stories about Storm-deities, is it borrowed unconsciously from the common pool of literary expression without mythological association, or is it used with deliberate apologetic intent to squeeze out pagan gods by ascribing all their attributes to Yhwh alone? These questions are beyond our scope which is limited here to showing that both Ashurbanipal and the Psalmist, as well as Amos, Hosea and later prophets were wont to base historical expectations on their deities acting in respect to curses appended to a treaty/covenant document.³ What parallels there are should not, of course, obscure the unparalleled, namely, Israel's

1. See, for example, W.Brueggeman: Tradition for Crisis, John Knox, 1968; F.C.Fensham: OTWSA 1964/65, 35-49 "The Covenant Idea in the Book of Hosea".

2. Cf. Job 27:20ff, Nah 1:3b. The chaff simile (eg. Isa 40:24 & 41:16) seems to belong to another though possibly associated literary figure, cf. Isa 29:5 with the following verse, 29:6 .

3. It is quite inadequate to say with J.L.Mays - commenting on Amos 1:14 - that 'tempest and whirlwind are elements of the traditional portrayal of a Yhwh theophany' (Amos, SCM, 1969, p 38) and leave it there without pursuit of the ANE literary relationships, and in this instance of the curse material. Even special studies of the curse tradition (eg. ZAW 75, 155-175) need extending now that their basic point has been established and accepted.

subjection to her bĕrît curses, for she had need to confess her disobedience to the bĕrît, though she might like Ashurbanipal have claimed to have fulfilled Yhwh's rituals.¹

The three biblical prayers mentioned (2 Chron 20; Isa 37; Psa 83) brief as they are, reveal the distinctive faith of Yahwism when laid alongside Ashurbanipal's prayers. In them, Yhwh alone 'rules over all the kingdoms of the nations' (2 Chron 20:6), is 'God, thou alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth' (Isa 37:16), and 'alone whose name is Yhwh, art the Most High over all the earth' (Psa 83:19), so that none is able to withstand thee' (2 Chron 20:6). While the Assyrians might say much the same about Ashur on occasion,² it would be less exclusive both of other gods in their pantheon and of foreign gods reckoned as existent but less powerful, whereas Yahwism's praise was not directed now to this god and now to that in the petitioner's interest, while foreign deities were reckoned as 'no gods, but the work of men's hands, wood and stone' (Isa 37:19). Yhwh is motivated to demonstrate this (Isa 37:20, Psa 83:19, 2 Chron 20:6-8) .

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1. Compare Prism B, 5:33ff with Amos 5:21f, Hos 6:6, Jer 6:20, 7:1-4, 21ff, etc.
 2. C.J.Labuschagne correctly describes the Mesopotamian hymns and prayers which address one god as supreme or incomparable as using 'nothing more than a stereotyped epithet expressing the profoundest adoration' (The Incomparability of Yahweh in the OT, POS 5, Brill, 1966, chap. 3 "The Incomparability of God in other ANE Religions", page 35). This important monograph treats Jehoshaphat's prayer (p. 86ff), and in its general conclusions supports the points made above regarding the distinctiveness of Yahwism expressed by national election and *heilsgeschichtliche* perspective - 'nowhere else in the ancient Middle East was the attribute of incomparability applied to a community; we find it only in connection with Israel' p. 149; ' "epithets" describing certain aspects of Yahweh involve much more than honorific ascriptions, embellishments or epithets of lavish praise, for they are confessions of Israel's experience in history, motivating belief in His incomparability' (p. 97). The importance of the Exodus as the historical basis for belief in Yhwh as the incomparably just redeemer to whom appeal could be made is stressed repeatedly by Labuschagne and described as 'the moral basis of Yahweh's redeeming intervention in history' (p. 100). The Exodus confession is the basis of both the hymns of praise and the appeals for rescue, in both of which the incomparability of Yhwh is prominent.

Again, despite election appearing in both sets of prayers, Israel's election is thoroughly historicised by reference back to the Abrahamic covenant, the Exodus and the Conquest as the fulfilment of Yhwh's covenant promise (2 Chron 20:7ff, Psa 83:4), and is national rather than monarchical alone. The Yahwistic covenant regulated Israel's occupation of Palestine, which is threatened, and since Israel had observed the covenant prohibitions in the Conquest as stipulated by her divine Suzerain, she is now able to appeal against her attackers for divine arbitration and for protection of 'the pastures of God' (Psa 83:13) and 'thy possession which thou hast given us to inherit' (2 Chron 20:11), just as a vassal might appeal to his suzerain ('ēlōhîm hălō' tišpāt-bām, 2 Chron 20:7). Hope for victory is historically rooted by recollection of Yhwh's previous interventions (2 Chron 20:7 & Psa 83: 8ff cāšēh-lāhem kēMidyān, etc). Hence at the points of monolatry, election, covenant, nationhood and the *heilsgeschichtliche* perspective, the biblical prayers which run parallel to Ashurbanipal's depart from their Assyrian counterparts. It is important to be clear on both divergences and parallels for enlightened biblical studies, and hence the point has been labored here.

From the prayer uttered before action divine or human was taken, we move to the response from the gods.

C.7: F- The Divine Pronouncement.

Of the five prayers - four specified and one implied - which were mentioned in the previous section, only one has its responsive oracle attached, while the oracle but not the prayer has been preserved in the fifth example.¹ Besides these two oracles, it is possible to present three more and to indicate further passages in the Annals of Ashurbanipal where an oracle has not been recorded in the narrative but where it is clearly implied in the original historical circumstances.

This truncated form of preservation contrasts with the full and growing representation of 2nd Millennium prophetic oracles from Mari from which so much has been learnt about prophecy in Mesopotamian and in Israel.² Ideally, the oracles of Ashurbanipal's Annals should not be studied in isolation but alongside the Mari collection and the remainder of the Sargonid corpus, some of which has received

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1. Prism B, 5:25ff prayer + 5:46ff oracle & vision
 Rassam, 3:4ff prayer implied & oracle
 Rassam, 2:115ff prayer only
 Rassam, 1:63ff prayer only
 Prism B, 7:52ff prayer only

2. A good bibliography on the Mari collection of prophetic oracles may be found in four of the most recent studies

J-G.Heintz: VISupp 17(1969),112-138 "Oracles Prophétique et 'Guerre Sainte' selon les Archives de Mari et l'AT"

ibid: Biblica 52(1971),543-555 review article of

F.Ellermeier: Propetie in Mari und Israel, 1969.

W.L.Moran: Biblical 50(1969), 15-56 "New Evidence from Mari on the History of Prophecy"

renewed attention at least so far as translation goes.¹ A complete study of this nature cannot be attempted here, and occasional references to the texts and studies falling outside the limits of Ashurbanipal's Annals must suffice, though they may be of influence by leading us to ask of the Ashurbanipal oracles as to whether they are solicited or unsolicited, by whom mediated and from which deity, of what form and content, to whom addressed and of what historical fulfilment. Yet our main concern must be how the oracles fit into the theological framework of the adê and the sword.

1. The oracles in mind here belong to Esarhaddon (A) and Ashurbanipal (B), and may be tabulated as follows:

- A: \$ Pinches: 4R², pl. 61 - bibliography HKL 1, 405 & ANETS, 169/605
 \$ K.2401 - bibliography HKL 1, 67 under Craig: ABRT I, 22-25; ET & transliteration, S.A.Strong: Bei.Assyr. II, Leipzig, 1893, page 627ff
 \$ BM. 82-5-22,527 bibliography, HKL 1, 294; S.Langdon: T&I, Oxford, 1914, pls. 2-3 & p. 137ff
 \$ K.6259 T&I, pl. 4
- B: \$ CT 35, pls. 13-15 (K.2647 + Rm.2, 99) bibliography HKL 1, 298 under Leeper; ET in ARAB 2, 402ff
 \$ CT 35, pls. 26f (K.6064); transliteration & German translation in Bauer: IASb, 82
 \$ CT 35, pl. 30 (Rm 2,236); *ibid.*
 \$ H.923 = SLA \$248 = Parpola: LAS, 82f; ANETS, 170/606
 \$ Prism B,5:15-76 Piep, 64ff; Oppenheim: Dreams, 249; ANETS, 170/606
 \$ K.883 bibliography HKL 1, 67 under Craig: ABRT I, pl. 26f; ANET, 450

Note also H.32, 58, 1021, 149, 1237. H.58 records a victory promise from Ishtar of Arbela, and H.1021 a dream in which Bel speaks.

Before looking at the recorded divine pronouncements, we can learn much from two passages in the Annals where the actual oracle has disappeared, being replaced by a summary phrase which clarifies the character of the oracles themselves. The first of these is embedded in the Elamite wars narrative prior to the accession of Tammartu. The context has been described in Section C on the Royal Threat where the passage was quoted recording Ashurbanipal's threatening letter to Ummanigash, who ignored it.¹ The narrative continues -

DNN [ilāni] tiklīja dīn kitti itti PN
idīnūinni PN2 šēruššu ibbalkit-ma šāšu
gaḍu kimitišu urassip in kakkē

Ashur Sin Shamash Bel Nabu Nergal [the gods] my helpers, passed a just sentence (lit. judged for me a true judgement) on Ummanigash. Tammartu revolted against him and cut him down and his family with the sword. ²

A royal prayer is surely implied prior to the divine verdict in which Ummanigash would have been indicted for breach of the adē, as he is earlier in the Prism B column.³ The charge of treaty-breach which opens Column 7 is this a scribal re-arrangement of the adē charges contained in Ashurbanipal's letter and prayer which have been omitted for brevity.

1. Prism B, 7:36-39 Piep, 76; see Section C: The Royal Threat, p 113.

2. Prism B, 7:40-44, Piep, 78; ARAB 2, 336 §867.

3. PN ša ṭābtu ma'assu ēpušuš aškunuš ana šarrūti
GN ša damiqti lā ḥassu lā iṣṣuru adē māmīt
ilāni rabūti (Prism B, 7:3-6)

See the discussion of treaty breach vocabulary in Section B: Rebellion - its Character & Vocabulary, page 102f .

Besides the text of the letter and the prayer, the words of the divine pronouncement have also been omitted in favour of the bare fact of the verdict itself: dīn kitti itti PN idīnūinni. If we may trust the scribes, the list of six Assyrian gods associated with the judgement removes it from the category of divinatory inquiry which resulted in a Yes or No and was addressed to Shamash the bēl dīnim, to Shamash and Adad DN1 bēl dīnim DN2 bēl bīri or to another deity.¹ From the way the narrative moves on to describe Ummanigash' slaughter at Tammarithu's hand, which is surely being presented as divinely ordained, a retribution flowing out of the divine verdict, it would be most appropriate to suppose that the divine dīnu predicted the fate of Ummanigash in a prophetic oracle whose fulfilment the historiographers saw in the subsequent events.

The judicial framework which the dīnu/dānu phraseology points to is to be found in the adê. Ashurbanipal had taken his case against Ummanigash to the gods, and they had ruled in his favour (idīnū + -inni) confirming his adê indictment. Since all the Assyrian gods were listed as witnesses to the adê, the list of six may be regarded as representative. Because this is not an instance of ordeal by battle in

1. On inquiries by omen directed to Shamash, see J.A.Knudtzon: Assyrische Gebete an den Sonnengott, Leipzig, 1893 and E.G.Klauber: Politisch-Religiöse Texte aus der Sargonidenzeit, Leipzig, 1913 and the new edition with supplementary texts promised by J.Aro 'Remarks on the Practice of Extispicy in the Time of Esarhaddon and Ashurbanipal' in La Divination en Mésopotamie, RAI 14, 1966, 109-117. They open with the request for a clear omen ^dŠamaš bēlu rabū ša ašallaku anna kīna apulanni, and Esarhaddon seems to have introduced or made this a regular feature in his time (Aro: op.cit., 112). The Babylonian tamītu can also concern warfare as well as trivial matters (ibid., 11 with reference to Craig: ABRT I, 81/82) but addressed Adad as well as Shamash - see Lambert: La Divination, 119-123 'The Tamītu Texts'. K.81-2-4,48 & 83-1-18,199 = H.1367 & 1368 are well preserved oracular inquiries without answers addressed to ^dLahar on behalf of Ashurbanipal by a woman (sinništu in the ēzib clause) concerning rumours of revolt and the sword. The semantic range of dīnu in no way obliges us to take it here in Prism B, 7:41 as limited to an omen (cf. CAD D, 150ff).

which the outcome decided which of the two contestants was judicially supported by the gods,¹ we must presume that the judicial decision recorded prior to Ummangash fate - unless a scribal concoction without historical correlate - was communicated by a prophetic pronouncement which was likely to have built on the curses of the breached adê, as Ashurbanipal's prayer may have done, for which we have the precedents quoted in section E.

The second wordless 'divine pronouncement' comes from a summary of the Elamite wars in the *Jagdinschrift* where Ashurbanipal describes his prowess in wisdom and war with credit to the gods who bestowed their favours upon him:

ušarbu kakkēja eli nakrēja ša ultu šeherija adi
rabija igriinni idinū dīni itti PN šar GN ša lā
agrušu igranri ...] kīmūa tahtašu iškunu imḥašū
pānāssu iṭrudūšu adi mišir ...]

(The gods) exalted my weapons over my foes who were hostile to me during my lifespan. They gave judgement in my case against Urtaku king of Elam who made war on me although I had not been hostile towards him [...]. In my stead, they accomplished his defeat, smote him and drove him off across the border [...]

2

When this is compared with the Prism B account of the encounter with Urtaku, the context of the dīnu becomes clear. It is the breach of the adê. This is spelled out by phrases drawn from the adê vocabulary such as tābtu lā ḥasāsu and ibrūtu lā našāru followed by the historical details of Ashurbanipal's succour and Urtaku's invasion. Associated with Urtaku are Beliqisha and Nabushumeresh, described as vassals and oath-breakers (ardāni dāgil pānija, 4:29 & adê lā našāru, 4:62). The fates of all three are given in terms of divine wrath through sword, wild beast and disease,³ which are regular means of retribution in the treaty curses.

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1. Neither Fensham nor Harvey (*Festschrift Volterra*, art.cit. & *Biblica* 43) makes use of the important prayers and pronouncements in the Ashurbanipal material, but their general thesis relating prophetic pronouncements to the treaty/covenant, its curses and the sword is much the same.
 2. K.2867 + Ki.1904-10-9, 11 lines 27-29; Bauer: *IAsb*, 87; *ARAB* 2, 362 §934.
 3. 'Nergal & Ishum smote (Urtaku) with a mortal wound' (cf. *ARAB* 2, 366 §944 Rm 281 *Streck*, 226 & 225 note 9 on alternative reports); Beliqisha died by 'the bite of a boar(?)', B, 4:61 (cf. *AHw*, 355 ḥumšīru - 'Maus'); Nabushumeresh died of dropsy - aganutillū mē malūti, B, 4:63.

ēmissu DN šar ilāni šērtasu rabītu ...libbi DN2.
 aggu ul inuḥṣunūti ul ipšahṣunūti kabitti DN3 ša.
 utakkilanni (Prism B, 4:66 & 69ff, Piep, 60)

Marduk king of the gods laid upon him (Urtaku's officer) a heavy sentence ... The angry heart of Ashur was not calmed regarding them nor was the liver of Ishtar who came to my aid soothed about them.

In the light of the parallel account, we see that the divine dīnu is the judicial precursor of the divine retribution, and that both are united in the framework of the adê. Where the indictment and divine pronouncement of the sentence are missing, the bare fact of the verdict recalls the legal-theological setting, the adê, into which fit the oracles, dreams and visions which are occasionally reported.

The fragmentary Dugdamme oracle by preserving some of the wording of the divine pronouncement on Ashurbanipal's enemy takes us one step further than the passages previously reviewed. Texts parallel to the dedicatory inscription to Marduk of Esagila highlight the oracle's adê context by their explicit reference to the nīš/māmīt ilāni rabūti and its transgression, and follow this with vivid details of the curses that befell him, but they omit the pronouncement itself.¹ The Marduk text preserves the following description and wording:

kī šipri ilūtika ša tašpura umma usappah
 il-lat-[](Streck, 284:24)

according to your divine message which you
 despatched, saying: "I will shatter [his?]
 forces [.....] (ARAB 2,385 \$1001)

Details of the place and medium of the message are entirely wanting, and its ascription to Marduk might be questioned on the grounds that whatever god was the subject of a dedication tended to be credited with the king's successes, just as incomparability was attributed for a prayer's greater effectiveness. What remains merits attention - that the prophetic pronouncement is unequivocally characterised as a divine message. This accords with Westermann's thesis that biblical prophecy is the speech of a messenger. Here too the message formula

1. See BM.123410:22^ˆ,24^ˆ (Iraq 30,109f) & IT:142ff (AAA 20,88ff), esp. 149 where illness and fire from heaven are affected through the gods' word - ina amāt [lilu]-ti-[šū]-nu, an embryonic *Worttheologie* viewing history as the outworking of the divine word.

leads to the quotation of the direct speech of the god. The unconditional announcement of doom/salvation - doom on the enemy is assurance of salvation - directed to the king gives the impression of truncation. There is no 'Fear not' formula, no 'handing over' formula, no divine self-predication and no recollection of *Heilsgeschichte*, ie. Ashurbanipal's birth, enthronement and past victories by divine enabling. Nevertheless, the record of the god's promise of victory - was it pronounced in Babylonia and forwarded by letter to the king? - is a welcome filling out of the parallel accounts, and a proof that the divine verdict in an adê suit was not limited to a divinatory positive, but could issue in an announcement of victory over the oath-breaker.

The emphasis of the Ahsheri oracle passage is on the fulfilment and reliability of the divine pronouncement.¹ The scribes give it an adê context by including the charges that tribute had been withheld and Assyrian territory annexed (Rassam, 3:23f & B,3:52ff), though Ashurbanipal admits or perhaps boasts that the Mannai acknowledged 'neither his fathers' (ša ana šarrāni abbēja lā kitnušu, B,3:18) nor his suzerainty (lā pāliḫ bēlūtija, Rassam, 3:4) prior to his campaign.

ina amāt DN ašibat CN ša ultu rēši taqbu umma
anāku mītūtu PN šar GN kī ša aqbu ippušina qātā
ardānišu tamnušu (Rassam, 3:4-7 Streck,24;ARAB 2,299)

At the word of Ishtar dwelling in Arbela which she had spoken at the outset, saying: "I myself will bring about the death of Ahsheri king of the Manneans just as I announced" - she delivered him into the hands of his servants

What do the phrases ša ultu rēši taqbu and kī ša aqbu imply? Apparently time has elapsed since the original prophetic announcement and this recorded reiteration of the promise given to allay fears that no fulfilment would be realised. The words of the oracle, sandwiched as they are between the identification of Ahsheri and the record of

1. Albrektson quotes it in parallel with 2 Kgs 9:36f (H&G,64) in his trenchant chapter on 'The Divine Word & the Course of Events' with which we are in basic agreement. However, he fails to explain the theological framework of adê/bērît within which the divine pronouncements in the Annals & the 'Deuteronomistic History' are made, which is our concern here.

his fate, prove that events are determined by the divine word, even though it may lie dormant for a while. Of course the Old Testament is far richer than the Assyrian Annals in its record of scepticism towards prophetic oracles, of reiterated pronouncements and of exposition of the theological doctrine of the Word of Yhwh, but in this write-up of Ishtar's pronouncement we glimpse a similar mentality to that of Jehu when he makes an orthodox theological comment on history and the word of Yhwh when he declares: 'Know then that there shall fall to the earth nothing of the word of Yhwh, which Yhwh spoke concerning the house of Ahab; for Yhwh has done what he said by his servant Elijah' (2 Kgs 10:10).¹

Not incompatible with the above may be the suggestion of royal apologetics. Why had Ashurbanipal not meted out judgement on Ahsheri himself? - he escaped - because the goddess herself had more appropriate means, a more ironical fate. The *Übergabeformel* has been modified - 'Ishtar counted him into the hand of *his subjects*!'. The humiliation of the enemy was a favorite motif, and loss of dignity in flight - riding a mare, fleeing like a bat, creeping away like mice, being caged like a bird - compensated for the failure to kill or capture.

Ahsheri's loss of dignity is complete at the hands of his subjects/slaves/servants (*ardānišu*), for not only is he deposed but his corpse is desecrated in the streets after the manner of treaty curses. This

1. Von Rad: *OT Theol* 2, 94 note 23 lists the phrases used by the historical books emphasising the efficacy of the diine pronouncement in the course of events. Compare Chap. F 'The Prophets' Conception of the Word of God', pages 80-98, and *OT Theol* 1, Chap C.6, 334ff 'The Deuteronomist's Theology of History', esp. 341ff.

This echoes a Holy War motif in which the enemy kill themselves off without the need for Israel to strike a blow.¹

The pronouncement against Shamash-shum-ukin, preserved in the Rassam prism though missing from F, gives details of its mediation:

ina ūmēšuma šabru ina šāt mūši utūl-ma inaṭṭal
 šuttu umma ina eli kigalli ša DN šaṭir-ma ma ša
 itti RN šar GN ikpudu lemuttu ippušu šēlūtu mūtu
 lemnu ašarrakšunūti ina patri parzilli hanti
 miqit išāti hušagḫi lipit DN uqatta napšassun
 annāte ašme-ma adgil ana amāt DN bēlija
 (3:118-127, Streck,32; ARAB 2, 302 \$790)

At that time a seer was lying down during the course of the night and he beheld a dream, as follows: upon the statue of Sin was written 'Whoever plots evil against Ashurbanipal king of Assyria and begins an insurrection I will bequeath them an evil death; by the swift thrust of the iron dagger, by fiery conflagration, famine and the outbreak of plague (lit. the touch of Erra) will I bring their lives to an end'. I gave heed to these (words) and waited upon the pronouncement of Sin my lord.

Dreams are uniquely prominent in Ashurbanipal's Annals - three dream revelations are extant - and these appear to differ from the later Nabonidus dreams in being mediated rather than being experienced by the king himself.² In this instance the exact significance of the

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1. See Heintz: VTSupp 17, 125ff section B: 'À la poigne du roi' compares the *Übergabeformel* in the Mari prophecies and in the OT Holy War with passages listed. Note his observation that the *Übergabeformel* is closely linked with (a) consultation of Yhwh, and (b) exhortation to battle. On the Holy War, see G.von Rad: Der Heilige Krieg im alten Israel, Zurich, 1951. For the enemy's self-destruction, see Jdg 7:22 & 2 Chron 20:23. Compare the following phrases from the Neo-Assyrian letters: nakrūti ša šarri bēlija ina qātā šarri bēlija limnišu[nu] (H.340:21f Mar-Ishtar) & dibbi parsutušunu kēnu šita ana libbi māti ša ina qātāka tašbutu DNN ultu tām̄tim elitim adi tām̄tim šapl̄itum ana qātā šarri bēlija indanū: 'The text of their decision is reliable. Shamash and Marduk have given into the hands of the king my lord the entrance to the heart of the land which your hands have seized from the upper sea to the lower sea' (H.137 = SLA \$324 Zakir).
 2. See A.L.Oppenheim: Dreams, 1956 esp. 249ff for an overall assessment of dreams recorded in Mesopotamia with translations and comment on the Ashurbanipal and Nabonidus material.

inscription of the message on the statue/pedestal of the Moon god escapes us. Why is there this psychological preference for a written transmission in the middle of a visionary experience? Does this perhaps reflect legal tradition? Is the generalised scope of the threat simply intended to include the allies of Shamash-shum-ukin - he is not named - or is there a correspondance in form to the treaty clauses which is more than coincidental?

A case can be made for the reflection of the legal-theological treaty tradition in this oracle. The form ma ša itti RN šar GN + subjunctive corresponds quite closely with the form of a treaty paragraph as well as with its contents, as for instance:

Šumma memēni ina muḫḫi RN šar GN sīḫu u bārtu
ētaḫpaš (EVT, 302f; ANETS, 101/537 \$26)

If anyone raises an insurrection and rebellion
against Esarhaddon king of Assyria

The šabrû oracle is a generalised threat - this is the whole tenor of the EVT. The oracle mentions dagger, fire, famine and plague, - these feature prominently in Assyrian treaty curses. Further, the oracle is given an adê setting by the adê indictment of Shamash-shum-ukin heading the narrative,¹ which is also concluded with the pointed references to famine, flames and dagger as divine retribution at the denouement.² Without the need to state it explicitly, the record is presenting the story of the sack of Babylon in terms of the fulfilment of the šabrû's oracle and in exposition of the treaty curses.

In connection with the Shamash-shum-ukin war it is worth drawing attention to the mutilated collection of oracles in which his fate as

1. Rassam, 3:70ff and explicitly 3:97 & 108 - ša lā uššuru adêja iprusa aḫḫutu. See the discussion in section B, page 102ff above.
2. Rassam, 4:42ff; ARAB 2, 303f \$794; Streck, 36ff where twelve gods and their net - sapar ilāni rabūti - are mentioned in connection with the nikis patri parzilli sunqi bubūti išāti ariri. See the Excursus I: The Divine Net for discussion. Note too 4:77ff mentioning plague - pagrē nišē ša ^dErra ušamqitu.

an oath-breaker is spelled out. Phrases such as the following occur:

šūt epšēte annāte lemnēte ša PN ēpušu elika išdi
 kussi šarrūtišu assuḥ palāšu [...] ušappiḥ GN kalīša
 PN ša adēja lā iṣṣuru-ma iḥtu ina ṭābti RN šarri
 narlam libbija ina mēsiri dannī ēsiršu-ma
 PN nizirte bēlūtija ša āruruš
 [qilbītua ilānišu ittišu iznū umašširūšu iṣbatū
 aḫāti [...] qibīt ilūtija rabīti ālānišunu takšud
 šallassunu kabittu tašlula ana qereb CN

Because of these evil deeds which Shamash-shum-ukin has perpetrated against you, I will tear out the foundation of his royal throne, his reign [...] I will overwhelm the entire land of Akkad ...

Shamash-shum-ukin who did not keep my treaty but sinned against the treaty relations (lit. good) with Ashurbanipal the king whom my heart loves have I blockaded with a severe siege

Shamash-shum-ukin whom I cursed with the curses of my lordly authority....

At my [wo]rld, his gods were/will be wroth with him forsook/will forsake him and went/will go elsewhere [.....] at the pronouncement of my great divinity, you will conquer their cities, their weighty booty you will carry off to Assyria

1

Notable are the 'prophetic perfects' stating what is promised as fulfilled, the direct divine speech attested by the 1st Sing suffixes

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1. K.2647 + Rm 2,99: 3f, 7ff, 14f, 21ff; ARAB 2, 402f \$1100ff. Note the mixture of pronouncement against the individual, and against his house and the whole land. Does this not make dubious Weinfeld's neat distinction between mantic oracles pronounced against individuals and alleged Deuteronomistic 'interpolations' concerned with the dynasty and national destiny? See his statement -

In contrast, the deuteronomic word of God, *which is appended to the words of these prophets* deals, not with the individual and personal fate of the king, but with the fate of his 'house', i.e. his dynasty; in other words it concerns his historical destiny - his place in the divine historical scheme

(DDS, 16)

and verbs, and the explicit reference to the adê and its curses. Most significant is the 1st Sing. suffix + adê (line 7) by which the god describes the treaty as his/hers, which makes one think of the Old Testament phrase 'my covenant which you have broken' (Jer 31:32 and bērîti many times in divine speech). It is vexing that all details of the origin and mediation of these oracles and why they were collected is lacking.

Ashurbanipal's prayer which forms the prelude to the lengthy pronouncement of Ishtar against Teumman has already been quoted and discussed in the previous section.¹ Prism B presents a two-fold response from the goddess: there is a short directly spoken oracle followed by a long and vivid dream appearance to a seer. The scribes omit the means of mediation of the former, though it could be given through an attendant cultic prophet or prophetess such as those named as responsible for the oracles in the Esarhaddon oracle text.²

inḫija šunuḫūti DN išme-ma lā tapallaḫ iqba
ušarḫiṣanni libbu ana niš qātēka ša tašša ēnēka
imla dimtu artaši rēmu

Ishtar heard my groaning sighs, and said: "Do not fear ! " , and she gave me heart. "Because of your imploring hands raised to me, and because your eyes overflowed with tears, I have had mercy on you." ³

The 'Fear not' formula is a motif in the Holy War, attested in Mari and in the Old Testament as well as relatively frequently in the Sargonid corpus.⁴ Heintz outlines a four-part scheme covering the oracles of 'Fear not' formulation: (i) the opening assurance assurance formula for which various Akkadian verbs are used and their semantic

1. See page 119ff.

2. 4R², pL 61; ANETS, 169/605: 6 mediums from Arbela, all but one women, are named; plus one more woman from the town Darahuya; 7 'Fear not' formulas appear.

3. Prism B, 5:46-49 Piep, 64ff; ARAB 2, 332 §860.

4. Heintz:art.cit., 121ff section II,A for references; cf. Weinfeld:DDS, 45f & note 5 . In K.883 (ANET, 450f), 'Fear not' occurs 4 times.

equivalents in Hebrew and Aramaic (ii) kī the motivation particle (iii) the divine self-presentation involving self-description and often the recollection of previous undertakings, (iv) a promise of action, either salvation or judgement of the enemy and frequently accompanied by assurance of the divine presence.¹ It is noticeable that this oracle is built up from an assurance formula and a reason which amounts to the assurance of a favorable response to the prayer. This gives the impression of truncation. There is no promise for the future, no divine self-presentation or recollection of past *Heilgeschichte*. This brings the oracle closer to a simple verdict in the suit against Teumman, while the seer's dream which follows carries the promise of active intervention.

The swiftness of divine response is a motif in the vision's introduction which stresses that it was given on the very same day the king prayed - ina šāt mūši šuātu ša amḥurši, 5:49.² The šabrû priest first describes Ishtar's battle-dress with quiver, bow and drawn sword (5:55). Fearful to her foes, she is to the king a mother.³ This is the message of the descriptive section of the vision, forming the prologue and epilogue to the exchange of speech between king and goddess. Thus, the introductory phrase šī kī ummi ālitti itamma ittika: 'she like a mother

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1. Heintz: art.cit., 124 note 3 under (i) Akk. ḥāšû, palāhu; Heb. yr' ; Aram zhl
 2. Piepkorn's translation of 5:50-52 is preferable to ANETS, 170/606 which changes the dream (šuttu) into a post-awakening 'nocturnal vision' (tabrīt mūši ša DN ušabrušu), whereas with Piepkorn we take the syntax as a Pluperfect subordinate clause: 'he woke up and related the nocturnal vision which Ishtar *had revealed* to him'. Technically therefore it was a dream revelation not an hallucination or visionary trance in a non-somnulant state (against Oppenheim: Dreams, 249). Compare Moran's discussion of the psychological state of the Mari prophetic personnel, and the place of dreams (Biblica 50).
 3. Compare the elaborate Mother-Child imagery used to express the goddess-king relationship by the Ashurbanipal Ninlil oracle, K.883: 20ff (ANET, 451), and the Esarhaddon Ishtar oracle 4R², pl. 61, 3:15ff ANETS, 169/605.

with child spoke with you' (5:56f) is followed up at 5:71f by ina kirimmeša ṭābi taḥsinka-ma taḥtena gimir lānika: 'in her tender embrace¹ she enfolded you and protected your entire form', while by contrast she makes a warlike and purposive exit to confront the enemy:

pānussa išāti innapiḥ šamriš tattaši ana aḫāti
eli PN šar GN ša uggugatu pānussa taškun

her face began to blaze fiercely she went off
setting her face against Teumman king of Elam
with whom she was enraged²

The instructions given by the goddess follow the 'Stand still'³ theme such as appears before the overthrow of Pharaoh at the Red Sea.

tanatṭala ana epēš šašmi ašar pānua šaknu ṭebaku
anāku atta taqabbiši umma ašar tallaki ittaki
lullik bēlet bēlēti šī tušannakka umma atta akanna
lū ašbata ašar maškanika akul akulu šiti kurunnu
ningūtu šukun nu'id ilūti adi allaku šipru šuātu
ippušu ušakšudu šummerat libbika pānuka ul urraq
ul inarruṭa šēpēka ul tašammaṭ lē'ūtka ina qabal
tamḫāri (B,5:59-76 Piep, 66; ANETS, 170/606)

"You are wanting(looking) to do battle. Whither my face is set I go". You (Ashurbanipal) then spoke as follows: "Wherever you(Ishtar) go, truly I will go with you, O Lady supreme !" She replied to you herself as follows: "You must stay where you are at your base; take food, drink wine, make music and praise the gods while I go, and that deed is accomplished (which) grants you the desire of your heart. Your face will not blanch, your step will not waver, your ability will not desert you in the heat of battle.

The translation above differs from ANETS, which cannot be grammatically justified from Piepkorn's text and presumably uses variants such as Streck's text attests.⁴ The point of the initial

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1. kirimmu: AHw., 484 'Armbeuge'; CAD K, 406 '... does not designate a specific part of the body ('Armbeuge') but rather a characteristic and functional position of the mother's arm assumed in order to hold a child safely'.
 2. Cf. Piep, 67 note 17-17 variant izziš naṣrīriš tattaši-ma] ana kašād [nakriša tallik]
 3. 'Fear not, stand firm and see the salvation of Yhwh which he will work for you today...Yhwh will fight for you, and you have only to be still' (Exod 14:13f). See F.C.Fensham: Exodus, POT, 1970, p. 68.
 4. Contrast 'Wait (Imperative) with the attack;(for) wherever you(!) intend to go, I am also ready to go'(ANETS) with Piepkorn's tanatṭala - 2nd Masc. Sing. Present Indic. + Ventive; pānua - suffix=Ishtar's face, cf. Streck, 116 pa-nu-ki.

exchange is certainly obscured in ANETS, for in fact the oracle simply tells Ashurbanipal to do nothing but leave the victory to Ishtar after the manner of this Holy War motif. The seer avoids any hint of royal cowardice by putting the lines into Ashurbanipal's mouth expressing willingness to follow Ishtar into battle anywhere. She cuts across this decisively. Noting his desire to go to war, she states her own sovereign freedom to attack when and how she pleases. The moment is always opportune for her. Ashurbanipal's rôle is to keep the feast, remaining behind to praise while she goes off to make his prayers an accomplished fact.

Despite Ishtar's grand exit, a battle had to be fought. Perhaps the oracle source was hoping that one of the frequent upheavals within the Elmaite nobility would avert the necessity for a trial of arms. Though giving the impression that the goddess would carry the day on her own, the oracle perhaps covers itself by adding promises about the valour of the king, while not relating this to a specific immanent event. At any rate, Ashurbanipal did muster his forces on a propitious day of a propitious month: 'I trusted in the decision (purussû) of Nanna the luminous and the message/word(šipru) of Ishtar my lord which is not altered' (B,5:78f). He sets out 'at the command of Ashur, Sin and Ishtar(ina qibît DNN), B,5:80. This seems to indicate that divination contributed practical details of the divine will which the Ishtar oracle had unfolded in general terms. The combination of divination and prophetic pronouncement is met with again during a later crisis in the campaign caused by the enemy seizing Ashurbanipal's watering places:

ina qibît DNN ilāni rabûti ša utakkilûinni
 ina ittat damqāte egirrê šipir maḥḥi ina
 qereb ša GN abiktašunu aškun(B,5:93-96 Piep,68)

At the command of Ashur and Marduk the great gods who strengthened me, through the favorable signs, the utterance (and) message of the maḥḥû, I accomplished his defeat at Til-Tuba.

Proof of the mahhû's¹ presence in the field is a tantalising gain from this passage since so much is still unclear regarding the exact relations between the personnel concerned with divination and those who acted as mediums of prophetic messages and visions. At Mari, divination was used to authenticate mediated messages,² but divinatory inquiry about practical decisions rather than counter-checking seems to be more likely here. Divine field directions are comparably given in the dream announcement by Ishtar of Arbela to Ashurbanipal's army³ when confronted by the flooded Idide river. While these allusions strengthen the bond between the sword and the gods, the divination and

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1. On the mahhû, see AHw, 582 - 'Ekstatiker, Prophet'; H.B.Huffman: BA 31(1968), 112ff "Prophecy in the Mari Letters"; W.L.Moran: Biblica 50, 27ff. On the egirrû, which Moran notes as 'still imperfectly understood', see ARM 10 \$4:6,10 (=Moran \$11, p. 46ff) where it is a prognostic utterance about battle and victory solicited by the queen Shibtu from 'a man and a woman'. Cf. AHw, 189 and CAD E, 44f egirrû 3.
 2. For an instance of divination to confirm a mahhû's message about a building project, see the 645 bc Asb. prism Th. 1929-10-12,2 Col 2:16ff

The Queen of Kidmuri ... in dream(s), the word of the mabbû sent continually (ina šutti šipir mahhê ištan-appara kajjānu). Shamash and Adad I consulted (ašāl) and they answered me with a reliable positive (ēpulānni annu kēnu)

3. The army was afraid to cross. Ishtar of Arbela in the course of the night revealed a dream (šuttu ušabri) to my army, and thus she spoke to them: "I myself go before Ashurbanipal, the king whom my hands formed." My army relied upon that dream and crossed the Idide safely (Rassam, 5:95-103 Streck, 48; ARAB 2, 308 \$807)

Omitted in Prism F

dream here fall outside our focal point, although broadly contained within the adê framework.

The main aim has been to demonstrate that the divine verdict and victory oracle form the judicial-theological nexus between Ashurbanipal's relations with adê partners in peace and his carrying the sword against them. He did not wish to be represented as acting capriciously without legal and moral justification. The broken adê gave him a just cause which he brought to the gods fully expecting them to play their rôle as adjudicators. The speech of the gods - chiefly Ishtar of Arbela, but also Marduk, Ashur, Sin, Nabu and Nergal¹ - takes up the adê indictment and responds with an exposition of treaty curses. The material is of great interest to the study of covenant indictment and prophetic oracle in the Old Testament with which it has obvious affinities, and it is only a pity that so little of the original Assyrian theophanies and adê-pronouncements has been transmitted by the scribes of the Annals. Nevertheless, there is sufficient on which to base the conclusions offered above.

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1. The frequent appearance of Ishtar goddess of war in the Annals is not surprising (Rassam, 3:4ff - the Ahsheri oracle; 5:97ff - the Idide dream; B, 5:46ff & 5:51ff - the Teumman oracle & dream oracle; cf. the Esarhaddon collection - 4R², p. 61 ANETS, 169/605), nor is the association with her of Ashur head of the pantheon (eg. B, 7:52ff; cf. the Ashur oracle of H. 923 = LAS, 82f \$117). The list of gods in B, 7:40 may be ascribed to scribal habit - the omission of Ishtar can hardly be significant, but the combination of a number of important gods and the judicial terminology DNN...dîn kitti PN idînūinni may point to a concept of decision in a Divine Assembly. Studies of the OT Covenant Lawsuit (rîb) have debated the rôle of a Divine Council and whether the natural phenomena appealed to are part of this Council, or witnesses to the prior covenant-oath as Huffmon and Harvey prefer. Though illuminating the Covenant Lawsuit, the Annals do not add material to the Tukulti-Ninurta suit and the earlier Hittite treaties mentioning heaven and earth. For discussion, see Harvey: art. cit., esp. p. 175, 180ff & 182 note 1; F.M. Cross: JNES 12 (1953), 274-277 "The Council of Yahweh in Second Isaiah" and CM/HE, 186ff; G.E. Wright: The OT against its Environment, SCM, 1950, p. 36; H.B. Huffmon: JBL 78 (1959), 285-295 "The Covenant Lawsuit in the Prophets", esp. p. 290ff.

C.8: G - Divine Intervention.

The Divine Intervention which follows the treaty indictment and the promises given in the divine pronouncements can take several forms and be direct or indirect. Before looking at key passages in the Annals, some passages from the letter corpus are worth quoting as examples of first-hand expression of belief in Divine Intervention, coming as they do from the field of battle and carrying the officers' theological interpretation of the events they were involved in. Pious affirmations that the king will be given complete victory by his gods abound, some as prayers others by way of assurances and encouragement.¹ Besides the generalised beliefs, there are more vivid despatches. Thus, Belinni discussing the capture of Nabu-bel-shumate with Ashurbanipal describes him as the 'accursed of Bel' (sikipti DN), and fears that he will escape but hopes that the gods will intervene to prevent this - 'perhaps the gods of the king my lord will act and seize him unawares (lit. with slack bow) and despatch him to my lord, the sovereign of kings' (H.281/SLA \$44, lines 8ff.²

1. Eg, the following lines from expositions of astronomical phenomena:

My lord the king will attain his wish. The good deeds and prayers of my lord the king are before the gods... truly the hand of my lord the king will capture him.
(H.629:rev. 3ff / SLA \$323)

Entry into the heart of the land, which you will/have seize(d) with your hand, Shamash and Marduk will give into the hand of my lord the king from upper to lower sea (H.137:rev. 2f/ SLA \$324)

Compare the following description of a previous reign, and the wish expressed for the fate of an enemy:

And he who observes before and behind, right and left, upwards and downwards, the king of the gods, exalted and pre-eminent, gave over the whole of the inhabited world into the hand of him who reverences him
(H.1240:11ff/ SLA \$12)

Upaqui about whom my lord the king wrote: Bel, Nabu, Ishtar of Erech and Nana exercise power (idannunū) from East to West - may they finish him off (luqattū), and hand him over (liddinū) to my lord the king, and may they cause the kings of the whole earth to bow (lušaknišū) before the weapons (ana pāni kakkī) of my lord the king.
(H.277:6ff/ SLA \$26)

2. On Nabu-bel-shumate, see Rassam, 7:9ff Streck, 60/ ARAB 2, 312 \$815 and B, 7:81ff Piep, 80; his career and Belibni's are described by Olmstead HA, 672 paraphrasing the primary material.

In another letter in which he describes Nabu-bel-shumate as 'the one whose skin Nabu will put up for sale (mašakšu ana maḥāra nadānu)', Belibni recounts parallel royal and divine protection during Elamite skirmishes - 'since the gods of my lord the king stood by me (ittija kī izzizū)' that 'under the protection of (ina šilli ša) my lord the king they made a great slaughter' (H.1000:12 & rev. 4ff/ SLA \$42). The parallel rôles of gods and king are a feature of the Annals too. Again, Belibni speaks of prayer when in a tight corner outnumbered by the enemy - 'we took up position opposite them and prayer (nušallū) to the gods of the sovereign of kings our overlord' (H.462:rev. 14ff/ SLA \$41), and in similar circumstances elsewhere credits success to bravery and divine aid - '(Belibni's forces) said to one another ... if we must die let us die with a noble name (ina šumi babbanî). Since the gods of my lord the king stood by his vassals (itti ardānišu kī izzizū), they killed 17 of the enemy forces ...' (H.520:rev. 2ff/ SLA \$43).

A letter important to our study links divine intervention to treaty breach in an exemplary statement of adê theology:

annūte parrišūte ša ina muḥḥi da-at-te (read ṭābti ?)
idbubūni adê ša šarri ina pān DN u ilāni rabūti issi
ardānišu iškununi ša ina libbi adê iḥṭūni DN u ilāni
rabūti uktassiū ina qāt šarri bēlija issaknūšunu ṭābtu
ša šarri taktaššassunu (H.584:7ff/ SLA \$214)

Those perjurers who plotted against the ... (good relations ?) sinned against the treaty, the treaty of the king which they entered into with his servants in the presence of Ashur and the great gods - Ashur and the great gods have bound them and delivered them into the hand of my lord the king. The treaty-favour of the king has overtaken them. 1

The writer interprets events in a cause and effect sequence centred on the adê with the gods as primary agents and the king as the passive beneficiary who receives his enemies already trussed. Whether the writer is reporting a successful campaign theologically or encouraging the king that the rebellion will be dealt with though the outcome at

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1. H.584 (K.1097) joins H.1370. Deller discusses aspects of H.584 such as parrišu and dātu - 'law, decree' in connection with the difficult da-at-te (Or 30, p. 251). Parallel to ṭābtu kašādu, cf. adê ša šarri bēlija kī ikšudūšunūti (H.350:rev. 5/ SLA \$24); see section H, p. 171ff.

the time of writing was not clear, we do not know, but we may assume that it was acceptable to mingle intelligence reports with theological statements in the administration of the empire. Though cynical and sceptical statements casting doubt on God's involvement in human affairs are to be found in the Old Testament, and possibly a nuance of reservation may be detected in Belibni's mindema ippušū - 'perhaps (the gods) will act' (H.281 quoted on p. 148), it would be a misinterpretation to view the letters, prophetic oracles and the Annals cynically, as though the writers, officers and king, royal scribes and mahḫū's did not subscribe to an adē theology of empire. We can assume that they did believe their own theology, and this leads us into the polytheistic *Heilsgeschichte* of the Annals as part of a self-consistent theological system which we have been following step by step in its component parts.

Turning to the Annals, we find two examples in which the gods act as supporters of the adē by examining and punishing a participant in the oath in a most direct manner. We have already studied the Rassam account of Shamash-shum-ukin's rebellion (section B, p. 102ff) and the prophetic victory oracles it evoked (section F, p. 139ff). Both indictment and divine pronouncement are steeped in treaty theology, as is the outcome of the campaign to be studied under section H. The sequences of (C) Royal Threat, (D) Insulting Reply and (E) Prayer to the Gods are missing from the Rassam text. Section (G) Divine Intervention is represented by mention of 'the net of the gods', discussed in the pertinent Excursus, and in Shamash-shum-ukin's execution, discussed in section (H). Missing from the Rassam edition is the following apposite wording from another version:

DNN ilāni tiklīja epšētišu lemnāti ippalsū-ma
illikū rešūti-ma tāḫāzišunu dannī [iṣḫupšu ?]
(var. ippalsū-ma ina ḏ[GIŠ.BAR iddūšu-ma ?])

Bel and Marduk, the gods my helpers, observed his
evil deeds and came to my aid and [overwhelmed him?]
with their fierce onslaught (var. ...observed and in
[god Fire cast him ?]) 1

1. IT, 111f (AAA 20,86); variant G. Smith: 3R, 38 No. 1, K.2631, etc
Streck, 186 line 22 & note (k); ARAB 2, 357 §923. The restoration
is based on Rassam, 4:51 ina miqit išāti arīri iddūšu.

The concept of divine surveillance conveyed by palāsu N-theme -'to observe' appears in the second passage which deals with Tammāritu whom Ashurbanipal had installed as vassal king of Elam:

DNN ša idāja illikū ušazzizūinni šir gārēja libbi PN
ekšu bārānū ibrū-ma uba"ū qātuššu ultu kussī
šarrūtišu idkūniššu-ma utirūniššu šanijjānu ušaknišūš
ana šēpēja šūt amāti annāte ina širṭi libbija ša PN
lā kēnu iḥṭā ina līti u danāni ša ilāni rabūti bēlēja
qereb GN ana siḥirtiša attalak šaltiš
(Rassam, 5:29-40 Streck, 44f; ARAB 2, 306f §803)

Ashur and Ishtar who go at my side and cause me to tread down my foes, examined the heart of Tammāritu the stubborn rebel and found him guilty/held him responsible (lit. sought at his hand). From his royal throne they toppled him and a second time returned him to bow at my feet. With furious heart at those deeds in which the faithless Tammāritu had sinned, I marched about the entire land of Elam victoriously in the triumphant power of the great gods.

Omission of the treaty indictment and the king's prayer in the two last quoted passages leaves the divine action in central focus. The gods act as guardians of the treaty exercising their judicial powers without the need of prompting. The concept of Yhwh reading the minds and hearts of men is a fundamental attribute of his deity in the Old Testament, and qualifies him to be judge as well as Suzerain partner in the covenant.¹ Here too the treaty guardians 'will by no

1. Eg Prov 19:1f, 1 Sam 16:7 and especially Jer 11:20 & 17:9-10

But O Yhwh of hosts who judgest righteously (šōpēt šedeq)
who triest the heart and mind (bōhēn kēlāyōt wālēb)
let me see thy vengeance (niqmātēkā) upon them
for to thee have I committed my cause (rībī)
(Jer 11:20)

I Yhwh search the mind (ḥōqēr lēb)
and try the heart (bohen kēlāyōt)
to give to every man according to his ways,
according to the fruit of his doings
(Jer 17:10 cf. 1 Chron 29:19 David's covenant prayer)

means clear the guilty'.¹ There is a link in vocabulary and the concept of surveillance between these passages from Ashurbanipal's Annals and Assyrian treaty texts. Compare the use of ina qāti bu''û - 'to call to account, hold responsible' in both, and the parallel use of palāsu and dagālu - 'to look upon'.²

1. Such is the character of the covenant God of the Exod 34 theophany naqqēh lō' yēnaqqeh (Exod 34:7, Num 14:18, Nah 1:3, cf. Exod 20:7 & Deut 5:11). NEB reverses the sense of this Absolute Infinitive Piel use of the root nqh by translating 'not sweeping the guilty clean away', setting it in parallel with the previous clause rather than in antithesis to it; cf. K-B, 632 nqh - 'ungestraft lassen'; BDB, 667 Pi. (2) 'leave unpunished'; NEB bases itself on the supposed primary meaning 'to purge'.

2. CAD & AHW do not quote this significant use of dagālu in the EVT. Wiseman's 'take note' (Iraq 20,66) is better than Reiner's 'look on' (ANETS, 103/539), but Wiseman's grammar is wrong; the gods are not invoked to take note of the oath - '...that we (swear that we) will not make rebellion ...' - but to watch for offences, ie. 'May these gods take note if we rebel ...'. On the grammar of the EVT, see Frankena: OTS 14(1965), 125 and ANETS, 99/535 note 5.

From the OT, compare the use of Heb. dāraš mē^cim & biqqēš miyyad with ina qati bu''û in Deut 18:19 - 'And whoever will not give heed to my words which he (nābī: the covenant messenger) shall speak in my name, I myself (Yhwh) will require it of him ('ānōki 'edrōš mē^cimmō); Deut 23:22 MT - When you make a vow (neder) to Yhwh your God, you shall not be slack to pay it; for Yhwh your God will surely require it of you (dārōš yidrēšennū...mē^cimmāk) and it would be sin in you'; compare, therefore, the covenant vow. Compare the concept of accountability in response to covenant indictment at Josh 22:13ff - 'If it was in rebellion (bēmered) or in breach of faith (bēma^cal) toward Yhwh, spare us not today... may Yhwh himself take vengeance (DN hū yēbaqqēš)'. Note 1 Sam 20:16 in the David + Jonathan covenant, the clause ūbiqqēš Yhwh miyyad 'ōyēbēy Dāwid, especially if the NEB emendation prove correct - 'may Yhwh call him (David) to account if he and his house are no longer my friends'. H.P. Smith regards the clause as an imprecation on David should he break the covenant, emended in the MT by euphemistic insertion of 'ōyēbēy (I Samuel, ICC, 188f); however, RSV and H.W. Hertzberg could well be correct in taking the clause as a separate benediction upon David (Samuel, SCM, 169). This would mean a variation from the covenant formula pattern of blessings followed by curses, but this is not a decisive argument in view of the narrative context.

ilāni annūte lidgulū šumma ... ilāni mala
 šumsunu zakrū ina qātini zērini zēr zērini
 luba"ū (EVT,494 & 511f; ANETS,103/539 \$57)

May these gods take note if ... (list of treacheries)
 May the gods as many as are herein named, hold us,
 our children and our children's children responsible

Not surprisingly, there is an echo of the biblical concept of solidarity and corporate responsibility in the perpetuation of the covenant/treaty. Hence the gods witness not only the single historical oath, but continue their surveillance down the generations, 'visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children and the children's children to the third and fourth generation'.

Thus the three features - divine discernment of the heart, continuous surveillance over the treaty oath down the years, and the corporate consequences of sin as well as particular retribution - are common to the Annals, the treaties and the Old Testament.¹

1. On the involvement of children in the covenant/treaty and its consequences, note:

- (1) Children participate in the oath: Deut 29:9ff *ṭappēkem* - 'your little ones' ... *lē^cobrēkā bibērīt DN ūbē'ālātō* ... *DN kōrēt ḡmmēkā*

adē ša RN ... issikunu mārēkunu mārēkunu ša arki
ade ina ūmē šāti ibbaššūni

- (2) The Responsibility of teaching children the stipulations:

ana mārēkunu ...etc...lā taqabbāni ṭēmu lā
tašakkanānišuni mā adē annūte ušra mā ina libbi
adēkunu lā taḥṭē ...etc (EVT,283ff \$25)

Cf. Deut 6:7,20 31:9-13, 32:46

- (3) The Effect of sin on children:

šumma attūnu...ana mārēkunu...etc...lā tušallatāni
...mārēkunu mārēkunu ana šāšu lipluhū (EVT,385ff \$34)

offspring are mentioned as victims of most curses, such as eradication(\$45), disembowelling(\$69f) and cannibalism (\$70) and the internalisation of the curse like oil rubbed in (\$94, cf. \$72)

Cf. Exod 20:4f = Deut 5:9f vengeance to fourth generation for breach of graven image stipulation; the perishing of children in Dathan & Abiram's rebellion (Num 16:27); the converse implication of Deut 5:29 'that it may go well (*yīṭab*) with them & their children for ever'.

Cf. Ashurbanipal's avenging of his grandfather on the contemporary generation of Babylonians (Rassam,4:70ff)

Similar to the judicial surveillance of Shamash-shum-ukin and Tammartu is the emphasis of two passages with the prepositional phrase kimūa - 'in place of, instead of', expressing how readily Ashurbanipal's gods intervened on his behalf:

DNN ilānija ša itapalū kimūa puluḫti kakkē[šunu]
 ḫarbašu ishupšunūti
 (K.2631+:38f Streck, 182; ARAB 2,357 §924)

idīnu dīni PN ...kimūa abiktašu iškunū...libbi
 ilāni rabūti bēlēja ul inuḫ ul ipšaḫ ša ezezu
 kabitti bēlūtišunu šarrūssu iskipū palāšu ēkemū
 (K.2867:15ff Streck,210ff; ARAB 2, 362 §934)

Cf.(ilāni rabūti ša) kimūa ētappalū bēl šaltija
 ināru gārīja (Rassam,1:38 Streck,4; ARAB 2,\$768)

Ashur and Nergal my gods who respond on my behalf
 - the fear and horror of their weapons overwhelmed
 them (the enemy)

(The gods) adjudicated my case against Urtaku...on
 my behalf they accomplished his defeat...the heart
 of my lords the great gods did not rest, was not
 soothed, as suzerains their spleen was stirred and
 they dethroned him and took away his rule 1

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1. Cf. the parallel account of Prism B,4:18ff Piep,56ff and see the discussion of idīnu dīni itti PN on page 133ff, section F. Compare too the concept of the determined and unquenchable wrath of the deity (ul anāḫu, ul pašāḫu) shaping historical events following treaty/covenant breach:

eli PN ša GN ša uggugatu pānussa taškun
 libbi ^dAššur aggu ul inuḫšunūti ul ipšaḫšunūti
 kabitti ^dIštar ša utakkilanni

(B,5:75f & B,4:69f variant of K.2867:118)

Behold I will bring evil upon this place and upon its inhabitants, all the words of the book which the king of Judah has read. Because they have forsaken me and burned incense to other gods, that they might provoke me to anger with all the work of their hands, therefore my wrath (ḫāmātī) will be kindled (wēniṣṣētāḫ) against this place, and it will not be quenched (wēlō' tikbeh)
 (2 Kgs 22:16f// 2 Chron 34:24f)

Cf. Deut 18:19 & 2 Chron 36:15f dealing with the rejection of the covenant messengers and the rousing of unquenchable wrath - 'till the wrath of Yhwh rose against his people, till there was no remedy': ^{cad} cālōt ḫāmat-DN bē^cammō ^{cad} lē'ēn marpē'

When the enemy was beyond Ashurbanipal's reach like Gyges of Lydia in the far West, Dugdamme the Scythian chieftain¹, or Mugallu of Tabal, the readiness of the gods to intervene on his behalf was all the more pressing, and the Annals make a point of drawing attention to their fate.

epšet lemuttim ša ina niš qātēja ilāni tiklīja ina
pān abi bānišu ušapriku ...išpuramma ...šarru ša ilū
idūšu attat abua tārur-ma lemuttu iššakin ina pānišu
(Rassam, 2:121ff Streck, 22; ARAB 2, 298 \$785)

DN šadû rabû ša itâšu lā innenni ... rūqu ikšussu-ma
ina ^dGerri arīri pagaršu ušaqme
(IT:143f, AAA 20, 88)

(Gyges' son) sent an account of the evil which the gods
my helpers had laid upon his father progenitor at the
lifting of my hands (in prayer) ... "A king whom the gods
acknowledge you are, for you cursed my father and evil
befell him"

Ashur the great mountain whose bounds are unalterable
...from afar overcame him and burned his body in the
flaming (god) fire (cf. IT:150, Dugdamme) ²

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1. On Dugdamme, see Campbell Thompson's note (AAA 20, 107ff), but corrected by understanding zer Hal-ga-te-i (IT:143) not as a tribal name but as zer halqatî - 'nomad' from the Adj. halqu (AHw, 313; CAD H, 50a); cf. Millard: Iraq 30, p. 109f & note 46.
 2. Cf. Amos 9:7ff & all the foreign oracles; in historiography, see 2 Kgs 6:11ff & 19:37. On the God-Gyges & Tubal-Tuballu relation and their rôle in apocalyptic, see the standard commentaries on Ezek 27:13 & 38-39 together with D.S. Russell: Jewish Apocalyptic, SCM, 1964, p. 190ff and J.G. Aalders: Gog en Magog in Ezechiël, Kampen, 1951 who finds 'endgeschichtliche' events in view at the same time as arguing for a 'zeitgeschichtlich' orientation fulfilled in the Seleucid wars, especially in the days of Antiochus (Epiphanies) IV.

The Old Testament carries the concepts of Yhwh's control over far flung peoples and of his acting on a curse uttered by his representative following an insult and action construed as sin against Yhwh. This seems the best way of understanding the Old Testament historiographer's presentation of 2 Kgs 2:23ff when he records the curse of Elisha - wayēqallēlēm bēšēm Yhwh - and follows it with the note that 'two she-bears came out of the woods and tore forty-two of the boys'.¹ When this is read in connection with Deut 18:15-19 which emphasises the sanctity of the covenant messenger and with the covenant curses of wild beasts common to the Old Testament and Ancient Near Eastern treaties, including the specific mention of bears in one source,² we seem justified in drawing a parallel between Elisha and Ashurbanipal as representatives of their deities calling down a curse on their enemies for violations of the covenant/treaty in which subsequent events are interpreted as the fulfilment flowing from divine intervention.

There is also a parallel in treaty/covenant terminology to be observed in the Gyges passages and the Old Testament. Epšet lemuttim with parāku Š-theme, and lemuttu + šakānu N-theme have their equivalents in the threat of Joshua: kēn yābī DN Calēykem 'ēt kol-haddābār hārāc ... bēcōbrēkem 'et-bērīt DN (Josh 23:15f), and of the prophetess Huldah - hinēnī mēbī' rācāh Cal-hammāqôm hazzeh wēcal-yōšēbāyw 'ēt kol-hā'alôt hakkētūbôt Cal-hassēper (2 Chron 34:24) with rācāh + Hī. bō'.

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1. In fact the text carries no indication of whether the bears emerged immediately, or were in the area for a period of time, nor is their appearance attributed to Yhwh except by implication.
 2. Hillers: TC/OTP, 54ff discusses the wild beasts curse in ANE and OT texts, noting 2 Kgs 2:24 (p. 55 note 36) without further comment or the suggestion of the parallel with Ashurbanipal. Fitzmyer argues that the Aram dbhh of Sefire I, A:31 is a feminine form of the later Aram dubbā (Heb. dōb), and refers to the ursus syriacus, cf. 1 Sam 17:34 & Hos 13:8.

Hand in hand with the ability of the gods to operate extra-territorially over vast distances goes their power over the enemy's mind or spirit. This could be dubbed the psychological intervention of the gods, and results in a state of morbid fear, despair, flight or radical alteration of behaviour either in the direction of insanity or of conversion:

[puluḫti] DN bēlija išḫupšu-ma maḫḫutaš illik-ma
ina miqit tēme] unaššak rittēšu

DN šar ilāni šadû rabû tēnšu ušanni-ma illika adi
maḫrija

PN...namurrat kakkē DNN ezzūti ša I-šu II-šu III-šu
itbukū eli GN iḫsus-ma iršâ ḫīp libbi ultu qereb GN
innabtu-ma išbata šēpē šarrūtija

[The fear of] Ashur my lord overwhelmed him and he
went insane and chewed at his wrists in his dementia

Ashur, king of the gods, the great mountain, altered
his mind and he came into my presence

Pa'e...thought about the terrifying brilliance of the
weapons of Ashur and Ishtar which had been poured out
once, twice, three times over Elam, and he broke down.
He fled from the midst of Elam and laid hold of my
sovereign feet.

1

Despite the contradictions and propaganda motives of the Annals, the realism of at least some of its descriptions of psychological breakdown may be accepted, since modern clinical studies and case histories confirm that breakdown occurs under the severe stresses of warfare and physical deprivation such as those of seige.²

1. Dugdamme, IT:159f (AAA 20,89); Uwaite, Rassam,8:5ff Streck,66 ARAB 2, 314 \$819; Pa'e, Rassam, 7:51ff Streck,62 ARAB 2, 312 \$816.

Tēmu šanû - 'to alter the mind' with the god as subject is ambiguous and may mean 'to drive insane'; alāku Ventive + adi maḫrija might indicate a hostile advance - so Streck 'er kam mir entgegen' and Luckenbill's footnote. The 'severe penalty' (annu kabtu) Ashurbanipal imposed might support an interpretation of aggression. There are biblical parallels of Yhwh luring an enemy into attacking for judgement - see Ezek 38:16 & 39:2 - to vindicate his suzerainty. If this interpretation be correct, it affords yet another link between biblical and Assyrian treaty/covenant theology.

2. See W.Sargant: Battle for the Mind, rev. ed,1959 for a Pavlovian interpretation of psychological breakdown in modern warfare compared with altered behaviour patterns via brainwashing and certain types of religious conversion experiences.

The psychological intervention of the gods is indicated by a number of closely related phrases, from 'the fear of the gods' to 'the fear of the weapons of the gods' and from 'the splendour of the gods' to 'the terror of the splendour of the gods', or simply 'fear, terror', etc. These expressions are frequently applied to the king as well, his weapons¹ and his splendour. They do not all fit into section (G) in the sequence we are following through, but always relate closely to the adê, if not after treaty breach, indictment and divine pronouncement, then as renewed by submission without conquest or entered into spontaneously without precedent.

Taking Tarqu(Tirhaka) as paradigm, the interchangeability of phrase conveying divine psychological intervention is illustrated thus:

namriri DNN ishupšu-ma illika mahhutaš melammē
šarrūtija iktumūšu-ma ša uza'inūinni ilāni šūt
šamē eršetī

PN ašar innabtu rašubbat kakki DN bēlija ishupšu-ma
illik šimat mušišu

šāšu hattū puluhtu bēlūtija ishupšu-ma illik šimat
mušišu

The terrifying brilliance of Ashur and Ishtar overwhelmed him so that he went insane; the splendour of my royalty with which the gods of heaven and earth endowed me overcame him

The terror of the weapon of Ashur my lord overwhelmed Tarqu in the place where he had fled and he went to his fateful oblivion

PN šar GN hattū puluhti bēlūtija ishupšu-ma illik
šimat mušišu

The terror and fear of my suzerainty overwhelmed Tarqu king of Cush and he went to his fated oblivion 2

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1. Compare ultu kakkē DNN eli GN ušamriru & kakkēja ušamrir - Š-theme of marāru I - 'to be bitter' (AHw, 609) with the king as subject and the gods' weapons/his weapons as objects (Rassam, 3:50 & 2:46, Streck, 26 & 14; ARAB 2, 300 & 296, \$788 & 778; cf. Prism B, 2:38 & 7:80).
 2. Rassam, 1:84, 2:20ff; LET:19, 66; Streck, 8, 14, 158, 164; ARAB 2, 293, 295, 349, 351 \$771, 775, 901, 906.

In the above quotations puluḫtu and melammē are predicated of the king, but this is secondary to their divine attribution of which the Annals also give examples. The Ishtar Temple inscription abounds in the phrase puluḫti DNN and after the Dugdamme account, partially quoted above, adds the summary statement:

sittē nakirē lā kanšūte puluḫti DNN ilāni
[tiklīja išḫupšunūti-ma] ana gipiš šumija
iptalaḫū ardūti iršū (IT:164f AAA 20,89)

The rest of the unsubmitive enemies the fear of Ashur, Ninlil and [Ishtar] of Arbela the gods [my helpers overwhelmed, and] at my widespread renown they grew afraid and became vassals

cf. IT:152ff. 1

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1. Cf. puluḫti DNN ālikūt idāja išḫupšu - Ummanaldasi (Rassam, 5:71 Streck, 48; ARAB 2,307 \$805), and examples of pre-treaty puluḫtu such as secured the submission of Cyrus:

After the conquering weapons of Ashur had conquered and annihilated (ultu kakkē DN kāšidūti GN kalša ikšudū inārū) the whole of Elam, Cyrus the king of Parsumash and Pishlume the king of Hudimeri, kings whose locality is far off, who live beyond Elam, the fear of (puluḫti + saḫāpu) Ashur, Ninlil and Ishtar of Arbela overwhelmed them and they were prostrate (iršū naquttu), and they despatched their envoys to me with substantial tribute to establish peaceful treaty relations (širūtišunu ša tūbi u sullummē abālu), and they kissed my feet. (IT:115ff AAA 20,86)

Cf. Shihum & Mugallu's submission (IT:135ff) and Natnu's (Rassam, 8:56ff Streck, 70; ARAB 2,315 \$822)

On the etymology and semantics of puluḫtu, see AHw, 878 and the important discussions by Oppenheim: JAOS 63(1943), 31-34 "Akkadian puluḫtu & melammu" and E. Cassin: La Splendeur Divine, Civ & Soc 8, 1968, p. 131f who describes it as -

la zone à l'intérieur de laquelle la vitalité royale se fait sentir dans ce qu'elle a de terrible et de bienfaisant, à la fois, de brûlant et d'apaisant ... la personne... comme étincellement qu'émet le roi et à plus forte raison tout être divin .

When the link between the ḥattu rašubbatu and puluḥtu of the gods or king with the adê is perceived, it may be used to throw light on biblical historiography, and several passages take on a new clarity when read in parallel with the Assyrian material. For example, the Chronicler presents Jehoshaphat as a king faithful to the covenant traditions who had Judeans instructed from 'the book of the law of Yhwh' (2 Chron 17:9). The next sentence describes how Yhwh honoured his covenant fidelity in terms evocative of the summary statements in Ashurbanipal's annals - 'and the fear of Yhwh fell upon (wayēhî paḥad DN Cal) all the kingdoms of the lands that were round about Judah, and they made no war against Jehoshaphat'. It continues by recording the Philistine and Arab tribute similarly to Ashurbanipal's boasts about the submissinn of Cyrus, etc. This is taken up again in chap. 20 after the illustrative narrative involving the pronouncement of Jahaziel promising Yhwh's victorious intervention on their behalf.¹ The compiler attributes the peace of his reign to the fact that 'the fear of Yhwh came on all the kingdoms of the countries when they heard that Yhwh had fought against the enemies of Israel' (2 Chron 20:29).

This treatment of Jehoshaphat is preceded by an equally covenantal historiography for Asa's reign with great prominence given to covenant renewal and divine intervention in battle. At this time, they 'entered into a covenant to seek Yhwh (wayyābō'û babbērît lidrōš 'et-DN) the god of their fathers, with all their heart and with all their soul...they took oath to Yhwh with a loud voice...and Yhwh gave them rest round about' (2 Chron 15:12ff).²

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1. Compare rē'û 'et-yēšū^cat DN ^cimmākem of Jahaziel's oracle conveying Yhwh's representative action with the kīmū phrases discussed on p.154
 2. Note the terminology which underlines the importance of a complete heart obedience, so characteristic of both covenant and treaty:

bēkol lēbābām ūbēkol-napšām

kī bēkol-lēbābām nišbā^cû ūbēkol-rēṣōnām biqēšūhū

ina gummurti libbi, ina kitti ša libbi, ina kul libbišu

Associated with the covenant renewal ceremony is Asa's prior prayer which secures Yhwh's intervention against the attack of Zerah the Ethiopian who was 'broken before Yhwh and his army' (lipñēy DN wēlipñēy maḥānēhū)¹, 2 Chron 14:13, so that 'they smote all the cities round about Gerar, for the fear of Yhwh was upon them' (kî-hāyāh paḥad -DN cālēyhem).

Just as Ashurbanipal links the fear of his gods and his spreading renown² (ana gipiš šumija iptalaḥū, IT:165), so the biblical historian-grapher describes the reign of David in the identical idiom:

And the fame of David (šēm-RN) went out into all lands, and Yhwh brought the fear of him upon all nations (DN nātan 'et-paḥdô Cal) 1 Chron 14:17

Cf. 1 Sam 11:7 wayyippōl paḥad-Yhwh Cal-hācām - the aura surrounding Saul, Yhwh's elect king

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1. Note maḥānēhū - the 3rd Masc. Sing. pronoun is significant, so too the sharing by the royal forces of Yhwh's attribute of producing fear in the enemy, which parallels such lines from Ashurbanipal as:

They heard of the advance of my mighty battle-array (tāḥāzija danni) as I approached Elam. The terrifying brilliance (namriri) of Ashur and Ishtar my lords, and the fear of my suzerainty (puluḥti šarrūtija) overwhelmed them (Rassam, 4:118ff cf. the parallel variants ša lapān kakkē DN bēlija / kakkēja ipparšidū, Rassam 9:55f; B, 8:23f)

2. For renown as a divine gift, see 2 Sam 7:9 and note its context in the Dynastic Covenant, as expounded by Calderone: DynOracle, 44ff, plus much useful comparative material supplied by H. Tawil: Or 43 (1974), 40-65 "Some Literary Elements in the Opening Sections of the Hadad, Zakir & the Nerab II Inscriptions in the Light of East & West Semitic Royal Inscriptions", p. 58ff drawing on Old Aramaic, Hebrew and Akkadian sources, which supplement Kitchen: AO/OT, 106ff in rebutting the misinterpretations of von Rad and Morenz who attempted to press the 'great name' into analogy with the Egyptian titulary.

This is set within the context of David's covenant fidelity and of Yhwh's covenant with his dynasty, so that the covenant is the key interpretative tool for the Old Testament historiographer just as Ashurbanipal's succession adê the EVT, and his vassal treaties underlie the theological interpretation of his reign in the Annals.

That the link between the 'fear of Yhwh' and the covenant is fundamental and precedes kingship in Israel is apparent from the inclusion of this motif in the archaic 'Song of the Sea' ¹ in the section dealing with Yhwh as the Suzerain Protector of his covenant people *vis-à-vis* the possible hostility of surrounding nations.

The peoples have heard, they tremble (yirgazûn)
 pangs (hîl) have seized on the inhabitants of Philistia
 Now are the chiefs of Edom dismayed (nibhâlû)
 the leaders of Moab, trembling seizes them (râcad)
 all the inhabitants of Canaan have melted away (nâmogû)
 Terror and dread ('êmâtâh wâpahad) fall upon them;
 because of the greatness of thy arm,
 they are as still as a stone,
 till thy people, O Yhwh, pass by,
 till the people pass by whom thou hast purchased.
 (Exod 15:14-16)

Confirming the grounding of this motif in the covenant we may also cite Exod 23:22 & 27 from the so-called 'Book of the Covenant'.²

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1. Albright dates it to the 1st quarter of the 13th century bc using comparative ANE linguistic and literary data, and is supported in assigning it an archaic, pre-monarchical dating by other scholars. See F.C.Fensham: E/POT, 75ff & bibliography p. 245, to which add P.C. Craigie: TB 22(1971), 3-31 "The Poetry of Ugarit & Israel", section 3. 'The Song of the Sea & Canaanite Literature', p. 19ff which adds to the basic study by F.M. Cross & D.N. Freedman: JNES 14(1955), 237-250 "The Song of Miriam".
 2. Archaic ANE parallels and features have led recent scholars to assign an early date to Exod 20:22 - 23:33. 'Het moet één van de oudste israëlistische wetsverzamelingen zijn en kan op Moses en in bepaalde gevallen zelfs nog op een vroegere tijd teruggaan' (Fensham: E/POT, 145 and see his whole discussion and bibliography p. 144f & 246ff). Cf. Albright: op.cit., 88ff; S.M. Paul: Studies in the Book of the Covenant in the Light of Cuneiform & Biblical Law, VTSupp. 18, 1970, p. 104f on dating. Note too G.J. Wenham: TB 22(1971), 95-102 "Legal Forms in the Book of the Covenant" which shows that Alt's conclusions about apodictic and casuistic distinctions and origins are an oversimplification, and that 'we must be cautious about assigning them to different Hebrew life-settings, whatever their earlier origins may have been', p. 102. Cf. A. Marzal: CBQ 33(1971), 333-364 & 492-509 "Mari Clauses in 'Casuistic' & 'Apodictic' Styles", p. 509 - 'Both formulations are attested in Mari at the same time; the subject matter and the setting in life are not the factors which finally determine the selection of one formulation over another'.

Here covenant fidelity is linked with the promise of Yhwh's suzerain protection in a formula derived from international treaties,¹ and after further promises of the covenant blessings of health and fertility have been spelled out the question of enemies is taken up again and the promise of verse 22 is elaborated in verse 27:

I will be an enemy to your enemies
and an adversary to your adversaries

I will send my terror before you ('et-'êmâtî
'āšallah lēpāneykā) and throw into confusion
(wēhammōtî) all the people against whom you
shall come, and I will make all your enemies
turn their backs to you. (Exod 23:22 & 27) ²

Quite clearly, then, the 'terror of the gods' operates on behalf of those inside the covenant/treaty against those outside it, reducing them to submission. It is one of Israel's earliest traditions that the later historiographer of Chronicles has adopted as a theological interpretative tool. Though the concepts of suzerain protection and cowed enemies run parallel with the early Hittite and late Assyrian concepts, the terror of Yhwh falling on Israel itself is elaborated in a characteristically Hebrew manner in its reflexive extension.

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1. Exod 23:22 is discussed in relation to its ANE parallels with references in the article by F.C.Fensham: VT 13(1963),133-143 "Clauses of Protection in Hittite Vassal Treaties & the OT", but the 'terror of Yhwh' and its parallels are outside its scope.
 2. Compare too Deut 2:25 -

This day I will begin to put the dread and fear of you
(pahdēkā wēyirē'ātēkā) upon the peoples that are under
the whole heaven, who shall hear the report of you and
shall tremble and be in anguish (wērāgēzū wēhālū)
because of you.

Another 'psychological' cause of submission in the Assyrian arsenal is the divine effulgence, the bright aura of glory which terrifies the enemy. Namrīru/namurratu - 'terrifying brilliance' is a synonym of the spiritualised meaning of melammu, which is the numinous glow emanating from sacred objects and persons, as well as the divine tiara in the phrase adū melammu, and more concretely can be a mask. Melammu may be bestowed on the king, but he may also lose it in a kind of draining away of his charisma. It has associations with burning.¹ Compare the following texts with Rassam 1:84ff (Tarqu), already quoted:

melammē DNN GN isḫup-ma iknuša ana nīrija

namrīri DNN bēlēja puluḫti šarrūtija isḫupšunūti
 šunu nišēšunu alpēšunu šēnēšunu ana epēš ardūtija
 ana GN imquttūm-ma iṣbata šēpē šarrūtija

namrīri DNN bēlēja isḫupšunūti ultu šadē ašar
 markitišun innabtūnim-ma iṣbatū šēpēja

The glory of Ashur and Ishtar overwhelmed Elam
 and they bowed to my yoke

The terrifying brilliance of Ashur and Ishtar
 my lords (and) the dread of my sovereignty
 overwhelmed them; they, their people, their
 oxen, their sheep went headlong to Assyria to
 become vassals and they seized my feet

The terrifying brilliance of Ashur and Ishtar
 my lords overwhelmed them; from their refuge in
 the mountains they fled and seized my feet 2

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1. See the studies of Oppenheim and Cassin quoted, esp. the latter, chap. 6 'Le melammu et la Fonction royale', p. 65ff; cf. AHw, 643 melammu - 'Schreckensglanz (maske)' for references to the use of melammu of gods and demons, king, temple and alone; AHw, 728 & 730 namrīru, namrīru & namurratu - 'schreckenlicher Glanz'. Cf. the gā'ôn Yhwh of Exod 15:7 ūberōb gē'ônēkā tahārōs qāmeykā, and Isa 2:10, 19 & 21 mippēnē paḥad Yhwh ūmēhādar gē'ônō bēqūmō la'ārōš hā'āreš. Similarly the king is endowed with glory by the covenant God: gādōl kēbōdō biyšūcātekā hōd wēhādar tēšawweh cālāyw Psa 21:6 MT read in the light of the article by F.C. Fensham: ZAW 77 (1965), 193-202 "Psa 21 - a Covenant Song?"; cf. 1 Chron 29:25 the endowment of Solomon, wayyittēn (Yhwh) cālāyw hōd malkūt.
 2. Prism B, 6:4f Piep, 70; Rassam, 4:119ff & 7:75ff, Streck, 42 & 62; ARAB 2, 305 & 313, \$800 & 816.

Apart from katāmu -'to cover' at Rassam 1:85, the usual verb to describe the effect of the divine melammu/namrīru on the enemy is saḫāpu -'to overwhelm'.¹ In the examples just quoted this does not lead to insanity but to the positive action of accepting Ashurbanipal's suzerainty, having become aware of the power and splendour of the gods who stand behind him. There is no battle on the physical plane for the revelation of Ashur and Ishtar's glory bends the enemy's will.²

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1. See Ahw, 1004 saḫāpu (1c) for further references in the royal inscriptions.
 2. For an idea of the antiquity of the melammu of the gods cowering man, see the Enheduanna poem Nin-me-sār-ra:

When mankind	comes before you
In fear and trembling	at (your) tempestuous
	radiance (<u>nī-me-lām u_x-lu-da</u>)
They receive from you	their just deserts.

(Hallo & van Dijk: Exaltation, 16f section (iii) lines 21-23; but cf. ANETS, 144/580 for S.N.Kramer's rather different translation of these lines)

For an artistic presentation, see the 9th century bc glazed brick from Ashur showing the god Ashur with feathered wings spread, drawing a bow, and surrounded by a circular aura with little flames on its circumference. Beneath are the broken fragments of a man in a chariot and we may assume some battle scene was depicted since the man does not wear a crown. The aura must represent the divine melammu, and the drawn bow indicates pictorially the divine intervention in battle conveyed verbally in the Annals. The relief sculpture carries the same theme. (A.Parrot: N&R, fig 282 the Ashur glazed brick; cf. fig 40c feathered disc with hands and bow above Tiglath-pileser I's prisoners; fig 18 winged god drawing a bow above Ashurbanipal attack on city)

The final passage for consideration in this section will be divided and part treated in the following section H since it describes the observable effect of the Arabs' sin against the adê, while its later lines deal with what is for us the unseen activity of Ashurbanipal's gods, which is purely theological description, and from the point of view of the modern reader is therefore negated as history since the existence of its actors is denied. This very gap between ancient and modern perspectives makes it essential reading in order to grasp the Assyrian mentality and its effect through Assyria's imperialism on her contemporary world.

DN1 rīmtu DN2 mītu qadirti ilāti ša itti DN3 u
 DN2 šitlutat manzāzu unakkip nakrūtija ina qarnēša
 gašrāti DN4 āšibat CN ištāti litbušat melammē našāta
 eli GN izannun nabli DN5 qardu anuntu kuššur-ma
 urassipa gārēja DN6 tartahu qarradu rabū mār DN2
 ina uššišu zaqtiuparri' napištim nakrūtija DN7
 sukallu na'du mušāpū bēlūti ša ina qibīt DN8 DN1
 qaridtu bēlit tāhāzi idāja illik-ma iṣšura šarrūti
 mihrīt ummānāteja išbat-ma ušamqita gārēja tibūt
 kakkē DN8 u DN4 ilāni rabūti bēlēja ša ina epēš
 tāhāzi illikū rēšūti ummānāte ša PN išmū-ma elišu
 ibbalkitu šū iplah-ma ultu bīti innabtu ušam-ma
 ina tukulti DNN qāta ikšussu
 (Rassam,9:75-101 Streck, 79ff; ARAB 2,318f §829)

Ninlil beloved of Enlil, the honoured, proudest/
 impetuous among goddesses, who holds a station with
 Anu and Enlil, gored my enemies with her mighty horns:
 Ishtar of Arbela clothed with fire (and) bearing
 splendour rained down flame on the and of the Arabs;
 the heroic Erra organised the battle array and felled
 my foes: Ninurta the lance, the great warrior, son of
 Enlil, slit the throats of my enemies with his sharp
 arrow; Nusku the awesome vizier who proclaims my
 suzerainty (and) who at the command of Ashur and
 Ninlil the heroine and mistress of battle goes at my
 side and guards my sovereignty took (his place)
 before my forces and felled my foes. The forces of
 Uwaite heard about the advance of the weapons of
 Ashur and Ishtar the great gods my lords who came to
 my aid to do battle, and they revolted against him.
 He was afraid and from the house he had entered he
 fled and my hands captured him through the help of
 Ashur, Sin, Shamash, Adad, Bel, Nabu, Ishtar of Nineveh,
 the queen of Qidmuri, Ishtar of Arbela, ninurta,
 Nergal and Nusku.

The five gods Ninlil, Ishtar, Erra, Ninurta and Nusku are described in action in a striking manner, unusual in the Annals. Indeed the language lapses back into generalised cliché in resumé with line 90 which subsumes the previous statements in the phrase tibûť kakkē dAššur u dIštar. The prominence given to Ninlil and Nusku is interesting. Sumerian Ninlil was the spouse of Enlil, but in Assyria her rôle suffered the usual syncretism, and as Ashur assumed priority in the pantheon, Ninlil became assimilated to Ishtar the leading Assyrian goddess. Yet here she retains her individuality, and we may compare her rôle here with that in the E.MAŠ.MAŠ dedicatory slab, where she appears as Ashurbanipal's means of victory,² with her oracular pronouncements of victory and motherly care for him in the important oracle text K.883 already alluded to.³

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1. Cf. the Assyrian coronation ritual text in which Ashur and Ninlil take the leading rôles: 'The diadem on your head - may Ashur and Ninlil, the lords of the diadem, put it upon you for a hundred years' (G.Roux: Ancient Iraq, Pelican, 1966, p. 310; text originally published by K.F.Muller: MVAG 41/III(1937) 'Das assyrische Ritual'). Note that Ninlil 'guards Asb.'s kingship' (9:88).
 2. By means of her(Ninlil's) mighty help my hand captured them, and I yoked them to my chariot my royal transport. Further, at her powerful injunction I traversed all lands without meeting a rival. (Streck, 274; ARAB 2, 383f \$995ff)
 3. See page 132 note 1, and page 143 note 3.

The rīmtu or 'wild cow' metaphor appears in Ashurbanipal's Ishtar Temple inscription where her (Venus') help against his enemies is phrased ša qarnāša eddā munakkipāt zā'irē: 'whose horns are sharp, who gores the enemy' (AAA 20,80 IT:7). Hammurabi also depicted himself as 'the impetuous steer who gores the enemy': rīmum kadrum munakkip zā'irē (CH 3a:7-9), and though the Old Testament appears to avoid comparison of El to a bull, a trace of the metaphor appears in the archaic oracles of Billaam with the cognate rē'ēm:

What its curving horns are to the wild ox (kētô^cāpôt rē'ēm lō) God is to him, who brought him out of Egypt; he shall devour his adversaries the nations (Num 24:8 NEB) ₁

The description of Ishtar is a proof text for Cassin's connection of melammu and burning, and it tallies with the Prism B vision where fire burns before her (pānussa išāti innapiḥ, B 5:73) as she departs to destroy Ashurbanipal's foes.² Other oracles cite fire or something like it raining down from heaven.³ It is difficult to know if this is simply exotic imagery for divine wrath or whether it mirrors and mythologises the fires of warfare or the phenomena of electrical storms.

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1. Also Num 23:22 with which compare Deut 33:17 bēkôr šôrô hādār lō wēqarnēy rē'ēm qarnāyw bāhem Cammīm yēnaggah yaḥdāyw 'apēsēy-'āreṣ - the success of the Joseph tribes. Job 39:9ff singles out the wild ox for its untameable strength .
 2. Compare Ishtar's title in a late bilingual text: 4.u.kām.ma.mu izi.gar.mē.[]- rabû šumi išātu napiḥ[tu (ša tāḥāzi)]: 'my (Ishtar's) 4th name is Flaming-Fire-of-Battle', CAD I/J, 229 išātu, 2b' =G.A. Reisner: SBH, 1896, p. 109 line 63f .
 3. išātu ina māt Ellipi ummad
išātu lušakilšunu
abnē aqullū ina muḥḥiṣunu azannun
 Fire have/will I hurl(ed) on the land of Ellipi
 Fire will surely consume them
 Glowing stones will I rain down upon them
 (K.2401, Col 2:2,17,21; Craig:opcit, 22f cuneiform; Strong:
artcit , 627ff transliteration)

The same association of Yhwh with numinous fire, and of judgement in the form of fire rained down from heaven upon earth is, of course, common to the Old Testament as well. ¹

Apart from these remarks little can be drawn further from these lines in the theological sense, for the list of deities in lines 97ff appears to be a random selection of major gods such as is often inserted in the Annals for pious reasons. The phrase ina tukulti DNN is a cliché which introduces many phases of a campaign and a large number of passages which fall under our section heading (G), the conquest of rebels by divine support. ²

1. For the OT equivalent of Ishtar išātu litbušat, note the theophanies of Exod 3 - the burning bush, Deut 4:11ff - the fire on Horeb (cf. Heb 12:29 'our God is a consuming fire'), Ezek 1:13,27 - the fiery figure; 2 Thess 1:8 - a fiery Parousia. For fire in special connection with judgement, note Exod 9:23f, Num 11:1f & 16:35, 2 Kgs 1:10ff, Lk 9:54 & 17:29 and the following texts:

kī-hinnēh Yhwh bā'ēš yābō'	wēkassūpāh markēbōtāyw
lēhāšīb bēhēmāh 'appō	wēga ^c arātō bēlahābēy-'ēš
kī bā'ēš Yhwh nišpāṭ	ūbēharbō 'et-kol-bāsār
wērabbū halēlēy Yhwh:	(Isa 66:15f)

yamṭēr ^c al-rēšā ^c īm paḥīm	'ēš wēgoprīt (Psa 11:6)
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timša' yadēkā lēkol-ḫyēbēykā	yēmīnēkā timša' sōnē'eykā:
tēšitēmō kētannūr 'ēš lē ^c ēt pāneyka	Yhwh bē'appō yēbal ^c ēm
wētōkēlēm 'ēš: piryāmō mē'ereṣ tē'abbēd	wēzarē ^c ēm mibbēnēy
(Psa 21:9-11)	'ādām:
'ēš lēpānāyw tēlēk	ūtēlahēṭ sābīb ṣārāyw:
hē'irū bēraqāyw tēbel	rā'ātāh wattāhēl hā'āreṣ:
hārīm kaddōnag nāmassū millipēnēy Yhwh	
millipēnēy 'ādon kol-hā'āreṣ:	(Psa 97:3-5)

2. Eg. Prism B, 1:75f - ina tukulti DNN ilāni rabūti bēlēja ālikūt idāja ina tāḫāz ṣēri rapši aškuna abikti ummānātešu .

To sum up, we have seen that a rôle of tremendous national importance was ascribed to the Assyrian deities. The battles which seem significant to modern historians of the Assyrian empire were given a dimension by their participants which makes them key material for reconstructing the psychological and theological make-up of Ashurbanipal and his fellow empire builders, and without which one can assume Assyrian imperialism could not have operated. The history of the Assyrian empire as it is told in the Annals is *Heilsgeschichte*. Furthermore, the accounts of the divine surveillance and action are anchored in the adê with all that this implies of promise, oath, stipulation and curse. Through the adê, Assyria's gods were believed to exert a judicial control over nations and history. Theirs was no passive rôle, nor was their intervention regarded as haphazard and arbitrary,¹ rather it was in accord with the fidelity and prayers of their earthly representative, and was morally conditional upon the responsible reaction of the adê-sworn peoples. This leads us to the next section 'The Fate of the Adê-Violator', which might be subtitled from Ashurbanipal's theological viewpoint 'Historical Proofs of Divine Justice'.

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1. Note the concept of swift and specific retribution on Tammartu conveyed by Rassam, 4:21f :

eli amātē annāti ša ilzinu DNN ēriḫūšu

On account of these words with which he (Tammartu) had insulted Ashur and Ishtar, they rushed against him/ attacked him.

On lezēnu/lazānu - 'to mock, insult, scoff at', see AHw., 548 & CAD L, 162f; for erēḫu - 'to attack, rush against', see AHw., 237 & CAD A.2, 222f arāḫu C.

C.9: H - The Fate of the Adê-Violator.

In the previous section we focussed our attention on the activity of the gods. Now we shall concentrate on what results from it, on the effects of divine wrath as experienced by those who are its cause and its victims. Emphasis has been laid on the direct intervention of the gods, and now we shall see this balanced by the king playing the rôle of judge and executor.¹ Ashurbanipal is seen as the expositor of adê theology in the field. He has no wish to be represented in his royal records as an autocrat, a tyrant whose absolute and arbitrary will controls his kingdom. When passing sentence or waging war he wishes to be seen to be governed by the clauses of the legal document, which the adê is, and by the promptings of his gods. The moral to be drawn is that the violator of the adê has only himself to blame for the consequences of his actions. When the Annals describe the curses of the treaty at work, it is the Assyrian theology's way of affirming the responsible free-will of people and the sovereignty of the gods.

We may begin by immediately quoting the clearest exposition of treaty theology to be found anywhere in the Mesopotamian records. In the light of our section by section analysis of Ashurbanipal's Annals it comes as no surprise that such an explicit theological exposition should be embedded in the record of his reign, though it raises the interesting question as to why Ashurbanipal's Annals rather than those of his predecessors or Babylonian successors should exhibit an adê- theology of history so clearly and 'systematically' .

1. Note the judicial nature of Zedekiah's sentence by Nebuchadnezzar in 2 Kgs 25:6f - wayēdabbēr 'ittō mišpāṭ : 'who passed sentence upon him' (cf. 'and he took process with him', J.Gray: 1 & 2 Kings, SCM, 1964, p. 695 & 698). Blindness and exile were familiar treaty curses. See F.E.Deist: JNSL 1(1971),71f "The Punishment of the Disobedient Zedekiah" .

PN adi ummānātešu ša adēja lā iššurū ša lapān kakkē
 DN bēlija ipparšidū-ma innabtūni maḥaršunu ušamqis-
 sunūti DN2 qardu sunqu ina bīrišunu iššakin-ma ana
 būrišunu ēkulū šēr mārēšunu ina arratē mala ina adē-
 šunu šaṭrā ina pittī išīmūšunūti DNN bakru suḫīru
 būru ḫurāpu ina eli 7 mušēniqāti ēniqū-ma šizbu lā
 ušabbū karašēšunu nišē GN ištēn ana ištēn ištana'alūm
 aḫāmeš umma ina muḫḫi mīnē kī epšetu annītu lemuttu
 imḫurū GN umma aššu adē rabūti ša DN lā niššurū
 niḫṭū ina ṭābtī RN šarri narām libbi DN3
 (Rassam, 9:53-74 Streck, 76ff; ARAB 2, 318 \$828)

Uaite', along with his forces who had not kept my treaty, and who had fled before the weapons of Ashur my lord, and made a get-away in front of them, the heroic Erra felled. Famine set in among them and they eat the flesh of their children to (alleviate) their hunger. Ashur, Sin, Shamash, Adad, Bel, Nabu, Ishtar of Nineveh, the queen of Kidmur, Ishtar of Arbela, Ninurta, Nergal and Nusku beset them correspondingly with curses, as many as were written down in their vassal-oath. The young camel, foal, calf and spring lamb sucked at seven udders but did not satisfy their bellies with milk. The people of Arabia questioned one another repeatedly, saying: "Why is it that this evil has befallen Arabia?" The reply - "Because we did not keep the weighty vassal-oath of Ashur, but sinned against the covenant-goodness of Ashurbanipal, the king beloved of Enlil's heart."

1. Streck, Luckenbill and Piepkorn take ina pittī to mean 'instantly, suddenly', cf. GAG, 174 \$119g ina pittī - 'plötzlich, sogleich'; but compare von Soden: AHw., 871 pittu I, etwa 'Bereich', 2(b) dafür ina pit-ti (bestimmten sie) Asb. A IX.61. There is a variant of these lines in VAT 5600 (Streck, 378; ARAB 2, 367 \$949), edited by M. Weippert: WO 7/1(1973), 74ff, Episode 2, Col. II:10-12, page 76 -

arratē mala ina adē ina nibīt šumika u ilāni
 mārika šaṭrū ina pittī šimtu lemuttu tašimšunūti

Alle die Flüche, die im Eid(estext) unter nennung meines(!) (šumika = 'thy name', i.e. Ashur's name - see line 1 of the Column) und (der Namen) der Götter, deiner Kinder, geschrieben stehen, bestimmtest du ihnen genauso als schlimmes Geschick (p. 82)

Since the whole tenor of the narrative is the swift and exacting nature of the retribution, either nuance of ina pittī fits.

The importance of the document lies in its explicit linking of the written document and the battlefield. The clay tablet of the treaty established a complex relationship between the visible and the invisible, the present and the future. Ashurbanipal and the vassal confronted each other visibly and publicly in the adê ceremony; the gods were possibly represented visibly by their effigies, but otherwise they and the future course of events were unseen. The historical narrative is therefore a theological apologia. The events empirically verified the theology of the adê. The adê has become a prophetic text, and an exposition of the nature of divine sovereignty in the face of human sin.

The passage has quite rightly been compared with Old Testament texts of which Jer 22:8f is the most striking because of its parallel form.¹

And many nations will pass by this city, and every man will say to his neighbour, "Why has the LORD dealt thus with this great city?" And they will answer, "Because they forsook the covenant of Yhwh their God (ʿal 'ăšer ʿāzēbū 'et-bērît DN 'ēlōhēyhem) and worshipped other gods and served them."

After quoting the Ashurbanipal passage and Jer 22:8f, Albrektson goes on to label both as 'a stock interpretation of defeat and disaster in the Ancient Near East', based on the belief in moral retribution. We may agree that disaster was commonly interpreted as a revelation of divine wrath, but two points need to be borne in mind relating to the two passages above. The biblical passage is a prophecy, not a *vaticinium ex eventu*, and belongs not to royal apologia but to prophetic denunciation of the state by a commoner. The source, motivation and timing of the biblical passage mark it off from the Assyrian material. Secondly, the Ashurbanipal passage cannot be grouped fairly in one category with other records of disaster, for example, the Sumerian laments for temples and cities, the Flood stories, the Erra Epic, etc, and its theologically distinctive framework, which we have analysed step by step, ignored. It is too imprecise to subsume the theological

1. Albrektson: H&G, 104ff with reference to Frankena's remarks (OTS 14 153). We share Albrektson's scepticism about direct borrowing by the biblical writers (H&G, 105 note 24).

ideas of lament, theogony, theodicy, wisdom, epic and historical narrative under the one heading of belief in moral retribution because all touch on the disasters and evils of the human lot.¹ This is the great temptation of 'Comparative Religion', that in order to compare and systematize distinctions are overlooked for the sake of an umbrella generalisation. Hence we must stress that the verses of Jeremiah are distinctive in being both prophecy and attesting a montheistic or monolatrous covenant relationship between a people and its God, while the words of Ashurbanipal, attesting a polytheistic and imperially imposed vassal treaty attain their distinctiveness in the Mesopotamian milieu by their focus upon the clay tablet of the adê in which the relationship, the theology and the legality of the particular historical situation were fixed.

We shall return to the specific curses of the Arabs' treaty later, but may now gather the additional material from the Annals which links the fate of adê-violators with the curses and the gods. As explicit as the Arab campaign narrative is the interpretation of

1. Note that Albrektson (H&G, 106 note 28) is quoting from Lambert's introduction to BWL on the commonality of belief in moral retribution in the context of failure to maintain the cultus, eg. fish offerings for Esagila in the 'Weidner Chronicle' (H.G. Güterbock: ZA 42, 47-57). Lambert's and Albrektson's inclusion of the Tukulti-Ninurta Epic alongside the 'Weidner Chronicle' overlooks that it belongs with the Assyrian Royal Annals in being an indigenous exposition of an adê-theology of history - see the Excursus on the Tukulti-Ninurta Epic. But the literary genre and means of expression of a generalised belief that in the end the righteous are justified and the wicked suffer an evil fate in Wisdom literature like the 'Babylonian Theodicy', Ludlul, etc is a far cry from both Royal Annals and OT Prophets. Albrektson's quotation from C.R. North The OT Interpretation of History, 1946, page 67 is equally misleading, since North was writing before the discovery of treaty/covenant parallels and the work done on the OT Prophets from this perspective. Even so, North was concerned to correct the equation of 'the prophetic interpretation of history' with a generalised belief in the prosperity and doom of the righteous and wicked respectively, and goes on to differ from H.G. Wood, whom he quotes (op.cit., 67). Neither Jeremiah nor Ashurbanipal can be fairly reduced to illustrating a belief in moral retribution so vaguely defined.

the arrest and execution of the Egyptian kinglets:

māmīt DN šar ilāni ikšussunūti-ma ša iḫtū ina
adê ilāni rabūti ṭābti qātāšun uba'ima ša
ēpussunūti dunqu

(Rassam,1:132 Streck,12; ARAB 2,294 §773)

The curse of Ashur king of the gods overtook them because they sinned against the treaty-oath of the great gods. The grace which I had benevolently bestowed upon them I required at their hand.

The characteristic treaty vocabulary combines with the characteristic parallelism between Ashur and Ashurbanipal.¹ Curse and king operate effectively in the historical situation. Sometimes the king does not effect the curse himself, as in the case of Gyges cursed in prayer before Ashur and Ishtar with the result confessed to by his son (Rassam, 2:116f). This verbal curse cannot, of course, be divided from the adê-document curses, as its nature and context proved, but appears to re-inforce or activate the written curses. This is the case with the Ishtar oracle on Ahsheri (Rassam,3:4ff), also a Corpse & Burial curse fulfilled in the historical situation. On the basis of the Arab campaign's specific reference to the written document, the prayer and oracle presentation of curses may be seen as a variant means of drawing attention to the adê document.

The technique of incorporating curses into prayers and oracles re-iterative of the adê-document curses is illustrated by the Shamash-shum-ukin campaign narrative previously discussed.² In the vision of Ashurbanipal's šabrû, the god Sin threatens sword (ina patri parzilli hanti), fire (miqit išāti), famine (ḥušāḥḥu) and plague (lipit^d Erra),

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1. Compare H.350:rev. 4/SLA §24 - u adê ša šarri bēlija kī ikšudušunūti.
 2. See section B, page 102ff, and section F, page 139 above. Note the curses in Ashurbanipal's prayer of Prism B, 5:29ff discussed in section E, page 119f, and the prayer of Rassam, 2:115-117 discussed on page 122 .

well-known treaty curses, as indeed they might be since they were common enough realities in everyday imperial life. The narrative then builds on this pre-view describing the fate of the adê-violators:

nibrētu išbassunūti ana būrišunu šērē mārēšunu
maḫrātēšunu ēkulū iksussū kurussu DNN sa ina
maḫrija illikū inārū gārīja PN...ina miqit išāti
arīri iddūšu-ma uḫalliḫū napšassu...ša lapān nikis
patri parzilli sunḫi bubūti išāti arīri išetūni
ēḫuzū markītu sapar ilāni rabūti bēlēja ša lā
naparšudi išḫupšunūti ēdu ul ipparšid multaḫtu
ul ūši ina qātēja imnū qātūa
(Rassam, 4:43-63 Streck, 36ff; ARAB 2, 303f \$794)

Famine seized them; to (ease) their hunger they eat the flesh of their sons and daughters and gnawed on thongs. Ashur, Sin, Shamash, Adad, Bel, Nabu, Ishtar of Nineveh, the Queen of Kidmuri, Ishtar of Arbela, Ninurta, Nergal and Nusku, who advance before me and annihilate my foes cast Shamash-shum-ukin into a flaming holocaust and destroyed his life... Those who escaped before the stroke of the iron dagger, famine, want and flaming fire, and attained a refuge, the net of the great gods my lords which is incapable overwhelmed them. Not one escaped, no rebel destined for my hands got away from them.

The curses of the adê-document have produced a two-fold literary influence, firstly on the wording of the oracle, and secondly on the wording of the narrative, for though in one sense this is historical description of what happened, the scribes surely intended these later lines to echo phrases from the victory oracle in promise and fulfilment manner, and besides this the net of the gods is quite gratuitous, theological and unconditioned by historical realism. We are not suggesting that the previous oracle was invented by the royal scribes and placed in the šabrū's mouth only in the cuneiform write-up of the civil war. What we are saying is that the šabrū, besides being aware of the realities of siege warfare was aware of the existence of the adê document and the action from the gods enshrined in the curses which could be expected to become operational. Just as the šabrū could not fail to be influenced in his pronouncement by his theology, so too the royal scribes in writing up the victorious campaign saw fulfilment of the šabrū's words in its closing scenes and believed that it was accurate theological reporting to say that the gods cast the rebel brother into the flames, and trapped his supporters in their net.

If we move from šabrū and royal scribe to Old Testament prophet and historiographer, what parallels are there? The use of covenant curses in the Prophets has been amply illustrated by Hillers, Fensham

and pertinent references during the course of this study, but the influence of the covenant curses on the Old Testament historiographers deserves a special study in depth. We can only point a direction here by drawing attention to the following features in the second book of Kings: fire from heaven (cf. the fate of Dugdamme) (2 Kgs 1); Elisha's bears (2 Kgs 2); cf. the curse of lions (2 Kgs 17); blindness (2 Kgs 6); fear from Yhwh (2 Kgs 7); corpse & burial curse on Jezebel (2 Kgs 9); the sword of Yhwh (2 Kgs 10, 13 & 15); the curse of leprosy (2 Kgs 15); defeat & exile (2 Kgs 17). These curses of sword, fire, wild beast, disease, exile and desecration follow covenantal disobedience. They are not all laboriously spelled out as covenant curses by the historiographer, but his theological perspective on them may be deduced from his explicit editorial explanation of the exile (chap. 17), and his dwelling, conversely, on the covenant renewal under Josiah. Again, it should be emphasised that the theology is not 'creating' the history, but rather the interpretative tools of the Old Testament historiographer become clearly visible, while the explicit negative and positive covenantal expositions lead one to look again at the less explicit elements .

Returning to Ashurbanipal's Annals, we can single out a number of realised treaty curses embedded in the campaign narratives. One immediately notices the frequency of two related curses, the Corpse & Burial curse and the Banquet for Birds & Beasts curse. Hillers and Fensham have commented on both with references from kudurrus, treaties, Old Testament Prophets and other Old Testament passages, but omit mention of the equivalent realised curses in Ashurbanipal's Annals.¹

1. See Hillers: TC/OTP, 68f No. 15 'No Burial'; he points out the compound nature of the curse - the body is unburied, eaten by predators, left as refuse; Fensham: ZAW 75, 161f (iii) 'The corpse of the transgressor will be exposed'. Of the references quoted, Deut 28:26 (cf. Lev 26:30) illustrates the curse in the treaty document; 1 Kgs 14:11, 16:4, 21:24 & 2 Kgs 10:9,36 show them in prophetic oracles embedded in historiography; Psa 79:2f lament over realised curse; Jer 7:33, 8:2, 9:22, 14:16, 16:4,6, 22:19 & 36:30, Amos 8:3 & Isa 5:25 directed against kings and people of Israel by the classical prophets; Ezek 39:17-20 prophesies a reversal whereby they operate against Israel's enemies; cf. Baruch 1:20 & 2:24f; Rev 19:17ff; note too M.P.Horgan: JSS 18(1973), 224-234 "A Lament over Jerusalem (4 Q179)", p. 225 Frag. 1, Col. 2:2 with his comment - 'In the literature, then, these images move from the terms of the covenant to the warnings of the prophets, and finally to the mourning of the people when disaster has befallen them' .

The EVT is linked to Ashurbanipal's Annals both by its royal subject and by the continuing scribal tradition which drew up both. From it we may quote the pertinent curses with the observation that there is a correspondence in frequency of occurrence of these curses in the Annals and in the EVT.

DN ašarēd ilāni ina šiltaḥišu šamri lišamqitkunu
 ŪŠ.MEŠ-kunu limalla šēru šērēka arū zību lišakil
 širēkunu kalbē šaḥē likulū

ina rebīt CN lindašarū pagrēkunu ina eršetim aj
 imḥur ina karši kalbi šaḥī lū naqbarkunu

DN2 bēl ašarēdu širēkunū erū zību [lišakil]

May Ninurta, leader of the gods fell you with his
 fierce arrow, and fill the plain with your corpses,
 give your flesh to eagles and vultures to feed upon

Let dogs and pigs eat your flesh

May dogs and pigs drag around in the streets of Ashur
 the ... of your young women, the ... of your young
 men before your very eyes, may the earth not receive
 your body for burial, may the bellies of dogs and
 pigs be your burial place

May Palil, lord of first rank, let eagles and vultures
 eat your flesh

(EVT, 425ff, 451, 483 & 519f; \$41, 47, 56 & 59; ANETS, 102/538)

As it happens the Banquet curse predominates, probably because of its extra horror, for it goes beyond inadequate burial, already serious because of the restlessness of the eṭemmu it caused, to the vivid picture of a person being reduced to offal and carrion.

From the Annals comes Ashurbanipal's enactment of the Banquet curse. It is not a case of vultures descending on the dead after a

1. See Erica Reiner: ANETS, 103/539 note 22 for restoration of line 484; for other improvements on Wiseman's text in Iraq 20, see R. Borger: ZA 54(1961), 191. The ideogram ŪŠ.MEŠ can be read Akkadian dāmē - 'blood', see Labat: Manuel, No. 69 & AHW, 158, but Wiseman and Reiner take it probably correctly as 'corpses' - ŪŠ.MEŠ for the more usual LŪ.ŪŠ.MEŠ = pagrē (cognate with Heb. peger, cf. Lev 26:30 & Amos 8:3). On zību = 'jackal/vulture', see CAD Z, 106f.

a battle as one sees in Assyrian sculpture, but of the king's deliberate revenge on the Babylonians, executing them and feeding their corpses to predators - note the use of anāku and of the Š-theme of akālu in the 1st Sing .

sitti nišē balṭūsun ina šēdi lamassi ša RN ab abi
bānija ina libbi ispunū eninna anāku ina kispišu
nišē sātunu ina libbi aspun šērēšunu nukkusūti
ušakil kalbē šaḫē zībē erē iššurātē šamē nūnē apsi
(Rassam,4:70-76 Streck,38; ARAB 2,304 \$795)

I myself now cut down on the spot the rest of the
people alive between the protective genii where they
had cut down my father-begetter Sennacherib as an
offering for the dead to him. Their severed flesh
I fed to to dogs, pigs, vultures, eagles, birds of
the heavens and fish of the deep.

Cf. pagar qurādēšunu ina lā qebēri ušakil zību

I let vultures/jackals feed on the corpses of their
warriors without burial (Asar, 58 Nin A,5:6)

Quite clearly the king is putting the treaty curses into effect, and doing it to satisfy the gods, for he immediately refers to this in the words 'After I calmed the heart of the great gods my lords': ultu unihhu libbi ilāni rabūti bēlēja.² The period of the curse is then brought to a definite end by the clearance of the Banquet's leftovers - reḫēt ukulti kalbē šaḫē ...ušēši (4:81ff), and a ritual purification. This in itself is interesting, but the exceptional nature of the circumstances - rebels occupying the sacred city - do not allow us to generalise about the period for which curses would apply to foreign territory and how, if at all, their ill effects were terminated.

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1. CAD K, 426 kispu has Ashurbanipal crushing the victims with the statues (ina šēdi lamassi, ina libbi ispunū, ina libbi aspun). This seems unlikely, but he may have conceived of the colossi as witnesses to the retribution if not its instruments. As witness to Ashurbanipal's pious practice and as background to his enactment of the Burial curses where he deliberately cuts off libations for ancestral spirits:

adi kispi nāq mē ana eṭimmē šarrāni alikūt maḫrija
ša subṭulu arkus ana ili u amēlūtum mītūti u balṭūti
ṭābtu ēpuš (K.891: Streck, 248ff; ARAB 2,376ff \$984)

Identifiable as the pleasure of the gods is the fate of the Mannean king, subject of one of Ishtar's doom oracles, discussed in section F. The curses are presented as answers to prayer.¹ One is rebellion against him, from which the second follows:

ina sūqi ālišu šalamtašu iddūšu indaššarū pagaršu.

They cast his body into the street of his city and they dragged around his corpse

(Rassam, 3:8f Streck, 24; ARAB 2, 299 \$786)

The verbal correspondance - mašāru Gtn-theme Precative and Preterite - between the EVT, 483 and the historical narrative together with the deliberate desecration implied as a public spectacle and the contacts with expressions in the Old Testament Prophets² suggests that we may take these lines as more than a chronicle of events.

Another passage which might qualify as influenced by treaty curses deals with the fate of Teumman's army:

ina lā mēni adūk qurādēšu ina qāta balṭūti
uṣabbit mundaḥṣēšu šalmātišunu kīma balti u
ašagi umalla tamirti CN dāmēšunu GN ušardi mēša
ašrup kīma nabassi (Var.: ina pagrēšunu GN asker
šalmātēšunu ...etc)

Countless of their warriors I slew. I seized alive his fighters. With their corpses I filled the plain of Susa like baltu and ašagu thorn-bushes. With their blood I made the Ulay river run down; its waters I dyed like red wool (Var: with their corpses I blocked the Ulay river, their bodies...etc) ₃

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1. See section F, page 137 on the oracle which implies a prior prayer. Three curses are involved in its answer - rebellion, desecration of corpse and eradication of dynasty.
 2. Eg. Jer 14:16 - 'the people to whom they (false prophets) prophesy shall be cast out in the streets of Jerusalem, victims of famine and sword with none to bury them'; Jer 22:19 - 'With the burial of an ass shall he (Jehoiakim) be buried, dragged and cast forth beyond the gates of Jerusalem'. Note that one of the four curses, i.e. scourges or destroyers (mišpāḥōt) along with sword, birds and beasts is 'dogs to tear/drag': wē'et hakkēlābīm lišōb, Jer 15:3. Cf. Jezebel's fate, cast out into the street by human agency and devoured by dogs. Though indassarū could imply a humiliation like Hector's, animals may be the subject as in the EVT & OT parallels. In Hammurabi's Code, a certain defaulter could be dragged (to death, presumably) in the field which was the site of the crime (BabLaws, 88f, lines 97-100; ANET, 177 \$256), so this treatment was both ancient and widespread.
 3. Rassam, 3:38ff Streck, 26; ARAB 2, 300 \$787. Var. Prism B, 5:97 Piep, 68. Umalla (3:40) must be translated 1st Sing with Asb. as subject, not 3rd Plural with Piepkorn.

Does this describe a battle or an execution? The second clause with balṭūti might suggest a massacre of prisoners, and support for such a practice could be found in 2 Sam 8:2 where David executed two lines of Moabites, sparing one other line.¹ The EVT Ninurta curse (lines 425f) speaks of the plain being filled with corpses (pagrē-kunu limalla ṣēru) The imagery of rivers of blood like red wool is reminiscent of simile curses which can be very vivid, but this has not turned up as a treaty curse yet, though it is a cliché of the Annals.² Though certainty is impossible, this passage may reflect a royal execution of adē-violators after the manner of adē curses.

Beyond cavil as royal punishments are the following passages which fall under the rubric of the Corpse & Burial curse.

eṣemti abi bānišunu ašlula

kimahḡē ṣarrānišunu maḡrūti arkūti lā pāliḡūti DNN
bēlēja munarriṭū ṣarrāni abbēja abbul aqqur ukallim
šamši eṣmētīšunu alqā ana GN eṣemmēšunu lā ṣalālu
ēmid kispi nāq mē uzammešunūti

sitti aḡḡēšu ṣa PNN anīr šērēšunu ušēbil ana tāmarti
mātītan...eṣmātē PN3 ṣa ultu qereb GN ilqūni ana GN
eṣmātē šātēna miḡrīt abulli qabal CN ušahšila mārēšu

pagaršu aj addin ana qebēri eli ṣa maḡri mītussu
uttir qaqqassu akkis ina kišādi PN ...ālul 3

The bones of the father who begot them I carried off
The sepulchres of their former and latter kings who
did not reverence Ashur and Ishtar my lords, but who
harassed my royal fathers, I destroyed and demolished
and exposed to the sun. Their bones I took off to
Assyria; I laid a penalty of not resting upon their
spirits; I deprived them of their funerary offerings
and libations

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1. Cf. too Amaziah's massacre of the 10 000 captured Edomites by casting them to their deaths from a high rock (2 Chron 25:12).
 2. For references, see AHw., 697 nabāsu - 'red wool'; CAD Ṣ, 104 ṣarāpu B - 'to dye red, to dye'.
 3. Rassam, 3:64, 6:70ff Streck, 28 & 54ff; ARAB 2, 300 & 310, \$788 & 810 Prism B, 6:90ff Piep, 74; Rassam, 7:45ff Streck, 62; ARAB 2, 312 \$815.

The rest of the brothers of Dunanu and Sumayya I killed. Their flesh I sent around as a spectacle throughout the land ... the bones of Nabushumeresh which they had brought back from Gambulu to Assyria these very bones I made his sons crush to bits before the city gate of Nineveh

I did not allow his body to be buried but rather exacerbated his death. I cut off his head and hung it on Nabuqatasabat's back

When these are read in the light of Ashurbanipal's prayer-curse upon Gyges (*pān nakrišu pagaršu linnaddi-ma liššūni ešmētišu*, Rassam 1:116), the treaty, *kudurru* and Old Testament maledictions, it is clear that the king is carrying out a definite program of retribution, in other words, executing a sentence.¹ We note the legal use of *emēdu* in the second passage (Rassam,6:70ff), and can compare it with phrasing from another passage dealing with a divinely imposed sentence - *ēmissu Marduk šar ilāni šērtasu rabītu*: 'Marduk king of the gods laid upon him his onerous penalty' (B,4:66) - which came as retribution on Mardukshumribni an officer of the Urtaku assault.²

The deterrent intention behind Ashurbanipal's barbarous justice is brought out clearly in his sending of the dismembered corpses on tour *ana tāmarti* - 'as as spectacle, for beholding' from the root *amāru* - 'to see'. Our comprehension is increased when the biblical parallel is recalled when Saul dismembered his oxen and distributed the pieces 'throughout all the territory of Israel' with the warning 'Whoever does not come out after Saul and Samuel, so shall it be done to his oxen !' (1 Sam 11:7). It is a visual aid in the form of a simile curse in both cases, though intensified in shock effect in Assyria by its

1. Cf. the following curses from legal documents:

ša[am]antašlu qebēra aj [irši]/ limqut šalmassu-ma qebēra aj irši // eṭemmēkunu pāqīdu nāq mē aj irši/ eṭemmēkunu mē lišamū (King: BBS, 62 & 127, No. 9, 2:24 & No. 36, 6:54f; EVT, 452 & 477)

Note Jeremiah's closely parallel forecast of sepulchre desecration with bones exposed to the sun, but lacking a statement on the spirits which may be a significant omission for OT theology in contradistinction to Assyrian beliefs about the afterlife. For the Grinding of Bones curse, but in the context of cannibalism, see EVT, 444ff (ANETS, \$47).

2. Cf. *aššu māmīt ilāni rabūti ša ētiq DNN anna kabtu ēmedūšu-ma qereb GN ināruš ina kakki* (Asar, 47 Nin. A, 2:55ff; ARAB 2, 204 \$509); cf. CAD E, 141f *emēdu*, 3(b)(d) & (o). Is there an irony intended in B, 4:66 with Marduk sentencing his namesake 'Marduk-a name-has created' ?

use of human flesh and threat to humans.¹

The importance of the Assyrian capital city as the site of execution is related to its cosmopolitan nature which makes it suitable for staging executions so that justice may be seen to be done and the news carry. Many foreigners were in Nineveh, including the royal hostages of vassal states. The city gate has traditionally been associated with the business of justice as well as being a general thoroughfare,² so that the specific mention of 'the city gate of Nineveh' as the site for the sons of Nabushumeresh to crush their father's bones underlines the judicial nature of the act, and its intended effect.

In concluding the discussion of the Corpse and the Banquet curses, it will be worthwhile noting a passage from one of Ashurbanipal's Covenant of Grant texts, for these legal documents give a clear though incidental picture of the Assyrian attitude to burial, and have formal links with treaty texts. We quote from Postgate's newly collated edition of these texts:

When Baltaya, chief of the fodder supplies, goes to his fate in my palace with a good repute, they shall bury him where he dictates, and he shall lie where it was his wish. Where he lies you shall not disturb him (ašar šallu lā tadakkišu), and you shall not raise your hand against him, to do him evil, because he is one who has deserved kindness and favour (bēl ṭābti bēl damiqti) of the king his lord. Whoever disturbs him and removes him (ša ...idekkušu) from the grave where he is lying, may the king his lord be angry with him (likkilmēšū) and show him no

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1. Jdg 19:29 the distribution in 12 pieces of the Levite's outraged and murdered concubine may have carried an implication 'May Yhwh do so to you and more also, if you do not avenge me', but this is not stated. On the dismembering of animals, note the Spring Lamb curse of AMT, 10ff (AFO 8, 18; ANETS, 96/532 §iv ; UDU.NIM = ḫurāpu, see AHW, 357f & CAD H, 245), and the EVT, 551ff (ANETS, 103/539 §70) where the threat is that the entrails (errē) of sons and daughters will spill out like those of disembowelled yearlings and spring lambs (kabsu, ḫurāpu). Cf. PN qereb CN eli makāši iddūšum-ma iṭbuḫuš asliš: 'In Nineveh they threw Dunanu onto the slaughter-table and slaughtered him like a lamb' (B, 6:87ff). See CAD A.2, 335f aslis & aslu for further references from the Annals in like vein.
 2. See E. Speiser "'Coming' & 'Going' at the 'City' Gate", Oriental & Biblical Studies, eds. J.J. Finkelstein & M. Greenberg, 1967, p. 83-88 and the discussion of the throne/judgement-seat discovered in the city-gate complex of Dan - BA 37 (1974), 43ff; L. Köhler: Hebrew Man, SCM, 1956, p. 149-175 Appendix: 'Justice on the Gate'.

mercy(ai iršišu rēmu), may he forbid him to walk in temple and palace, and let him shroud his head(līrim qaqqassu) daylong from the wrath(uggat) of god and king. May the dogs tear apart his corpse as it lies unburied (pagaršu ina lā qebēri libaṣṣirū kalbē) 1

This states the positive blessings of a good relationship using the terminology of covenantal grace (tābtu, damiqtu). They are, so far as death is concerned, burial of a kind and in a place chosen by the person beforehand; his wishes are carried out in every respect, and his spirit has rest - sallu in contrast to the Elamite kings lā ṣalālu. The curse for violating the king's decree is appended, and appropriately includes a Corpse & Burial curse amalgamated with the Banquet curse.

We have seen, then, that it is possible to reconstruct the Assyrian attitude towards burial and the after-life from texts of Ashurbanipal's day dealing with the positive and negative aspects of covenantal relations, and that the Annals in fact expound the treaty-curses applied to adē-violators in this sphere.

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1. N.Postgate: NARG, 37 No's 9-12:rev. 52ff. Note how the wrath of king and gods runs parallel in the text. Likkilmēšu derives from root nekelmû (AHw,775f), and is often used to express the gods' anger leading to the great curse -

Anu Enlil Ea ilāni rabûti ina aggi libbišunu likkilmûšu
(BBS,17 No. 3,6:2)

ilāni rabûti ša šamê erṣeti ašibutū kibrāti mala ina
ṭuppi anni šumšunu zakrū limḥaṣūkunu likilmūkunu
arratu maruštu aggiš līrurūkunu (EVT,472ff; ANETS,103/539)

On the phrase rēmu rašû - 'to show mercy', see the pertinent Excursus. On the form of the Covenant of Grant and its relations with treaty texts and biblical material, see the important articles by M.Weinfeld: JAOS 90(1970),184-203 "Covenant of Grant in the OT & ANE", and JAOS 93(1973), 190-199 "Covenant Terminology in the ANE & its Influence of the West", and DDS,74ff.

The narrative of the sack of Susa, from which we quoted the lines dealing with curses executed upon the sepulchres and bones, continues with other equally obvious allusions to treaty curses which have received commentary from scholars such as Fensham, Fitzmyer and Hillers.

ṭābtu sahlû usappiḥa ṣēruššun...eperē CNN...ēriš
 alqa ana GN ina araḥ umē GN2 ana pāṭ gimrēšu aspun
 rigim amēlūti kibis alpē u ṣēni šišīt alāla ṭābi
 uzamma ugarēšu serrēmē ṣabīti umām ṣēri mala bašû
 pargāniš ušarbiša qerebšun
 (Rassam, 6:79ff Streck, 56ff; ARAB 2, 310f \$811)

Salt and sahlû-weed I strewed upon them (the districts of Elam) ... the soil of Susa, Madaktu and Haltemash... I ploughed up and carried (some) back to Assyria. In a month of days I devastated Elam to its outer limits. The human sounds and the plod of oxen and sheep, the exuberance of sweet work-songs I cut off. And as for their pastures, wild asses, gazelles, the beasts of the steppe of all varieties I caused to frequent for grazing.

The Sowing of Salt, the Reduction to Wasteland & Rubble, the Removal of Joyful Sounds and the Habitation of Dragons curses spring from the treaty milieu with parallels in Hittite, Hebrew, Aramaic and Assyrian sources. The references and discussion of them is found in the works below and need not be repeated here, for the point we wish to emphasise is that Ashurbanipal was taking judicial action in specific terms against an adê-violateur, so that his Annals reflect his practical exposition of an adê theology. ¹

1. See Fensham: BA 25(1962), 48-50 "Salt as Curse in the OT & the ANE", and ZAW 75, 166ff & 171f; Hillers: TC/OTP, 44ff & 57f; Fitzmyer: Sefire, 45, 47f, 50f & 53f; EVT, 545f - d[Šamaš ina epinni ša parzilli alūkuḥnu nagêkunu] lu-[-?]: 'May Shamash plow up your cities and districts with an iron plow' (ANETS, 103/539 \$68; cf. Iraq 20, 69 & 88 and ZA 54, 192 on restoration of the verb). Cf. 'to pacify (ana nuḥḥi) the heart of Ashur my lord and so that people would praise his glorious power, I gathered up dust of Babylon (epirē CN assuḥam) as a spectacle for future generations (ana tāmarti nišē ahrāti), and stored it in that Bit Akiti in a heap in a storehouse' (Senn, 137f, lines 36ff; ARAB 2, 185 \$438f). On sahlû & serrēmu against Streck's sihlû & purimē, see Ahw, 1009f & 1038.

There are, of course, a number of other curses common to the Aramaic, Hebrew and Assyrian sources which are reflected in Ashurbanipal's Annals, such as those of Dry Breasts, Famine, Thirst, Disease and Cannibalism.¹ Some are strongly underlined as curses for adē violation, such as the curse of Dry Breasts and of Cannibalism in the Arab campaign (Rassam,9:53ff quoted previously), while others appear more 'naturally' or obliquely in the narratives. Previous studies have covered these, but omitted others such as the curse of Insanity and of Fire, so it is worth quoting an incident in which the latter two come together.

DNN [ša ana] ... ezizū pišu irhe dāmū-ma imtarāš
 elišun ina amāt [ilūtlišunu [išāt]u ultu šamē imqut-ma
 šāšu ummānātešu karassu uqallišunūti ... kakkē DN
 bēlija ishupšu-ma maḥḥutaš illik-ma ina miqit tēme
 unaššak rittēšu muttassu immašid-ma siḥlu iššakin
 ina libbišu immarta-ma imqut ušarišu ina zābi u ḥāli
 ua aj iqtati napištuš

Ashur, Ninlil, Bel, Nabu, Ishtar of Arbela [who against] [...] were wrathful. His mouth poured out blood and he fell sick. Upon him at the decree of their divinities fire fell from heaven and burned up him, his army and his camp....The weapons of Ashur my lord overwhelmed him and he went insane and in his dementia chewed at his wrists. Half of him was paralyzed, searing pain pierced his heart, he began to scratch away, and his penis fell off due to oozing and putrifying. With groans of woe his life came to an end.²

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1. The curse of Dry Breasts in Rassam,9:65ff has a particularly striking counterpart in Sefire I, A:21ff (Fitzmyer: Sefire, 14f & 41ff; TC/OTP, 62f), and on Cannibalism, see the vivid passages referred to by Hillers: TC/OTP, 62f.
 2. IT: 148ff (AAA 20, 88f); cf. BM.123410 (Iraq 30, 109f); Thompson's transliteration in AAA 20 has been improved on in lines 149,159,160, 161; see Ahw.,269 ezēzu, 1(c) & 623 mašādu N - 'to suffer a stroke' & 392, UŠ = išaru, ušāru, and Millard's transliteration and translation of BM.123410 .

Firstly, the inscription is given an explicit treaty context in its record of Dugdamme first swearing to and then breaking the nīš/māmīt ilāni rabūti (IT:156f). Secondly, Millard's text adds an explicit theological interpretation of Dugdamme's fate as a sentence for adē violation with the words - ēmessu šerēssu rabītu: '(Ashur?) imposed upon him his severe sentence' (line 29¹). Thirdly, the misfortunes described are 'natural', i.e. not executed by Ashurbanipal but caused by direct divine intervention.

Enlarging on the second point, we may note that divine legitimation or motivation for royal sentences is the rule rather than the exception in the Annals, and in the two passages explicitly referring to a divine šerētu, the result is death. In the case of Urtaku, Beliqisha, Nabushumeresh and Mardukshumibni, the deaths result from unspecified decline (illness ?), the bite of a wild animal, dropsy and a completely unspecified cause.¹ Vagueness might be intentional to veil the person's actual fortunes, or could be due to lack of information in a confused aftermath of war, but we can be certain that disease would have been theologically interpreted by Ashurbanipal for we have his own lament before the gods when illness overtook him² as well as such instances as the interpretation of Teumman's stroke or convulsions as something the gods did to him seriously affecting his lips and eye - itti epšēti annāti ša DNN ēpušūš ul ibāš: 'yet despite these things which the gods did to him he was not ashamed' (B, 5:13ff).

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1. Prism B, 4:54ff Piep, 58ff. Urtaku: ša lā iššuru ibrūti ina ūmē lā šimtišu mūtu ugarru ina tanihi iqtu izubu: 'who had not maintained friendly relations, on a day not decreed as his fate death declared war on him and with groans he came to his end ebbing away'; Beliqisha: ša islū nīr bēlūtija ina nišik ḥumšīri ištakan napišti: 'who had cast off my sovereign yoke lost his life from the bite of a ḥumšīru (type of rat ? wild boar ?)'; Nabushumeresh: lā nāšir adē išši aganutillâ mē malūti: 'who did not keep the treaty-oath, dropsy carried off'.
 2. ammīni muršu lumnu libbi uddû ḥuluqqû ritkusa ittija: 'Why is it that sickness, malaise, depression and misfortune haunt me ?' (K.891:rev. 4f Streck, 248ff; ARAB 2, 376ff). Note for comparison a theological presentation of disease in Elijah's Letter threatening plague and disease of the bowels for 'infidelity' (2 Chron 21:12ff). With ANE leprosy curses (see Fensham: ZAW 75, 160f), compare Gehazi's and Uzziah's leprosy (2 Kgs 5:27 & 2 Chron 27:19ff).

The royal šerētu's which are complementary to the divine were carried out on captured kings or insurrectionists, and definitely were intended as deterrents. Besides the distribution of the severed corpse already mentioned, there is the differentiated treatment of the Bit-Imbi captives - some were beheaded on the spot while others went to Nineveh where 'their lips I pierced, and for a spectacle for the people of my land I took them off to Assyria': šaptēšunu apru' ana tāmarti nišē mātija alqâ ana māt GN (Rassam, 4:135ff Streck,42; ARAB 2,306 \$800). The motive of public display is quite congruent with glorification of the gods, as the following passages show:

ina qabal tamhāri balṭussu ina qāta ašbat ina CN
āl bēlūtiya mašakšu ašḥuṭ

ana kullum tanitti DN u ilāni rabūti bēlēja annu
kabtu ēmissu-ma šigāru aškunšu-ma itti asi kalbi
arkusašu-ma ušanširšu abulla qabal CN Nereb
Masnaqti Adnāti

ina qibīt ilāni rabūti bēlēja ulli kalbi aškunšu-ma
ušanširšu šigāru

ina nīs qātāja ša ana kašād nakrūtija amdahharu ina
qibīt DNN ina hutnê māšire šibit qātēja mēšišu apluš
... ana dalāl tanitti DN ... rēmu aršišu uballiṭ
napšassu

nikis qaqqad PN ina tarši abulli qabal āli ša CN
umahhira mahhuriš aššu danān DNN bēlēja nišē
kullume nikis qaqqad PN

ša ultu ulla ina bārūti qabū umma [qaqqadē]
nakrēka tanakkis]

I took him alive in the battle; in Nineveh my royal
capital I flayed off his skin

To reveal the glory of Ashur and my lords the great
gods I laid upon him a heavy penalty. I appointed
him to a kennel, and tied him up with bear and dog,
and made him guard the city gate of Nineveh, called
'Entrance for the Scrutiny of Peoples'

At the behest of the great gods my lords I fitted
him with a dog-chain and made him guard a kennel

By the raising of my hands which I received for the
conquest of my foes at the decree of Ashur and Nin-
lil I pierced his jaws with the hutnū of the chariot
held in my hand...to praise the glory of Ashur, Ishtar
and the great gods...I showed him mercy and spared
his life

The severed head of Teumman in the middle of the city-
gate of Nineveh I presented as an offering so that the
people might behold the power of Ashur and Ishtar my
lords by the severed head of Teumman

(The severed head of Teumman...I presented as an offering in the middle of the city-gate) where from of old in the oracle it was said: "[The heads of] your foes you will cut off] 1

1. Rassam, 10:4ff, 8:8ff, 8:27ff, 9:103ff Streck, 82, 66, 68, 80 ; ARAB 2, 320, 314, 315, 319 \$831, 819, 820, 829 ; Prism B, 6:66ff Piep, 74; CT 35, pL 32 = BM.80-7-19,102:14ff, E.Weidner: Afo 8 (1932/33), 184 ARAB 2, 396 \$1047 .

From the second passage (Rasaam,8:8ff), note a-si = asu II Sumerian loan-word = 'bear' (AHw., 76 against Streck & Luckenbill); cf. Sennacherib binding the Babylonian king dabû'iš - 'like a bear' (cf. Heb. dôb) with the variant itti asi attested (Senn., 88 line 36). On the name of the city-gate, where Luckenbill has 'Entrance of the Thronging Nations', cf. Streck, 68 note 1, see AHw., 619 masnaqtu - 'Überprüfung'; 'Examination, Inspection' from root sanāqu - 'to examine' (AHw., 1020); cf. CAD A.1, 128 adnātu 'Entrance-to-the-Place-where-the-World-is-Controlled'.

From the fourth passage (Rassam,9:103ff), note against Streck & Luckenbill ('meinem schneidenden Handmesser') the difficulty of precisely rendering ina hutnî māšeri šibit qātēja: lit. 'with the hutnû of the chariot the grip of my hands' . See CAD H,263 'hutnû should be connected with hetennu, likewise denoting a part of the chariot and possibly with the missile hutennu' and translating it 'with the hutnû of my own chariot'; cf. CAD Š, 166(d) 'with the ...javelin which I myself held'; cf. AHw., 342 he/hutennu, hutnû - 'Deichelspitze (?)' .

From the fifth passage (B,6:66ff), note against Piepkorn whose translation fits the context well ('I displayed conspicuously') von Soden's distinguishing of the root miḫhuru, mu/aḫḫuru - 'Opfergabe' and mi/muḫḫuriš - 'als Opfergabe', which implies an element of display add presentation to the gods, not only to the people. See the other references given, AHw., 651 .

In these passages there is a careful interweaving of royal and divine impetus, public and religious action. The gods' promptings are represented in the phrases ana kullum tanitti DNN, ana dalāl tanitti DNN, aššu danān DNN, ina qibīt DNN (twice) , ina bārūti qabū and in a variant reference to Teumman's beheading not quoted ina našparti DN: 'at Ashur's order', a noun from the root šapāru - 'to send, despatch'.¹ Ashurbanipal's responsive action can be summed up in his passing sentence - annu kabtu + emēdu, and his awareness of bestowed power - ina niš qātāja ša ana kašad nakrūtija amdahharu, which is then expressed by the string of 1st Preterites, especially umahhira mahhuriš with its religious nuances. The element of public display is inherent in the use of kullumu - 'to cause to see, demonstrate, reveal', and the references to the populace and the capital with its public place, the city-gate.²

1. PN ... ša ina našparti DN ina gērīja mahrê akkisu qaqqassu (Rassam, 5:7 Streck, 44; ARAB 2, 306 §801). See AHW, 760f našpartu B:4(a) 'Botschaft von Göttern' .

2. As a variant of the phrase ana tāmarti nišē mātija (Rassam, 4:135ff above), compare ana tabrât nišē (noun derived from barû I- 'to see, behold') in the royal sentence passed by Ashurbanipal in a parallel text reading -

PNN ina abul šit šamši ereb šamši ina tabrât nišē
itti asi urakkiššunūti

CT 35, pl. 31 = Sm. 1350:52; Weidner: AfO 8(1932/33), 182;
ARAB 2, 395 §1044

Returning to the Dugdamme incident, then, we note that it belongs to the category of divine sentence, which is inherent in the phrase ina amāt ilūtišunu and explicit in the variant (DN) ēmessu šerēssu rabītu, and which then finds expression visibly in fire, insanity and disease, behind which lie the curses of the adē.¹

A phenomenon which emerges from a study of the curses in the passages of major importance in Ashurbanipal's Annals such as the Arab campaign, Shamash-shum-ukin's revolt, the sack of Susa and the fate of Dugdamme is the grouping of curses in clusters. For instance, the theological exposition of the Arab campaign draws in four curses - plague,

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1. On fire, see TC/OTP, 74ff Hillers' Sodom & Gomorrah curse, exclusive to the OT, but may be regarded as a particular and vividly historicised form of a broader curse involving lightning, fire and brimstone. With the Dugdamme, Shamash-shum-ukin, Ishtar oracle and other instances of judgement by fire in the Annals (eg. IT:144 ina ^dGerri arīri pagaršu šaqmê) compare the Girra curse of the EVT, 524f: ^dGIŠ.BAR (girru) nādin makalē ana šeher rabū zērkunu zēr zērkunu liqmū: 'May Girra (a fire god) who provides food for young and old, burn your offspring and descendants' (ANETS, 103/539 \$62). Compare too the Figurine curses of the EVT & Sefire I: 'Just as one burns a wax figurine in fire, ... so may they burn your figure in fire' (EVT, 608f; ANETS, 104/540 \$89) & 'Just as this wax is burned by fire, so may Arpad be burned and her gr[eat daughter-cities] ! Just as this wax is burred by fire, so may Mati[cel be burned by filre] !' (A:35, 37 Sefire, 14f & 35f). Note that the Aramaic curse applies to cities as well as to persons, affording a better parallel to the burning of Dugdamme and his camp, Shamash-shum-ukin and Babylon than would individualised curses alone. Note also the Lightning curse known in Assyria as attested by the curse cluster protecting Tiglath-pileser I's prism inscriptions and reading - ^dAdad ina birqi lemuttu māssu libriq: 'May Adad (the storm god) blitz his land with (his) dread lightning-bolt' (AKA, 108 8:83f; ARAB 1, 91 \$266). See further the Excursus: 'Sg 8:146f & the Phenomena of Electrical Storms'

On the curse of Insanity, compare -

Tarqu illika mahhūtaš // yakkēkāh Yhwh bešiggā^cōn
 ūbē^ciwwārōn ūbētīmhōn lēbab ... wēhāyītāh mēšuggā^c
 mimmar'ēh cēyneykā 'āšer tir'eh // bayyōm hahū'
 nē'ūm-Yhwh 'akkeh kol-sūs battimmāhōn wērōkēbō
 baššiggā^cōn (Rassam, 1:84 ; Deut 28:28, 34; Zech 12:4)

On Disease as a covenant/treaty curse, compare Deut 28:27, 35 & 59ff with EVT, 418ff, 461ff & 469ff, \$38A, 39 & 52 (ANETS, 102/538).

famine, cannibalism and sterility - in ten lines (9:57-67 within the larger unit of 9:53-114). The šabrū's oracle from the civil war groups sword, fire, famine and plague (Rassam,3:122-126), while the narrative groups sword, famine, want, fire and the divine net (4:59-61). The sack of Susa links together action against sepulchres and bones, the sowing of salt and weed, the reduction of cities to rubble, the cutting off of joyful sounds and the turning over to wild animals (6:70-106), while the Dugdamme narrative expounds the curses of fire, insanity and disease (IT:149-161). This clustering of curses is not sufficiently accounted for by the demands of historical description, even though one must allow for inter-related natural phenomena in something like a siege where sword, famine and plague are commonly found together. For one thing, the Susa narrative relates five deliberately executed curses not natural occurrences, for another the inclusion of the divine net or of fire from heaven is gratuitous not a cause and effect necessity. The explanation would seem to lie in the clustering of curses at the end of the Assyrian treaty documents. This called for a fulfilment of like clustering together of realised curses in the adê historiography, the official imperial theology.

Perhaps a further analogy is to be found in those Old Testament passages which group curses in three's, four's or five's. This is a characteristic of the books of Jeremiah and Ezekiel from which the following passages deserve special mention:

Those who are for pestilence (lammāwet) to pestilence,
and those who are for the sword (laḥereb) to the sword;
those who are for famine (lārācāb) to famine,
and those who are for captivity (laššēbiy) to captivity.

I will appoint over them four kinds of destroyers (mišpāḥōt), says Yhwh: the sword to slay, dogs to tear (hakkēlābīm lišōb), and the birds of the air and the beasts of the earth to devour and destroy (ḥōp haššāmāyim wē'et-behēmat hā'areš le'ekōl ūlēhašhīt)

Jer 15:2-3

How much more when I send upon Jerusalem my four sore acts of judgement ('arba'at šēpātay hārācīm), sword, famine, evil beasts (ḥayyāh rācāh), and pestilence (deber), to cut off from it man and beast! (Ezek 14:21)

1. See J. Bright: Jeremiah, AB, 1965, p. 102ff on the reasonable ascription of the composition/adaptation mixing poetry and prose to Jeremiah; on Ezekiel, see the standard commentary of W. Zimmerli: Ezekiel, BKAT, 316ff.

These passages are particularly striking in their departure from the usual threefold curse of sword, famine and pestilence (eg Jer 24: 10, 29:17, 34:17), or sword, wild beasts and pestilence (Ezek 32:27), or the fire, sword and exile of Ezekiel's acted out curse using his shaven hair in thirds (Ezek 5:1ff). The general thrust of a cluster is the complete nature of the act of judgement, complete destruction 'root and branch' as the English idiom has it, or as the Hebrew would put it, the cutting off of man and beast.¹ The variations of content - captivity is added in one instance, evil beasts in another, while the third omits pestilence and famine in favour of extending the wild beasts category - do not seem significant at all. Rather, one is dealing with a numerological figure of speech, perhaps comparable to Amos' phrase 'for three transgressions or for four'. Ezekiel twice extends the cluster of three or four curses to include famine, wild beasts, pestilence, blood and sword as 'deadly arrows for destruction' from Yhwh directed against Israel (Ezek 5:17), or in reversal of direction the curses of pestilence (deber), blood (dām), torrential rains (gešem šōṭēp), hailstones ('abnēy 'elgābīš), fire ('ēš) and brimstone (goprīt), which fall on the hordes of Gog (Ezek 38:22).

It appears, then, that the Annals and the Old Testament Prophets share the technique of clustering treaty/covenant curses together to underline the gravity of the sin committed and the fullness of the retribution demanded by it, and that in doing so they are influenced by the form of the treaty/covenant which carries extended lists of curses clustered together in both traditions.

1. Some regard four as 'one of the symbols of completeness in the Bible' (NBD, 897 R.A.H. Gunner, 'Number'), and compare the four horns scattering Judah (Zech 1:18ff), the four patrolling chariots (Zech 6) and the four horsemen of the Apocalypse (Rev 6), and the four destroying angels (Rev 9:13ff), (IDB, 565). In addition to the passages quoted above, compare the choice of scourges offered to David in which the implication is that they are not causally linked: 'The command of Yhwh had come to the prophet Gad, David's seer, to go and speak to David.... "Is it to be three years of famine in your land, or three months of flight with the enemy at your heels, or three days of pestilence in your land?" (2 Sam 24:11ff NEB).

To sum up this section, we have seen how explicitly the Annals refer to the treaty document and its curses, and how these permeate the prayers and oracles as well. We have looked at a number of specific curses in detail, especially the frequent references to the bodies and graves of adê-violators. We have seen the king in the rôle of executor of the curses on cities, citizens and kings taken on punitive expeditions, and noted the element of public display of victims as deterrent. But most important from Ashurbanipal's point of view as we perceive it through these scribal compositions was the power of his gods, the justice of his case against adê-violators and the demonstration of the effects of sin against himself and his gods.

C.10: I - The Victory and Spoil Ceremony.

There is surprisingly little material for documenting the celebration of Ashurbanipal's victories, and we shall have to build on what there is with the help of other sources than his Annals. Pertinent to the lack of descriptions of victory ceremonies is the lack of *Erstberichte* or *Göttesbriefe* which might well have been composed after the pattern preserved in the Sargon and Esarhaddon sources and used in Nineveh in ceremonies after the king's triumphal return from campaigns. It may be reiterated that a lack of extant texts does not imply that this sphere of celebration was unimportant in the social and religious life of the imperial community. There are after all only a tiny fraction of the vassal treaties extant, and whole categories of native Assyrian literature which must have existed once are entirely missing and the gap cannot be satisfactorily explained by denying them creativity because of excessive dependence on Babylonian exemplars.

If we found that Nineveh was the scene of the public execution of adê-violators who were displayed to the cosmopolitan populace, then we might expect that the capital would be the site of the victory ceremonies. This may well be so, but another most important factor enters into consideration - the location of the appropriate temples. For instance, the importance of Ishtar of Arbela is apparent from every list of gods in the Annals, and because of the references to oracles coming from her promising military victories. It is no surprise, then, to read of a combination of Bīt-Akīti ceremonies and entrance into Arbela amidst the tokens of victories bestowed on Ashurbanipal by the goddess.

anāku RN šar GN ultu niqê DN aqqû ēpušu isinni
 Bīt-Akīti atmuḫu ašāti DN ina libbi PNN u nakis
 qaqqad PN4 šar GN2 ša DN bēltu imnu qātāua ereb
 CN ēpuš ina ḫadê

I am Ashurbanipal king of Assyria. When I had poured out libations for Shatru(Ishtar) and had celebrated the feast of the New Year's House, had taken hold of the reins of Ishtar, surrounded by Dunanu, Samgunu, Apla and the severed head of Teumman king of Elam whom the mistress Ishtar had delivered into my hand, I made entrance into Arbela with rejoicing.

(CT 35,pl. 12 rev. 1:20-23; ARAB 2,398 \$1071)

Is there any relation between this ceremony and the 'taking the hand of Bel' and Bīt-Akīti ceremonies in Babylon? Did Ishtar of Arbela 'go out' to meet the king outside the city and accompany him back to her shrine there? ¹ Was the celebration of the year's campaign delayed to coincide with the asinnu of the Bīt-Akīti, or were there other victory processions held independently? These questions may be too involved for our extant sources to answer.

We can attempt to piece together references to the four characters named above from elsewhere in the Annals. Thus Prism B states that Teumman's head was hung around Dunanu's neck *en route* to Nineveh, and that the capital was entered to the accompaniment of musicians and singers:

itti kišitti GN šallat GN2 ša ina qibīt DN ikšuda
qātāja itti nārē ēpeš ningūti ana CN ērub-ma ina
hidāti (B,6:52-56; Piep, 72)

With the spoil of Elam and the booty of Gambulu which my hands had acquired by conquest at the behest of Ashur, accompanied by singers and makers of celebration songs, I entered Nineveh amidst rejoicing. ²

This answers one question, namely that there was a public celebration of the king's victory on his return to the capital, whatever additional rites were held at other shrines elsewhere. The narrative continues with the passage already quoted in the previous section where Teumman's head is offered as a tribute to the power of the gods (umahhira mahhuriš, 6:67). We presume that Dunanu was still wearing the head at this stage, for another description of Dunanu has him, his younger brother Samgunu and Aplā tied up at the gate of Nineveh for the populace to stare at - ana tabrāt nišē (Sm 1350; ARAB 2,395 \$1044). Then Dunanu and Samgunu are separated, going to Ashur and Arbela respectively, if we follow Piepkorn, or successively (Prism B, 6:76ff), The motive for this is given in 6:82 ana dalāl ahrâte ūbil-šunūti: 'for praise unto posterity I brought them', that is, they are presented at the shrines in these important cultic centres so that the record of their defeat and humiliation before Assyria's gods may be known and lead future generations to extol the gods. This makes

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1. See Saggs: Greatness, 383ff on the Akītu festival at Babylon.
 2. Hadīs/ina hadē have ceremonial public reference rather than being limited to the king's emotional state. On music, see N&R, 296-312.

more sense to our mind than does Piepkorn's 'for future obedience' which the record of their later slaughter contradicts. Piepkorn's separation of the victims is also contradicted by their joint appearance in Arbela in the text quoted previously. If we allow the various texts a historicity and attempt to harmonise them, the following sequence emerges: an initial celebration on Ashurbanipal's return to Nineveh the capital, a period of public display in the capital, then a presentation of victims at major shrines successively, perhaps synchronising with set festivals held there, and finally an execution back in the capital, followed in at least this instance by sending the severed corpses on tour. Thus Dunanu appears in Nineveh with Teumman's head, and leaves subsequently for Ashur and Arbela. At the latter city, Teumman's head again receives special mention in the processional (see Sm 1350; ARAB 2, 395 \$1043 & 1045)¹, and finally Dunanu is slaughtered like a lamb in Nineveh.

Moving outside Ashurbanipal's Annals, we find corroboration for concluding that holding a victory parade in the capital with a display of captives and decapitated enemy heads was an important part of the king's return from campaign, and served the dual purpose of impressing the populace and honouring the gods. Esarhaddon states his motive for the ceremony as follows:

aššu danān DN bēlija nišē kullim-ma ina kišādi
rabūtišun ālul-ma itti nārī u sammī ina rebēt
CN ētettiq

In order to demonstrate the power of Ashur my lord to the people, I hung (the heads of Sanduarri and Abdimilkutti) around the necks of their nobles and paraded through the concourse of Nineveh to the accompaniment of singers and harps.

(Th.1929-10-12,1 Col. 3:36-38 Asar,50; ARAB 2,212 \$528)

1. Note the depiction of the decapitated heads of enemies in Assyrian sculpture, notably Parrot: N&R, 51 fig. 60 showing Ashurbanipal and the queen feasting together in the gardens with an Elamite head hanging from a nearby tree! Cf. the hanging up of the heads of Saul and his sons in the temple of Dagon (1 Chron 10:10).

For comparison we may cite the Jehoshaphat narrative of 2 Chron 20, which has already been discussed in connection with its covenant prayer, victory oracle and the fear of Yhwh falling on surrounding nations. Two spoil and victory ceremonies take place, one in the field in the valley of Berachah, the other in the capital which echoes the Assyrian celebrations:

Then they returned, every man of Judah and Jerusalem and Jehoshaphat at their head, returning to Jerusalem with joy, for Yhwh had made them rejoice over their enemies. They came to Jerusalem with harps and lyres and trumpets, to the house of Yhwh. (2 Chron 20:27f)

We have a procession led by the king to the accompaniment of music, which winds through the capital city and ends at the national shrine. In this context, joy has a ceremonial and theological colouring and is not simply emotional elation, and of course the theological context is the bērît and the divine election of the king, both of which receive vindication through the military victory.

Worth mentioning too is the reaction of the Philistines to the victory over Saul, for the biblical narrative states that they 'sent messengers throughout the land of the Philistines, to carry the good news to their idols (wayěšallēhū bē'ereš GN sābīb lēbaššēr 'et-Ĉašabbēyhem) and to the people' (1 Chron 10:9f). The impression given is that runners were despatched post haste to keep the gods informed. Certainly at Mari the gods wanted up to the minute intelligence reports on the campaigns, and perhaps this was also the custom in Assyria, though the Annals do not mention it. Again one notes the duality of purpose - publicity and praise. The latter is prominent in the presentation of Saul's head to Dagon. Did the Philistine and Assyrian gods need to be informed of events on the battlefield? Is this a motive for the Assyrian *Göttesbrief*? Probably there is an inherent ambiguity in prayer in any religion, since much of it involves telling the deity/deities what it/they already know according to the worshipers' presuppositions about its/their competence. It seems reasonable to conclude that *Göttesbrief* or Annals edition, like the victory ceremonies themselves, had both publicity and praise motivations, whether or not they aimed at informing the gods.

Another feature of biblical victory ceremonies unduplicated in the extant Annals of Ashurbanipal is the ceremonial donning of a con-

quered king's crown, for David is crowned with the Ammonite crown whose craftsmanship is remarked upon (1 Chron 20:2). We read of Ashurbanipal carrying off the personal furniture and regalia of the conquered Elamite king, or of his bedecking of the vassal Necho, but in neither instance is there a mention of crowns. This may be put down to chance silence in the sources, but on the other hand it could reflect Assyrian nationalism, prepared to undergo Babylonian coronation ceremonies but unprepared to even negatively acknowledge other territorial authorities. However, this seems unlikely and lacking information from our sources, speculation is liable to err.

As well as dealing with the fate of adê-violators, the Annals make a point of mentioning the rich booty captured on punitive campaigns. Though for detail there is no comparison with the Sargon *Göttesbrief*, the record of the Elamite campaign just referred to does list materials and artisans taken captive. The gods are acknowledged in both the seizure and the distribution of spoil :

ša ina tukulti DNN ilāni rabûti bēlēja birit GN
u GN2 ikšuda qātāja ina qibīt DN u ilāni rabûti
bēlēja ultu qereb GN3 ḥadīš ušam-ma ana gimir
ummānāteja šalimtu šaknat (B,6:12-16 Piep,70)

(The war equipment) which by the help of Ashur and Ishtar the great gods my lords my hands had captured between Susa and the river Ullaya, at the command of Ashur and the great gods my lords I brought out of Elam with rejoicing and to every soldier a portion of the spoil was given.

Two clichés are inserted in the narrative - ina tukulti DNN & ina qibīt DN - to theologially justify the looting of Elam and the way the spoils were handled. This particular narrative omits reference to the gods' share, but perhaps we may read into the cliché covering the soldiers' benefits a feeling that all the spoil belonged to Ashur and that divine injunction or permission was needed to assign some of the spoil to the human agents of victory.

The Rassam prism makes good Prism B's omission by adding that the best of the people and spoil captured at the gods' behest went to them rišāti ana ilāni ašruk: 'the choicest/chief part I dedicated to the gods' (7:1, Streck, 60; ARAB 2,311 §814). Some of the fighting men were attached to the royal command, while 'the rest I divided like sheep among the cultic cities, locations of the great gods (ana māhāzi šubat ilāni

rabûti¹, among my officers and dignitaries and whole force' (7:6ff). The implication seems to be that those not executed became the property of the gods, deployed in the armed forces which are called 'the forces of Ashur'.

Supporting this is the text of LET:rev. 32-36 devoted to the Sin temple at Harran which Ashurbanipal restored:

ina tukulti ilāni rabûti u DN āšib CN bēlija raggē
 iknušū šipši [u līti unaššiqū šēpēja mātāte lā
 māgirēja akšud šallassunu kabittu rēšitē kaspu
 hurāšu mimma aqru nakiri šadlūti ana ilāni GN ilāni
 [GN2 ?] aqīš ana qišti

By the help of the great gods and Sin resident in Harran, my lord, the wicked bowed in submission at my feet at (my) power and might. The unsubmissive lands I conquered. Their massive spoil, the choicest of it, silver, gold and whatever was of value, enemy prisoners I dedicated as a gift to the gods of Assyria and [Babylonia ?] .

The destiny of the material treasures is corroborated by the Ishtar Temple inscription in a passage referring to the restoration of É.MAŠ.MAŠ, temple of Ninlil:

lulê umalli dadmē nakirē ša n[akš]luda qātāja
 simāti nakiri ša ina qibīt ilūtiša šīrti
 aštakkanu u šarrāni lā kanšūti ana nīrilja

With the riches of the inhabited world from the kings whom my hands conquered, with the regalia of the enemy and of kings unsubmissive to my [yoke], which I had accumulated at the command of her exalted divinity, I filled (it) .

(IT:34f, AAA 20, 82)

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1. See AHw., 582 on māhāzu - 'Gathering place; market/cult centre'.
2. Thompson's translation which follows the awkward syntax more closely makes it sound as though É.MAŠ.MAŠ was filled with unsubmissive kings, whereas it is the rich decoration and regalia that graces the shrine ! Cf. Tiglath-pileser I dedicating bronze and copper vessels and idols from loot and tribute (AKA, 44 Col. 2:58ff; ARAB 1, 76 §223); David's dedication of silver, gold and bronze spoil and tribute (1 Chron 18:11); the vessels of Yhwh stored in the Babylonian temple (Ezra 1:7).

The mention of É.MAŠ.MAŠ leads us to the last passage to be quoted from the Annals in connection with praising the gods for victory. It ties in with the deductions made in regard to the use of Dunaanu at various shrines in succession, for it deals with rites performed at the shrine of Ninlil in connection with the Bīt-Akīti.

ultu ana nadān niqê elu ina TN šubat bēlūtišun
maḥar DN ummi ilāni rabūti ḥirtu naramti DN2
ēpušu parši Bīt Akīti nīr ša šadādi ušašbissunūti
adi bāb ekurri išdudū ina šaplija albin appi atta'id
ilūssun ušappa dannūssun ina puḥur ummānateja ša DNN
ša lā kanšūtija ušaknišu ana nīrija ana līti u dan-
āni ušazzizūinni šīr nakrūtija
(Rassam, 10:24-39 Streck, 82ff; ARAB 2, 320 §833)

After I had gone up to make offerings in É.MAŠ.MAŠ the residence of their lordships, and had performed the rites of the Bīt Akītu before Ninlil, mother of the great gods and consort of Enlil, I made them (Tammaritu, Pa'e & Ummanaldash) lay hold of the yoke of my chariot, and they drew me as far as the temple gate. I humbly prostrated myself, I praised their godhead, I made much of their power in front of my army, (the power) of Ashur, Sin, Shamash, Adad, Bel, Nabu, Ishtar of Nineveh, the Queen of Kidmuri, Ishtar of Arbela, Ninurta, Nergal and Nusku, who made the unsubmissive bow to my yoke, and with victory and might caused me to stand on the neck of my enemies.¹

It may simply be coincidence that Bīt-Akīti rites are cited in connection with martial celebrations in the two instances - the Ishtar of Arbela and the Ninlil celebrations. Most instructive is Ashurbanipal's emphasis on his army's presence and his crediting of the gods before them.² Whatever the rites and offerings concerned, the

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1. The cuneiform of 10:28 should be read PA.AN.MEŠ = parši - 'rites', and not a-di ilāni (Streck, 82; 'my covenant with the gods' - ARAB 2, 320) - see CAD A.1, 268 under akītu; cf. AHw., 835 paršu.
 2. Line 32: ū-ša-pa-a is the Š-theme of root wapûm - 'to be visible', for which von Soden assigns two Š-theme meanings, at times distinguishable by their vowels - ušāpi - 'er verherrlichte; er schuf' & ušēpi - 'er machte sichtbar' (GAG, 142 §103(v)gamma). 'Glorify' is the meaning here, rendered 'to make much of' to give the feel of the context in which the king is acting out his praise before his officers, drawing their attention to the gods' primary rôle in victory.

the dominant theme of the temple visit as the scribes have recorded it is praise for victory over Elam. This takes us close to the heart of Assyrian religion and substantiates Wiseman's remark that 'the Assyrian campaigns were conceived, at least in part, as a holy war against those who failed to avow his (the king's as regent of Ashur) sovereignty'.¹

Nevertheless one of the features of a 'Holy War' is missing from the Annals for there is no record of Ashurbanipal's putting everything under the ban. In Mari both royal and divine bans are known; in the Old Testament, the divine herem was practised during Saul's reign; in Moab, the Mesha stele tells of the same rite in honour of Ashtar-Chemosh; but so far as we know, Ashurbanipal apportioned or sold the spoils, and never slaughtered prisoners to the last man, woman or child.² It may be that the needs of the empire dictated otherwise, for so far as we can see, there is nothing in the adê system and its theology which would be incompatible with this method of glorifying the gods. At any rate, it is not attested in extant sources.

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1. D.J. Wiseman 'Assyria', NBD, 104. Two further passages outside Ashurbanipal's Annals mirror the 'devotion' of prisoners to the gods without it involving total slaughter:

I trod on the royal neck of the Kassite king Kash-tiliash as though it were a footstool (galtappi). Stripped and bound before Ashur my lord I brought him. (ARAB 1, 51 & 57 \$145 & 166; E. Weidner: ITN, 26ff)

ša mārē CN dullulūte ṣābē kidinni šubarē DNN andurāršunu eššiš aškun šamūte ša ana rēšūte šūlukē ša arašindi u birti zu'uzū upaḫḫir-ma ana Babilaja amna bušēšunu šallutē utīr

As for the enslaved Babylonians under divine protection freemen of Anu and Enlil - their freedom I re-established; I gathered together the privileged who had gone into slavery distributed among the foreign riff-raff and declared them Babylonians, returning their plundered possessions. (Asar, 25; ARAB 2, 253 \$659E)

Compare this reversal with Senn, 137f; ARAB 2, 185 \$438f.

2. On 'the ban', see A. Malamat "The Ban in Mari & in the Bible", OTWSA 1966, 40-49; C. Brekelmans: De Herem in het Oude Testament, 1959; AHw., 73 asakku II & 368f ikkibu; CAD A.2, 326 & CAD I/J, 55ff.

In summary, we find that Ashurbanipal carries his theological apologia through to its logical conclusion in the face of violation of the adê by rebellious vassals, for the victory he gains is publicly acknowledged as divinely promised, sanctioned and achieved. The spoils of war decorate the shrines of the adê witnesses. This makes a fitting conclusion to the episode which has run from the public adê ceremony in the capital to the public execution of the sinner and the public celebration of Ashur's power. There remains but one step more - the initiation of the next cycle of vassaldom with the drawing up a fresh legal documents.

C.11: J - The Renewed State of Submission.

We have already discussed the best two examples of renewed vassaldom in the Ashurbanipal corpus in section A above - namely, the re-installation of Pharaoh Necho and the fragmentary Qedar treaty replacing the one previously concluded with Jauta'. The former account refers explicitly to a new legal document to cover the new situation in these words - 'I made the oath more severe than previously and concluded it with him': adê eli ša maḥri ušātir-ma ittišu aškun (Rassam, 2:8f).

Unfortunately, we simply do not have two consecutive treaties to compare, or two detailed accounts of treaty ceremonies, so no precise contents can be attributed to Necho's renewed treaty, nor can we focus on changes in the vocabulary used or the rites. In general, the obvious changes in the direction of more severe terms would cover such things as an increase in yearly tribute, additional hostages taken as security (in distinction from further prisoners of war), the extension of the re-naming process for cities and people, greater demands for the accommodation of the Assyrian pantheon in the local cult, more frequent appearances of the vassal king at his suzerain's court, tighter control of foreign trade and relations, and the like. These changes do not appear to be of great theological significance.

There was no way of making the theological penalties more severe in a fresh vassal treaty, especially if the local gods were already impounded in the imperial temples. Had there been a concept of a blessed afterlife dependent on a right relation with Ashur and the other important Assyrian deities, a concept which the vassal somehow accepted as valid, there would have been the threat of eternal perdition. But such a belief would not have been easy to implant in a resentful and humiliated populace, even if they believed that their native deities had deserted them, giving them up to the Assyrian conquerors. Polytheistic and syncretistic religion never succeeded in gaining allegiance for one god or pantheon only, even when the gods of conquerors were assimilated into the indigenous worship. In Israel there was always the possibility of a theological threat of 'cutting off' without the possibility of covenant renewal. It would be difficult to say whether the 'cutting off' and broken covenant had implications for the afterlife in the thinking of the common Israelite, but in the absence of any commentary on the afterlife in the covenant

curses of Israel, it might be more accurate to conclude that this theological issue was never worked out and incorporated into Israel's covenant theology, and that in the face of sin by the covenant people it was the consequences in this life that filled the prophets' utterances with threat.

If we look to Judah's later history under the Babylonians we may perhaps discern a pattern which would bear application in its general features to Assyria's imperial policy, for there is a progressive severity in the dealings of the imperial power with her rebellious vassal state. First, there is vassaldom retaining the temple and equipment under Jehoiachin, then after his rebellion there is the loss of the sacred golden vessels, and finally after Zedekiah's rebellion the burning down of the Temple and the seizure of its less important items such as pots, shovels, dishes, firepans and bowls (2 Kgs 24 & 25). The measure of theological distress this caused can be ascertained from the measure of attention the restoration of the Temple and its paraphernalia receives - and this in a community which was trained to distinguish between the presence of its deity and a fixed location for that deity - witness Jeremiah's 'Temple of Yhwh' oracle (Jer 7).

Something of Ashurbanipal's frustration with Elam and the long years of tension with that kingdom come through in his Rassam account of the sacking of Susa which has a thoroughness about it comparable to Nebuchadnezzar's work at Jerusalem. Complete devastation seems to have been Ashurbanipal's aim in this onslaught of the eighth campaign, and he makes a special point of recording how his common soldiers broke into the most sacred precincts of their shrines, ransacked them and set them on fire, and he records the deportation of the gods and goddesses listing eighteen of them by name, and mentions their cultic paraphernalia too (ilāni ištarāte šatunu itti sukkuttišunu makkūrēšunu, Rassam, 6:44 Streck, 52; ARAB 2,310 §810). This was the end of the road as regards imperial policy, and for economic reasons was obviously not desirable since the Elam Ashurbanipal left behind was one as thoroughly devastated as possible with its agricultural land sown with weeds and salt, as noted in section H. What was presented theologically as a singular victory for the Assyrian pantheon was probably not as desirable as the more usual result of military success, namely the installation of a repentant or a new vassal king sworn to obedience and the payment of tribute in the adê witnessed by Assyria's conquer-

ing gods and perhaps the effigies of the vassal's gods brought into the imperial capital.

Finally, we may mention the possibility of repentance in relation to a renewed state of submission. Repentance is a key factor in covenant renewal in the Old Testament, for which the renewal under Josiah can serve as a paradigm. The wrath of Yhwh is not completely withdrawn but renewed promises are granted to the king in these words:

Thus says Yhwh the God of Israel: Regarding the words which you have heard, because your heart was penitent, and you humbled yourself before the LORD, when you heard how I spoke against this place, and against its inhabitants, that they should become a desolation and a curse (lěšammāh wēliqēlālāh) and you have rent your clothes and wept before me, I also have heard you says the LORD. (2 Kgs 22:19)

The note of repentance is struck too at the renewal later under Ezra who 'prayed and made confession, weeping and casting himself down before the house of God' together with the people who wept bitterly (Ezra 10). Other examples could be brought in too.

In the imperial context, mercy towards a penitent vassal is known. In the Esarhaddon *Göttebrief*, the repentance of the Shuprian king came too late to avail him of treaty renewal, but in Ashurbanipal's Annals the phrase rēmu rašû - 'to show mercy' used in a technical way relating to the adê appears several times¹. Thus, for example, Abijate' flees to save his life when the writing was on the wall for Shamash-shum-ukin's coalition and lays hold of Ashurbanipal's feet. The king says 'I showed him mercy': rēmu aršišu (Rassam, 8:44) and immediately refers to the renewed adê document - adê niš ilāni rabūti ušazkiršu: 'I made him swear the treaty-oath by the life of the great gods' (8:45). And so a new cycle began, or as the imperial monarch hoped a continuing line of vassals bound by the adê. If the Assyrian kings regarded history as cyclical, it was in terms of cycles of the vassal oath imposed, rebellion, royal threat, insulting reply, indictment before the gods, the divine pronouncement, divine intervention, the fate of the adê-violateur, the victory and spoil ceremonies and a renewed state of submission to the adê.

1. See the Excursus: rēmu, re'āmu/rēmu, rēmūtu/rhm for details.

PART II: TREATY THEOLOGY AND THE SWORD IN SELECTED NEO-BABYLONIAN
ROYAL INSCRIPTIONS.

Introduction.

The Neo-Babylonian Empire began with the successful generalship of Nabopolassar, whose accession to the throne can be accurately dated to the 26th of Marcheswan 626 bc, and ended with the unopposed entry into Babylon by Cyrus II in 539 bc.¹ The Chaldean Empire can be placed in its theological setting by relating it to its Old Testament contemporaries, and especially to the two prophetic giants Jeremiah and Ezekiel whose oracles were so often motivated by historical interaction with the great imperial power, Babylon. It was around the time of Nabopolassar's accession that Jeremiah received his call in the thirteenth year of Josiah king of Judah, at which time he was old enough to be aware of national and international events, of empire and the sword. At this time too, his younger contemporary Ezekiel may have been born.³

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1. See Wiseman: CCK, 50 for BM.25127:14f and S.Smith: BHT, 98ff & pls. 12-14 'The Nabonidus Chronicle' (ANET, 305ff). The standard works CAH III, chap. 10 and Greatness, 134ff cover the period in broad outline, while Bright: HI², 314ff follows it from Israel's perspective.
 2. On Josiah's dates and hence the date of Jeremiah's call, see the following references - Jer 1:2, 2 Kgs 23:29; BM.21901:rev. 66f (CCK, 62); 2 Chron 34:1 and E.R.Thiele's discussion MNHK, 165. On Jeremiah's age at the time, note the looseness of naCar, but the likely guideline that the age for priestly service affords (25 years - Num 8:24, 1 Chron 23:27), since he was the son of a priest but considered himself too young to be a prophet.
 3. Ezek 1:1, if the 30th year refers to the prophet's age as a recent commentator has argued - see J.B.Taylor: Ezekiel, TP, 1969, page 37ff where literature for and against is cited.

Jeremiah continued to give oracles after the second fall of Jerusalem to Nebuchadnezzar and the subsequent assassination of Gedaliah, after which we lose sight of him, for he was forced to accompany fugitives into Egypt where there was a Jewish colony.¹ He predicted both the conquest of Egypt by Nebuchadnezzar and the passing of the Neo-Babylonian Empire, while the last dated oracle of Ezekiel also predicts the fall of Egypt and comes from 571 bc.² Their lives thus spanned six decades of the Neo-Babylonian Empire, and their vision comprehended its demise. Ezekiel may have looked upon the very temples whose construction is recorded in the royal building inscriptions.

It is with some interest that we may turn to the Babylonian records to discover what was their contemporary understanding of empire and the gods. Unfortunately, the Chaldeans did not continue the Assyrian tradition of recording their wars in elaborate Annals, and so we must utilise what material there is on the sword scattered through their building inscriptions of which there are a good number. As with the Assyrian kings, we shall allow the Babylonians themselves to state the purpose of their inscriptions so that occidental misconceptions may be avoided as far as possible.

(a) The Nature and Purpose of the Neo-Babylonian Royal Inscriptions.

Firstly, the kings of this period were conscious of being heirs to a longstanding tradition of restoring shrines and leaving a record of their pious work. Nabonidus, the last king of the Neo-Babylonian Empire shows this feeling for tradition most markedly, for considerable space in his inscriptions is devoted to accounts of the search for and the discovery of archaic foundation deposits.

In the minds of some historians, Nabonidus' traditional concern for correct religious procedure has been linked with his unconventional ten year sojourn away from the capital in Arabia and his unusual devotion to the moon god Sin, practically expressed in the glorifica-

1. Jer 43:10-13 & 51:59-64 on which see the standard commentaries such as J. Bright: Jeremiah, AB, 1965.

2. Ezek 29:17-20. On this and the question of Ezekiel's locality, see the discussion and the literature cited in W. Zimmerli: Ezechiel, BKAT, 1955ff and other standard works.

tion of Sin's Harran shrine miles away from Babylon.¹ The result is that they have caricatured Nabonidus as an enthusiastic but amateur archaeologist. Thus R.C.Thompson describes him as 'a *scholar* with a most conservative respects for old records and customs, and was never happier than when he could excavate some ancient foundation stone'.² More recently Speiser slipped into the same approach dubbing Nabonidus as 'a frustrated *archaeologist* turned king'.³ The paternalistic and misleading use of anachronisms which have been italicised only serves to illustrate how difficult modern scholars find it to shed occidental presuppositions, yet this is a prerequisite for handling Ancient Near Eastern texts exegetically.

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1. The Babylonians probably resented the care lavished on Harran out of local patriotism; the priests may have felt that the supreme honour of Marduk was at stake. Later compositions reflect this resentment. The normal attitude of the Babylonian king is represented by the following words of Nebuchadnezzar: 'I made no cult-city (*māhāzu*) stand out (*Š*-theme of *wapû* - 'to be visible') more prominently than Babylon and Borsippa (Marduk & Nabu's cities); in Babylon, the apple of my eye (*āl niš inēja* = 'city of the lifting up of my eyes'), which I love ...': 'that my royal base should be in any other centre (than Babylon), I did not favour, in no other place on earth did I build my kingly shrine/palace or establish the treasures of my royal trappings' (Nbk 15, 7:32ff & 8:19ff Langdon, 134ff; Berger, Zyl. Frgm III.1).
 2. CAH III, 218 italics mine.
 3. IHANE, 46 italics mine.

Nabonidus' motives were neither antiquarian interest nor historical research. They were deeply religious.¹ A good illustration is provided by his record of the Ebabbarra shrine's restoration at Sippar. The whole process is invested with an intense religious aura. Coming before Shamsh, the king prayed for guidance before beginning on this project. Kings traditionally recorded their reverent hesitancy lest they start projects precipitately. Through an oracle Shamash and Adad answer Nabonidus with a true and unalterable affirmative in which he trusts wholeheartedly. Shamash is led to a temporary resting place while his own shrine is undergoing the renovation. The king calls in experts for consultation. Elders of the city, learned and wise, members of the scribal academy and well-versed in religious procedure, they are commissioned to seek out and uncover the earliest foundation deposits so that Nabonidus may go ahead with due observance. They search while the king prays earnestly. Soon they return. This did not happen on every occasion, for we read of one search that lasted for three years and produced no documents until they were forced to conclude that rain and floods had destroyed them.² But on this occasion Shamash showed his favour, and one of the experts reported: 'I have indeed found the old foundation work of Naram-Sin, a king of yore, and the very shrine of Shamash, the abiding place of his divinity'.³ No king before Nabonidus had been vouchsafed the blessing of seeing this deposit of Naram-Sin son of Sargon from 3,200 years ago.⁴

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1. Even Lambert's remark - 'Some texts reflect the pride of belonging to an ancient civilisation, as when Late Babylonian kings announce their finding of foundation documents from older rulers' (OTS 17, 1968, p. 65-72 "Destiny & Divine Intervention in Babylon & Israel", p. 70) - strays in the direction of conflating the figure of Nabonidus with that of Sir Kenneth Clark and his TV series 'Civilisation'!
 2. NBK, 246ff Nbd 4, 2:53ff/Zyl III,4; Berger, 377f bibliography.
 3. NBK, 252ff Nbd 6/Zyl II,9; Berger, 367f bibliography.
 4. NBK, 226 Nbd 1/Zyl III,2 Col 2:57ff; Berger, 371ff bibliography.

There was a twofold value in the foundation deposits. Firstly, each inscription carried a blessing and a curse to enforce its preservation.¹ If the king who uncovered the deposit read it, anointed it, made sacrifice and replaced it alongside his own inscription, then the gods would hear his prayers. This is the commonest blessing, but there were many others covering all aspects of welfare, opposite and complementary to the curses. No doubt a religiously devout man like Nabonidus valued these blessings, for he certainly makes a point of recording how he honoured and did not alter the prescriptions engraved on previous deposits.²

Secondly, a diligent search for the original foundations of a shrine was demanded by the Mesopotamian concept of the temple.³ Where there was once a shrine, there was always a shrine. The exact location took on a religious sanctity since the continuation of the relationship between deity and worshipers, which was described in the foundation tablet or cone or prism or cylinder, required a corresponding continuity in the architectural structure. Kings arrived at the decision to build and at the site for building only through divine revelation.⁴ Therefore architectural continuity enshrined both the

1. This was characteristic of ANE documents that were intended to retain their force in the future, eg royal decrees such as Hammurabi's Code, kudurru's, vassal treaties and royal inscriptions on steles, dedicatory statues, etc.

2. *šitir šum ša Narām-Sîn mār Šarrugina āmur-ma lā
unakkir šamni apšuš niqê aqqî itti musarêja aškun-ma
utîr ašrušu* (Nbd 1/Zyl III,2 Col 3:8ff)

3. See A.L.Oppenheim 'The Mesopotamian Temple', BA Reader 1, 1961, 158-169.

4. See the discussion of A.S.Kapelrud: Or 32(1963), 56-62 "Temple Building - a task for Gods & Kings", especially the comparison of Gudea and Solomon.

revelation and the numinous relationship. Thus it is that Nabonidus is at pains to record the exactitude with which he refounded the Shamash temple:

not a finger's breadth did I move outwards,
not a finger's breadth did I ingress,
upon the foundation-platform of Naram-Sin
son of Sargon I founded its brickwork |

In behaving this way he was simply playing the rôle of a devout Mesopotamian king, not that of archaeologist or scholar or oddity.

Before considering the rewards expected for this laborious piety, we may take note of a further evidence for the conscious adoption of tradition, besides the mention of previous kings and their foundation records.² There is an artistic continuity in foundation figurines which covers a period of over 2,000 years. The king is portrayed with arms raised to the level of the top of his head, steadying the reed-woven basket in which he carries the first mud-bricks for building the temple. An early example is that of Ur-Nanshe, king of Lagash in the middle of the 3rd Millenium bc, carved in profile on limestone in the so-called Genealogical Bas-Relief of Ur-Nina(Ur-Nanshe).³ With this compare the metal figurines with natural or pointed base or Ur-Nammu (c. 2100 bc), Shulgi(c. 2090 bc) and Warad-Sin(c.1830 bc).⁴ The

1. Nbd 1/Zyl III,2 Col. 2:64f ; cf. *mimmû ippušu ištene'û arkatsu hîta*: 'I (Nabonidus am) one who investigates carefully whatever he does, investigating its consequences' (Nbd 7/Zyl II,8 Col 1:11).

2. Other predecessors mentioned by Nabonidus include:

Assyrian kings:	Ashurbanipal	(Nbd 1/Zyl III,2	Col 2:3ff)
	Esarhaddon	(Nbd 4/Zyl III,4	Col 2:29ff)
	Shalmaneser	(Nbd 1/Zyl III,2	Col 2:3ff)
Kassite kings :	Kurigalzu	(Nbd 4/Zyl III,4	Col 2:29ff)
	Shagaraktish	(Nbd 1/Zyl III,2	Col 3:27ff)
	Burnuburiash	(Nbd 4/Zyl III,4	Col 1:55ff)
Ur II Dynasty :	Shulgi	(Nbd 5/Zyl II,2	Col 1:8ff)
	Ur-Nammu	(ditto)	

3. A.Parrot: Sumer, ET 1961, page 130 pl. 159, A & B.

4. *ibid.*, 238 pl. 292 C & D: Ur-Nammu & Shulgi; London Illustrated News, Aug 18th, 1956 & Sep 6th, 1958; Warad-Sin BM.91144 postcard No. WA 21. For a full discussion of foundation deposits, see R.S.Ellis: Foundation Deposits in Ancient Mesopotamia, YNER 2, YUP, 1968 and the review by G.van Driel JAOS 93(1973), 67-74.

The continuity of this early royal iconography is attested by the representations of Ashurbanipal in the later 7th century bc, of which Parrot says:

breaking with a century-old iconographical convention, Ashurbanipal had himself represented full-face in the humble posture of a basket-bearer. This was a reversion to a very ancient precedent, notably the representation of the Sumerian Ur-Nanshe, patesi of Lagash, who also had had himself depicted with a basket on his head. ¹

We know that this tradition was continued by the Chaldean kings, for Nabopolassar records this in describing his restoration of the Etemenanki ziqqurat in Babylon:

a figurine of my royal person bearing the tupšikku basket I made and placed in the foundation. ²

The manual labour on temples was done by slaves, prisoners of war and captive kings, and so far more was portrayed in the sovereign's bearing of the basket and head-pad than the laying of a foundation stone by a dignitary occidental style. Nabopolassar presented himself as the humble slave of the deity as is clear from his own words:

To Marduk my lord I truly bowed my neck (kišadam lū ukannišu); the cloak, my royal vestment I took off; bricks and clay on my head I truly bore. ³

Nabopolassar's two sons, Nebuchadnezzar his heir and Nabu-shum-lishir were put to work alongside their father.

The tupšikku-figurines are but a variation - in locality - on the dedicatory statues and statuettes set up before the deities in the shrine itself, for their purpose was to commend the pious work of

1. Parrot: N&B, ET 1961, p. 35 pl. 40A; cf. BM.90865 postcard WA 16.

2. Npl 1/Zyl III,1 Col. 2:55ff.

3. *ibid.*, Col 2:60ff.

restoration continually before the deity who was well able to see his devotee's figurine beneath the walls of sun-dried brick. In a typical passage Nabonidus gives us an insight into the purpose of the dedicatory statue and inscription:

The inscription of my name and statue of my royal person (šalam šarrūtiya) before Shamash and Aja, my lords, I placed unto everlasting days (ana dūr ūmi). O Shamash, exalted lord, lover of my life (rā'im napištim) in your going forth and entering of Ebabbarra your shining abode favourably regard my good works (epšētija damqātam), the inscription of my name (šitir šumiya) and my royal figurine (šalam šarrūtiya); my good deeds (damqātūa) may they ever be before you (ana dūr dār libša)
(NBK, 232 Nbd 2/Zyl II, 4 Col 1:35ff)

There follows a list of blessings to flow from the gods' joyous beholding (N-theme palāsu + hadīš), mainly to do with long life and an enduring throne or dynasty - not an idle prayer in view of the many assassinations in palace history, such as Labashi-Marduk's, Nabonidus' predecessor. The inscriptions, the figurines and the statues were therefore of much the same function, namely, to continually present the king's good deeds before his deity so that he might receive the rewards of his piety.

In our parlance, we might say that the shrine spoke for itself. The Babylonian kings put this more vividly by addressing the shrine and asking for its intercession on their behalf with the high gods in the same way as they would ask this of a lesser god. The following examples illustrate this form of address:

At that time, for Lugal-Marad my lord, his temple which is in Marad...an inscription of my name I made and placed therein...O Lugal-Marad before Marduk king of heaven and earth cause my works to appear favourable (epšētēja šumgira), speak for my good (qibi dumqua)

O Etemenanki unto the king your renovator grant blessing (ana šarri muddiška kurub); when Marduk with rejoicing takes up his dwelling within you O Temple, unto Marduk my lord report my good deeds (ana DN...damiqtim tizkaram)

Thresholds, bolts, door-sockets (sippī sigārī midilū dalāti) of Ebabbarra, my good works without ceasing may they report before you (lā

naparkâ lizkurû maharka).¹

Each king in turn claims that he exceeded all former kings, at least in a particular project, but often in his pious works as a whole. Indeed, when predecessors are mentioned, it is usually to highlight the inscriber's surpassing of their accomplishments.²

There is little in the Neo-Babylonian post-scripts to suggest that it is the glory of the god which the record enshrines, which is in some ways a contrast to the carefully balanced duality of the Assyrian kings' records where the gods' and the monarch's glory run in parallel. This is not surprising if van Driel's view is accepted that we should understand the whole building which the king completed as a 'votive object' and that 'the purpose of the dedication is to ensure the prolongation of the reign, well-being and life, although a wish that the memory of the good deed should be preserved after the death of the dedicator was certainly present'.³ Two passages illustrate the balance of the Neo-Babylonian inscriptions: the first appears as a colophon inserted in a blank space after column 2 on a clay barrel cylinder of Nabonidus, which bears copies of stone stela originals set up at one of the centres where he had had work done such as Larsa, Sippar of Anunitum or Akkad. It reads as follows:

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1. NBK, 68,52 & 92 Nbk 2/Zyl III,2 Col 3:20ff,28ff,45ff; Nbp 1/Zyl III,1 Col 3:50ff; Nbk 10/Zyl II,4 Col 2:22ff. The verbs used are magâru & zakâru, Š-theme and qabû & karâbu.
 2. Note such typical phrases as: šarru ša epšētūšu eli šarrāni abbēšu šutugu anāku & ša mannamma šarru mahru lā ipušu (NBK,57,84 & 162; Nbp 3/Zyl II,2 Col 1:18ff, Nbk 9/Zyl III,4 Col 2:4, Nbk 19/Nbk Wadi Brisa Col 7:41).
 3. G.van Driel: JAOS 93(1973),67-74 review of Ellis: Foundation Deposits in Ancient Mesopotamia, YNER 2, 1968.

e-piš-tú of Sin, lord of the gods and the goddesses of the heavens and earth, which upon a stele of galala-stone I inscribed for the hearing of the people in the future (ana šamê ša nišē arkītu)

1

It seems that the scribe intended these lines to cover the whole inscription, and that he inserted them in the blank space in the body of the text when he found that he had run out of space at the end after collecting together several stele inscriptions for the barrel cylinder. The phrase ana šamê ša nišē arkītu deserves attention since it runs counter to the notion that these compositions were for the eyes of the gods alone or even primarily so, for it emphasises the motive of public display.

What does e-piš-tú mean here, and can the colophon be cited as *ad majorem dei gloriam* ? Epištu the feminine abstract noun from the root epēšu -'to do' (basic meaning) has a range of meanings, and the context allows the following possibilities:

- A: 'the achievement(s) of Sin ...'
- B: 'the deed(s) of Sin ...'
- C: 'the work done for Sin
- E: 'the rites of Sin'

Normally one would need look no further than A or B, and the English Genitives would be taken in the sense of 'the achievement/deed which Sin performed...', and one could compare phrases like epšet bēlūtija - 'my royal deed' or epšet Tiāmat - 'Tiamat's (evil) deed',² and indeed Moran has translated a supposed parallel from the Harran inscription as 'the great deed of Sin which none of the gods or goddesses understands': ipišti DN rabīti ša ilāni u ištār mamman idūšu. But Moran then explains the phrase as being an alternative and theological way of describing the building-work done by Nabonidus for his god.³ How-

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1. King: CT 34, pl. 26ff for cuneiform of Nbd 1912-7-6,2 (pl. 37:80), (104738); NBK, 242ff Nbd 4/Zyl III,4 .
 2. TCL 3, Sg 8:192 & Enuma Elish VII:91 quoted by CAD E, 241ff epištu, 1. workmanship, work, 2. construction, 3. working groups, 4. act, activity, achievement, accomplishment, 5. ritual(act), 6. evil magic. Note especially 4.4' (pious) works, referring to temples
 3. W.L.Moran: Or 28(1959), 130-140 "Notes on the New Nabonidus Inscriptions", p. 138 & 135.

ever, in the context of building inscriptions the word epištu may simply carry its building-work connotation, so that epištu Sin means 'the building-work for Sin'.¹

Less ambiguous and perhaps of weight in interpreting the first passage are the lines from a cylinder of Nebuchadnezzar which read:

The care-taking of Esagila and Ezida and the renovation of Babylon and Borsippa which I made excell everything done previously (ša eli ša mahri ušātiqū), I completed outstandingly well (aškunam ana rēšētim). The care-taking of the sacred places of the great gods, which I made surpass that done by the kings my forefathers (ša eli šarrāni abbēja ušātiru), all my excellent works (kala epšētiija šūqurāti) I inscribed on a stele (ina narī aštur) and conserved for posterity (ukīn ahrātaš). All my works which I have inscribed on the stele may the wise read and let him continually take thought for the glory of the gods (mūdā litammar tanitti ilāni lihtassas). The building-work on the cult-centres (epišti māhāzi) of the gods and goddesses which my great lord Marduk sent me to do (uma"aranni) and which my heart urged me on to do (ušadkanni) reverently (palhiš) without interruption his task I completed (lā baṭṭil ušallam šipiršu)

2

There are three basic assertions in this summary. Firstly, the king has outdone his predecessors; secondly, he has persevered with his divine commission and fulfilled it completely; thirdly, he has made records. All this is clear. The debate turns on the exact motivation of the record-making.

Recently Albrektson has undertaken to defend the royal inscriptions as being *ad majorem dei gloriam*. He subscribes to the view that

1. Moran's exegesis of the Harran inscription lines quoted has it that 'the view of Nabonidus that all of his accomplishments even his building activities were in reality the work of Sin here finds its most articulate expression' (Or 28, 1959, p. 135).
2. NBK, 102ff Nbk 13/III, 7 Col 2:72ff. For bibliography, see Berger, 292. The verbs etēqu, watāru & dekū appear in the Š-theme; šūqurāti is the superlative Adjective from root waqāru; kānu & wāru are used in the D-theme (wāru in late Babylonian is mainly based on m'r with a D-theme meaning of 'to commission', GAG 106(f); hasāsu is in its Gtn-theme; ana rēšētim is not 'according to instructions' (Langdon), but from rēštu I, AHw., 972 'Anfang, Spitze, Qualität' with the phrase ana rēštu sakānu meaning 'besonders gut gestalten'.

the inscriptions were primarily intended for the eyes of the gods,
and says:

And in a text where the king does expect his inscriptions to be read by men and states this explicitly, he does not boast of his exploits and take the credit to himself but records the *ad maiorem dei gloriam* 1

He then quotes the central lines of the passage quoted above from Nebuchadnezzar. Since he is referring to both Assyrian and Babylonian inscriptions, this could hardly carry the point, for as was noted the Assyrian inscriptions appear in various forms such as stelae planted on foreign soil with an explicit public display motive and a glorification of the king incorporated. Further, a careful examination of the Nebuchadnezzar passage reveals serious problems with this mode of interpretation. In fact, Albrektson takes note that it has been used to prove the contrary to his point, for in a footnote he remarks:

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1. H&G, 42ff. Compare and contrast Lambert's assessment - 'Most rulers wanted posterity to be informed of their achievements, and royal inscriptions are commonly written with this in view' (OTS 17, 1968, 65-72 "Destiny & Divine Intervention in Babylon & Israel", p. 70). Note also that Albrektson's use of Olmstead's phrase on Assyrian historiography - 'developed from the building inscription and not from the boast of the soldier' - is misleading, since Olmstead goes on to emphasise that glorification of the king was a scribal motive:

later editions not only omitted important facts but 'corrected' the earlier recitals *for the greater glory of the ruler, real or nominal...* we should never forget that these are official documents ... all the greater must be our suspicion that they have concealed the truth when it was not to the *advantage of the monarch glorified*

(Olmstead: Ass. Historiog., p. 64 italics mine)

See further the Introduction to the Assyrian royal inscriptions on page 1ff above.

Oddly enough Mowinkel quotes this particular passage in support of the view 'dass die Inschriften... das Verdienst des Urhebers vor den Göttern hervorheben wollen'. There are certainly some passages on which such a claim could be based, but I cannot find that Nebuchadnezzar here speaks of his own merits before the gods: on the contrary he gives the credit to them.¹

Close attention to the wording of the original affords reasons for rejecting Albrektson's interpretation. Firstly, the phrases eli ša mahri ušātiq and eli šarrāni abbēja ušātiru are characteristic in Mesopotamian royal inscriptions. In the Neo-Babylonian corpus they are of course confined to building operations, whereas in the wider scope of the Assyrian records they are applied to diplomatic, military and exploratory ventures. Such stock phrases are often historically unjustified, though in the case of Nebuchadnezzar his claims to extensive building in the capital are justified. In both Assyrian and Babylonian inscriptions, the renown of the monarch is to the fore whenever these phrases are used, and their frequency is some indication that the glorification of the king was a constant aim of the record making, even if this be qualified by its being the king *qua* elect or representative of the gods. Using a poetic-like parallelism, the Precatives in the lines mūdā litammar-ma tanitti ilāni liḥtassas address the subsequent generations - not the gods at this point. The Gtn-theme of amāru-'to see' has the sense here of 'to read over and over again', that is to internalise the king's words as the Gtn-theme of ḥasāsu - 'to think' indicates with its meaning 'to continually reflect upon, to meditate upon'. Tanittu, the Feminine abstract Noun from nādu, na'ādu II - 'to praise', is probably rendered better by 'praise' than 'glory' and the phrase as a whole translated 'let him continually take thought for (what is appropriate for) the praise of the gods'.

Nebuchadnezzar thus addresses the religious experts and points to his building work as the praise of the gods in bricks. Note that epištu occurs three times in the passage quoted and is each time clearly the king's work not the gods' work (twice it has the 1st Sing suffix attached, epšētīja), and is explicitly the stated subject matter of the whole inscription. Also this work of the king is

1. H&G, 43 note 6 .

šūqurāti - 'excellent, outstanding'. Nebuchadnezzar is therefore holding himself up to posterity as a paradigm of piety. The wise will acknowledge that what he has done was appropriate to the service of the gods, and that he has set a standard which none of his predecessors has attained. This is the spirit of the inscription. It is the king and his works that stand enshrined in the inscription for posterity and before the gods for their blessing. No attempt can subsequently by-pass the life and works of king Nebuchadnezzar.

As further confirmation of the public attention motive we may point to the use of the phrase ana tabrāti - 'for the beholding, as a spectacle' from the verbal root barû I - 'to see'. Its use in connection with the palace indicates its thrust when temple restoration is involved. For example, writing about his palace Nebuchadnezzar says:

that house I made for the beholding/as a spectacle (ana tabrāti) and for the people of the world (kiššat nišē) to gaze upon (ana dagālu) with opulence (lulē) I filled it. Potent (baltī), awesome (uzzū) and numinous things (puluḫti), the awe-inspiring splendour of my royalty (melammē šarrūti) I scattered around its environs. (NBK, 138 Nbk 15/ZylFrgm III, 1 9:29ff)

There is no doubt about the tenor of this passage. The king intended there to be an overwhelming effect on all who caught sight of his magnificent palace. Similarly, world acclaim seems clearly to figure in the motives for temple restoration in the following lines:

a temple after the pattern of Ebabbarra with jubilation and rejoicing I indeed made and raised its pinnacle like a mountain (kīma šadīm rēšišu lū ullīm) For my lord Marduk as in the days of old I erected it as a spectacle (ana tabrāti) (Nbp 1/Zyl III, 1 Col 3:19ff)

the temple (Ezida) I suitably beautified (asmiš udammiq) and for a spectacle (ana tabrāti) I filled it with opulence. (Nbk 15/Zyl III, 1 Col 3:62ff)

its (Ebabbarra's) utensils I adorned with silver and gold, as a spectacle I filled it with opulence; the inscription of my name alongside the inscription of Naram-Sin's name, a former king, I set up within it. (Nbd 2/Zyl II, 4 Col 1:25ff)

The same phrase ana tabrāti - 'as a spectacle' which Nebuchadnezzar used about his palace is used here by Nabopolassar, Nebuchadnezzar and Nabonidus in the passages quoted above. The temples stood as witnesses

not only to the glory of the gods but also to the acclaim of the monarch. Their effect is attested by the ancient historian Herodotus who was deeply impressed by the buildings of Babylon and described them for the classical world.¹

In drawing to a close this discussion of tradition, piety, merit and renown in the Neo-Babylonian royal inscriptions, another look at occidental presuppositions may account for differing evaluations of the motivations of the kings. The characteristic phrase ana tabrâti in the Babylonian corpus has a semantic equivalent in the Greek phrase pròs tò theathēnai whose context may be the source of the perhaps unconscious apologetic tone in Albrektson's discussion:

Be careful not to make a show of your religion before men; if you do, no reward awaits you in your Father's house in heaven. (Matt 6:1 NEB)

If this principle that the value of good deeds is vitiated by their public display colours an occidental scholar's approach to Mesopotamian royal inscriptions he will likely attempt to play down the self-presentation and aggrandisement in those texts in an attempt to give them as sympathetic a hearing as possible. Analysis has shown that this self-praise motif is present both explicitly and implicitly, but analysis does not prove that the Mesopotamians thought it inconsistent for their records to plead the king's merits before the gods and simultaneously keep one eye on posterity. There is no obligation whatsoever to justify the royal practice of religion according to the canons of good taste in Western culture or according to Christian theology. That

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1. See Herodotus: The Histories Book I, 178ff, and note the spirit of the passage describing the image of Bel:

In the temple of Babylon there is a second shrine lower down, in which is a great sitting figure of Bel, all of gold on a golden throne, supported on a base of gold, with a golden table standing beside it. I was told by the Chaldeans that, to make all this, more than twenty-two tons of gold were used. (A.de Sélincourt: Herodotus, the Histories, Penguin Classics, 1954 reprinted, page 87)

The lulê has worked its effect !

the records speak for themselves at this point and that the pious deeds of the Neo-Babylonian kings were efficacious in securing the intervention of the gods on their behalf according to their testimony is of fundamental importance in the theological exegesis of the sword in the imperial records to which we now turn.

(b) The Form of the Inscriptions in relation to the Exegesis.

Several options are open regarding the organisation of the relevant material for theological exegesis. Analysis could proceed chronologically treating each inscription individually, but this would be repetitious and tedious since the Neo-Babylonian corpus shows little variety in either form or contents and the use of stock phrases along traditional lines means that there is little fresh literary creative effort to clothe the basic theological ideas during the period. It seems preferable therefore to group the material for exegesis under categories which are the most utilitarian though it will be a mixture of form and content.

This decided, a very brief sketch of the predominant form found in the Neo-Babylonian corpus may now be given, and reference made to the work of P-R. Berger where full details may be found on the literary structure and style as well as the historical information.¹

1. P-R. Berger: Die Neubabylonischen Königsinschriften, AO/AT 4.1, Verlag, 1973 abbreviated Berger throughout. Full bibliography is given on each inscription covering physical details, copies, transliterations, commentaries, historical details and so on. The second volume promised with the fresh translations and transliterations has not been available in the preparation of this study, where reliance has had to be made on the basic edition by Langdon. This latter edition (NBK) cited under the abbreviation VAB 4 is the reference work for CAD & AHw, so that Langdon's numbering of the inscriptions needs to be cited in any case.

With few exceptions, the Neo-Babylonian inscriptions follow a standard pattern or form which is made up from the following units:

- A: Royal Titulary
- B: Election Formula
- C: Building Project
- D: Concluding Prayer

This form is used for both short and long inscriptions. In two-columned inscriptions, A may be limited to the name plus 'king of Babylon', B omitted or greatly abbreviated, C occupying the major space with D limited to a single general request for blessing. Three-columned inscriptions display the full form in its simplest use, while inscriptions of ten columns or more have rather fuller versions of A and B prefaced to C₁, C₂, C₃, etc. The concatenation of building projects accounts for the length, while the Concluding Prayer may match the Royal Titulary and Election Formula in being more ample than in a three-columned piece.

Each unit of the form is introduced by a stock phrase. Hence, A opens with the king's name (RN) and closes with the 1st Sing Personal Pronoun anāku. Between RN...anāku lies a list of stock phrases conveying the prestige of the king as darling of the gods and hero among men.¹ The king's father may be mentioned; for example, Nebuchadnezzar closes his Royal Titulary -

RN šar Bābili...aplu ašaridu ša ^dNabû-aplu-ušur
šar Bābilam anāku (Nbk 1/Zyl III,3)

An exception to this opening formula is provided by Nabopolassar's three-columned inscription which begins with a dedication formula - ana ^dMarduk...bēlija RN...anāku (Nbp 1/Zyl III,1).

The Election Formula is introduced by the conjunction enūma - 'when ...', and relates how the king was chosen by the gods because of his great piety towards them - the invariable explanation of accession. Even the usurping of the throne is turned to good effect by this means. Thus the first Chaldean king stressed that he was 'the son of a nobody' to prove that his elevation to the throne was due to his out-

1. See Berger, 72ff for lists of the royal epithets used by each monarch and for discussion of them.

standing piety.¹ So too did the last king of the Empire some seventy years later, though it was accepted that he had ruled against the will of the gods after his humiliating defeat at the hands of Cyrus the Great.² Completing the Election Formula after the enūma clause describing divine election follows a series of clauses introduced by anāku which give the response of the king to his election and how he gave his heart wholly to the service of the gods.

The specific Building Project is then introduced either by the conjunction inūmišu -'at that time', or more abruptly with the name of the building (BN). The considerable detail of this record accounts for the overall length of the inscription.

The Concluding Prayer terminates the inscription, and is abruptly introduced by a divine name (DN) in the vocative, eg 'O Shamash....', or else introduced by the phrase ana DN...umma -'to DN...thus (I prayed)'. Exceptionally, the prayer is replaced by a royal injunction to a future prince who might light upon the cylinder.³ Notable is the absence of Curse Formulae which were so much part of protective clauses for documents from Sumerian times. Occasional positive injunctions to read and replace do appear.

Allusions to the sword appear in each of the literary units A, B, C and D. Though reference will be made in passing to the form category during exegesis, the analysis will not proceed on the basis of form but rather on the basis of content and context.

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1. Nbp 4/Zyl II,8 Col 1:4 & 10 mār lā manmanim...jāši šaḥrim ša ina ina nišim lā uttū, inūma ina mišširūtja mār lā manmanim: 'son of a nobody...as for me I was little, one who was not visible among the people', 'when in my obscurity as the son of a nobody...'
 2. 'I (am) Nabonidus, who have not the honour(?) of (being a) somebody, and kingship is not within me' (Nbd Harran 2 Col 1:8f by C.J.Gadd: AnSt 8(1958), 56). Compare S.Smith: BHT, pls. v-x, p. 83ff; ANET, 312ff.
 3. Nbp 4/Zyl I,2 Col 1:31 mannamma šarru ina māti-ma lū aplu lū mār mārī āliku arkija: 'whatever king(there be) in the land, and whether it be heir or grandson who follows after me...'. Instructions follow.

PART II: A: The Sword in Historical Passages.A.1: Nabopolassar and the Fall of Assyria.

Though it is true that the Neo-Babylonian corpus of royal inscriptions contains to Annals of international events, there are nevertheless a number of historical references to empire and the sword. Allusions to the defeat of the Assyrians which inaugurated the Neo-Babylonian Empire provide valuable historical-theological insights.

Three passages allude to Nabopolassar's victory and the final extinction of the Assyrian Empire, so accurately recorded by the Babylonian Chronicle, and vividly portrayed in later Greek and Jewish histories.¹ Yet the general in the field makes but passing reference to the events which put him on the throne, and gives all the credit to his gods. Nothing could emphasise so well the contrast of the Babylonian and Assyrian scribal practices. Two of the passages run -

<u>RN...anāku</u>	<u>RN...anāku</u>
enūma ina qibītim	enūma Šamaš
Nabû u Marduk	bēlu rabû
nāram šarrūtija	idāja illiku-ma
u kakkī dannī	
ša Girra rašubbu	[Subarum a]nāru
muštabriqu zā'arīja	[u māt zā'alrīja
Subarum anāru	[utirru] ana tillī
māssu utirru	[u ka]rmē inūmišu ana DN...BN
ana tillī u karmē	
<u>inūmišu BN ...</u>	

Nabopolassar...am I. When at the decree of Nabu and Marduk the one who loves my kingship and with the mighty weapons of Girra the terrible who blasts my foes, the Assyrians I annihilated and turned their land into mounds and ruins, then at that time Etemenanki ... // Nabopolassar...am I. When the great lord Shamash went at my side, and I annihilated[the Assyrians][and turned the land of my enemies] into mounds [and ruins], then at that time to Belit of Sippar... E'edinna (Nbp 1/Zyl III,1 Col 1:23ff & Nbp 3/Zyl II,2 Col 1:21ff)

1. See Wiseman: CCK, 50-69 for transliteration and translation of the relevant sections of the Babylonian Chronicle, and pages 5-27 for discussion and references to Berossus, Diodorus and Josephus.

Both passages follow on immediately from the Royal Titulary (RN ...anāku), and are enclosed by the time indicators enūma...inūmišu, the second of which simply gathers up the first as though what intervened were in parenthesis and the scribe wished to hurry on to the important section of his inscriptions, namely the Building Project which differs in the two cylinders, one describes the work done on Etemenanki, the other on E'dinna at Sippar. In form, therefore, these historical passages are but introductions to the unit of the Building Project.

The theology of the divine action is polytheistic, of course, and the divine functions are no more than very generally distinguished. Thus five gods are named - Marduk, Nabu, Shamash, Nergal and Girra.¹ The latter two are gods of plague and fire, or of warfare in general, and it is thus appropriate for them to be in the field, while Marduk as the supreme god of the pantheon and Nabu his son give the divine command to advance to victory. Shamash god of justice goes at the king's side. There may be some attempt at a division of labour among the gods, though this should not be pressed too hard and taken to imply a coherent theology of divine action, for the scribe might equally well have given the oracular command to Shamash, and made Ishtar or Marduk advance at the king's side. In the broken passage, Shamash appears by himself while the others are omitted, haphazardly it would seem, whereas in a third passage divine team-work is envisaged for Marduk sends Nergal to execute the task. What does emerge is the traditional Mesopotamian belief that their gods intervened, especially in battle, to grant an outcome which accorded with their will and the desires of their favorites - RN ša Girra rašubbu ušakšidušu nizmassu: 'whom Girra the terrible enabled to attain to his desires'.²

Victory is the outcome of divine election based on pious merit. Restoration work was the evidence of the ruler's piety. Seen in this light, it is comprehensible that the Mesopotamians regarded shrine-

1. Nbp 1, 3 & 4 - Marduk, Nabu, Girra; Shamash; Marduk, Nabu, Nergal. Note that the defeat of the Assyrians is being described in all three.

2. Nbp 3/Zyl II,2 Col 1:13-14. For further references to the royal stock phrase nizmatu kašādu, see AHw., 799 .

building as a formula for empire. How far back were monarchs able to stand from this theological thought-pattern in their planning and interpreting of political manoeuvres in a secular manner in terms of strategy, diplomacy and economics ? This we may not be able to discern since the inner reckonings of the characters are cloaked as much as revealed by the traditional religious phraseology used in historical documents.

The following passage also describing Nabopolassar's defeat of the Assyrians gives expression to the theological understanding of cause and event in terms of the king's piety, election, victories and building works. We have no real basis for questioning Nabopolassar's single-mindedness, and indeed the more so since the passage lacks the admissible bombast and slander. A longish quotation from this cylinder will convey its tone :

inūma ina mišhirūtija mār lā manmanim ina ašrat DNN
 bēlija aštenī kajjānum ša kunni paršišunu u šullumi
 kidudīšunu itama kabittua ana kitti u mišarim bašā
 uznāja DN mūdū libbi ilāni ša šamē u iršetim ša
 takallat nišim ibarru kajjānum jāši šašrim ša ina
 nišim lā uttū ša libbija ibri-ma māti abbanu iškunanni
 ana rišētīm ana bēlut māti u nišim ittaba nibītja
 ušallik šēdu dunqu ina idēja ina mimma ēteppušu
 ušallim šiprāja DN3 dandanni ilāni ušallik idāja inār
 ajjābija ušamqit gārīja Aššurū ša ultu ūmī rūqūti
 kullat nišim ibēlū-ma ina nīrišu kabti ušazziqu nišim
 māti anāku enšum biznuqu muštē'u bēl bēli ina emūqi
 gašrāti ša DNN bēlija ultu GN šēpēšunu aprus-ma nīršunu
 ušaddi inūšu BN

When in my insignificance as a son-of-a-nobody I was ever seeking the advice of Nabu and Marduk, my lords, in truth - for my mind(liver) instructed me about the establishing of their rites and the completion of their shrines - to truth and justice were my ears open, (then) Marduk who knows the hearts of the gods of heaven and earth, who truly beholds all people, beheld my heart - I the insignificant who was not visible among the people - and over the land where I was born appointed me to supremacy, for the rule of land and people he named my name. He sent a good spirit to accompany me; in whatever I did he prospered my work. Nergal the most powerful of the gods he despatched to my side and he exterminated my enemies, felled my foes. The Assyrians who for ages had been the masters of all peoples and who with their heavy yoke had wearied the people of the land, I the weak and humble worshiper of the lord of lords had cut off their foot from the land of Akkad by means of the gathered forces/mighty power of Nabu and Marduk my lords and had banished their yoke. At that time, BN.....

The form of this passage compares with that of the two previously quoted, enclosed as it is in the temporal framework enūma...inūšu BN, and following the Royal Titulary RN...anāku.¹ It is impressive for the way in which it presents the gods carrying through their will. The defeat of the Assyrians is seen as one step in this direction and as the outcome of the king's election. This in turn was the result of Marduk's insight.

In fact this text focuses on a divine attribute of heart-surveillance already encountered in connection with judgement in the Assyrian Annals where the gods read the mind of rebellious vassals as they hatch plots against the suzerain.² Here there is a parallel with Yhwh's selection and election of David a younger brother and herd-boy 'not visible among the people' from an unpretentious family. His brother Eliab was outwardly more impressive, but Yhwh said to Samuel:

Do not look on his appearance, or on the height of his stature, because I have rejected him; for the LORD sees not as man sees; man looks on the outward appearance, but the LORD looks on the heart (1 Sam 16:7)

Similarly, Marduk passed over those of standing because he was able to discern Nabopolassar's heart. The scope of Marduk's knowledge is both general - mūdû libbi ilāni ša šamê u iršitie ša takallat(!) nišim ibarru kajjānum - and particular - jâši...libbija ibri. It is referred to again in the concluding injunction addressed to future rulers -

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1. Langdon notes the position of anāku at the end of line 4, and comments plausibly - 'it appears to be almost certain that the scribe has brought the word anāku-ma down from the line above although all three copies have it at the end of line 4'. Text and translation, Langdon, 56ff Nbp 4/Zyl I,2 Col 1:4-21. Note in the translation above 'seeking the advice of DNN' as opposed to Langdon's 'the sacred places of DNN' - see A.Goetze: JCS 19(1965), 129ff note on aširtu.
 2. DNN...libbi PN ekšu bārānû ibrû: 'Ashur and Ishtar...examined the heart of Tammartu the stubborn rebel' (Rassam, 5:29ff). See Part I: C.8 Asb. section G:Divine Intervention, page 151 above.

Marduk bēlī iḥâṭu pīm ibarri libbi

Marduk my lord examines speech(mouth) and scans the
mind(heart) (Nbp 4/Zyl I,2 Col 1:35) ,

Where the Babylonian inscriptions use the roots ḥâṭu, ḥiâṭu II -'to examine, keep under surveillance' and barû I -'to see, discern' with pî and libbu, the Old Testament uses bḥn -'to try, test', ḥqr -'to search, examine thoroughly' and less frequently r'h -'to see' with lēb, lēbāb -'heart, mind' and kēlāyōt -'kidneys, inmost being' as object.²

1. Compare the election of Cyrus by Marduk:

kullat mātāta kališina iḥīṭ ibrē-ma išti'ēma malki
išaru ḥibil libbi ša ittamaḥ qātuššu

(Marduk) examined all countries, the whole lot of them,
(and) made an inspection: he looked for an upright king
after his own heart who would take his hand.

(BM.90920:11f; 5R, p. 35; R.P. Dougherty: Nabonidus & Belshazzar, New Haven, 1929, p. 176; ANET, 315)

The roots ḥâṭu & barû are used in parallel. Note that T.Fish: DOTT, 92 apparently reads ibrēma (CAD B, 116 barû A, 1(a)1[˘]) as ib-ri-e-šu: ibrušu = 'his friend, companion'. The verbal root as reflected in the translations, if not the transliterations of Dougherty and CAD H, 160 ḥâṭu, (2a), is no doubt correct here.

2. For further examples of divine surveillance expressed with the roots barû & ḥâṭu, see CAD B, 116 barû A, 1 (2[˘]a & b) and CAD H, 159f ḥâṭu (2a). Of particular interest is a text published by H.H. Figulla: Business Documents of the New-Babylonian Period, UET 4, London, 1949 No. 171 given in transliteration and translation by W. von Soden: JAOS 71 (1951), 267f improving on a prior edition by Ebeling. Kudurru asks the deity Muštēšer-ḥabli for vindication of an accusation brought against him, asking the god to try his heart - libbi biri (line 13), and invoking curses upon himself if he is guilty, including the dropsy curse - agannutillâ šeretka rabīti ša lā paṭāri šuššanni: 'dropsy, your great penalty which cannot be got rid of, let me bear' (line 16; see CAD A.1, 144 (a) curses for further references, and page 187f, Asb. section H: The Fate of the Adē-Violator.)

From the OT, note such passages as Psa 7:10, 26:2, 139:23; Jer 17:9f, Prov 17:3, Psa 95:9, Jer 12:3, 20:12 and 11:20

In his survey Marduk noted two qualities about Nabopolassar which counted towards his election - he was righteous towards the gods in planning for their rites and shrines (ša kunnī paršišunu u šullumu kidudīšunu itama), and in pious dependance upon their guidance he desired to rule justly (ana kitti u mišarim bašâ uznāja).¹ The

1. Just rule was in theory if not in practice strongly bound up with the king's accountability to his gods. Discussing the mēšarum-act of the early period, Wiseman says:

It may be further argued that the mēšarum-act was an essential element in the procedure whereby a king established his royal authority over the land on accession. He ordained 'justice' for the land (mēšarum šakānu) and demonstrated his quality as a ruler according to law (šar mēšarim).... The so-called 'law-codes', including that of Hammurabi, were not themselves the written record of the mēšarum-act though they presupposed such an activity. Finkelstein has shown that they were composed late in the reign as a royal *apologia*, a witness to the king's conduct of affairs as šar mēšarim. This will explain why the stele bearing the portrait and laws of Hammurabi and named šar mēšarim was set up within Esagil, the temple of Marduk, to be the written witness to the deity of the king's oral decisions. The prologue and epilogue and thus the laws, were addressed to the deity and not to the people, they were a report on the exercise of the royal wisdom (emqum) recorded also for the benefit of successors with a plea to continue the same legal practices. (D.J. Wiseman: *JSS* 7(1962), 161-172 "The Laws of Hammurabi Again", p. 163 & 168)

On the technical mīšarum-act, see too F.R. Kraus: Ein Edikt des Königs Ammisaduqa von Babylon, SD 5, Leiden, 1958 and J.J. Finkelstein: *JCS* 15 (1961), 91-104 "Ammisaduqa's Edict & the Babylonian 'Law Codes'", while for further references see *AHW*, 659f mīšarum - 'Gerechtigkeit' and *CAD* K, 468ff kittu, especially 1(b), 1' & 2', p. 470 for both general and technical associations of the king with justice.

In Israel, the just rule of Yhwh was to be imitated by his anointed who was instructed in this out of the Tōrāh. Cf. 'So David reigned over all Israel; and David administered justice and equity (ḥōšeh mišpāt ūšēdāqāh) to all his people' (2 Sam 8:15); Deut 17:18-20 & 1 Sam 10:25; Psa 9:7f & Psa 45:6f. Note the use of the Heb. nouns mīšōr & mēyšārīm from the verbal root yšr - 'to be straight, right' cognate with Akk. ešēru & mīšaru. Akk. kittu, pl. kīnātu from root kānu cognate with Heb. root kūn has no philological Heb. counterpart but semantic equivalents 'emet & šedeq/šēdāqāh often in parallel, while 'emet & hesed in parallel are frequent with Godward reference.

imagery of the 'open ear' which expresses an attentive and receptive attitude before the deity is familiar in the Old Testament, as is the negative attitude expressed by the 'closed ear'.¹ Humility and righteousness are associated in Nabopolassar's self-portrait.

Further comparing the election of Nabopolassar with David's election to the throne of Israel, we may note the semantic parallels in Samuel's words to Saul: 'Yhwh has sought out (biqqēš) a man after his own heart ('iš kilēbābô) and has appointed him to be prince (lěnāgîd) over his people' (1 Sam 13:14). The picture is of Yhwh sifting through Israel, scanning the hearts of all until he found David whose inner character accorded with his will. The replacement of Saul by David parallels the replacement of Nabonidus by Cyrus, who was to be trusted to carry through Marduk's will as a man after Marduk's heart (malki išaru bibil libbi). The dynamic results are no doubt just as much in mind as the inner character, for both Nabopolassar and David had the task of delivering the people from enemy oppression, while Saul like Nabonidus was regarded as having failed militarily and by cultic aberration.

David's election marks a break in the succession - a fact which was never forgotten by the embittered remnants of the house of Saul, and which sprang to the lips of Shimei as a curse in the time of Absalom's rebellion. Nabopolassar used the dynastic break to great effect, underlining it, the open field of choice and his personal insignificance. Although there appears to have been no formal adoption in Saul's day of the principle of dynastic succession, the curses of Shimei and the history make it clear that a theological apologia for David's elevation to the throne was imperative. In fact at no point in the book of Samuel is this apologia given, though it is conveyed silently through the unfolding narrative and through Samuel's prophetic word and actions. Did David himself ever write in like vein to Nabopolassar drawing attention to his piety as the cause of his election? At least one passage deserves attention in this connection,

1. Note for instance the character of the Servant: 'Morning by morning (God) wakens/ he wakens my ear/ to hear as those who are taught/ The Lord GOD has opened my ear/ and I was not rebellious/ I turned not backward (Isa 50:4f) in marked contrast to Israel - Isa 48:8 'From of old your ear has not been open'.

and it has been given a context somewhat parallel in that the victory song over enemies including Saul ascribed to David and involving the celebration of Yhwh's intervention and success with the sword has been set in the historiography of the book of Samuel and when David could reckon himself in full control of his empire.¹ A moral aphorism in general terms conveys the same flavour of righteousness and humble dependence on God as encountered in Nabopolassar's inscription:

With the loyal (ḥāsîd) thou dost show thyself loyal;
 with the blameless man thou dost show thyself blameless;
 With the pure thou dost show thyself pure,
 and with the crooked thou dost show thyself perverse.
 (2 Sam 22:26f)

Immediately before this general conclusion, the poet speaks in personal terms offering an explanation as to why Yhwh took his part:

He delivered me because he delighted in me (ḥāpēs bî);
 Yhwh rewarded me according to my righteousness (kēsîdēqātî);
 according to the cleanness of my hands he recompensed me.
 For I have kept the ways of Yhwh,
 and have not wickedly departed from my God.
 For all his ordinances were before me,
 and from his statutes I did not turn aside.
 I was blameless (tāmîm) before him,
 and I kept myself from guilt.
 Therefore Yhwh has recompensed me according to my
 righteousness (kēsîdēqātî),
 according to my cleanness (kēbōrî) in his sight.
 (2 Sam 22:20-25)

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1. Since it is the concepts which are being compared the problems of composition and dating are not critical here, but Eissfeldt's words may be quoted as representative of modern scholarship:

against this possibility (a question of source-criticism) must be set the normal dating of both passages in the late pre-exilic period or even later, a dating based upon substantial grounds... But it may be that these two songs, like many other OT songs, and in particular those in the Psalter, are considerably older than is usually assumed, and then they could be assigned to one of the older narrative works, as seems to be the case with the Song of Moses in Deut 32:1-43

In one or two cases, as for example with Psa 18 (= 2 Sam 22), the possibility does not seem to be quite excluded that we have a composition which really does go back to David.
 (OEissfeldt: OTI, 279 & 452)

See Cross & Freedman: JBL 72 (1953), 15-34 "A Royal Song of Thanksgiving, 2 Sam 22 = Psa 18", p. 20 - 'A 10th century date for the poem is not at all improbable'; Albright: Y/GC, 22 - '10th century in agreement with the tradition'.

That the poet spoke as a king and not merely as a warrior is revealed in verses 44-46 which describe the submission to vassaldom of foreign peoples, and with these verses should be compared the wording of the epilogue in which Yhwh is praised for giving great victories to his king (malkô) and demonstrating his covenant love (hesed) to his anointed (mēšihô), king David.¹

It seems then that there are grounds for comparison of the election apologia in the biblical song and the Nabopolassar inscription with the proviso that it is the reasons for election that are compared in general terms rather than the supposition being made that there is a synoptic view of righteousness and duty towards the deity in the two religious systems. In Nabopolassar's view he was elected to build or renovate shrines for the pantheon, whereas David was in fact specifically prohibited from the building of the Temple in Jerusalem, and that on the grounds of his success as a warrior.² It is indeed of the essence of the Old Testament's presentation that the limitations and failures of its leading figures are recorded at the same time as their call and commissioning by Yhwh are affirmed. Thus Moses did not enter the promised land; David did not build the Temple. David's reasons for not building the Temple would sound strange on the lips of a Mesopotamian king, and it is of paramount importance to a methodology that risks comparisons to note divergences as well.³

1. Cross and Freedman find the mention of David as suspicious, but argue that mēšihô - 'his anointed' 'is not at all out of place in an early psalm' (art.cit., 34 note 116).

2. But God said to me, 'You may not build a house for my name, for you are a warrior and have shed blood.' Yet Yhwh God of Israel chose me from all my father's house to be king over Israel for ever. (1 Chron 28:3f)

I had it in my heart to build a house to the name of Yhwh my God. But the word of Yhwh came to me, saying, 'You have shed much blood and have waged great wars; you shall not build a house to my name, because you have shed so much blood before me upon the earth..' (1 Chron 22:7f)

3. The restricting oracle remains paradoxical, for David's wars were waged at the directive and in the name of Yhwh who granted the victorious outcome according to the OT (cf. 2 Sam 8:14 'And Yhwh gave victory to David wherever he went', a summary statement which embraces victories over Philistines, Arameans, Moabites & Edomites, the fate of the latter two being particularly bloody).

With respect to temple building, Solomon's election makes a closer parallel to Nabopolassar's than does David's :

'It is Solomon your son who shall build my house and my courts, for I have chosen him to be my son and I will be his father' ... 'And you Solomon my son, know the God of your father, and serve him with a whole heart and a willing mind; for Yhwh searches all hearts (kî kol-lēbābôt dōrēš DN) and understands every plan and thought (wēkol-yēšer maḥšābôt mēbîn) (1 Chron 28:6 & 9)

Amid a repertoire of covenantal terminology, election and temple building are indissolubly linked reinforced by repetition.¹ Military supremacy, expressed in the promise of 1 Chron 22:9 'I will give him peace from all his enemies round about' is regarded as a gift from the deity as in Nabopolassar's inscription, and in Solomon's case merely as incidental, a factor ensuring favorable circumstances for the building of the Temple for which Solomon was elected (1 Chron 22:10). Again the heart-surveillance by Yhwh is a most prominent part of the electoral procedure.

Thus it is possible to draw parallels between Nabopolassar's theological interpretation of history and the sword and his election and some of the Old Testament's theological historiography, yet both have their remarkable features, the Old Testament in its paradoxical but clearly implied judgement that the sword and bloodshed is incompatible with a sanctified worship of Yhwh;² the inscription of Nabopolassar in its passing over of astounding political and military events with a circumstantial allusion, and its absence of self-glorification on that score.

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1. Note the construction of 1 Chron 28:10 where election (DN bāḥar bē) and temple building (libnôt-bayit) are linked by the Infinitive Construct with Lamed construction expressing the purpose of election.
 2. Is this based on Gen 9:6, where a sanctity is set on human life because man is created in the image of God ?

Nabopolassar goes on to conclude his inscription with another memorable theological insight which appears to be a summary of his own imperial faith. The lines replace the usual Concluding Prayer and carry the following injunction to successors:

manammu šarru ina māti-ma lū aplu lū mār māri
 ālikū arkija ša DN ana bēlūt māti inabbu zikiršu
 ša emūqū u danāni ē tašdud ana libbika ašrat DNN
 • šitē'e-ma linārū gārīka (Nbp 4/Zyl I,2 Col 1:31-34)

Whoever the king is over the land after me whether heir or grandson whom Marduk names for suzerainty over the land, do not incline your mind(heart) to power(forces) and might; seek the direction of Nabu and Marduk, and let them annihilate your enemies.

It is after this injunction that the reminder is given that Marduk discerns word and thought (ihātu pīm ibarri libbi, line 35), and then follow lines carrying an aphorism comparable to the biblical Cim-hāsīd tithassād : 'with the loyal thou dost show thyself loyal' (2 Sam 22:26).

Ša itti DN kīnu ikunna išdašu
 Ša itti apal DN kīnu ulabbar ana darāti (lines 36f)

He who is steadfast to Bel,
 his foundation shall be/is firm;
 He who is steadfast to the son of Bel,
 shall endure/endures to eternity.

Nabopolassar himself was 'the weak and humble worshiper of the lord of lords' (line 19), who 'sought the advice of Nabu and Marduk' (line 5), and hence enjoins his successor to 'seek the guidance of Nabu and Marduk' (line 34).¹ This leads him to make a strong prohibition against reliance on the 'arm of the flesh' - ša emūqū u danāni ē tašdud ana libbika . The root šadādu is a vigorous one with the basic meaning of 'to pull, drag, draw', here used in the negative Optative construction, ē + 2Masc.Sing. Preterite - 'Mayest thou not...' . The positive affirmation follows with the Precative of the root nāru, nēru - 'to annihilate', with the Precative not being a wish - 'O, may they annihilate...', but rather an asseverative - 'Truly, they will annihilate.../ and they really will annihilate...' . So there is a

1. For aširtu - 'direction, guidance, advice, counsel', as opposed to aširtu, ešertu, išertum - 'shrine', see A.Goetze: JCS 19(1965), 130.

condition in positive and negative terms - depend on the gods, do not depend on or strive for power - and a guaranteed result. Success with the sword lies with the gods. Lines 36f read like a quotation from a hymn to Marduk with their parallelism. Here we have the opposite stated to the many treaty curses which threaten deracination, the crumbling away of an untrue kingdom to sand, the overturning of the throne, the extermination of lineage, etc. The blessing is an enduring 'foundation', which in context of course means 'throne' and 'dynasty', a this-worldly form of eternal life in which the name, fame, status and offspring of the monarch live on and on.¹

Besides the parallels to David's Song of Thanksgiving (2 Sam 22), we may note how familiar is Nabopolassar's injunction against reliance on human resources for power to readers of the Old Testament. To quote only one passage, we may draw attention to the words of Nabopolassar's contemporary, Jeremiah:

'ārūr haggeber 'āšer yibṭaḥ bā'ādām
weššām bāšār zērōcō ūmin-Yhwh yasūr libbō

Cursed is the man who trusts in man
and makes flesh his arm,
whose heart turns away from Yhwh.
(Jer 17:5)

If, as seems probable, Nabopolassar is basing his theology of trust in Marduk on his own experience of victory over the Assyrians, then one could compare this historical theology with the theology of salvation which flowed out of Israel's deliverance from bondage to the Egyptians, which was the cornerstone of festival, law and prophets alike. For example, it is on the basis of the Exodus that the theological hope of a New Exodus is formulated in Isaiah.² In the brief inscription of Nabopolassar, there is no place for the theological development of the theme but the parallel of a national deliverance experienced historically and interpreted theologically which in turn becomes the foundation for faith in future divine

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1. See AHw, 393 išdu (2) a & b for references to išdu + kussû/šarrūtu.
 2. See, for example, B.W. Anderson's essay "Exodus Typology in Second Isaiah" in Israel's Prophetic Heritage, 177-195, eds. Anderson & W. Harrelson, New York, 1962.

intervention is noteworthy. Granted this understanding of history, empire and the sword by Nabopolassar, it is evident that Albrectson is correct that there can be no facile distinction drawn between Yhwh's believed action in historical events and what the Mesopotamian monarchs expected of their gods in terms of divine intervention.

Before leaving Nabopolassar's inscription, one further passage from the Old Testament may be adduced for comparison to its presentation of the searching eye of Marduk, the vanity of arms, and the secret of the king's victory. In Psalm 33 just such a pattern of associations is present. Beginning with the creation (verses 6-7) which took place at the divine word, the psalm asserts that Yhwh rules the nations, frustrating their counsel but bringing his own to pass (verses 10-12). He sits enthroned scanning the hearts of men, and in particular marking the king to see whether he is relying on the machines of war or on his God.

Yhwh looks down(hibbîṭ) from heaven,
 he sees(rā'āh) all the sons of men;
 from where he sits enthroned he looks forth(hišgîaḥ)
 on all the inhabitants of the earth,
 he who fashions(hayyōšēr) the hearts of them all
 and observes(hammēbîn) all their deeds.
 A king is not saved by his great army(bērāb ḥayil);
 a warrior is not delivered by his great strength(kōaḥ).
 The war horse is a vain hope for victory(litēšûcāh),
 and by its great might(ḥēylô) it cannot save(yemallēt)
 Behold the eye of Yhwh is on those who fear him(yērē'āyw),
 and those who hope in his steadfast love,
 (lamēyaḥālîm lēḥasdô)
 that he may deliver their soul from death,
 and keep them alive in famine.
 (Psa 33:13-19)

Yhwh is the fashioner of the heart who discerns man's motives as well as their deeds. It is not the earthly king who is in control, but the deity who reigns as suzerain, so that the king who fears the deity has the hope of victory rather than the one who places his trust in ḥayil, kōaḥ, emūqu and danāni. The psalmist and Nabopolassar draw close in their statements of imperial theology at this point.

It is only a pity that the king who put an end to the empire of Assyria should have left so tantalisingly small a record of his theological interpretation of empire and the gods. It is nevertheless a significant one.

A.2: Nebuchadnezzar and the Conquest of Syria.

Nebuchadnezzar was not only the greatest builder and beautifier of Babylon, but also one of its greatest generals. Before he succeeded his father to the throne, he had assumed responsibility for the army in the field, and indeed it was due to the battles fought under his leadership that the Neo-Babylonian Empire was able in large measure to assume immediate control of Assyria's western holdings after her collapse. Again, it is surprising that Nebuchadnezzar makes virtually no mention of such historic events as the battle of Carchemish, the double investiture of Jerusalem, the crushing of Ascalon, the siege of Tyre and other clashes to the north. Again, the Babylonian Chronicle reveals that these historical events were recorded as they occurred, but no scribe took up his stylus to compose an account glorifying king and gods. In the Building Inscriptions, one general and one particular reference to military campaigns remain.

Following a practice as early as the time of Naram-Sin, which was emulated by Shalmaneser III at the source of the Tigris, Esarhaddon at the Nahr-el-Kelb, Darius at Behistun, Nebuchadnezzar inscribed an account of his deeds on the rock faces of the narrow Wadi-Brissa in Syria,¹ on one side in Neo-Babylonian on the opposite in an archaizing script. The gist of this is that he wished to build a temple using Lebanon's fragrant wood, claimed by imperial theology as 'the luxurious forest of Marduk'. However, 'a hostile foreign king' (Šarru nakru ahu) controlled the area - perhaps a pharaoh or Phoenician whose name might appear elsewhere, who was exploiting its resources which according to Nebuchadnezzar's imperial theology was 'robbing (it of) its riches'. A further indictment was that 'its people were scattered, had fled to a far (away region)'. Presenting himself as Lebanon's liberator who 'made that country happy by eradicating its enemy everywhere' and re-assembling its populace, Nebuchadnezzar speaks of organising his army for an expedition to the Lebanon 'in the power of my lords Nabu and Marduk' (ina emūqa DNN), a phrase

1. See A.Malamat's essay "Campaigns to the Mediterranean by Iahdunlim & Other Early Mesopotamian Rulers", Festschrift Landsberger, AS 16, p. 365-373. For modern translations of the Wadi Brissa inscription, see ANET, 307 by A.L.Oppenheim from which phrases above are taken, and DOTT, 87f by T.Fish. See HKL 1,627 Weissbach:Wādī Brīsā and Berger under the sigla W.Br. for bibliography.

standard to the vocabulary of empire and the gods, which is here left quite unelaborated and which is counterbalanced with the king's rather fuller record of his victory stele, the šalam šarrūtija and the writing of 'an inscription mentioning my name' with the traditional injunctions to posterity following.

Brief and formal as this text is, it speaks of an imperial theology clearly enough in which the king's rôle as temple builder fits hand in glove with his rôle as empire builder. Foreign territory and its resources are regarded as the legitimate domain of Marduk, while the king is concerned to present himself as wielding the sword justly, in this instance as a liberator for the oppressed indigenous populace. If Nebuchadnezzar reflected on the names, fates and theologies of the previous imperialists whose inscriptions he encountered on the far flung marching routes of the western kingdoms, he has taken those royal thoughts in silence to the grave.

The second of Nebuchadnezzar's texts with references to his military exploits is a ten-columned inscription which echoes the traditional phraseology but which departs slightly from the set form in that the Election Formula which follows the Royal Titulary is expanded, first by reference to the king's conception and birth and his elevation to the throne after which a prayer to Marduk is included which touches the heights of Babylonian theology. This in turn is followed by a resumé of conquest, tribute and the prosperity of Babylon under the king's just rule, before the usual Building Project is introduced by the standard phrase ina BN

The pre-natal election of Nebuchadnezzar echoes that of Jeremiah:

ištu ibnanni bēlu ilu irûa DN ibšimu nabnīti ina
ummi enūma aldaku abbanu anāku ašrāti ilī ašteni
alakti ilī irteneddi ša DN bēlu rabū ilu bānīja
epšētūšu naklāti eliš attanadu
(Nbk 15/Zyl III,1 Col 1:23-32)

After the lord my divine begetter made me, Marduk had built my structure within my mother, when I was born, was created, I continually sought the guidance of the gods, the way of the gods I followed ever; as regards Marduk, the great lord, the god, my maker to his artistic work I continually paid attention.

Now the word of Yhwh came to me saying:
 Before I formed you in the womb I knew you
 and before you were born I consecrated you;
 I appointed you a prophet to the nations.

(Jer 1:4)

1

Following this strong affirmation of divine election, Nebuchadnezzar records his pious response in traditional terms, but then he goes on to amplify this with the inclusion of a prayer which takes up the motif of his divine creation, encompasses his piety, and prays for a devout rule over the people .

ullânuku bêlî mînâ bašî-ma ana šarri ša taramma
 tanambu zikiršu ša elika t̄abu tušteššir šumšu
 ḥarrânâ išartâ tapaqqidsu anâku rubû māgiraka
 binûti qâtika atta tabananni-ma šarrûti kiššat
 nišî taqipanni kîma dunquka bêlu ša tušteppiru
 gimiršun bêlûtka širti šure”im puluḥti ilûtika
 šubša ina libbija šurqam ša elika t̄abu ša balâtija
 lû tippeš (Nbk 15/Zyl III,1 & St. Tfl. 10, Col 1:55ff)

Without you, my lord, what exists ? For the king whom you love, whose name you pronounce, who pleases you, you establish his reputation (lit. make straight his name) and appoint a straightforward course for him. I am the prince who is submissive to you, the creation of your hands. You have begotten me, and entrusted me with the rule of all peoples. In accord with your beneficence, O lord, who watches over them all, lead them to love your exalted sovereignty. May reverence for your divinity be in my heart; prolong (the days of) him who pleases you, for you indeed are the one who gives me life.

The prayer is notable for the spirit of godly dependence it breathes, moving from the general theological principle enunciated in the rhetorical question to the concept of the god's personal care and providence for king and people. The inclusion of the ruled in the god's providential care - tušteppiru Štn-theme of epēru I² - and the

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1. For the biblical concept of individual creation, see Psa 139:13ff; for the idea in the context of election, see Isa 44:2,24 on Israel's election, and Isa 49:1,5 on the Servant's election.
 2. AHw., 223 epēru I - 'verköstigen, versorgen'; Štn 'gemäß deinen Wohltaten, Herr du sie alle i.w. versorgen liessst'. Langdon has taken it as from the root ebēru - 'to enter' in error.

prayer that they will be devout in their acknowledgement of the deity is striking, for it brings a perspective to empire and the gods complementary to rule by the sword. The implication is that the people's heart-allegiance is necessary not simply towards Nebuchadnezzar but to Marduk, then his rule will be successful. The gods being sovereign are able to instil this devout attitude in the hearts of the ruled as well as in the ruler's. This prospect of pious and peaceful imperialism stands in contrast to the lines which then follow:

ina tukultišu ŝirti mātātī ruqāti ŝadīm nisūti
 ištu tām̄ti elīti ana tām̄ti ŝaplāti urḥum ašṭūtim
 padānīm piḥūti ašar kibsi ŝuprusu ŝēpē lā ibašū
 ḥarrānām namrāšā uruḥ ŝamāmi irteddi-ma lā māgirī
 anār akmi māta ušteššir-ma nišīm uštammih raggā u
 ŝēnīm ina nišī ušessi (Col 2:12ff)

With his exalted aid far-off lands, distant mountains from the upper sea to the lower sea, rough paths, blocked roads where the march was hindered, untrod by human foot, difficult ways and thirsty paths I followed and I annihilated the unsubmissive, I bound (my foes), the land I set in order, and the people I made joyful; the rogues and evil-doers I removed from among the people.

It can be said with fair certainty that Nebuchadnezzar traversed no untrodden routes - the passage is quarried from stock phrases and reflects the traditional picture of empire and the gods with its nod in the divine direction in the stock phrase ina tukultišu and its chain of 1st singular verbs underlining royal prowess. The level of generalisation makes a disappointing sequence to the previous theologically rich section, for while these lines attest a theology of history and the sword, they are rather colourless.

A.3: Nabonidus - His Interpretation of History & Loss of an Empire.

The inscriptions of Nabonidus break out of the previous patterns to some extent to give a more vivid portrait of this official under Nebuchadnezzar who came to the throne through the murder of the child king Labashi-Marduk, whose religious outlook seems to have been deeply influenced by his centarian mother, Adda-guppi, high-priestess of Sin in Harran, and who left the splendour of his capital city for a ten year sojourn in the sands of Arabia, returning only to lose his empire to Cyrus the Great.

Nabonidus' theology of the sword deserves attention for it provides the last opportunity for the study of the indigenous Mesopotamian thinking before Iranian suzerainty obscured it. Further, it would appear that Nabonidus was a monarch motivated to a greater degree and cost than most by religious considerations. He has left only religious explanations of his unusual conduct, which defies rationalistic explanations by western historians.¹

In a basalt stele now in Istanbul, Nabonidus reviews the story of Babylon before his coronation by way of introduction to records of work on Esagila and Ezida and restoration of the jasper cylinder seal of Sin engraved by Ashurbanipal. Happily the fate of Babylon from Sennacherib's day is recounted in several extant sources. The parallel sources will be discussed in relation to the conclusions which Albrektson has drawn in his comparison of divine revelation in history in the context of Ancient Near Eastern thought.

1. See C.Gadd's discussion (AnSt 8,1958,88ff) which notes 'the failure of modern historians to divine any convincing reason at all' for the Teima interlude, and after mentioning health or trade suppositions concludes that 'neither of these is more than incidental, and certainly in the purpose of Nabonidus, so far as he was willing to reveal it, they played no part at all'. With this compare Tadmor's remarks - 'We know not the motives behind Nabunaid's departure to Arabia in his fourth year...This question remains a riddle' ("The Inscriptions of Nabunaid", Festschrift Landsberger, AS 16, 351-363, p. 363). This underlines the value of a theological analysis of Nabonidus' inscriptions.

(a) Sennacherib's Destruction of Babylon:

The basalt stele becomes readable at this point -

iktapud lemuttim řiri māti libbařu itamā hiřiti
ana niřē māti tajjaru ul irři limniř ana CN unammi
eřretiř usařhi uřurāti billudē uřalpit qāti rubi
DN iřbat-ma uřērib qereb GN

(Sennacherib) planned evil against the land, his heart premeditated crimes, toward the people of the land he did not show mercy; evilly disposed toward Babylon, he turned the shrines into steppe, their outlines he obliterated, their rites he dislocated. He took the hand of Marduk and brought him to Assyria. 1

The coldly calculated nature of the crime (hiřitu) is conveyed not only by the premeditation (kapādu - 'to plot, plan'; awūm - 'to say, speak' Gt-theme + libbu), but by the very thoroughness of execution (nawūm II, namū III D-theme 'to lay waste, turn into wasteland'; sařū D-theme 'to obliterate, desecrate'; lapātu ř-theme 'to ruin, dislocate')² By obscuring the very foundation outlines, Sennacherib made the re-building according to religious protocol impossible. Note too the irony in the phrase řabātu qāt Marduk, which applied to the king when he 'took the hand of Bel' in the New Year ceremony, confirming his divinely decreed rôle as king. Capture and removal of gods was a dire and distressing punishment inflicted on rebels.³ The Assyrian Annals make a point of recording this when describing victories; the Babylonian Chronicle exhibits an acute interest in the movement of idols during political curses; Nabonidus himself appears to have set greater store by the in-gathering of idols to Babylon than on any other countermove in the face of Cryus' advance.⁴ Commenting on another

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1. Nbd 8/Stl. Frgm XI Col 1:1ff. See Berger, 60 & 384 for bibliographical details; a translation by Oppenheim is given in ANET, 309.
 2. For nawūm, sařū & lapātu, see AHw., 771, 1034 & 535 respectively.
 3. See the discussion under Part I, Asb. subsection A: The Vassal Oath & Vassal Status, page 83ff.
 4. See Esarhaddon Prism Th. 1929-10-12, 1 Col 4; Bab. Chron., BM 25127:6, 16f, rev. 19, 21; BM.21901:8f; BM.21946:10; Nab. Chron., Col 3:9ff.

occasion when Sennacherib removed a city god to Assyria, Millard succinctly remarks that 'exile of the deity was an act of retribution inflicted upon enemy or rebel cities as a mark of complete subjugation'.¹

To Nabonidus, therefore, it was not acceptable that Marduk had been carried off to Assyria forcibly. He could not re-write history for it had been chronicled and likely was too well remembered an event, but a theological re-interpretation of the exile was an open option - far from leaving the city against his will Marduk went voluntarily! In Nabonidus' own words:

kīma uzzi ilī-ma itēpuš māti ul ipšur kimiltašu
rubû DN 21 šanāti qereb GN irtamê šubassu

(Sennacherib) did to the land what was the
wrathful will) of the gods; the prince Marduk
did not relax his wrath; for 21 years he set up
his dwelling in Assyria. 2

No reason for Marduk's wrath is recorded in the stele as we have it,³ but it achieves the castigation of Sennacherib and an apologia for Marduk's supremacy, for Marduk is seen as the real

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1. A.R.Millard: Iraq 26(1964),p.18 commenting on the Chronicle text BM.96273:1.
 2. Nbd 8/St1.Frgm. XI, Col 1:18ff. For chronological details and source references to the duration of Marduk's exile in Assyria, and the return of the statue, couch and chariot to Babylon, together with the inscription of Ashurbanipal carved upon them, see Millard's article note 1 above. Compare the anger, departure, residence in Elam and return of Nana after 1635 years recounted by Ashurbanipal (ARAB 2, \$812-813 etc).
 3. A traditional reason was that the god's rites were not being correctly observed. The disorder in the cult here is described as the result of Sennacherib's seige rather than its cause via Marduk's wrath. In the Esarhaddon version, he asserts sacrilege in the form of using the temple treasure of Esagila to buy an Elamite alliance against Assyria (ARAB 2, \$642; Asar, \$11)

instigator of Babylon's destruction, his agent not thereby escaping the incurring of guilt.¹

Marduk's wrath passed, and this heralded the restoration of his city and temple, and the day of reckoning for his erstwhile agent.

imlū ūmē ikšuda adannu inūh-ma uzzašu ša šar
ilāni bēk bēlē TN u CN ihsus šubat bēlūtišu ša
GN ša ina uzzi DN šalputtim māti iškunu mār šīt
libbišu ina kakkī urassibšu

The days were fulfilled, the appointed time arrived; quieted was the wrath of the king of the gods, the lord of lords. Esagila and Babylon his lordly residence he he remembered. As for the king of Subartu (Assyria) who through the wrath of Marduk brought about the destruction of the land, a son the progeny of his loins cut him down with the sword. 2

For Nabonidus, Sennacherib's murder was the dramatic token of the end of Marduk's wrath with Babylon. He does not state in so many

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1. The principle of Yhwh's right to use a foreign power to punish Israel, and his right to in turn dispose of that power pervades the OT, especially the prophetic literature. Thus Assyria was 'the rod of my (Yhwh's) anger', destined to be broken subsequently (Isa 10:12, 15f). Compare Jeremiah's oracles on Babylon and Jer 25:1ff. It could be argued that to some extent a parallel in the Babylonian milieu exists to Israel's covenant relationship with her national deity Yhwh, for Israel is explicitly threatened with covenant curses while the Babylonians are implicitly regarded as subject to fates like those of disobedient vassals conditional upon proper (cultic) relations with Marduk.
 2. Urassibšu is 3rd Masc.Sing. D-theme of root rasābu, rasāpu plus 3rd Masc.Sing. accusative suffix. Oppenheim renders this as a causative with Marduk as subject: '(Therefore) he (Marduk) made his (Sennacherib's) own son murder the king of Subartu (Senn)', ANET, 309. This translation accords well with the theology of the passage, but the D-theme with mār - 'son' as subject is what we have here. The D-theme of rasāpu occurs frequently in the Assyrian Annals with the meaning 'to raze' in the context of the sword; russupu is quoted by von Soden as an example of where there is little distinction in meaning between G- and D-themes - GAG, §88(f), cf. AHw, 958f .

words that Marduk contrived the murder, nor do the two or three broken lines following reveal whether he provided a theological rationale for Assyria's use in chastisement followed by her destruction.¹

The concept of a fixed period of divine wrath merits consideration in the wider context of parallel usages, though only a brief discussion can be given here. In the basalt stele, the duration of Marduk's wrath is encompassed by the phrase imlū ūmē, and its termination point indicated by kašādu - 'to arrive, reach' plus the noun adannu.² A selection of Akkadian parallels will illustrate the use of the phrase.

A most important parallel is given in a barrel cylinder of Marduk apla-iddina II, the Merodach-baladan of the Old Testament who was the contemporary of Isaiah, Hezekiah, Sargon and Sennacherib in the 8th century bc.³ Describing work on Ningizzida's shrine attached to the E-anna temple at Erech, he tells of Assyrian domination, the wrath of Marduk with Akkad, its appeasement leading to his coronation, and his pious restoration work, for which there is also archaeological evidence.

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1. The OT prophets supply a rationale by making a point of enemy arrogance, that is their taking the credit for their victories without reference to Yhwh's rôle. Again, judgement is passed on them for the excesses to which they carried the punishment of Israel. On these points, see Isa 7 to 11, 47:6f, 51:21ff & Zech 1: 15.
 2. See AHw., 10 'Termin'; CAD A.1, 97ff (2) 'a period of time of predetermined length or characterized by a sequence of specific events'.
 3. See J.A. Brinkman's masterly essay "Merodach-Baladan II" in Festschrift Oppenheim, p. 6ff; ND.2090 is discussed on page 14f.

[i]nūšu bēlu rabû DN ana māt GN kimiltuš isbus-ma
 [MU-x-]kam-ma nakru limnu Subaru ina GN appuš bēlūtu
 [a]dī (?) ūmē imlū ikšuda adannu [bēlu] rabû DN ana
 GN ša ikmilu iršū sālīma

At that time the lord Marduk became wrath with the land of Akkad. [X] years the wicked enemy, the Subarean (ie. Assyrians) exercised lordship in Akkad until the days were fulfilled and the appointed time arrived. The great [lord] Marduk became friendly towards Akkad with which he had been wrath. 1

The passage is an exact parallel to Nabonidus' basalt stele, and for all we know may be a text a copy of which Nabonidus might have read or unearthed.

The second passage concerns the recapture by Ashurbanipal of the statue of Nana carried off to Elam 1,635 years previously:

ūmē imlū ukkipa adannu ilāni rabūti epšēti ēmuru
 the days were fulfilled, the appointed time approached; the great gods saw the deed2

Ashurbanipal apparently would have subscribed to the proverb 'the mills of God grind slowly but they grind exceeding small', for his vengeance wrecked on Elam was thorough. As the broken text stands there is no mention of Nana's wrath calming, so it just possible to take adannu as here denoting the moment of vengeance. However, it seems preferable to understand it as indicating the terminal point of the god's anger, as is so in the other examples.

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1. C.J.Gadd: Iraq 15(1953), 123-132 "An Inscribed Barrel Cylinder of Marduk-apla-iddina II". Found in three pieces at Nimrud in 1952, its published number is ND.2090 ; Col 1:8-11 is quoted here.
 2. K.2631+K.2653+K.2855:line 15 - Streck, 178; ARAB 2, §923. Compare the other accounts by Ashurbanipal - ARAB 2, §812f, 885, 919, and by Sennacherib - §249-251 .

granted through liver divination (and astrology as well in the case of Nabonidus) that they could set a termination to the period of the divine wrath. Indeed, adannu can hardly be severed from its place in the highly technical vocabulary of divination, for it is characteristic of the oracular enquiries placed before Shamash by Esarhaddon and Ashurbanipal, and here refers to the period stated specifically in months and days during which an event might occur.¹ Oracular consultation is evidence enough that the gods were thought to know the future, and other texts can be cited to show that the Mesopotamians believed in the personal intervention of the gods in events. There would therefore appear to be no good reason for regarding the wrath of the gods as invariably an expedient theological explanation whereby political events were draped in religious covers. What the Mesopotamians understood as an active cause and effect system may not, of course, be acceptable to modern minds, but this is irrelevant to the exegesis of the texts and their thought patterns. It seems soundest then to ascribe Nabonidus' interpretation of the 7th century to his

1. See La Divination en Mésopotamie Ancienne, XI^e Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale, 1966. For a definition of adannu, see Gadd "Babylonian Divinatory Methods", p. 31f; on adannu in the oracular enquiries published by Knudtzon & Klauber, see J. Aro "On the Practice of Extispicy", page 109f.

conviction about the personal and operative will of his deities.¹

After the period of wrath, Marduk is said to have given thought for or remembered - ḥasāsu - his city and temple. This is reminiscent of the Old Testament psalms where the remembrance by Yhwh of Zion and its Temple, often in association with his remembrance of the various covenants with the fathers, is a recurring theme. After

1. In the many religious cultures where gods are believed to control events, there seems to be room in the popular mind at any rate for an impersonal category of more fatalistic nature, called luck, chance or fate, which differs from divine decree. In true Yahwism, there was no place for this really, but it appears in syncretistic practices such as attested by Isa 65:11:

But you who forsake Yhwh,
 who forget my holy mountain,
 who set a table for Fortune (laggad)
 and fill cups of mixed wine for Destiny (lamēnî)

Cf. but time (cēt) and chance (pena^c) happen to them all
 (Eccles 9:11)

Cf. the idea of luck in Punic mzl n^{cm} and Rabbinic mzl ṭb

In the OT, besides 'the Day of Yhwh' which is intimately associated with wrath and judgement (eg Zeph 1:14-16), there are phrases which describe the termination of a period of divine wrath and the dawn of an era of favour. Compare the use of mō^cēd - 'meeting-place, appointed time, fixed day, space of time, time of feast' with adannu in Psa 102:13 -

Thou wilt arise and have pity on Zion;
 it is the time to favour her (kî-cēt lēḥenēnāh);
 the appointed time has come (kî-bā' mō^cēd).

For the onset of a period of divine wrath on an erstwhile conqueror - a context equivalent to that of Nabonidus' basalt stele, note:

Behold, I am against you, O proud one,
 says the Lord Yhwh of hosts;
 for your day has come (kî bā' yômēkā)
 the time when I will punish you (cēt pēqadtikā)
 (Jer 50:31 cf. verse 27)

Adannu is used as the pre-determined sign for the onset of the Flood - a divine judgement:

adanna Šamaš iškunam // [uṣur] adanna ša ašapparakka
 adannu šū iktalda

Shamash set a definite time for me...that appointed time arrived // [Observe] the appointed time of which I will inform you (Enter [the boat] and close the boat's door)

(Gilg XI:86 & 89; Atrahasis, 128 DT 42(W):5)

the destruction of the city and Temple, which was predicted so realistically by Jeremiah, assurance was again given of Yhwh's will to restore the fortunes of Israel in terms very similar to those of Nabonidus' inscription.¹

Nabonidus apparently passes over the considerable restoration work done by Esarhaddon on Babylon,² which he began before the death of his father, for after recording Sennacherib's death and a gap of two or three lines, the basalt stele passes straight on to the overthrow of Assyria after Ashurbanipal's death. The agents of Marduk in

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1. Zechariah mentions the 70 year duration of Yhwh's wrath, and then records an oracle which affirms that Yhwh would again remember Zion and the Temple:

'O Yhwh of hosts, how long wilt thou have no mercy on Jerusalem and the cities of Judah, against which thou hast had indignation these 70 years?' And Yhwh answered gracious and comforting words to the angel who talked with me....thus says Yhwh of hosts...'I am very angry with the nations that are at ease; for while I was angry but a little, they furthered the disaster.. .. I have returned to Jerusalem with compassion; my house shall be built in it...my cities shall again overflow with prosperity, and Yhwh will again comfort Zion and again choose Jerusalem' (Zech 1:12ff)

2. After the sack of 698 bc, Sennacherib made Esarhaddon the vice-regent of Babylonia, a position he occupied for 8 years before winning the crown of Assyria from his brothers after his father's murder in 681 bc. 'It is known that Sennacherib himself commenced the work of rebuilding the city' (CAH III, 69) - no references given; cf. 'Babylon, devastated by Sennacherib, had probably begun to be rebuilt by the end of his reign' (Greatness, 125). For documentation of Esarhaddon's work, see ARAB 2, 242ff.

this retributive punishment of Assyria are the Umman-Manda.¹

rīšū iddinšum tappā ušaršiš šar Umman-manda ša māḡiri lā išū ušakniš qibīssu ušallik rēšūtšu eliš u šapliš imnu u šumēlu abūbāniš ispun utir gimillu CN iriba tuktē šar umman-manda lā ādiru ušalpit ešrētišun ša ilāni GN kalašun u māḡazāni pāt GN ša itti šar GN nakru-ma lā illikū rēšūtšu ušalpit-ma mēsišun manamma lā ēzib ušahrib māḡazāišun ušattir abūbiš šar CN šipir DN ša šillati ikkibšu lā ūbil qātāšu ana billudē ilāni kalama išši malâ(!) majjāl qaqqar ināl.....ilānišunu [mušaklil [šuluḡhišun ša DN ana šušubu māḡazā ilāni ḡarbūtū imbū nibīssi tillāni nadūti ešrēti ilāni iškunu qātuššu (Nbd 8/Stl. Frgm XI, Col 2:1-3:10)

(Marduk) gave him helpers (and) provided him with friends - the king of the Umman-manda who was without rival he caused to bow to his orders and go to his aid. Above and below, to the right and to the left, like the Flood he overwhelmed (the land); he made retribution for Babylon and wrecked vengeance. The king of the Umman-manda, without fear (ie. fear of the gods), destroyed all the shrines of Assyria's gods, and the towns/cult-centres who had been hostile to the king of Akkad who had not gone to his aid he destroyed, and their cults without exception he layed waste; their towns/cult-centres he tore down like the Flood. But as for the king of Babylon the creation of Marduk, who abhors sacrilege, he did not raise his hand against the cult-places of the gods. He let his hair grow dishevelled, and made his bed on the ground..... their gods, restoring their cultic-rites, those ruined cult-centres of the gods which Marduk directed to be resettled, the deserted tells, the shrines of the gods which he put into his control.

1. The usage of this term is still debated, especially in the Chronicle of the Fall of Nineveh in view of what certain Greek historians say about the Scythians. For recent discussion with source references, see Wiseman: CCK, 16 & 81. In Nabonidus' inscriptions it undoubtedly denotes the Medes - see Gadd: AnSt 8,73; cf. Nbd 1, 1:8ff; Nbd 8,10:12ff; cf. the references to the destruction of Harran in Adda-guppi's stele H1 B, 1:6-9 and the Nabopolassar Chronicle BM.21901:58-65 .

Marduk is the catalyst in the interaction of three groups of peoples - the Babylonians, the Medes and the Assyrians. Firstly, he is instrumental in the formation of the Medo-Babylonian alliance. The grammatical construction bears this out, for although the previous lines are missing from the inscription, Marduk must be reckoned to be the subject of the verb nadānu - 'to give' with the suffix -šum 'to him' standing for the king of Babylon. This is supported by use of the Š-theme of the roots rašû, kanāšu and alāku which follow. This is divine action in history.

Secondly, Marduk uses the Medes to avenge his temples and city. The concept of retribution is emphasised in the inscription with the use of gimillu and tuktû implying the wiping out of former ignominy by the successful retaliation in like degree.

Nabonidus was himself no friend of the Medes, for they had thwarted his plans for reconstructing Éḫulḫul by their continued presence in Harran.¹ He looked to Cyrus the Persian, the new master of Iran, to solve the Median problem and allow his plans for honoring the dishonoured Sin to reach fruition. This subsequent historical development explains why he is so careful to dissociate the king of Babylon in the basalt stele, who is presumably Nabopolassar, from the rampaging Medes,² for while the latter sacked city and shrine

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1. bitu šuātīm ša taqbû epēšu Umman-manda saḫiršum-ma
puggulū emūqāšu (Nbd 1, 1:24f)

That temple which you are commanding me to rebuild
the Umman-manda surround, and their forces are mighty

2. It is interesting to note the absence of the Babylonians at the fall of Ashur, and the carnage attributed to the Medes by the Babylonian Chronicle, though no moral or religious consequences are necessarily implied by that document:

(The Mede) inflicted a terrible massacre upon the greater part of the people, plundering it (the city) and carrying off [prisoners from it] .[The king of Akkad and his troops, who had come to the help of the Medes, did not reach the (scene of) the attack (until) the city [was (already) taken] .

(Wiseman: CCK, 57 BM.21901:24-28)

alike, the Babylonian king demonstrated to the gods his distress at the sacrilege, lest destruction of the Assyrian shrines arouse the wrath of the gods and bring their retaliation upon Babylon in turn.¹ He was careful to rebuild those sites expressly indicated by Marduk, lest in any way he overstep the boundaries of the divine will.

In this way, Nabonidus threads his way through the historical events of empire and the sword down to his day with a considerable theological skill. Marduk is seen in the process of executing his will through human agents yet in an unfettered manner for he retains the right to dispose of them when they have served their purpose. Indeed this is explained not only by his sovereignty but by his righteousness, for he was entitled to punish any who might lift their hand against a shrine disrupting the service of the gods. It is ironical that the same theological process could be turned against Nabonidus and that his loss of the empire could be ascribed to his acts of sacrilege against Marduk, his innovations in the cult leading to the anger of the gods and their use of Cyrus as agent of judgement.²

1. The following lines are a crux for interpretation:

šar CN šipir DN ša šillati ikkibšu lā ūbil qātāšu
ana pilludê ilāni kalama

Oppenheim renders this: 'The king of Babylon, however, for whom this sacriligious action of *Marduk* was horrible, did not raise his hand against the cult-places...' (ANET, 309; italics mine). There are good reasons for rejecting this incrimination of Marduk. Albrektson spots the theological absurdity (H&G, 36 note 60), but misses a clinching parallel provided by Esarhaddon's prism Th. 1929-10-12, 1 Col 1:35 - Aššur šar ilāni rimnu Marduk ša nullāti ikkibšu...uṣallišunūti: 'Ashur king of the gods merciful Marduk to whom iniquity is an abomination...to them I prayed' (cf. AHW, 369 *ikkibu*, 5(a)). Nabonidus is the *šipru* of Marduk, that is, either the 'creation, handiwork' (*šipru* = 'work') or perhaps less likely 'the messenger of Marduk' (*šipir DN* for *mār šipri DN*), and *šillati* is either an abomination to him, or perhaps more likely to his god as we have it in the parallel from Esarhaddon's prism: 'The king of Babylon, the creation of Marduk to whom sacrilege is an abomination, did not raise his hand against the cult-places of the pantheon'.

2. See the Cyrus cylinder BM.90920 and the Persian Verse Account both translated in ANET, pages 315f & 312ff respectively.

We are now in a position to go back over the same historical events and to examine the other extant accounts, not for their historical content but for their theological interpretation of those events. By this means, we shall be able to determine whether it may be fairly said that there is a common theology in the Ancient Near East, or at least a common method of interpreting the activity of the gods and the fate of empires.¹

(b) Senaacherib's Account of the Sack of Babylon.

Merodach-baladdan returned from Elam to proclaim himself king in Babylon, to be dislodged in 703 bc and replaced by Belibni, who in turn was replaced by Sennacherib's son, Ashur-nadin-shumi. He was captured by the Elamites, and their protégée, Nergal-ushezib fell into Assyrian hands. The Chaldean Mushezib-Marduk took over control of Babylon in league with Elam, and subsequent to the inconclusive battle of Halule, Sennacherib laid siege to him, the city falling in 689 bc after suffering famine and plague.² The sacking which follows is recorded in vivid detail reflecting Sennacherib's bitterness at his failure to subdue Elam and govern Babylonia. Two accounts are extant, one commemorating the engineering works at the Bavian gorge, the other the building of the temple of the New Year's Feast, and they are too long to quote in full, but excerpts with a bearing on subsequent theo-

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1. Morton Smith in a sceptical paper entitled "The Common Theology of the ANE", JBL 71(1952),135-147, attempts to establish that there is a general theological uniformity as a result of deterministic forces of psychological, social and rhetorical nature at work on interpreting natural and political phenomena. Thus he speaks of the OT prophets as basically talking about change, and change was as inevitable as it was newsworthy - 'change, if for the better, was conceived of divine reward, if for the worse, as punishment' (p. 145). His paper begs a number of important questions, and underlines the dangers of blanket generalisations and abstractions.
 2. See the recent article by J.A.Brinkman: JCS 25(1973),89-95 "Sennacherib's Babylonian Problem: an interpretation", where source references are given; on the battle of Halule, see A.K.Grayson's essay "Problematical Battles in Mesopotamian History", Festschrift Landsberger, AS 16, 3371342, p 342. Other standard discussions are CAH III,61-70 chap 3.1 'The Babylonian Policy of Sennacherib' and Ölmstead: HA,283-296 chap 23 'Senn. & the Babylonian Problem' .

logical interpretation may be given:

ana CN ša ana kašādi ušammerušu hitmutiš allik...
 ilāni āšib libbišu qātā nišēja ikšussunūti-ma
 ušabbirū-ma būšāšunu makkūrāšunu ilqūni...dūru u
 šalḥu bītāti ilāni ziqqurat libitti u epiṛi mala
 bašū assuḡ-ma ana GN addi...aššū aḡrat ūmī qaqqar
 āli šuātu u bītāti ilāni lā muššī ina māmi
 ušḡarmissu-ma agdamar ušalliš (Senn,84 Bavian H.3:43ff)

Against Babylon which I had decided to conquer I advanced very swiftly...As for the gods resident there, the hands of my people seized them and smashed them, and helped themselves to their goods and paraphernalia... Wall and outer wall, temples and gods, ziqqurat of brick and earth - I demolished the lot of them and cast them into the Arahtu canal.... That in days to come the fundament of that city and the temples of the gods might not be remembered, I washed it away with water and inundated it like a meadow

ištu CN aḡbu ilāni ša ušabbiru nišēšu ina kakki
 ispunu....ana nuḡḡi libbi DN bēlija tanitti dannūtišu
 nišē ana dalāli ana tāmarti nišē aḡrāte epiṛi CN
 assuḡam-ma ina bīt akīti šuāti karī katmi ugarrin

After I had destroyed Babylon, had shattered its gods and overwhelmed its people with the sword... to calm the heart of Ashur my lord, to make people bow in praise of his power I distributed the dust of Babylon as gifts to distant peoples. In that temple of the New Year Feast I filled up a storage vessel (with dust from Babylon) (Senn,137 Ashur stele VA8248:36ff)

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1. In this context, the dust of Babylon serves the same purpose as the spring lamb in the Mati-ilu vassal treaty, ie. as a visual aid actualising a treaty curse. The distant peoples or more accurately 'the people of subsequent generations' may not have been Sennacherib's foreign vassals, however, as Luckenbill's translation suggests, since we could translate 'I dug up (samples of) the dust of Babylon as a gift/evidence for later generations' - nasāḡu-'to uproot' rather than 'dispense,distribute' (AHw, 749), and with ana tāmarti perhaps retaining some of its etymological connection with its verbal root amāru -'to see' - hence, 'for evidence' rather than 'as gifts'.

It is interesting that Sennacherib adds no special phrase to indicate that he consulted the divine will before attacking Babylon. There is no stock phrase such as ina tukulti DNN, ina qibīt DN or ina emūqā DN. He simply records his decision to destroy the city. As a generalisation, the Annals of Sennacherib are less decked with religious phrases than are, for example, Ashurbanipal's, and so the omission here may not be significant. This is perhaps borne out by the appearance of the stock phrase ana nuḥḥi libbi DN in the second passage, which implies that the entire campaign was undertaken at the command and in the honour of the national god, Ashur. Though Sennacherib does not mention it, we may assume that a breach of loyalty oath such as the *Zakutu Vereidigung* forms part of the background to the attack.

The smashing of idols broke all religious bounds in view of the very close relations of worship in Assyria and in Babylon. On his previous entry into Babylon when he had put Merodach-baladdan to flight, and when his reception was not hostile, Sennacherib had only laid hands on the palace treasures. Brinkman notes that in the key lines describing the sacriligious action there appears 'one of the few sentences which does not have "I"(Sennacherib) as its subject', and he thinks this is evidence that 'Sennacherib's scribes attempt to focus the blame for the desecration of the temples...pointing out that it was Sennacherib's irate men - not Sennacherib himself - who were guilty'.¹ He may be right, but one cannot be certain. At any rate, Sennacherib's own account proves that Nabonidus was not exaggerating when he spoke of shrines being turned into steppe and rites dislocated.

(c) The Babylonian Chronicle Account and Esarhaddon's Account.

The third source, that of the dispassionate Babylonian Chronicle, carries no theological interpretation at all but simply records that 'on the 1st day of the month of Kislev, the city was taken; Mushezib-Marduk was taken and brought to Assyria'.² Thereafter, according to

1. Brinkmann:art.cit, 94f.

2. ANET,302 ; BM.84-2-11,356 Col 3:22f, CT 34,p1.46ff.

the orthodox Babylonian view 'for 8 years there was no king in Babylon' (line 28).

The last source for comparison on the sack of Babylon comes from Esarhaddon's scribes. That the king was in a position of the utmost political and theological delicacy is obvious - his manifesto had to be convincing if his Babylonian policy was to succeed, for he set his hopes on conciliation and the rebuilding of what his father had destroyed. His scribes produced one of the most intriguing religio-political documents of the Ancient Near East. Perhaps they first read the official versions of the sack produced under Sennacherib and found the following germ of a theological explanation:

bīt niširti ša TN iptū-ma ḥurāša kaspā ša DNN
būšā bīt ilānišunu ušēšūni ana PN šar GN ša lā
išū ṭēmu u milku ušēbiluš da'ūtu

(Senn., 42; Oriental Institute prism, 5:31-34)

They opened the treasure-house of Esagila, and took out the gold, silver and temple possessions of their gods Bel and Sarpanitum to send it as a bribe to Ummanmenanu king of Elam who lacked both intelligence and counsel.

The implication is that this use of the temple treasure was an act of sacrilege which invited divine retribution.¹ Esarhaddon was quick to utilise this embryonic theological interpretation, and his version reads:

ana makkūr TN ekal ilāni ašar lā âri qātšunu
ūbilū-ma kaspu ḥurāšu nisiqti abnē ana GN
išpurū maḥīriš (Asar, 13)

They dipped their hands into the property of Esagila temple of the gods of forbidden entry and sent off gold, silver and precious stones as a bribe to Elam.

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- Misuse of temple treasure seems to have been 'standard' practice in political emergencies, so that the veracity of Sennacherib's report need not be doubted. Compare Ahaz' bribe to Tiglath-pileser III in 2 Kgs 16:7f, Asa's buying of an alliance from Ben-hadad of Aram - though misappropriation of Temple treasure is secondary to the condemnation of reliance on a foreign power instead of on Yhwh, brutal treatment of the people and the prophet (2 Chron 16:1ff), and 2 Chron 28:16ff.

Elsewhere he describes their action as theft - imšū būšēšu: 'they plundered his property'.¹ To this indictment, already sufficient to arouse divine anger, Esarhaddon adds two charges - civil disorder and ritual irregularity. It is unfortunate that the passage with the religious charge is badly damaged. It reads:

[ilani]šina xxx[x] [x] Ištara paršišina
eziba-ma šanāti-ma irkaba

[...]tu šuršu asakku aklu [...] satukku
ušabṭalu ušabšu rikiltu

2

It is not possible to give a coherent translation of these lines, but one seems justified in seeing in them reference to cultic disorder. The phrase asakku akālu might be compared with occurrences in the Mari letters where it means 'to infringe on a taboo', where asakku does not mean 'a demon; disease caused by demon' but rather 'something set apart'.³ This would fit well for Esarhaddon would be charging the Babylonians both with omitting necessary rituals and with desecration. Restoration of satukku in line 5 seems assured since there are many examples of the root baṭālu - 'to cease' + satukku - 'daily offering' to describe cultic irregularities.⁴

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1. Asar, 13 §11, Epi 4, Fass. (b); see AHw, 624 mašā'u for parallels.
 2. Asar, §11, Epi 3 a2 = c2:A&B lines 25ff & c3:B lines 4f in Borger's translation: 'Ihre Gotter...Gottinen verliessen ihre gottlichen Ordnungen(?) und ... (unklar)' & '...einreissen lassen des Essens von Tabu-Speise...die regelmassigen Opfer schafften sie ab und setzten eine Verschwörung an'. Compare BM.78223 (Asar, 10ff A.1a+A.1b+A.1c) - 'the people who dwelt in Shuanna split into factions, plotting rebellion, forsaking their gods, abandoning the worship of the goddess of their cult, and going away to other (lands)', ARAB 2,245 §649.
 3. See CAD A.1, 255 akālu, 7(a) & CAD A.2, 326 asakku B; J. Bottéro & A. Finet: ARM 15, 176 asakkum.
 4. See AHw, 116 baṭālu G 2(a) & Š 2(b).

In describing the fate of Babylon, Esarhaddon carefully avoids mentioning his father by name,¹ though he claims descent from Sennacherib whose titulary he inherited elsewhere. 'The reign of a former king' is his circumlocution:

inūšu ina palê šarri maḥrê ina māt GNN ittabša
idāti lemnēti

At that time in the reign of a former king evil days befell Sumer and Akkad (lit. there began to be evil omens)

nišē āšib libbišu anna ulla aḫāmeš ētappalū
edabbubā surrāti [naḥ]balu šaggašu [ina]
zumrišina iššakin-ma enšū iḫabbilū išarrakū ana
dannī ina qereb āli dullulu maḥar katrê ibbaši-ma
ūmišam lā naparkā imšu'ū būšē ša aḫāmeš māru ina
sūqi ētarar abašu rēšu ana bēlišu[.]bēltiša ul
išem[me]

The people who lived there (Babylon) deceived each other (lit. answered each other Yes and No) and uttered lies/plotted insurrection.... a murderous [snare was placed [on] their bodies. They robbed the weak and gave to the strong. In the city there was oppression and the taking of bribes. Daily without a lull they plundered each other's goods. Sons insulted/cursed their fathers in the street; slaves [did not obey] their masters; [slave-girls] did not obey their mistresses. 2

When he had painted this picture of social and religious chaos, he went on to describe the just anger of the gods it aroused:

īgug-ma DN ilāni DN2 ana sapān māti hulluqu nišēša
iktapud lemuttim (Asar, 13 §11, Epi 5a)

Marduk the Enlil of the gods was enraged, and planned disaster - the overthrow of the land and destruction of its people

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1. Compare the indefinite expression with ullânua - ullânua bēlu rabû DN īgug: 'before my time the great lord Marduk was enraged' (Asar, §11 Epi. 5c, E.1)
 2. Asar, 12 §11 Epi. 2 & Epi. 3 Fass. (a)1 & (b) & Fass. (c)1. On idāti, see CAD I/J, 304ff ittu (2) 'omen; ominous sign'; AHw, 406 ittu II, (4.d). On surrātu- 'lie, crime', see AHw, 1062.

In another version, there is an even more vigorous theological statement:

[En?lil ippalis-ma ēziz libbašu kabattuš iššariḫ
DN ilāni bēl mātāti ana sapāḫ māti u nišē iktapud
lemuttim ana sapān māti u ḫulluq nišēša libbuš ēziz-ma
arrat marušti iššakin ina pišu

[Enlil saw and his heart was enraged, his liver cried out; the Enlil of the gods the suzerain of lands planned disaster - that the land and its people should be destroyed. His heart grew inflamed (bent on) overthrowing the land and doing away with its people, and on his lips was a disastrous curse. 1

Esarhaddon thus placed responsibility for Babylon's destruction on the shoulders of its inhabitants, while Marduk himself was alleged to have decreed and effected it. Sennacherib is not once named, even as an agent of Marduk. This likely betrays a sensitivity to anti-Assyrian feelings, for normally the record of a victorious campaign proudly bore the name of the gods' agent. Here it looks as though Esarhaddon felt it was wiser to speak in theological language and not focus upon secondary causes.

Another touch in the son's account which may not be coincidence is the way the dependable Arahtu canal becomes a treacherous torrent with a will of its own, where Sennacherib had told how it was he who diverted the irrigation water until it flowed through the city carrying eroded soil down to the Persian gulf where it discoloured the sea and struck fear into the hearts of the inhabitants of Dilmun:

Araḫti nār ḫegalli agû ezzi edû šamru mīlu kaššu
tamšil abūbu ibbālam-ma ālu šubassu ešrētišu mē
ušbi'-ma ušeme karmeš (Asar, 14 Epi. 7a)

The Arahtu an abundant river, a violent current, a raging flood, a mighty tide, a replica of the Flood, overflowed; the water saturated the city, its dwellings and shrines, and turned them into ruins.

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1. See Borger's note (Asar, 13 on Epi. 5b:10) - 'B hat meš(drei Keil-köpfe)-ša, nicht Aš-sur', so that Luckenbill's reading with the national god 'Ashur was angered' (ARAB 2, 250 \$659B, K. 192 obv) must be discarded. Marduk's wrath was revealed in heaven and on earth, ie. in the stars and the entrails by divination - ina šamē u eršitim idāt lemuttim (Asar, 14 Epi. 6).

Ibbablamma is the N-theme + Ventive of root babālu -'to bring'. It could be translated 'was brought' in the regular passive meaning of the N-theme, but Borger's translation 'trat über' and his note pointing to the derivative noun bibbulu -'flash flood' are attractive. As N-ingressive the N-theme denotes the beginning of action, and since the context stresses the dangerous nature of the river, in fact its malevolence, an active translation like 'began to flood' would fit perfectly with Esarhaddon's playing down of his father's agency in the destruction.¹

Completing the picture of desolation and surely to be understood as a theological consequence of Enlil's arrat marušti, Esarhaddon tells of Babylon's state before he began its restoration:

TN u CN namûta illikû-ma emu qišubbeš...qān
 apparātē u šarbāti ina qerbišu magal išir-ma
 ušarriša papallu iššurat šamē nūnē apšī ša lā
 nībi ina qerbišu ibbašū (Asar, §11 Epi. 7b & 7c)

Esagila and Babylon became wasteland and cane-brake
 ...swamp-reeds and poplars shot up within it and
 sprouted growth; birds of the air and fish of the
 deep were there in countless numbers

To read this only on the naturalistic plane would be to miss the associations and implications it would have had on a theological plane for the scribes who wrote adê historiography, as Part I of this study has shown. When they wrote of the arrat marušti it could hardly have been divorced from the parallel treaty curses extant in Esarhaddon's Baal and Ramataja treaties, or from the familiar curses on cities which were to lie desolate inhabited by wild animals and their pasturage overgrown with weeds, only slightly adapted from desert conditions to fauna and flora appropriate to Mesopotamian swamps.²

1. Note the CAD's translation 'the Arahtu..a very Deluge, overflowed'
 - CAD E, 35 edû (a)

2. ilāni GN arrat lā napšuri līrurūkunu
 ḫītu kabtu māmīt lā pašāri ana šimtikunu lišim
 arratu maruštu aggiš līrurūkunu
 May the gods of Eber-Nari curse you with an indissoluable curse
 (May Marduk the eldest son !) assign you a grievous penalty
 and an indissoluable curse as your fate
 May they fiercely curse you with an indissoluable curse
 (EBT, iv:9; EVT, 433f & 475; ANETS, 98/534 & 102/538f)

On the curses of desolation, see Fensham: ZAW 75(1963), 166ff, Hillers:
TC/OTP, 44ff, Fitmyer: Sefire, 14f and the biblical threats against
 Babylon such as Isa 13:19ff, Jer 50:12f, 39f & 51:36f .

The theological point is driven home with the assertion that the indigenous gods took flight from the city, leaving it to its fate:

ilāni ištārāti āšib libbišu iṣṣūriš ipparšū-ma
ēlū šamāmeš (Asar, Epi 8a)

The gods and goddesses resident there took flight
like birds and went up to heaven.

There may be an allusion to or recollection of the Gilgames Epic here, for the gods took fright before the Flood although it too was a divine decree by Enlil. The two contexts concern floods, and the phrase tamšīl abūbu which Borger translates 'ein Ebenbild der Sintflut' with the support of the CAD, indicates an association in the scribe's minds, so that the flight into the heavens could well duplicate the Epic.¹

Esarhaddon's scribes knew of both the smashed idols and the captured ones, for Marduk and his chariot were carried off to Assyria, and they were confronted with the theological niceties which the relation between god and idol presented - a real issue since there are elaborate rituals preserved which govern the manufacture, dress, installation and repair of idols to the end that the idol and the real presence of the god should in some way, which we can hardly understand, coalesce.

1. ilū iqbū gamert[am] / šipra lemna ana nišī ipuš DN]

The gods commanded total destruction,
Enlil did an evil deed on the peoples.
(Atrahasis, 86f lines 34f)

ilāni iplahū abūbam-ma/ itteḥṣū itelū ana šamē ša DN/
ilāni kīma kalbī kunnunū ina kamāti rabsū

The gods feared the Flood/ They drew back, they took flight
into the heaven of Anu/ The gods cowered like dogs, they
crouched within the outer wall (Gilg XI:113-115)

Cf. DN šar ilāni itti ālišu u bītišu iznu ilū šamāmiš ālu u
nišē ša ina libbišu illikū karmūti: 'Sin king of the gods
was angry with his city and his temple, and went up to
heaven. The city and its peoples went to ruin' (AnSt 8,46
Adda-guppi's stele H.1, B Col 1:7f)

Cf. AHw, 827 parādu II - 'sich absondern; to make off, disappear' used
also in stele H.2, Col 3:12 - ilāni ša ippardū irīqā: 'the gods (and
goddesses) who had fled and were afar off'; not napardū, but parādu
or parātu - 'to clear off, move away' (AHw, 832 cf. W.L.Moran: Or 28, 1959,
130-140 "Notes on the New Nabonidus Inscriptions", p. 139 against Gadd)

On tamšīl abūbu, see CAD A.1, 78 abūbu, 1a; Asar, 14 Epi 7:41.

ilāni u ištār āsibūt qerbišu ša mē butuqtu u rādu
 ūbilūšunūti-ma ikilū šikinšun šalputtašunu lumunti
 uddiš zimēšunu ukkulūtu ušanbit šubassunu aršu ubbib
 ina parakkēšunu dāriš ušarmešunūti (Asar, 23 Epi. 32a)

As for the gods and goddesses resident there whom the flood-waters and thunderstorms had carried off, whose appearance they had darkened, I renewed their disfigured features, I made their blackened faces shine, their dirty garments I made pure, and established them in their cellas eternally.

Presumably the gods represented by the despoiled statues remained in heaven where they had fled until the time when their effigies were refashioned and ritually purified, whereas those gods whose idols had been exiled to Assyria were thought to have inhabited them in an unbroken sequence.

Nabonidus had included both the involuntary and the voluntary aspects of Marduk's residence in Assyria in his account, for Sennacherib, he said, had 'caused (Marduk) to enter Assyria' (the Causative Š-theme of erēbu) and Marduk had 'taken up residence' (Gt-theme of ramû II + šubtu) according to his own intention. On the other hand, Esarhaddon's main intention was to record his piety in his act of restoration without dwelling on the way in which they came to be in Assyria. He too espoused the dual explanation as the most convenient, while his noble deed was enshrined in the phrases of his Royal Titulary:

ēpiš TN u CN muddiš ilāni u ištār qerbišu ša ilāni
 mātāti šallūti ultu qereb GN ana ašrišunu utirru
 (Th. 1929-10-12, 1 Col 2:22-24)

Builder of Esagila and Babylon renewer of the gods and goddesses resident there, who returned the gods of plundered lands from Assyria to their places

1

In other passages relating to the same events the phrasing gives Marduk the leading rôle:

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1. Translated incorrectly by Thompson as 'despoiled from the midst of the city of Ashur', whereas ultu qereb GN goes with utirru and not with šallūti - cf. ND. 1126:5-7 of 5 th Abu, 672 bc published by Wiseman: Iraq 14 (1952) with the identical phrase correctly translated.

šarru ša ina ūmē palêšu bēlu rabû DN ana CN salimu
iršu ina TN ekallišu irmû šubassu

(Esarhaddon) the king in whose reign the great lord
Marduk was reconciled towards Babylon and took up
his dwelling in Esagila his temple. ¹

It is interesting to note that Marduk the head of the pantheon alone actively brings about his return, whereas the other gods - Anu and ilāni mātāti šallūtu - are described passively as being resettled by Esarhaddon, whereas their passage to Assyria is put into the active - ilāni mātāti ša ana GN ihīšūni: 'the gods of the lands which had rushed off to Assyria (their treasure I renewed)'.² The root hâšu, hiāšum denotes hasty and precipitous action, and is strengthened further by the use of the Ventive, yielding the sense 'rush off'. No discrepancy is felt in describing the gods as taking flight to heaven in one text, and rushing off to Assyria in another! This indicates the *ad hoc* nature of Esarhaddon's theological interpretations.³

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1. Text compiled from fragments by A. Goetze: JCS 17(1963), "Esarhaddon's Inscription from the Inanna Temple in Nippur", p129 line 9.
 2. The passive return uses Esarhaddon as subject with Š-theme of erēbu and wašābu, and the Preterite of tāru + šunūti; on the root hâšu III cognate with Heb. hûš see AHW, 343.
 3. The dual fate of the Babylonian population after its fall provides an interesting parallel on the human plane to the fate of the gods, for some fled to remote parts while others went into slavery in Assyria:

nišē āšib qerbišu ana šindi u birte zu'uzū illiku
rešūtu (Asar, 15 Epi. 9, c: D & E)

nišē āšib [qerbišu ašar šanamma ihliqum] ina eršet
lā idū eḫuzū puzrāte (Asar, 15 \$11, Epi. 9, b: B; cf. a: A)

The final justification for the rebuilding of Babylon is handled with an adroitness which appeals to modern minds by its ingenuity and must have impressed its original readers:

70 šanāti minūt nidūtīšu ištur-ma rēmēnu DN surriš
libbašu inūg-ma eliš ana šapliš ušbalkit-ma ana 11
šanāti ašabšu iqbi (Asar, 15 §11 Epi. 10, a)

(Marduk) wrote down 70 years as the figure (for the duration) of its desolation (Babylon's), but the merciful Marduk's heart quickly calmed down, and he turned (the Book of Fate/ Tablet of Destiny) upside down, and decreed its refounding after 11 years.¹

Since all kinds of coincidences in everyday life could be omens with a hidden meaning for the observant Mesopotamian, this neat but *ad hoc* manipulation of the cuneiform sexagesimal system might have carried theological conviction with its original readers.² Chronology indicates that the numbers 70 and 11 are used 'theologically' rather than exactly. From the much cited parallels of Jer 25:11 and 29:10, it would appear that 70 years was a round figure appropriate to a protracted period of divine wrath. Sheer coincidence seems to be ruled out by the contextual harmony of divine wrath, punishment by a human agent, period of desolation, possibility of eventual restoration and punishment of the agent, which of course is not admitted overtly by Esarhaddon in Sennacherib's case.

Of special interest is the parallel writing down of the divine decree where the Akkadian uses šaṭāru with Marduk as subject and the tablet of Destiny as the implied locus of the record and the Hebrew has ktb with the locus as bassēper hazzeh, the corpus of Jeremiah's oracles. Bearing in mind Jeremiah's use of treaty curses from the common Ancient Near Eastern pool in this very context, the 70 year period of wrath in Jeremiah and Esarhaddon seem comparable.

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1. Variants of this are given in Asar, Fassung b:B & c:E. Of note is the stock phrase imlū ūmē used to describe the period of a divine decree, which was discussed in connection with Nbd 8, p. 245ff above.
 2. Vertical + Horizontal Wedges (60+10=70) become Horizontal + Vertical (10+1=11) with the Vertical representing 60 and 10 respectively. Assuming the promulgation of the record in 681 bc, Esarhaddon's 1st year, 11 years back was 692 bc, an approximation for the 689 sack.

In conclusion, it is fair to say that Esarhaddon's account of the sack and restoration of Babylon reveals itself as an *ad hoc* document of political expediency framed in theological language. This estimate is supported by the delicate omission of Sennacherib's name, depiction of the carrying off of Babylonian gods as their voluntary flight to sanctuary, and the use of the numerical pun to explain changes of royal policy in terms of divine attitudes. It is likely that Esarhaddon needed to satisfy both Assyrian and Babylonian parties, for if the latter needed conciliation, there may have been counsellors in the Assyrian court who needed convincing as to the wisdom of reversing Sennacherib's policy of subjugation. The account did not stand by itself, of course, since Esarhaddon made a point of taking the most careful of omens which we must assume was a practice convincing enough to have endured for centuries. The scribes were presumably compiling the records after these omens were well known. Being an official document, the record conceals as much as it reveals for we have no means of knowing Esarhaddon's theological convictions other than by what he did and left written down. We have assumed that the king's account of empire and the gods was written amidst the pressures of a difficult political situation and involved a theological manipulation of the historical events. How conscious Esarhaddon was of trying to exonerate his father while reversing his policy and fostering the worship of the idols his father had despoiled or seized and whether this involved him in 'bad faith' cannot be stated exactly.

Before considering the various accounts of Sennacherib's murder, it would be opportune to take issue here with a point raised by Albrektson in connection with Esarhaddon's restoration of Babylon. Citing the passages which record Marduk's wrath and the reversal of his decree of 70 years desolation, he writes:

The verb 'to plan' (kapādu) is used about Marduk to describe his evil devices against the impious population of Babylon. This plan includes among other things an exile lasting 70 years - the parallel with Jer 25:11f & 29:10 needs hardly to be pointed out. The gods deeds in history are thus represented as a purposeful activity, though the future course of events is not inexorably laid down according to a fixed and detailed plan but rather dependant upon the general purpose of the deity, which admits a certain flexibility - much as in the Hebrew prophets, who some-

times describe the impending judgement as conditional or alterable, depending on the people's conversion and Yhwh's mercy. ¹

To draw such conclusions - from this passage at any rate - would appear to be unjustified in that it passes over the differences between the Esarhaddon and biblical material too lightly. Firstly, it is doubtful whether the phrase kapādu lemuttim can be pressed into meaning anything comparable to a detailed plan arrived at by meditation and then effected step by step over a considerable period.² Rather, it expresses a change of attitude towards the Babylonians on Marduk's behalf, just as its reversal is indicated by a complementary phrase rašû salîmu - 'to become friendly'. In other words, kapādu is not being used by itself with the emphasis on the planning but as an integrated phrase kapādu + lemuttu with the subsequent emphasis on the quality of divine action.

Secondly, Jeremiah's oracle of doom is a genuine prediction, whereas analysis has shown that Esarhaddon's theology was coloured by political exigency, and certainly composed *post eventu*. The well-known passage, Jer 18:1-12, in which Yhwh teaches the prophet the lesson of the potter and the clay, describing his action as conditional upon the people's response can scarcely be compared with the turning upside down of the tablets of Destiny in terms of divine flexibility, for repentance and repentance only averts doom decreed by Yhwh, whereas there is no hint of repentance among Babylonians or Assyrians in their records leading to Marduk's reversal of attitude. An official court document designed to highlight the king's piety with a *post eventu ad hoc* theological interpretation of historical events is so different from the prediction of a Hebrew prophet who held no brief for king or people that comparisons must be limited.³

1. H&G, 91f .

2. Albrektson himself complains of the difficulty of finding any Hebrew expression in the OT equivalent to our concept of planning as defined above - 'There is hardly a Hebrew term whose field of meaning covers entirely that of the English word', chap 5 'The Divine Plan in History', H&G, 69 .
3. J.J.M. Roberts' important article "Myth versus History" (CBQ 38, 1976, 1-13, esp. 9f. on Sennacherib and Babylon) in dialogue with Albrektson, and the literature of notes 49 & 51 appeared too late for discussion.

(d) Sennacherib's Murder in Esarhaddon's Records, the Old Testament and the Babylonian Chronicle.

Passing on to Sennacherib's murder in accounts previous to Nabonidus' version, we begin with the official Assyrian record of his son Esarhaddon who was once thought to be directly implicated but is now believed to have been away from Nineveh in the West such as Cilicia.¹

The adē ceremony opens Esarhaddon's account and provides the theological framework from the brothers' rebellion understood as treason committed against the gods to whom the oath was sworn. After plotting in secret the brothers 'went mad' and ran amock in Nineveh 'like young goats', during which time the murder presumably occurred.

arkānu aḥḥēja immahū-ma mimma ša eli ilāni u
amelūti lā ṭābu ēpušū-ma ikpuḍū lemuttim issihū-ma
kakkē ina qereb CN balu ilāni ana ēpiš šarrūti itti
aḥāmeš ittakkipū lalā'iš DNN epšet ḥammā'e ša kī lā
libbi ilāni innipšu limniš ittatlū-ma idāšun ul izizzu
emūqāšun lillūta ušālikū-ma šaplanua ušakmešūšunūti
(Th. 1929-10-12,1 Col 1:41-49)

Afterwards my brothers went insane and did whatever was sinful (lit. not good) against the gods and the people, and they determined to do evil. They drew the sword within Nineveh disregarding the gods. To secure the kingship they butted at each other like young he-goats. Ashur, Sin, Shamash, Bel, Nabu, Ishtar of Nineveh and Ishtar of Arbela saw with displeasure the rebellious conduct carried out contrary to the will of the gods, and lent them no support. They turned their strength to helplessness and made them bow before me.

The insanity of the brothers may be a divine judgement for we have seen that insanity is a treaty curse which leads to self-destruction. Esarhaddon's account is certainly a prime document of adē theology for it exhibits the established pattern of vassal oath, rebellion, prayer of indictment, divine pronouncement, divine inter-

1. See D.J. Wiseman: Iraq 36 (1974) Festschrift Mallowan, 249-260 "Murder in Mesopotamia", p. 251f on Sennacherib's murder in Dec/Jan, 681/80 bc; DOTT, 71 .

vention and judgement on the oath-breakers. The judgement was further-
ed by Ashurbanipal after Shamash-shum-ukin's revolt when he reports
the execution of Babylonians somehow implicated in his grandfather's
murder.¹ Esarhaddon's account is carefully prepared as a public docu-
ment to support his claims to the throne and to discourage disloyalty.
Naturally, he does not subscribe to the interpretation of his father's
death as either a personal or national judgement for sins committed.

Two passages in the Old Testament record the murder:

Then Sennacherib king of Assyria departed, and went
home and dwelt at Nineveh. And as he was worshipping
in the house of Nisroch his god, Adrammelech and
Sharezar, his sons, slew him with the sword, and
escaped into the land of Ararat. And Esarhaddon his
son reigned in his stead. (Isa 37:37f = 2 Kgs 19:36f)

And Yhwh sent an angel, who cut off all the mighty
warriors and commanders and officers in the camp of
the king of Assyria. So he returned with shame of
face to his own land. And when he came into the
house of his god, some of his own sons struck him
down there with the sword. (2 Chron 32:21f)

Leaving aside the complex and fascinating historical problems of
these passages,² a comparison of their contexts with that of Nabonidus'
account proves interesting. The murder is a sequel to the miraculous
deliverance of Jerusalem after the Assyrian seige. With a contradiction
characteristic of political propaganda, the Rabshakeh had claimed both
that Yhwh had sent the Assyrians and that Yhwh would not be able to
protect Jerusalem from them any more than had other gods saved their
cities (Isa 36:10,20). This theological interpretation of history was
resisted by Judean king and prophet, and the raising of the seige
followed an oracle predicting judgement on Sennacherib's arrogance.

1. See page 179 above where the passage is discussed.

2. The cuneiform documents neither corroborate nor dismiss the biblical
data. See DOTT, 70ff and on the campaign issue, K.A.Kitchen: TIPE,
383ff, \$346ff .

The account of the murder is impersonal and naturalistic, but may be understood as a theological reading of history because of the way it follows on from the seige reversal effected by the mal'āk Yhwh (Isa 37:36) and the prophetic oracle:

Behold I(Yhwh) will put a spirit in Sennacherib, so that he shall hear a rumour, and return to his own land; and I will make him fall by the sword in his own land. (Isa 37:7)

The use of the Hiphil 1st Sing of npl with Yhwh as subject is decisive; Sennacherib's death is marked as the deed of Yhwh.

The Chronicler makes his points rather more heavily without the literary qualities of the Isaiah passage, but is in complete theological accord. A summary statement of the covenant blessing of peace from enemies and tribute from foreigners rounds off the incident. The Chronicler sees Sennacherib's murder as poetic justice which comes out in the phrase mīšî'ēy mē^cāyw: 'the progeny of his loins', the equivalent of the Akkadian šīt libbišu, to describe the murderers. The more moralistic style of the Chronicler is evident in his insertion of bēbōšet pānîm - 'shame-facedly' describing Sennacherib's retreat. With these touches, the recorded boasting, the shamefaced retreat, the dishonourable conduct of sons, the house of worship the place of slaughter, the Old testament conveys the personal, national and Assyrian pantheon's humiliation.

In contrast to the colourful Old Testament record, the Babylonian Chronicle is brief and sober:

In the month of Tebet(Dec/Jan), on the 20th day,
(as for) Sennacherib king of Assyria his son
(DUMU-šū) in an uprising (ina sîhi)killed him
(GAZ-šū = iddūkšū)¹

No explanation of the rebellion or theological interpretation is given. In view of Babylon's fate at Sennacherib's hand, the restraint and reliability of this source is outstanding.

1. BM 84-2-11,356 Col 3:34f ; CT 34 for cuneiform with transliteration and translation by Borger: Asar, 121 §109; ANET, 301ff .

We are now in a position to compare the extant accounts to see if there is a common theology of the sword and the gods. Firstly, the Babylonian Chronicle must be set on one side apart for it carries no theological interpretation. Of course, there is not the slightest reason to suppose that the scribes responsible for the Chronicle's 'secular' statement differed radically in religious outlook from their contemporaries for the Chronicle's records of religious festivals and the itineraries of idols reflect normal religious concerns. The 'secular' version must be due to the brevity of form required in this genre.

Next the Old Testament account needs to be kept apart from those of Esarhaddon and Nabonidus since they are *post eventu*, while the basis of the Old Testament's record is a prophetic oracle.¹ The remaining accounts obviously differ because one stems from Assyria and the other from Babylon. The differences may be set out for convenient reference as follows:

<u>Esarhaddon</u>	<u>Nabonidus</u>
1. Sacrilege & disorder - the sin of the Babylonians	Religious disorder - the fault of Sennacherib
2. Hostile intentions of Marduk: <u>kapādu lemuttim</u>	Hostile intentions of Sennacherib: <u>kapādu lemuttim</u> ; Marduk's wrath the primary factor
3. Canal-waters as the instrument of destruction	Sennacherib as the instrument of destruction
4. Dual explanation of idols going to Assyria	Dual explanation of idols going to Assyria
5. Marduk's wrath calmed; sheer mercy instead; no reason	Marduk's wrath calmed; remembered temple & city; no reason given
6. Period of wrath 11 years	Period of wrath 21 years, ie. duration of (voluntary) stay in Assyria (but see 7 below)
7. Appeasal of Marduk's wrath revealed by omen; results in Esarhaddon's building project	Appeasal of Marduk's wrath revealed by murder of Sennacherib; no mention of Esarhaddon's building work

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1. Albrektson rightly lays great emphasis on the predictive and interpretative word of Yhwh as distinctive to the OT's interpretation of history in his concluding chapter - 'It must be emphasised that not only does God speak to man according to the OT: he also does so *before* his great deeds in history. To represent the verbal aspect of the divine self-revelation as merely a subsequent interpretation of events already occurred is entirely foreign to the OT authors' (H&G, 120)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 8. Omission of direct description of Sennacherib's murder: sin of brothers implied as the sole factor; contrary to the will of the Assyrian gods | Murder prominent in account; brothers' action recorded; implied that deed was brought about by Marduk |
|--|---|

What clearly emerges as a common theme of both accounts is the unquestionable sovereignty of the gods. Both kings make an effort to present Marduk as bringing about his will in an unhindered manner, despite nationality differences. Albrektson has aptly remarked that 'politicians may not always be too particular about the truth, but they usually see to it that what they say is marketable',¹ and we have said that Esarhaddon is writing an *ad hoc* account. He chose to set the divine will in the forefront in doing so, ascribing things that happened in human affairs to the god's operation, but this posed him an insoluble problem when it came to his father's murder, which he kept as far out of sight as possible by omitting direct reference to it, though he was forced to say that his brothers acted 'contrary to the will of the gods'. His compensation is to underline the retribution for breaching the *adê*,² and point to their re-assertion of control through his divinely inspired enthronement. There was no possibility of Esarhaddon's resorting to splitting the pantheon to explain events even though division in the pantheon was familiar from Akkadian myth such as the Flood story. There is no thought that the national god Ashur and the Assyrian Ishtars have been outmanoevred by Marduk. Esarhaddon prayed to Marduk and Nabu as well as the Assyrian gods implying their unity and sovereign control.

For Nabonidus the situation was not so delicate, for Assyria was gone for ever leaving Marduk unopposed head of the pantheon, for the Babylonians at any rate who did not share Nabonidus penchant for Sin. A second fundamental agreement for theological interpretation besides the sovereignty of the pantheon was the importance of the cultus. Both the Assyrian and Babylonian king regard irregularities in the cult as a primary cause of divine wrath. The inviolability of the shrine is already evident as a theological axiom in the 300 line

1. H&G, 102.

2. The brothers are contrasted with the loyal populace who 'had sworn loyalty by the curse of the great gods by means of water and oil to guard my suzerainty': ša adê māmīt ilāni rabūti ana našār šarrūti ja ina mē u šamni itmū (Th.1929-10-12,1 Col 1:50f).

Sumerian composition 'The Curse of Agade: the Ekur avenged'. This is an historiographic document though written in a highly poetic form of prose, and it interprets the destruction of Akkad, capital of the Agade dynasty, whose founder was Sargon the Great, at the hands of the barbaric GUTI as an event brought about by Enlil whose great shrine at Nippur the Ekur Naram-Sin had sacked impiously.¹ The Weidner Chronicle carries the same consistently applied temple-theology in its interpretation, above all of the Sargonid dynasty.² The fate of these kings depended on their relations with Babylon and the shrine of Marduk, Esagila. If the rites were neglected or property misappropriated, Marduk's wrath was aroused and he dethroned the unhappy king. The fact that this reading of events was anachronistic - Esagila did not exist in Sargon's time - only serves to illustrate how deep-grained was this temple-theology in the minds of the Babylonian scribes who prepared the document at a later period.

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1. This document is now on a better footing than ever; see A. Falkenstein's publication, ZA 57(1965), 43ff 'Fluch über Akkade' and the recent English translation by S.N. Kramer, ANETS, 210/646ff and his remarks in History Begins, 317ff. The composition is dated to the Ur III period, i.e. the last century of the 3rd Millennium bc. For its historical references see CAH I, Part 2, 454ff, esp. 456 note 2.
 2. On the Weidner Chronicle, see H.G. Güterbock: ZA 42, 47ff; IHANE, 59f; H&G, 102f; ANET, 266ff. Compare too the Sargon Chronicle where Shulgi son of Ur-nammu is said to have 'sought after evil and brought out the treasure of Esagila and Babylon as spoil' for which he was punished by Bel, and brought to an end. The Sargon Chronicle appears to have borrowed from the Weidner Chronicle where the two overlap. A.K. Grayson's work on the Chronicles scheduled for the TCS series will replace L.W. King's publication of BM.26472, the Sargon Chronicle.

Returning to Nabonidus' account, it is evident that his *post eventu* historical interpretation needed to adhere to the theological principles mentioned above. The personal fate of Sennacherib would have confirmed the inviolability of Babylon's holy shrines, as would the later national fate of Assyria. It seems likely that Nabonidus believed implicitly in his theological interpretation, and if it is correct to ascribe a certain contrived effect to Esarhaddon's record, this psychological difference behind the two accounts makes their agreement in modes of theological interpretation the more striking. Albrektson must be allowed his basic thesis that the gods of the nations around Israel were thought by them to intervene in historical events in a sovereign manner, making use of human agents to carry out their will, and governing according to a system of retribution described in terms of their personal wrath. So much must be allowed to stand. Yet it remains on the plane of broad generalisation.

It appears to be more doubtful whether direct comparison can be made with the Old Testament on the issues of Temple theology, the supremacy of the national god and historical interpretation.¹ Just when equivalents appear to be found between the religious concepts of Israel and her neighbours, closer examination reveals that divergences remain. Yhwh might, like Marduk, be said to make use of a foreign power to punish his own people and thereafter dispose of the agent. In abstract this comparison holds true, but in specific historical situations fundamental differences appear. Attitudes to the Jerusalem Temple and its cultus in prophetic Yahwism cannot be equated with the Mesopotamian concept of the inviolability of the shrine, and the all-importance of maintaining the cultus. Isaiah did not predict doom at Assyrian hands for lack of cultic maintenance. On the contrary, the sacrifices and festivals were in full operation. It was the moral conduct which drew down the prophet's condemnation.²

1. See Albrektson's remarks: 'historical events - the falls of kings and dynasties - are interpreted (by the Weidner Chronicle) as divine punishment of disobedient princes...The parallel with Hebrew historians and their view of history as God's judgement on apostate kings is patent; One could perhaps add that they have even the anachronistic trait in common as well as the emphasis on cultic offences'. The source of this thought is J.J.Finkelstein: PAPhS 107(1963), p. 467 note 24 on the Weidner Chronicle.

2. See for example Isa 1:10-17.

A parallel might be supposed between the Jerusalem and Babylonian social disorder. Esarhaddon mentions bribery and stealing as do the Hebrew prophets. However, Esarhaddon was intent on rationalising his father's intervention so allowance must be made for exaggeration, while the description of social disorder seems to function partly to explain how the shrines came to be neglected and how the bribing of Elam came about with the sacriligious use of the Esagila treasure. In other words, the shrine is at the centre of interest and sin against Esagila seems to loom largest

Like Isaiah, Jeremiah denounced the mentality which relied on an external maintenance of the cultus and found security in the presence of Yhwh's Temple without regard for the moral covenant stipulations of Yahwism. Implied is the sinking of Judah to the level of her contemporaries at their best. He therefore reminds them of the fate of Shiloh, an earlier cult-centre, and predicts the destruction of the present Temple, and more radically the abolition of the apparatus of the cult, notably the Ark of the covenant, looking to a new covenant relationship without this paraphernalia.¹

To Nabonidus, all this would have been quite alien. He was forced to attribute the destruction of Esagila and Babylon to Marduk for the continued worship of Marduk as supreme lord demanded this. Since Jeremiah was motivated by no such pantheon-saving motivation but rather of his grasp of the moral basis of judgement and the ethical character of his deity, an exact parallel does not exist between the two accounts of national gods destroying their central shrines. Isaiah and Jeremiah noted the lavish scale of cultic observation but flatly denied that this was any guarantee of security for land, people, city or Temple.

1. See Jer 7:21ff, 7:1ff, 3:16 & 31:31ff on false security in the cultus, the interpretation of the Shiloh destruction, the future abolition of the Ark and the nature of the new covenant. Jeremiah it is true, is more radical than, say, the Chronicler, though it would still be a mistake to equate the Chronicler's interpretation of history with the Mesopotamian, for a true Aaronic and Levitical worship is set over against the spurious Jereboam cult in the north where the true priests were dismissed and golden calves made, and against syncretistic practices and reliance on apostate and pagan powers instead of reliance on Yhwh. The election of David and his dynasty is at least as important a factor in the Chronicler's historical interpretation as his concern with worship. See for example, 2 Chron 13:5, 21:7,12, 23:3, 34:2f for this principle applied to the post-Solomonic history.

Nabonidus inscriptions on the other hand indicate that he regarded the smooth functioning of the cultus as the prime guarantee of divine favour and security.

It is not surprising that sword and shrine are juxtaposed in historical interpretations for war and worship at a cult centre both have a long history in Mesopotamia stretching back in time to the proto-literate period and beyond.¹ What could be more natural than the genesis of the theological interpretation of history with the writing of the history of a cult centre? Who would be more likely than the attendants of a shrine to record its history, and with the record to provide an explanation in theological terms for its prosperity or decline? Since warfare on an inter-city, regional and international scale also characterise Mesopotamian life, and included defeat on the same scale, it was only natural that priests should provide explanations for the desecration of their shrines or else completely change their allegiance in worship. The latter seems to have gone too much against the grain of human nature. No doubt defeat contributed towards syncretism, but rejection of local gods was psychologically of another order altogether. Hence Jeremiah speaks of theological conservatism as a general and historically verifiable human phenomenon:

For cross to the coasts of Cyprus and see,
 or send to Kedar and examine with care,
 see if there has been such a thing.
 Has a nation changed its gods,
 even though they are no gods?
 (Jer 2:10f)

It proved simpler to furnish an acceptable theological interpretation of the shrine and the sword, empire and the gods.

1. Note in particular the series of temples found at Eridu belonging to the Eridu, Ubaid and Uruk cultures from the 5th Millennium downwards (see CAH I.1 Chap 8) and the highly developed art of war attested by the 3rd Millennium 'Standard of Ur' showing onager chariotry in the historical period. The 'Tummal Chronicle' stemming from the shrine itself at Nippur during the Isin Dynasty carries historical information about the sacred precinct of Enlil, its foundation and fortunes, back to Gilgamesh and Enmebaragesi in Early Dynastic times in the 3rd Millennium (see S.N.Kramer: The Sumerians, chap 2,46ff; CAH I.1, chap 6 (II,e)).

(e) Further Temple Theology and the Harran Inscriptions.

In certain of Nabonidus' records there is a conflation of naturalistic and theological description bearing on a shrine where the enemy is the desert sand not an invading army. In one passage, the shrine is in ruins, its outlines obscured by natural collapse of the mud-brick and by the drifting sand. When the wind lays bare the outlines, it is said to have arisen 'at the word of Marduk'.¹ Elsewhere the natural burial process is interpreted in terms of divine anger. This was reversed in the time of former king Nebuchadnezzar when Sin and Shamash sent hurricanes to clear the site so that building could begin.² Clearly, the fortunes of a shrine irresistably drew theological interpretation.

Nabonidus goes on to elucidate a general principle which explains the rise and fall of nations which may be seen as an extension of the principles applying to the prosperity or desolation of shrines. Nabonidus Harran inscription dealing with the Ehulhul temple of Sin does not follow the set pattern of Royal Titulary, Election Formula, Building Project and Concluding prayer. The statement of theological principle occurs in a eulogy of Sin which asks the rhetorical question 'Without thee who does anything ?' . The inscription continues:

1. Nbd 3/Zyl III,1 Col 1:34-43 & Col 2:10-13; Berger, 369ff .

2. Nbd 4/Zyl III,4 Col 1:43ff:

ilāni rabûti āšibut ša šamê u eršitim ištu ūmê
 rūqûti ittišu isbusāma šipik epiru rabûti elišu
 iššapku-ma lā ussappu kissišu ina palê RN šar GN
 šarri mahri ālik mahrija mār RN2 šar GN ina qibit
 DNN bēlēšu itbūnim-ma šārī irbitti meḥī rabûti
 bašši ša eli āli u bīti šāšu katmu innassiḥ

mātu ša libbika āšabšu ūblu puluḫtu ilūtika
 rabīti ina libbišu tašakkan-ma ana ūmū rūqūti
 išdēšu ikunnu mātu ša libbika ḫapūšu ūblu
 puluḫtaka ultu libbišu tanissimu tanandiš ana
 ūmū rūqūti (Nbd H2 A & B, Col 2:26-32)

As for a land which you have ordained to be inhabited, you set the reverence of your great godhead within it so that its foundations stand firm to distant days. As for the land which you have decreed for destruction, you sever from it reverence for you and overthrow it to distant days

This has a quaint logic about it, the logic of a circular argument which runs as follows: a shrine is in ruins - this means that the gods were angry and decreed its destruction; the gods were angry - this was due to irregularities in the cultic worship; there was a failure to maintain the cult - this was because the gods took the numinous awe of themselves out of the hearts of the people; the gods dissipated the people's reverence - this was because they intended to destroy that country. Why did they so purpose? - because they were angry. Divine sovereignty is stoutly maintained.

Moving to Adda-guppi's inscription, the mother of Nabonidus tells of Sin's shrine in ruins:

ina šatti 16 RN šar GN DN šar ilāni itti ālišu u
 bītišu iznū ēlū šamāmiš ālu u nišē ša ina libbišu
 illikū karmūti (Nbd H.1 B Col 1:6-9)

In the 16th year of Nabopolassar king of Babylon, Sin king of the gods became angry with his city and his shrine, and departed to heaven. The city and its people went to ruins.

Historically, this refers to events which took place in 610/609 bc, when the king of Akkad and the Ummanmanda chased Ashurballit and his Egyptian allies from Harran, and 'carried off much spoil from the city and temple',¹ though one could never guess this from the generalised religious language adopted.² It is indeed striking that the

1. See BM.21901:rev. 58-65.

2. Gadd notes this remarking that 'the suppression of all secular details here was doubtless due to considerations which applied locally to Harran, above all the need to avoid giving offence to the Medes, who were still in control of the place' (*AnSt* 8, 74). But if the stele was set up in Adda-guppi's 104th year, that is Nabonidus' 9th year, 547 bc, the Medes were defeated.

Babylonian Chronicle and Adda-guppi could use such different terminology to describe the same events. Theologically, the sword arrived where the gods had departed. This is Mesopotamian temple theology.

The reversal of circumstances which led to the rebuilding of Ehulhul is explained by Adda-guppi as the fruit of prayer and penance. For 95 years she 'sought after the shrines of Sin's great godhead' (Col 1:34). He looked upon her good deeds with favour, heard her prayers, granted her requests, and the wrath of his heart calmed down. He was reconciled toward his shrine (Col 1:35-39). He elected Nabonidus to the throne and 'from the border of Egypt on the Upper Sea even to the Lower Sea, all lands he entrusted hither to his hands' (Col 1:41-44). Realising that the sword was wielded by the gods, Adda-guppi prayed for military victory for Nabonidus:

ina qibīt ilūtika rabīti ilāni rabūti idāšu
lillikū lišamqitū gārêšu (Col 2:2f)

On your almighty divine decree may the great
gods go at his side and fell his foes.

Sin replied in a dream, promising the return of the gods to Harran and the completion of the Ehulhul shrine (Col 2:5-8). Her prayer for victory over the enemy which is cast in stock phrases is the only hint that political and military events would necessarily be involved in the worship revolving around this shrine.

We have already quoted Nabonidus' crediting of Marduk with sending the Medes as Nabopolassar's helpers, and his dissociation of Marduk and Nabopolassar from the ensuing destruction of Assyrian shrines, including Ehulhul where Shalmaneser III and Ashurbanipal were known by him to have undertaken repair work. In the Babylon Nbd 8 inscription, the Medes are said to act independently of the gods in wickedly destroying Ehulhul, but this is contradicted by the Sippar cylinder employing stock temple theology where the ruin must be attributed to the wrath of the gods worshipped.¹

1. Compare and contrast Nbd 8/Frg XI and Nbd 1/III,2 ; Berger, 384ff & 371ff for bibliography.

TN bīt DN ša qereb CN ša ultu ūmū sāti DN bēlu
 rabū šubat ṭūb libbi ramū qerebšū ēli āli u bīti
 šāšu libbuš izuz-ma Ummanmanda ušatbam-ma bīti
 šuātim ubbit-ma ušālikšu karmūtu ina palē kīnim
 DN2 rabūti ina naram šarrūtija ana āli u bīti
 šāšu islimu iršu tajjāri (Nbd 1/III,2 Col 1:8-15)

As for Ehulhul the temple of Sin in Haman, where the great lord Sin had taken up residence in a dwelling that pleased him, against that city and temple he (then) grew angry, and despatched the Ummanmanda, and destroyed that temple and turned it into a ruin. (But) in my legitimate reign, great Bel out of love for my kingship became reconciled towards that city and temple and was merciful.

Sin is the subject of the Causatives (Š-thmme +ventive) of the roots tebū - 'to rise up and go' and alāku - 'to go', and of the D-theme of abātu - 'to destroy'.¹ This agrees theologically with the mother's less specific statement. The Sippar cylinder has been adjusted to make Marduk the spokesman and Sin a bystander in the dream oracle, where the Harran stele gives Sin an unrivalled rôle. Gadd comments aptly: 'The artful elaboration of this incident to the taste of the Babylonian readers is as deliberate as it is disingenuous'.²

In the Sippar dream, Marduk told the king to take bricks for the founding of Ehulhul from Babylonia in his chariot, and when Nabonidus could only fearfully think of the occupying Medes whose forces were formidable - puggalū emūqāšu - a second word was given prophesying their defeat and removal by Cyrus their Persian vassal:

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1. Since lūUmman-manda is treated grammatically as a singular, 'the Mede' could be the subject of abātu and alāku, but this would be a change of subject from the previous verb DN...ušatbamma, and so is less likely. Theologically it would have been permissible to say that Sin destroyed the shrine, since primary causes loomed larger than secondary ones (ie. human agents).
 2. C.J.Gadd: *AnSt* 8, 74 note 2. See W.L.Moran: *Or* 28(1959), 130-140 "Notes on the New Nabonidus Inscriptions", p. 135 for proof that Nbd 1 is more faithful in style to the *Vorlage* it shares with Nbd H2, A & B, which is a short recension mainly concerned with the Teima history.

DN ma itamâ ittija Ummanmanda ša taqbu šâšu mâtîšu
 u šarrâni âlik idišu ul ibašši ina šalulti šatti
 ina kašâdu ušatbûnišum-ma RN šar GN aradšu šahri
 ina ummânišu isutu Ummanmanda rapšâti usappih RN2
 šar Ummanmanda iŝbat-ma kamussu ana mâtîšu ilqi
 (Nbd 1 Col 1:26-33)

Marduk then swore to me: 'The Ummanmanda of whom you speak, they, their land, and the kings who support them will no longer exist. When the third year arrives I will send against them Cyrus king of Anzan their subordinate vassal. With his few forces he will scatter the wide-spread Ummanmanda'. Asyages king of the Ummanmanda he captured and took as prisoner to his own country.

Though no doubt this is a *post eventu* prophecy as artful as its adaptation to Babylonian readers, it speaks eloquently of the belief that the Mesopotamian gods governed the fortunes of war and peace. This early faith in Cyrus as the emancipator from Median occupation makes Nabonidus' end the more ironical. It is also ironical that the shifts in political power which eventually led to his downfall could have been viewed, it seems, solely in terms of one shrine far from the capital Babylon.

This estimate is supported by other political allusions in the H2 stele whose main theme is the Ehulhul project! It records the Sin oracle, omitting Marduk, and then candidly describes the Babylonian reaction which led to Nabonidus' withdrawal to Teima after the manner of an offended deity. During the 10 year appointed absence, Nabonidus

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1. Moran describes the Harran stele thus: 'The view of Nabonidus that all of his accomplishments, even his building activities were in reality the work of Sin here finds its most articulate expression...the inscription is, therefore, for the primacy of Sin a theodicy and by implication, for Nabonidus an *apologia pro vita sua*' (art.cit.,135).

both wielded the sword and made peace, all under the aegis of Sin and Ishtar:

ina amāt DNN bēlit tāhāzi ša nukurti u sulummu
 ina bališu ina māti lā ibaššu u kakku lā innippušu
 qātšu ina muhhišunu taprik-ma šar GN ālu Madāja
 GN2 u naphar šarrāni nakirūtu ana sulummu u ṭubbāti
 išapparūnu ana mahrija (H2 Col 1:38-45)

At the command of Sin and Ishtar, mistress of battle, without whom hostility and peace do not exist in the land nor is war waged, her hand she fulminated over them so that the king of Egypt, the city of the Medes, the Arabs' country and all the kings who were hostile sent (to establish) peaceful treaty relations with me.¹

The brief spell of good relations was regarded as god-given for the purpose of completing the work on Ehulhul, or so the inscription would make it seem, for Nabonidus goes on to describe how he returned to Babylon, which the gods had made to be at peace with him, and summoned his subjects 'the peoples of Akkad and the Hatti land from the border of Egypt on the Upper Sea as far as the Lower Sea' whom

1. Gadd suggests plausibly that the vague 'city of the Medes' denotes Ecbatana shortly after the reversal which put Cyrus on the throne, but before he had assumed official titles; cf. Cyrus as aradšu šiḫru in Nbd 1 where 'his (the Ummanmanda's) young/subordinate vassal/servant' is a pre-revolution reference (cf. H. Tadmor: AS 16, Festschrift Landsberger, p. 351 'his young servant', where CAD S, 182 šiḫru 1C2 takes šiḫru = 'Cyrus..the second'; Ahw., 1089 C1d 'der jüngere' II). On pharaoh Amasis II (569-525 bc) see the Nebuchadnezzar Chronicle BM 33041: rev. 1 referring to Nebuchadnezzar's 37th year.

Sin, king of the gods had 'put into his hand'.¹ He continues - 'Ehulhul, the temple of Sin, anew I built, I finished its work' (Col 3:21f).²

Even when allowance is made for the conventions of Building Inscriptions, these inscriptions of Nabonidus, and especially the Harran stele cannot fail to give the impression that the Ehulhul shrine at Harran was an *idée fixe* of the reign and played an extraordinary rôle in the drama of empire. Since this project was pursued by Nabonidus despite Median occupation, Babylonian revolt, his remoteness in Arabia and during the briefest of lulls after his return to Babylon before the engulfing tide of Persian expansion overtook him, the only explanation for this variation on the theme of empire, the sword and the gods lies in Nabonidus' personal theological beliefs. We must assume that he regarded the exaltation of Sin as the foundation for Babylonian imperialism. Subsequent generations did not see his belief in the sovereignty of the Babylonian pantheon as in error, but only his neglect of Marduk. The principle of divine sovereignty as the basis of empire was therefore upheld, and a theological interpretation of Nabonidus' reign was supplied which found the explanation for Babylon's change of master in the cultic irregularities perpetrated by the devotee of Sin. Nabonidus' temple theology was seen as a lop-sided aberration, but temple theology remained the key to historical interpretation.

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1. As in the Assyrian inscriptions, prisoners of war were regarded as the gift of the gods and in gratitude were put to work on the shrines.

2850 ina ummāni šillāti nakri ħumee ša bēlu DN eli
šarrāni ālik mahrija ušatiranni-ma umalla qātua ana
zabālu dupšikku ana DNN ilēja ālik idēja ašruk
(Nbd 8 Col 9:31-41)

2. It is now agreed that Nabonidus only finished the work on Ehulhul after he had returned from Teima in his 13th year or later. See Tadmor: AS 16,363; Moran: Or 28,132 and Lambert: AFO 22,1 .

PART II B: The Sword in Imperial Theology.

Attention has already been drawn to the action of the gods in the election of the king to the throne, and to their intervention on his behalf in battle, as recorded in the few historical accounts left by the Neo-Babylonian rulers. Imperial theology, as we have called it, is the religious rationale which the kings gave for their economic and political ventures, the theological justification for empire-building, whether by peaceful or by warlike means.

Implicit in election to the throne were imperial rights over foreign lands, for piety towards Babylon's gods had international consequences since election was election to empire. Syria, Palestine and other foreign lands were regarded as the patrimony bestowed on the king at his coronation by the gods.¹ Foreign peoples could be pressed into service of Babylon's gods, and foreign resources exploited for the decoration of their shrines. Cedars were cut in Lebanon by royal and divine prerogative. Royal imperialism also carried the ideal of a rule which brought peace and prosperity to the ruled, though how far this was applied beyond Babylonia is debateable.

In the following texts the scope of divine election emerges:

When the lord Marduk elevated my head(rēši ullu)
and gave me the wide-spread peoples to shepherd
(niše rapšātim ana rē'ūtim iddinam), to Marduk
my lord I was faithful without ceasing.
(Nbk 17/IV,1 Col 1:16-2)

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1. There is some analogy here with Royal Grants of land made by Assyrian & Babylonian kings to their loyal subjects, and of Yhwh's granting of Palestine to Abraham. See M.Weinfeld: JAOS 90(1970), 184-203 "Covenant of Grant in the OT & the ANE". Compare too Sargon's definition of his calling in the Grant text: ana šuklul sīmat ekurri dunnun sattukkī mu'ur kissati ullu rēšija - 'to decorate the temple perfectly, to increase the regular offerings, to rule the world, and to exalt my head' (Postgate: Decrees, 64 No. 32:43f). In this latter case it is a question of Sargon's receiving a parcel of land by exchange for building his capital Dur-Sharruken, but in principle the incorporation of foreign territory was much the same theologically speaking.

The passage is in the typical Election Formula form introduced by the adverbial conjunction enūma indicating the occasion of Marduk's act, and followed by the king's response introduced by anāku. 'The wide-spread peoples' are regarded as at the disposal of the gods who appoint the king of Babylon to look after them as their vice-regent. The imagery of the king as Shepherd, surely intended to imply benevolence, is an ancient one which can be traced back to Sumerian royal inscriptions such as those of Gudea.¹

The traditional nature of this concept of world rule emerges too from the use of the phrase translated 'four world quarters' in Nebuchadnezzar's prayer:

By your exalted word/decreed which does not alter
over the peoples of the four world regions (eli
nišē kibrāti arbātīm) may my shepherding be long
(līrik rē'ūti) (Nbk 18/Bkst. BIII, 1 Col 1:19-22)

Clearly Nebuchadnezzar wished to emulate the ancient kings who had first dominated the majority of the Near East and thought of their territory as extending to the four quarters of the world.²

The sovereign power of Babylon's gods and hence the power of Babylon's sovereign over foreign peoples is exemplified by his authority to impose corvée labour on them, as we learn in the record of the Etemenanki restoration:

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1. For references, see AHw, 976ff rē'û - 'to shepherd' G2b, Gtn2, Gt2; 977 rē'û - 'Shepherd', B1 & rē'ûtu - 'Shepherding', 2 .
 2. For references, see AHw, 471 kibru, 2; CAD K, 331f; cf. W.W.Hallo: Titles, 21ff and M.J.Seux: Epithètes Royales, 308ff, and CAD K, 458f kiššatu A, 2a . On the early feats of sword and empire, see A. Malamat: Festschrift Landsberger, AS 16, 365-373 "Campaigns to the Mediterranean by Jahdun-Lim & other Early Mesopotamian Rulers" .

nišē rapšātim ša DN bēli jāti iqīpanni rē'ūšina
 iddinam qurādam DN2 kullat mātītān gimir kala dadmē
 ultu tāmtim elitim adi tāmtim šaplītim mātāti ruqātim
 nišē dadmē rapšātim šarrāni šadē nesūtīm u nagē
 bērūtīm ša qereb tāmtim elitim u šaplītim ša DN1 bēli
 ana šadād širdišu zirassina umallū qātua adkam-ma
 ummānat DNN ina epēšu TN... šakkanakkē GN nībirti
 nāru GN ana ērib šamši ša ina amāt DN1 bēlija
 bēlussunu ābilu-ma erinē dannūtīm ultu šadū GN2 ana
 maḡāzija GN3 ibabbalūnim naphar nišē dadmē rapšātim
 ša DN1 bēli jāti išruqam ina epēšu TN dullum
 ušaḡbissunūti-ma ēmissunūti tupšikku
 (Nbk 17/IV,1 Col 2:12-36 & Col 3:8-24)

The widespread peoples whom Marduk entrusted to me, the hero Shamash appointed me as their shepherd, all lands, the entire inhabited world from Upper to Lower Seas, distant lands, widespread peoples of the world, the kings of distant mountains and far-off regions which are bordered by Upper and Lower Seas, whom Marduk the suzerain put into my control for drawing his yoke with their strength I assembled, and the work-force of Shamash and Marduk for building Etemenanki ... Viceroy from Syria beyond the Euphrates in the West over whom I was sovereign by the decree of Marduk my lord, these brought mighty cedars from the Lebanon range to my city Babylon. The entire people of the widespread world whom lord Marduk bestowed on me I pressed into service for building Etemenanki and laid corvée work upon them.

The scribe has multiplied stock-phrases in his effort to give an impressive picture of the sweep of Nebuchadnezzar's empire. The whole structure of empire is seen as harnessed for a single purpose - the service of the gods.¹ To achieve a consistent and dynamic theology of Babylonian domination of foreign countries, he uses the verbs qāpu - 'to entrust to, bestow upon', nadānu - 'to give, appoint', mallū qātu - 'to fill the hand with, put into the power of', šarāqu - 'to bestow' and the phrase ina amāt DN - 'by the word/decreed of DN' which prove the Babylonian gods' active sovereignty exercised through the reign of Nebuchadnezzar.

Because Marduk and Shamash rule the nations and bestow them on their chosen representative, any resistance to him at home or abroad is logically seen as rebellion against the gods and punishable by them. Thus Neriglissar describes how Marduk enabled him to quell opposition:

1. On 'drawing the yoke' as a cliché for vassalhood, see Part I, Asb. section A: Vassal Oath & Vassal Status, p. 96f.

opposition:

ḥaṭṭu iṣarti murabbiṣat mātam ana šarrūtiḡa lū
iṣrukam šibirri kīnu mušallim nišē ana bēlūtam
lū iqḡim ušpari mukanniš zā'iru lū ušatmiḡa qātua
agā kīnu ušaššanni-ma ana šarrūtiḡa šāninu u
mugallitu anār ajjābī ašgiš zāmānū lā māgiri
kališunu alūṭ mišari ina mātīm aštakkan nišēja
rapšātim ina šulmi artani'e
(Nrg 2/II,1 Col 1:29 - 2:3)

(Marduk) bestowed on me an upright sceptre which extends the land for my kingly rule, a true staff which prospers the people he did indeed decree for (exercising) suzerainty, he made my hand surely grasp a flail which humbles the foe, he made me wear a legitimate crown of kingship. Rival and rebel I annihilated, my enemies I destroyed. As for the rebels and the unsubmissive - I subjugated the whole lot of them. I established justice in the land. My wise-spread peoples I shepherded in continual peace.

The stock phrases are arranged in a rhythmical and exalted prose. The royal insignia's true symbolism is expounded. No ornaments or trinkets these. Marduk, acting through the sheshgallu priest on the fifth day of the Akitu Festival, invests Neriglissar. The ušparu is given specifically for humbling the foe - mukanniš zā'iri, and this is expounded with the verbs of conquest - nāru- 'to slay, annihilate', šakāšu - 'to destroy, kill' and laṭū - 'to subjugate'. Wanton slaughter is not intended, rather the preliminaries to the establishment of law and order. Mišarum seems not be used in its technical sense here as a specific royal act, but more widely of the quality of rule which in turn results in peace.

The same note is sounded in another of Meriglissar's inscriptions where Marduk, Nabu and Girra appear as his champions with Marduk decreeing his destiny, Nabu putting into his hand a sceptre of justice, and Girra 'mightiest of the gods gave him his weapons'.¹ Whether Awel-Marduk's deposition previously accounts for the emphasis on election² or whether it is simply scribal tradition, that the gods placed a sword in the hands of their chosen monarch was the common theology.

1. Nrg 1/II,3 Col 1:13.

2. As Langdon-Zehnpfund suggest: NBK, 211 note 1.

C: Babylon, Tribute and the Sword.

As a background for considering Babylonian Holy City theology as it bears on the sword and empire reference may be made to the study of Giorgio Buccellati on the theological associations of the capital city. Speaking of Mesopotamia and Syria-Palestine, he writes:

There is evidence to the effect that the city where the enthronement would take place - usually the capital city - was considered the object of a special divine choice. It was, therefore because of religious reasons that the act of enthronement was strictly linked with the site of the enthronement,¹

Speaking in secular terms, we know that empires were built on the economic advantage gained from securing trade-routes and tribute. It was the capital city of the empire which reflected these advantages to the fullest extent with magnificent temples and palaces. Though the Babylonian kings went into detail on the splendours of the capital, it was always within a theological framework. Babylon was a holy city of ancient religious traditions, and was acknowledged as a centre of religious ceremony and knowledge with its own sanctity by such redoubtable empire builders as the Assyrians. We should therefore not expect to find a secular account of imperial tribute and the resulting economic prosperity of Babylon. Just as foreign lands were understood to be the gift of the gods to Babylon, so tribute could be made a matter for prayer. If tribute could be exacted only at the point of the sword, then prayer for victory in battle was appropriate. Spoils of war and tribute were promised as decoration for the victorious gods' shrines.

The mother-city sentiment comes out strongly in the following inscription:

1. G. Buccellati "The Enthronement of the King & the Capital City" in Festschrift Oppenheim, 54-61, page 61.

nišim rapšatim ša DN bēlija umallu qātua ana CN
 ukanniš bilat mātāti bišit šadim hišib tām̄tim
 qerbašu amhur ana šillišu dārī kullat nišim ṭābiš
 upaḥḥir urrē šē'im dannūt̄im lā nībi aštapakšu
 (Nbk 9/III,4 Col 3:18-26)

The widespread peoples whom Marduk my lord put into my power I made subservient to Babylon. The produce(or, tribute) of the lands, the products of the mountains, the richness of the seas I gathered inside it. I gathered all peoples benevolently under its eternal protection(shadow). Great quantities of grain without measure I stored up for it.

Here is depicted a scene of peace and plenty at the heart of the empire. Marduk has poured into the king's cup such blessing that it overflows. A description of the palace follows on creating an impression of grandeur and statesmanship:

inūšu ekal mūšab šarrūtiya markas nišim rabītim
 šubat rišāti u ḥidāt̄im ašar kadrūt̄im uktannašu
 ina CN eššiš ēpuš ina kigallam rēšt̄im ina irat
 izirt̄im rapašt̄im ina kupri u agurri ušaršid
 temenša erēnīm dannūt̄im ultu GN qišt̄im ellet̄im
 ana šulliša lū ūbilam dūra danna ina kupri u agurri
 ušashiršu paraš šarrūti suluḥ bēlūt̄im ina libbiša
 ušāpām (Nbk 9/III,4 Col 3:27-42)

At that time a palace for my royal abode, the bond of mighty peoples, the abode of joy and rejoicing, where the proud were subjugated I built anew in Babylon on the primeval foundation, the bosom of the wide earth I laid its foundation. Mighty cedars from Lebanon that pure forest I surely brought to roof it. I surrounded it with a mighty wall of mortar and clay-brick. My royal decisions, the decrees of rule, I made public from its precincts.¹

After setting the scene in this manner, the inscription continues with a prayer that this might last in perpetuity, and the request for tribute is the nearest statement to a secular assessment of empire that may be found in Neo-Babylonian royal inscriptions.

1. Against Langdom:op.cit., 89 note 4 and the mistranslation of the 3rd Masc plural Dt-theme of kanāšu - 'to bow, submit' note the above translation with the Adj. kadru, qadru - 'wild, impetuous, proud' from thr root kadāru II (AHw, 419; CAD K, 32 kadru, b).

ašši qāta usalla bēl bēlē ana DN rāmīni illikū
 supūa bēl mātāti DN šīmi sīt pīa bīta ēpušu lalāšu
 lušbiam ina CN ina qerbišu šībūtu lū ukšud lušbā
 littūti ša šarrāni kibrātim ša kala tenēšētīm
 bilassunu kabitti lumḥur qerebša līpūa ina qerbiša
 ana dārātīm šalmāt qaqqadīm libēlū
 (Nbk 9/III,4 Col 3:43-59)

I raised my hand, I prayed to the lord of lords, to Marduk the merciful my prayers went up: O lord of the lands, Marduk, hear the utterance of my mouth. As regards the house I have built, may I enjoy its riches. May I attain grey hairs in the midst of Babylon; may I enjoy posterity. Within Babylon may I receive the heavy tribute of the kings of the four quarters of the whole world. May my descendants for ever rule the black-headed people within it.

The account is only 'secular' in that it pictures the king as the recipient of the wealth of empire, and so discloses the motives of imperial expansion.¹ In form, it is a prayer, and elsewhere the benefits of tribute are promised to the gods as fitting tokens in their worship.² For instance, Nabonidus prays:

ipāt kibrāt irbittim nuḥuš tāmāti ḥiṣib šadē u
 mātītān šattišamma ana TN ekal šamē u iršitim
 lušērib (Nbd 7/II,8 Col 2:46-49)

bilassunu ša kališ kibrāt maḥar ilīšu u DNN ilūa
 u ilāni gimiršunu ... (Nbd 2/II,4 Col 2:27f)

The produce of the four quarters of the world, the riches of the sea, the fulness of the mountains and the lands, yearly to Esagila the temple of heaven and earth may I bring.

their tribute, that of the whole world before his god and before Sarpanitum, Nabu and Nergal my gods and before all the gods

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1. Compare Nrg 1/II,3 Col 2:31-42 for a Concluding Prayer with identical requests with the empire described as 'from the horizon of the heavens to the zenith of the heavens, wherever Shamsh goes'.
 2. Compare Part I, Asb. section I: The Victory and Spoil Ceremony, page 195ff.

He mentions the feasts such as that of the New Year, and the offerings of grain and animals he desires to present to the gods out of the bountiful tribute he prays they will secure for him. It would no doubt be a mistake to dismiss the prayers, promises and religious language of the Babylonian kings as a subterfuge for purely economic and political gain. For one thing the feeling for Babylon runs too deep as is plain from Nebuchadnezzar's Concluding Prayer for tribute and aid against the enemy in which he describes himself as 'the one whom Marduk the great lord ordained for the good of Babylon his cult centre (ana damqāti CN māhāzišu)'.¹ He built impregnable defences to protect the holy city 'that the battle-line might not draw near to the wall of Babylon': gān tāhāzi ana dūri CN lā tahê (Nbk 15/III,1 Col 6:22) and that 'the merciless enemy might not press upon the sides of Babylon': aššum ajjābi lā bābil pānim itê CN lā sanāqa (*ibid.*, 6:39f). With confidence Nebuchadnezzar could say to Marduk:

kīma napšāti aqarti arammu ella lānka eli
 ālika CN ina kala dadmē ul ušāpa māhāza
 ... ša šarrāni kibrāti ša kala tēnišēti
 bilassunu kabitti lumhur qerbušša ištu išid
 šamē adi elat šamē ēma DN ašū ai išī nakiri
 mugallitī ai arši (Nbk 15/III,1 Col 9:52-56
 & Col 10:9-16)

I love your pure appearance as my own precious life. No city in the inhabited world have I made more illustrious than Babylon your city... From the kings of all quarters, from all mankind may I receive heavy tribute in Babylon. From the horizon to the zenith wherever the sun goes may there be no enemy, may I have no one to cause panic.

In similar vein, Nabonidus asked for the favour of Shamash, declaring that he was relying on the god for the subjugation of the enemy and the material rewards flowing from victory:

1. Nbk 15/III,1 Col 7:2f . We might note that the Assyrians recognized the sacred status of Babylon, but this did not prevent either the sack by Sennacherib nor indigenous Holy City theology as expressed in Sargon's 'Charter of Ashur' - āl DN ša DN bēlšu ana kibrāte issuqaššu markāssu 'the city of Ashur, which Ashur its lord has chosen to be the centre of the entire world' (Winckler: SKT 2, K 1349:30)

ina šitašrika šuqquru lilliki rēšūtu melammū
 birbirrūka zīme bēlūtu šalammāt šarrūtu ana
 šalala māt nakiriša šūlikki idāja lurḫiṣ māt
 ajjābiša lunār zā'iriša šillat nakriša lūkul
 būšē mātītān lušēribi ana qereb mātija.
 (Nbd 6:II,9 Col 2:38-42)

May help come through your extremely valuable support. Despatch the dread-glory of your rays your lordly face, your royal splendour to my side to plunder the land of my enemies. May I raze the land of my foes; may I annihilate my enemies; may I devour the spoil of my enemies; the goods of their lands may I bring back to my land. 1

After a further reminder that he is the one who cares for, renews and completes the gods' shrines, the king continues:

ana zikir šumiša kabtu kullat nākiri littarri
 līnušū liknišū ana šēpēja ana ūmē šātī lišdudū
 nīri bilassunu kabitti ana qereb āliša CN libilnū
 ana mahriša ina qereb CN likun šubti ina sulēšu
 atallaku lušbū (Col 2:44-47)

By the mention of my weighty name may all of my enemies change, become weak, bow at my feet, bear my yoke for evermore and bring their laden tribute into my presence in the midst of my city Babylon. May my abode be established in Babylon and on its highways may I walk about and be content. 2

There is no reason to question the sincerity of these prayers. Nabonidus, Nebuchadnezzar and Neriglissar were asking for tribute to roll into the capital because it was a city holy to the gods. Their prayers sprang from their self-concepts. The rule of the elect from the sacred city necessitated a theology of the capital in relation to the wider empire and its fruits.

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1. On the numinous terror of the gods and victory, see the Assyrian material discussed in Part I, Asb. section G: Divine Intervention, page 164f and the literature by Oppenheim and Cassin cited there.
 2. On 'name theology', see the discussion in Part I, Asb. section A: Vassal Oath & Vassal Status, page 74 & 87f .

D: The Sword in Concluding Prayers.

The conclusions of the Neo-Babylonian royal inscriptions differ notably from Assyrian counterparts in their omission of curse formulae. Assyrian kings appended instructions on the treatment of their records, adding blessings for those showing due respect and curses on those desecrating their names. The Babylonian kings concluded with a prayer to the god or gods to whom the inscription was dedicated. Even when Nabonidus made the innovation of appending the oracles taken at the time of the building project, he concluded with a prayer to Shamash.¹

Marduk naturally receives the majority of concluding prayers, while Shamash is also directly addressed, and other lesser deities such as Nabu, Ninkarrak, Ai, Bunene and Lugal-Marad are addressed as intermediaries, usually because their shrines are the subject of the repairs.

The range of requests in the concluding prayers is wide. Those for tribute have already been discussed, and there are others which involve the sword to receive attention presently. The general theme could be described as the good life conceived in Ancient Near Eastern terms marked by long life to grey hairs in health of body and mind with numerous offspring to succeed to the throne and continue the rule of Babylonia. The good life was also one of communion with the gods in the sense that they would respond to piety with recognition and rewards. With their help the king hoped to be preserved in some way whether through memory, renown, records or offspring as an island buttressed against erosion by the river of time.

The king prayed for himself in relation to the gods, the Babylonians and rebels or rivals. Nabonidus includes his heir Belshazzar in one prayer asking that they should be preserved from sin against the deity, and that reverence for Sin should be put into their hearts and those of the populace. Perhaps this reflects the tensions which Nabonidus' preference for the Moon god were causing in the empire.

1. See Nbd 7/II,8 Col 2:10-40 (oracles), 41-51 (prayer); cf. Nbd 8/StL Frgm XI broken off at Col 11:43 during the list of oracles but likely to have ended with a Concluding Prayer in its full form - ANET, 309ff for a translation.

A third category of address in concluding prayers is Nabopolassar's admonition to a successor, whether son or grandson, and his request to Marduk for a blessing upon such a one should he treat the cuneiform tablet with respect.

Some of the prayers for divine intervention against enemies are brief, general and in the character of stock phrases, but others breathe a more authentic sounding spirit of reverent dependence on the power of the gods as opposed to human resources or seem to carry a sense of urgency which might indicate some *Sitz im Leben* now lost to us. Three examples will suffice to illustrate the brief prayer against enemies:

DNN supūšu lišmū lingurā qibissu idašu lillikū
lišamqitā gārīšu ūmišamma ana DN3 abi bānišun
damiqtašu liqbū (Nbd 1/III,2 Col 3:48-50)

lū šumqutu nākirīja u sapānim māti ajjābīja ina
maḥar DN šar šamē u eršitim qibi sattakka
(Nbk 1/III,3 Col 3:48-52)

šumqutu nākirī kašādam māti ajjābī ana širiktim
šurkam (Nbk 11/II,12 Col 2:21f)

May Shamash and Anunitum hear his prayer and receive his petition favourably. May they go at his side and cut down his foes. May they daily recount his good deeds before Sin their father begetter.

O fell my foes and overwhelm the land of my enemies. Before Marduk the king of heaven and earth intercede continually.

the felling of the foe, the conquest of the enemy's land, grant as a gift !

Nabonidus' prayer perhaps reflects his personal religious bent, making Shamash but an intermediary to the Moon god; Nebuchadnezzar prays to Marduk through Ninkarraka of Eharsagila, and in the second prayer of his demonstrates his belief in divine sovereignty by his use of šarāku and šeriktum conveying the power of Marduk to add countries who were hostile to the empire at will.

A more elaborate imprecation against enemies from Nebuchadnezzar is given in Nbk 2 of which only Col 3 survives. The imprecation takes up most of the prayer, dominating the usual requests for throne and offspring.

šigiš lā māgirī šubbir kakkēšun ḥulliq napḥar
māti ajjābi suppun kullassun kakkēka ezzūtim

Ša lā igammilu nākiri lū tibū lū zaqtū ana nāri
 ajjābija lillikū idaja maḥar DN Šar Šamē u eršitim
 epšētija šumgir qibi dumqūa
 (Nbk 2/II,2 Col 3:37-47)

Destroy the unsubmissive, shatter their weapons;
 obliterate the entire land of the enemy; overwhelm
 them all. Let your dread weapons advance which do
 not spare the foe, and let them be sharp for the
 annihilation of my enemies; may they go at my side.
 Before Marduk king of heaven and earth make my deeds
 appear acceptable, speak up for favour to me.

Being Lugal-Marad's shrine that was under restoration, he was
 addressed as intermediary. The string of imperatives - šigiš, šubbir,
ḥulliq and suppuḥ - give the prayer great vigour, conveying the
 violent and decisive action which the king wished to see from his
 divine supporters.

The direct form of address in imprecation can be illustrated
 from examples where worship and dependence are expressed using the
 phrase DN....atta:

lū rēši tukultija DN atta-ma ina qibitika kitti
 Ša lā nākarim lū tebū lū zaqtū kakkūa kak nakarim
 limēsu (Nbk 4/II,8 Col 2:24-32)

ēma qabli u tāḥāzi lū rēši tukultija DN atta-ma
 kakkēka ezzūtim Ša lā immahḥarū ana šumqut nākiriija
 lillikū idaja (Nbk 5/II,5 Col 2:23-29)

In truth you are my help and stay O Marduk ! By
 your sure decree which does not alter let my
 weapons advance and be sharp. May they crush the
 weapons of my enemy !

Whether in battle or conflict, you O Marduk are
 truly my deliverer and help ! Let your dread
 weapons which are unrivalled go at my side for
 the destruction of my foes !

Both inscriptions commemorate the strengthening of Babylon's
 defences so that 'the evil destroyer might not press against Babylon,
 that the front of the battle-line might not draw near to Imgur-Bel,
 the wall of Babylon'. The imprecations fit well. Faith and works
 were found together in Babylonian theology of the sword.

Another passage is addressed to Shamash on conclusion of his
 temple Ebabbarra at Sippar, and combines prayers for peace and war.

ḥatti išarti rē'utu tābti šibirri kīnim mušallim
 niši lū isiq šarrūtija ana darāti ina kakkē izzūti

tebūti tāhāza lū sulul ummānija DN atta-ma ina
dīnim u bīri išariš apalanni ina amātika ellīti
ša lā šupilam lū tēbū lū zaqtū kakkūa kakkē
nakarim limēsu (Nbk 12/III,1 Col 3:11-30)

O grant as the lot of my kingship an upright sceppe,
a good rule (shepherding), a true staff bringing
prosperity (peace) to the people for ever. With dread
weapons, the advance of battle, O protect my army.
You are Shamash; in decision and auspice answer me
faithfully. By your pure word which does not alter,
O may my weapons advance and be sharp. The weapons
of the enemy may they crush.

Divine sovereignty manifests itself in the allotting of destiny which involves both rôle and quality of life - isqu is 'the lot assigned by the gods', here governing the kingship and the reign.¹ Knowledge of the future and divine guidance through divination is also involved. The combination of a decree of destiny, guidance through divination and the defeat of enemies make for successful imperialism in Babylonian theology. The prayer is appropriately addressed to Shamash since he was the god of justice - the Babylonian tradition being exemplified by the sculptured scene atop Hammurabi's stele and the wisdom poem 'Hymn to Shamash' - and also the one to whom oracular inquiries were addressed.² His orbit through the heavens passing over all lands and scanning their inhabitants made him an appropriate deity to be the vigilante of the empire - phrases such as 'wherever you go' and 'from your rising to your setting' have already been encountered in royal prayers quoted, and with Nebuchadnezzar's words above we may compare the phrase Nabonidus addresses to Shamash:

niši šalmāt qaqqadu mala ibarra nūrka namri
šukšida qātūa šuknišu šēpūa (Nbd 3/III,1 Col 3:43-46)

Make my hand conquer the black-headed people,
as many as your bright rays light up, make
them bow down at my feet !

1. See CAD I/J, 198ff isqu 3 ; cf. CAD E, esēqu D, p. 332, (2) and parallel phrases such as mušūn šimāti, muššir ušurāti, mussiḳ isqēti all used of divine dispensation.

2. For the Shamash Hymn, see Lambert: BWL, 121ff; Esarhaddon and Ashurbanipal learnt the procedure of oracular inquiry to Shamash from Babylonian experts - see J. Aro "Remarks on the Practice of Extispicy in the Time of Esar. & Asb.", Divination, 109-117, esp. p. 112, and compare C.J. Gadd "Babylonian Divinatory Methods", 21-34.

E: The Sword in Miscellaneous Contexts.

Moving on from considering the evidence for a Babylonian imperial theology revealed in the Concluding Prayers, there remain some references to empire and the sword to include in the interests of a complete survey of the Neo-Babylonian evidence. Material from epithet lines, dedications and omens will now be considered.

(i.) Epithet Lines.

When a god is mentioned by name in the Neo-Babylonian royal inscriptions, one or more epithets are usually attached indicating some of its attributes - the most repetitive example being bēlu rabû attached to Marduk, sometimes varied to bēl bēlē. Many other epithets occur and seem largely interchangeable for there is no systematic theology of the pantheon though certain trends are recognisable over the centuries such as the rise of Marduk and later of Nabu, and the late compilation of lists in which lesser deities are seen as manifestations of Marduk.

In the lines below, Shamash the sun god is related to empire and national enemies:

ana DN bēl elāti u šaplāti dānu rabû šamê u ersitim
dajjānu širi ša ilāni rabūti pariš purussê hā'it libba
nišē bārū tērētē rā'im šarrūtiya nāšir napištija kāšid
ajjābija muhalliq zā'iriya āšib TN
(Nbd 6/II,9 Col 1:10-14)

For Shamsh the lord of the above and below, great judge of heaven and earth, exalted decision maker among the great gods, unfolder of decisions, trier of the hearts of the people, who reveals oracles, who loves my kingship, who preserves my life, who conquers my enemies, who dwells in Ebabbarra ...

Perhaps one may discern here the imperialist's desire to fight 'just wars', to have an oracular word from the god of justice with which to go into battle. We saw that Ashurbanipal was at pains to present himself as a king with justice on his side in his war records and his use of an adê-theology to this end. Here Nabonidus relies on direct and special revelation to justify his imperial ventures.

Shamash was not alone in the field, for elsewhere Anunitum is addressed in a rôle parallel to Assyrian Ishtar's, and there are the

the gods of plague and fire abroad too:

ana DN bēlit tāhāzi našata qašti u išpati mušallimat
qibīt DN2 abišu sāpināt nakru muhalliqat raggu

DN dandanni DN2 eršitim muttalku ina qabli u tāhāzi
illiki idašu

DN rašubbu ušakšidu nizmassu

DN mušabbir kakkē ša nakirīja

For Anunitum mistress of battle who bears the bow
and quiver, fulfilling the command of Enlil her
father, who overwhelms the foe and destroys the
wicked

Nergal the mightiest the Enlil (ie. lord) of earth
who marches about in battle and conflict going at
his side

(whom) Girra the dread enables to attain to his
desires

Dumu-Lil-En who shatters the weapons of my enemies 1

Epithet lines which form the names of walls, gates and streets of
Babylon carry the same message. Thss a city-gate was named 'Nana, des-
troyer of those who advance against her' (DN-sākipāt-tēbīšu), while
another was 'Destruction of the foe' (Kibšu-nakar), and a street was
called 'Nana, strength/champion of his forces' (DN-dannat-šābēšu).²

1. Nbd 1/III,2 Col 3:22-24; Nbd 3/III,1 Col 1:19f; Nbp 3/II,2
Col 1:13 .

2. Nbk 19, A Col 7:43-45.

(ii) Dedications.

The building work as a whole was done to secure the blessing of the gods and the building inscriptions were dedicated to this end and climax in the Concluding Prayers, but on occasion certain features of the building were noted as designed to bring special blessings, and some of these concern the sword.

The work as a whole is invoked as motivation for divine intervention against the enemies of empire in the following two passages:

I completed the work on Ebabbarra and made the temple shine like the day. For the life of my soul (ana balaṭ napšātija), and the overthrow of my foes (sakāpu nakiriija) to Shamash my lord I dedicated it (lū aqiš)

I completed the work on Eulmash and made it shine like the day. For Anunitum, the great lady, my mistress, for the life of my soul and the overthrow of my foes indeed I built it (lū ēpuš).

1

In the next passage we are given an insight into the nature of the colossi which flanked the doorways of palaces and temples - symbols of Assyriology and 19th century excavation.

A wild bull (rīmu) in pure electrum for the fierce goring of my enemies (munaqqib gārīja kadriš) I set up in the shrine. Two colossi (lahmū) of bronze for the overthrow of my enemies I stood at either side of the east door.

2

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1. Nbd 4/III,4 Col 1:12-15 & Col 3:46-49. On the use of qiāšum, qiāšu, qāšu with man as subject and the gods involved, see AHw., 919, II, 2.
 2. Note how Hammurabi adopts this imagery in describing himself as 'the fierce wild ox who gores the enemy': rīmum kadrum munaqqib zā'iri (Driver: BabLaws, 8 Col iii:7ff). CAD Z, 12 reads the plural rīmī which seems more logical instead of rīmu as above. On lahmu, see CAD L, 41 & AHw., 528 for further references; cf. CAD L, 60ff lamassu and šēdu and Oppenheim: AM, chap 4, section 'Mesopotamian Psychology', p 198ff for an attempt at relating the ilu, išturu, lamassu & šēdu 'protective spirits' to the 'external souls' of the anthropologists and the personality theories of the psychologist.

These massive statues were therefore functional not simply decorative. Even if we do not understand the category of thinking surrounding genii of semi-divine nature and somewhat magical mode of operation, we can see that they fitted into the scheme of imperial theology.

(iii) Omens.

Mesopotamian omen literature is a vast and complex field demanding as much expertise today in translation and comprehension as it did of its original exponents. The experts were versed in rituals, internal anatomy of sacrificial animals, and the scholastic records of observations of all kinds in the heavens and on earth. Nabonidus appears to make an innovation in appending in full the favourable oracles the gods gave him when commanding his restoration of their shrines. These omens reveal Mesopotamian thought concerning war and victory and the rôle of the gods in empire. The following examples well serve:

The gods will go at your side

Your army will gather the choice yield and return home with its spoils (rēš eqlišu ikaššad šalmassu itarra)

Your foot will grind (imaššad) the foe

The weapon of Ishtar is my help (rēšua) to turn back (subhur) the advance of the enemy
secondly, "Subduer" (dēpi; AHw, 167 depu II from dēpu) is the weapon's name

These apodoses were divine promises on which the monarch could rely. They had proven true in the past and the experts declared that they applied most surely. Perhaps there is an element of hermeneutic involved since these omens were understood as favourable to going ahead with a building project, whereas one must assume they originally had a military *Sitz im Leben*. In any case, they reveal the need for military support from the gods expressed and promised.

F: Concluding Remarks.

At the end of a study of the Neo-Babylonian material, the question may be raised as to whether there is any theological difference between Babylon and Assyria, or whether one is entitled to speak of a Mesopotamian theology of empire and the sword? Are there any really significant dissimilarities besides such obvious but insignificant differences as Ashur and Marduk being heads of the respective pantheons?

In both sources there is a fundamental stress on election by the gods from which flow many corollaries with a bearing on the conquest of other nations and their subservience to the imperial pantheon. Both Assyrian and Babylonian dynasties see temple building as a major vocation, and regard prisoners of war employed in *corvée* labour as gifts of the gods to whom a portion of the spoils of conquest are dedicated.

The theology of kingship and the theology of the shrine are thus twin pillars of Mesopotamian thought on which Assyrian and Babylonian attitudes to foreign peoples are erected. Divine intervention - especially in battle, for battles were after all the decisive determinants of the fortunes of empire - was axiomatic in both Assyrian and Babylonian expectations, and is reflected in their *post eventu* historical interpretation.

But what of the adê so prominent in the Assyrian war records? What of the Divine Pronouncement and the realisation of the Treaty Curses? Where in the Neo-Babylonian records is there evidence of the sense of a judicial-theological framework regulating relations between suzerain and the segments of empire? The truth of the matter is that no reference to vassal treaties is to be found in the Neo-Babylonian records, and that no such treaties are extant. This is indeed strange, and it would be easy to jump to false conclusions and generalisations.

A moment's reflection leads one rather to the conclusion that the lack of treaty documents and the absence of the integrated treaty theology which characterises Ashurbanipal's records, as has been shown, must be due to a dual coincidence rather than to a factual divergence between Assyrian and Babylonian practice.

The evidence for this is found in the Old Testament records of

Nebuchadnezzar's dealings with Judah. It is quite clear from 1 Kgs 24:17ff and Ezek 17 that the Babylonians appointed vassal kings and also punished them judicially for rebellion. There is no reason to suppose that the vassal oath and relationship described in these passages in the Old Testament was not set down in writing, probably in twin copies, with specific stipulations and appended penalties.¹ The lack of reference to treaties in the Neo-Babylonian records must therefore be due to their genre as dedicatory building inscriptions to which such historical details were evidently regarded as inappropriate. The lack of treaty documents must be coincidence, a factor which further excavation could conceivably alter in the future.

What appears, then, to be a major difference between Assyria and Babylon turns out to be nothing more than a difference in literary convention. Nor can a fundamentally more modest attitude be ascribed to the Babylonian kings to explain the absence or virtual absence of their deeds of war from their records, for as was argued in the introduction, the Babylonian royal records have the glorification of the monarch for world acclaim just as much in mind as do the Assyrian royal records as a factor among other motivations.

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1. We may take note of the treaty-judicial language of the following germane passages from the OT:

wayyiqqaḥ mizzera^c hammēlūkāh wayyikrōt 'ittō bērit
bē'ālāh (Ezek 17:13)

hay-'ānī nē'ūm 'ādōnāy Yhwh 'im-lō' bimqôm hammelek
hammamlīk 'ōtō 'āšer bāzāh 'et-'ālātō wa'āšer hēpēr
'et-bēritō 'ittō bētōk-Bābel yāmūt: (Ezek 17:6)

wayyاملēk melek-Bābel PN... wayyasēb 'et-šēmō PN2
(2 Kgs 24:17)

wayyiqēḥū 'ōtō (Zedekiah) wayya^cālūhū 'el-RN (Nebuchadnezzar)
melek-CN GN bē'ereṣ GN2 wayēdabbēr 'ittō mišpāṭīm:
(Jer 39:5)

A case can therefore be made for speaking of a Mesopotamian theology of empire since so many of the facets of Babylonian imperial theology parallel the concepts reflected in the Assyrian records - for example, divine election, the bestowal of insignia and weapons by the gods, rule of the four quarters of the world as gift of destiny, the use of foreign armies by the national pantheon as agents in imperial affairs, tribute as a divine right, mother-city sentiment theologised, the association of sin and crime in international affairs and of cultic observation and divine wrath at home, the scope of divine action and decree, to mention some broad categories.

The Babylonian material considered may therefore be held to complement the material discussed in Part I of this study, and the two parts be considered together in reaching conclusions about a Mesopotamian theology of empire and the gods.

PART III: EMPIRE AND THE GODS.Conclusion.

Can a Mesopotamian theology of empire be written ? Does the very word 'theology' betray an occidental drive for systematisation which is doomed to frustration when confronted with the religion of Assyria and Babylon ? Or worse still, will the documents of these two nations be forced onto a Procrustean bed sprung with the pre-suppositions of modern scholars which have been or may become axiomatic by dint of frequent repetition ? Do the words of the late great Assyriologist A.Leo Oppenheim apply - ' a systematic presentation of Mesopotamian religion cannot and should not be written' ?¹ Should this dictum be applied to Assyrian and Babylonian concepts of history, the gods and the sword in the First Millenium bc, as well as to the documents related to rituals, festivals, idols, demons, divination and mythology which Oppenheim chiefly had in mind ?

The outcome of this study suggests otherwise. We may side with Hillers in the opinion that it is possible 'to reconstruct what might be called a "covenant-theology" from the annals of Sargon and his successors'.² There is sufficient material to hand. This is proven by the fact that this study had to prune the amount of material which could have been included so that attention was only given to one document from Sargon's reign and one from Esarhaddon's, though cross-references could be made at appropriate places. It was not a case of erecting a superstructure on flimsy foundations. Furthermore, if Speiser's theory is correct - and it seems to have a high degree of probability to the present writer - that 'the kings of Assyria, when annual reports had become customary, first composed these reports in

1. Oppenheim: AM, 172 under the sectional heading "Why a 'Mesopotamian Religion' should not be written' .

2. Hillers: TC/OTP, 86 note 27 quoted in the preface to this study.

the form of letters to their acknowledged sovereign (i.e. the god Ashur), to be abridged in due course for purposes of a year-by-year edition',¹ then the evidence marshalled from the limited number of extant documents is seen to be only a fraction of what must originally have been available in *Gottesbrief* form. In addition, it has been pointed out that the lack of adê documents from the Babylonian empire can only be ascribed to historical accident, so that the imperial theology contained in their royal building inscriptions is only a fraction of the original explicit theological documentation of the empire, the sword and the gods.

This gap in extant 1st Millenium treaty documents from Assyria and Babylonia leaves unanswered the question as to whether they included an historical prologue or not. Some scholars are inclined to suppose that they did on the basis of a couple of very fragmented lines in a very fragmentary text, the Ashurbanipal-Qedar document.² In the present writer's opinion, conclusions on this issue are presently premature, but if a 1st Millenium adê document were to turn up with an historical prologue, this would obviously lend weight to the view that Mesopotamia could be described as having an adê-theology of history. The possibilities of further discovery thus appear to weigh in the positive regarding the results of this present study.

Because the Assyrian material not only includes adê documents but also reflects more historical details of empire related to treaties in the royal records, it is only to be expected that a more coherent adê-theology emerges from the Assyrian sources than the Babylonian. All the details cannot be recapitulated here, but the coherent outlines obtained from Esarhaddon's *Gottesbrief*, and the scheme constructed from Ashurbanipal's Annals may be cited. From the former source came six points:

1. IHANE, 666.

2. Bu. 91-5-9, 178 published by K. Deller & S. Parpola: Or 37 (1968), 464-466 "Ein Vertrag Assurbanipals mit dem arabischen Stamm Qedar" with the comments of A. F. Campbell: Biblica 50 (1969), 534f "An Historical Prologue in a Seventh-Century Treaty".

- \$ the adê indictment of the vassal
- \$ the vassal's sin confessed
- \$ the reiterated verdict of retribution
- \$ divine intervention during the military attack
- \$ the adê righteousness of the Assyrian monarch
- \$ the realisation of the adê curses

This is impressively coherent when one considers that only a single aspect of a campaign is dealt with.

Backing this was the wider-spread coherent presentation to be found in Ashurbanipal's war records where the adê acts as a definite organisational principle in the historiography, so that incidents are related in terms of the ten points -

- \$ the oath
- \$ its rupture
- \$ the call for repentance
- \$ its divinely insulting rejection
- \$ the royal prayer of indictment
- \$ the divine response through oracular pronouncement
- \$ the ensuing active intervention of the gods
- \$ the judicial fate of the adê violator
- \$ the victory and spoil ceremonies as public thanksgiving
- \$ the renewed imposition of the vassal oath

These points were studied separately in depth using the Ashurbanipal material as a whole rather than individual incidents or campaigns.

The adê was also found to be at the root of Sargon and Ashurbanipal's campaigns to protect their vassals, and throughout the documents studied was perceived the need felt by these imperial monarchs to present themselves within the judicial framework of the adê, rather than operating as unfettered autocrats with no principle beyond themselves to appeal to. Thus it was seen that sin and righteousness are given character in relation to the adê.

Besides the elements of human heart, speech and deed defined in relation to the adê, the elements of nature were observed to be drawn into this coherent theology, for the adê was invoked to explain the phenomena of electrical storms, the activities of wild animals and the onset of diseases - to mention but three components of the historically realised treaty curses.

Furthermore, the adê attested to a relationship between the Assyrian pantheon and the gods of other nations with historical and imperial consequences.

Because all these elements of experience were given meaning in relation to the adê, we must conclude that one is justified in speaking of an adê theology meaning a coherent and somewhat systematic principle for the interpretation of empire and the gods in the 1st Millenium bc. In fact, the study of elements such as the Covenant Meal attested in Sargon's 8th Campaign and the Divine Net metaphor attested in Ashurbanipal reveals that the Assyrian kings of the 1st Millenium were heirs to a theological tradition reaching well back into the 2nd Millenium, whether in rudimentary or already developed form.

Carrying this summary forward historically, it became clear that it was justified to speak of a Babylonian imperial theology which functioned to explain the wielding of the sword and victories in battle. The organisational principle was found to lie in the concept of divine election to the throne and cultic care-taking, and the need to give an historical apologetic for divine sovereignty.

Prominent in this was the concept of divine wrath directed both against Babylon itself and against its enemies. The inscriptions of Nabonidus in particular revealed the concept of foreign people such as the Assyrians, the Ummanmanda and Cyrus being used to execute the divine will through the fluctuations of military power.

While there are differences of emphasis between the Assyrian and Babylonian theological writings termed royal inscriptions - mainly due to the lack of explicit exposition of the treaty in the latter - both display what may best be termed an imperial theology. This is sufficiently coherent in its explanation of the election to world rule of the king, his reliance on the active intervention of the gods in battle, and the exhibition of divine sovereignty in history to merit the term theology and to gain inclusion in any attempt to write a religion of Mesopotamia.

In conclusion, and to show that this imperial theology is not always a matter of *post eventu* apologetic, the words of the king who put an end to the Assyrian empire may be quoted again:

Whatever king over the land, whether heir or grandson who comes after me, whom Marduk names for suzerainty over the land - do not incline your mind to power and might. Seek the direction of Nabu and Marduk and they will certainly annihilate your enemies. (Nbp 4/I,2 Col 1:31-34)

Postscript.

The full implications of all the passages quoted from the Assyrian and Babylonian documents for Old Testament studies remain to be worked out, for the allusions to the Old Testament during the course of the discussion have necessarily been limited. Is there an imperial theology in the Old Testament, and if so what does it owe, if anything, to the Mesopotamian concepts of divine election to world rule, the divine choice of the capital city and the glorification of the national shrine, the bringing of tribute and the treasure of the nations and the subservience of foreign kings ? Or again, what are the implications for Deuteronomic studies of the adê-theology of history ? The prophetic rîb and the threat of treaty curses have received attention, and the distinctiveness of the so-called Deuteronomic doctrine of retribution in the Old Testament has been questioned in recent studies,¹ and it has become necessary to once again formulate the distinctive features of the Old Testament's statements about the covenant, the king, the sword and the sovereignty of Yhwh while fully taking into account not only the treaty documents of the 1st Millenium but also the theological material in the 1st Millenium royal inscriptions.

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1. For instance K.A.Kitchen's essay "Ancient Orient, 'Deuteronomism' & the OT" in New Perspectives on the OT, ed. J.Barton-Payne, Word Books, 1970, 1-24:

Much that is called Deuteronomic is common ground conceptually in the religions and society of the Biblical Near East at large, and not even specifically Israelite, let alone specially Deuteronomic within Israel. (p.19)

Compare J.G.Gammie: CBQ 32(1970), 1-12 "The Theology of Retribution in the Book of Deuteronomy" for a summary of the debate internal to Old Testament studies and centring around the publication of Klaus Koch: Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche 52(1955), 1-42 "Gibt es ein Vergeltungsdogma im A.T. ?", where Gammie formulates four aspects of the idea of retribution in the book of Deuteronomy itself - a reminder of the ever present danger of over-simplification.

PART IV: EXCURSES.IV.1: The Divine Net.

In Sg 8:118 the national god of Assyria is portrayed in the act of capturing her enemies in his net - ina gišparrišu ēpiš lemutti lā ipparšiddu.¹ A wider study of this metaphor will prove rewarding, for by itself it controverts the facile notion that Israel's God is to be distinguished from the gods of Mesopotamia by the latter's non-activity in the realm of history, as opposed to the cyclical realm of nature. What is presented here is an outline, the sketch of an idea, and makes no claim to comprehensiveness, nor to originality, for its starting point is the outstanding contribution of J-G.Heintz to Old Testament and Ancient Near Eastern studies in his paper on the prophetic oracles of Mari.²

The general point we wish to emphasise is the great antiquity and continuity of this theological metaphor, for it is found in Sumerian texts of the mid 3rd Millenium and also in the Ramataja vassal treaties (EVT) from Esarhaddon's 7th Century Assyria. Besides this wide time-span, there is an equally impressive distribution of the concept among literary genres. A quasi-chronobgical and quasi-literary approach will enable us to appreciate this distribution.

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1. The passage is discussed in Part I: A, Sargon's 8th Campaign Report, section A.1 - The Theological Structure of the *Gottesbrief*, p. 14-16.
 2. J-G.Heintz: VTSupp 17(1969), 112-138 "Oracles Prophétiques et 'Guerre Sainte' selon les Archives de Mari et l'Ancien Testament", which is a modified form of one of three concluding chapters of a thesis submitted to the University of Stradbourg with the title "Les Lettres 'prophétiques' des Archives royales de Mari et l'Ancien Testament". This and his study "Le Filet divine: étude d'un thème de souveraineté du Proche-Orient antique dans ses rapports avec le Herem biblique" (ex dactyl. - mémoire présenté à l'École Biblique et Archéologique Francaise de Jérusalem, 1964/65, to appear in Cahiers de la Revue Biblique have not been available to me in preparing this excursus.

(a) The Sumerian Context.

The so-called 'Stele of Vultures' provides a particularly fine example of the Divine Net theme, for it is expounded in both word and sculptured scene.¹ It commemorates the victory of E-ana-tuma king of Lagash over the neighbouring city of Umma some time in the 3rd Millennium², and is estimated to have originally carried some 830 lines of which only 335 complete lines of writing remain plus 130 damaged ones on the limestone body which is measured at 150 x 130 centimetres. One side portrays the warriors of Lagash in action with Eannatum at their head advancing in close order over the fallen bodies of the enemy; the other is devoted to the intervention of the gods of whom Ningirsu, the city-god of Lagash is foremost. Parrot comments:

the fragments of the shattered stele that have been pieced together make it clear that a whole pantheon of gods threw themselves into the fray. Two crowns still intact, point to the presence of two goddesses, presumably Inanna and Bau. But the mighty figure of Ningirsu, tutelary god of Lagash, dominates the scene.³

It is Ningirsu who holds a giant net in his left hand by a clasp with symbolic form attached to its main outer cord. The clasp consists of a lion-headed eagle mounted on two lions, and they may be compared with the near-contemporary divine emblems such as the hammered copper al ^Ubaid temple lintel, apparently the god of the storm DINGIR IM.

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1. In addition to the literature on the 'Stèle des Vautours' cited by Heintz (art.cit., 133 note 4), there is the recent French translation by Sollberger in the convenient collection of early royal inscriptions IRSA, 47-58 number IC5a. High quality photographs of the stele may be found in A.Parrot: Sumer, figs. 163-166 and in S.N.Kramer: History Begins, figs. 9-10.
 2. According to the Middle Chronology which dates Hammurabi at 1792-1750 bc, Eannatum reigned from 2454-2425 bc, while the Lagash Dynasty ran from c. 2570-2342 bc. See CAH I:Part 1, chap 6 on the Chronology and CAH I: Part 2, 93ff chap 13 "The Cities of Babylonia" by C.J.Gadd, especially 114-124 on the historical setting.
 3. Parrot:op.cit., 136.

DUGUD (lion-headed eagle on two stags),¹ or the finely-etched lion-headed eagle on two lions on the silver vase of Entemena patesi of Lagash,² or the similar emblem on the D du plaque in which the lions bite at the eagle's wings.³ The feathered, winged discs, so etimes with arms drawing a bow, which represent the divine intervention of the national god Ashur in battle sculptures of the Assyrian period continue the 3rd Millenium interpretation of history in pictures.⁴

In the Vulture Stele, Ningirsu wields a mace rather than the later bow and arrow which were apparently not used in battle at this period.⁵ Right-handed he strikes the head of a captive which is protruding from his net, while other captives tumble limply within it.

The text no less than the sculpture bears on our theme for it provides a six-fold oath with the Divine Net as part of the malediction. Eannatum describes himself as having cast the net of the gods over his enemy:

I Eannatum, the Great Net (^{sa}šuš-gal) of Enlil cast over the man of Umma, and (by this net) I made him take oath. (And) the man of Umma took oath. 6

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1. See the excellent photo in Saggs: Greatness, fig 10 .
 2. Parrot:op.cit, fig 188 .
 3. ibid, fig 167a; larger reproduction in Kramer:History Begins,fig 38f.
 4. See Tiglath-pileser I's Broken Obelisk 12th Cent. bc (Parrot: N&B, fig 40c, 35); 9th Cent. glazed brick from Ashur(N&B,227); 9th Cent. Kalakh palace relief of Ashurnasirpal II(N&B,14 fig 18).
 5. Though known to have been used in hunting - see CAH I:Part 2, chap 13, p. 121ff 'Armies & Warfare' .
 6. RN ^{sa}šuš-gal DN e-na-sì nam-e-na-ta-tar lú Umma^{ki}-ge
RN nam-mu-na-tar-rá (16:13-19)
- Best text edition by E.Sollberger: Corpus, Ean. 1; IRSA, 47ff.

Subsequently, he redefined the boundary between the two cities, which lie some thirty miles apart, Umma (Jūkhā) to the West and Lagash (Telloh or al Hibah) to the East, roughly equidistant from the channel-bed al-Gharrāf/Shatṭ al-Ḥayy, which runs between them. On the boundary he erected stelae, the removal of which would instigate retribution:

This stele (na-rú-a) let him not remove ! If he violates (the boundary), may the great net of Enlil, king of heaven and earth, by which he has taken oath, descend upon Umma !

Before Enlil my lord upon whose order, at the bidding of whom would the man of Umma go back on his word ? As long as the day endures, (this) word endures ! If he transgresses his oath, may the great net of Enlil by which he has taken oath, descend upon Umma !

This wording is repeated with the other deities - Ninhursag, Enki, Suen, Utu and Ninki. The importance of the Divine Net is apparent from the fact that it is the sole malediction backing the oath, unlike the multiple curses which begin with the Agade Dynasty inscriptions and develop to an extraordinary proportion in Esarhaddon's treaties.

For our purpose, it is important to note that the mention of the Divine Net in the record of Sargon II's 8th Campaign has this remarkably long theological history behind it. Not only imagery is involved - a similarity of metaphor or simile does not necessarily indicate an historical connection, but the very theological framework coincides, i.e. inter-state relations with terms sworn to in the name of the gods, re-enforced by curses on violators and expected to have an historical out-working due to divine intervention.

Next we may mention the clay cones of En-temena (2404-2375 bc), nephew of Eannatum, for they take up the historical relations between Lagash and Umma as well as continuing the Divine Net theme.² The

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1. The intervening passage with the liberation of two specially anointed doves is omitted here; see Corpus for text restorations, and Borger: HKL I, 497 under Ean. 1 for bibliography.
 2. See Corpus, Ent. 29; IRSA, 71ff IC7i; History Begins, 86f and S.N.Kramer IEJ 3(1953), 217-232 "Sumerian Historiography"; J.B.Nies: JAOS 36 (1917), 137-139 "A Net Cylinder of Entemena" with J-G.Heintz: artcit, 134 note 3 . .

inscription opens with a sketch of the historical-theological situation between the two cities since the time Mesilim king of Kish was overlord of both and himself a worshiper of Ningirsu, and measured out a boundary-line in accordance with the divine word.¹

This preamble which is apparently present at the opening of the Vulture Stele though in very damaged form² can hardly fail to remind one of the historical prologues of later treaty texts, notably those of the Hittites.

Kramer has described the style of the writer as follows:

he strives to fit the historical events into the accepted framework of his theocratic world-view, and thus evolves a unique literary style which constantly interweaves the deeds of men and gods and often fails to distinguish between them.³

In fact this is a common Ancient Near Eastern pattern of historiography with the exception of the Chronicle Texts and hence its uniqueness lies rather in the great antiquity of the specimen. We can be glad of the scribe's method for the history is by and large recoverable by reading between the lines, while the document also affords invaluable evidence of an already developed theory of divine intervention in human affairs.

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1. Dated c. 2550 bc by Middle Chronology. See IRSA,40 IA3 a-c in which Lugal-ša-engur of Lagash Nin-kisal-si of Adab are named as contemporaries, and he describes himself as the builder of Ningirsu's temple and a worshiper in E-sara, Inanna's temple in Adab.
 2. Less than 40 damaged and obscure lines remain out of an estimated 98, but the editor can say: 'ce qu'on sait de la littérature historiographique du temps, permettent de penser que l'auteur nous renseignait sur l'origine lointaine du conflit récurrent entre Lagash et Umma et sur ses principaux épisodes', IRSA,48.
 3. History Begins, 82f .

Enlil is pictured as head of the pantheon arbitrating between the lesser deities, Ningirsu and Shara, patron deities of Lagash and Umma respectively. This is no merely human arbitration on Mesilim's part. He measured off the boundary 'according to the word of Sataran'. The stele erected, presumably like Entemena's cones, recorded the history of the conflict, the divine decision, the oaths of the parties in agreement and maledictions against violators. At any rate, Ush the Umma aggressor is described as having 'violated (both) the decree (of the gods) and the word (given by man to man)'.¹

(Then) did Ningirsu, Enlil's foremost warrior do battle with (the men of) Umma in accordance with his (Enlil's) straightforward word; by the word of Enlil he hurled the great Shush-net upon them, and heaped up their skeleton(?) piles in the plain in their (various) places. ²

No human warriors are mentioned on the side of Lagash ! It is then recorded that fresh measurements and stelae were made. The subsequent history we skip over, and move on to the terminating curse:

The Ummaite who (at any future time) will cross the boundary ditch of Ningirsu (and) the boundary ditch of Nanshe in order to take to himself fields and farms by force, whether he be (really) an Ummaite or a foreigner - may Enlil destroy him; may Ningirsu, after hurling his great Shush-net on him, bring down on him his lofty hand (and) his lofty foot; may the people of his city, having risen in rebellion, strike him down in the midst of his city.

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1. Kramer's translation; but note Sollberger IRSA, 71 : "Uš ...agit selon (ses) discours grandioses", with a note suggesting this refers to the speech he made in the assembly at Umma when the accord was agreed to.
 2. Sollberger: 'érigea ses tumulus dans la plaine', with a note that sahar-dul-TAG₄...dub means 'entasser de la terre en un tumulus', décrit l'acte rituel accompli à la fin d'une bataille (par le vainqueur): les cadavres (ennemis) sont mis en tas et recouverts de terre', IRSA, 57 note 6.

The Divine Net is again in the hands of Ningirsu,¹ though the action of Enlil and of rebellious subjects are drawn into the curse formula and find echoes centuries later in Assyrian documents.

Before moving on from this early period we may note another example of sculptural representation of the Divine Net which belongs to the Agade Dynasty period, though its royal protagonist cannot be identified. It bears a very obvious artistic relation to the Eannatum monument. The fragment depicts the left arm of a giant figure, certainly that of a god, bent at the elbow and gripping the clasp of a net, exactly as Ningirsu does on the Vulture Stele. The right hand wields a mace which batters the protruding head of a bearded captive, while inside the net little victims lie trapped, exactly like those on the Vulture Stele. Apparently this was a popular motif for royal victory monuments.²

The next text we mention belongs to the great collection of Temple Hymns penned by Enheduanna, daughter of Sargon of Agade and high-priestess of the moon god Nanna of Ur.³ It is No. 34 in the series of 42, and honours Ninazu and his temple É-sikil in Eshnunna.⁴ The

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1. In Cylinder B of Gudea patesi of Lagash, c. 2141-2122 bc, Ningirsu is described as 'god of the man-catching net': dingir ka-mar-za ê-a sa-ni (Col 6:9).
 2. Compare the ink drawing in Heintz: art.cit, fig. 4 p. 132 with ANEP, No. 307, which unfortunately does not show the god's arms and mace from the angle from which it was photographed. According to the notes the object is diorite of 540mm of the Agade period and found at Susa.
 3. See Hallo & van Dijk: Exaltation for an introduction to her career and literary achievement; Kramer's translation of her major work appears in ANETS, 143/579ff .
 4. Ninazu was later ousted by Tishpak, originally identical with the Hurrian weather-god Teshup. The editors point out that Ninazu appears as a god of the nether world in No. 14, but here as a 'Ninurta figure' - see the note on 455, page 134 of the work cited below.

majority of the 22 lines describe not the temple but its god, who is portrayed as a warrior in terms of a lion, a dragon, a venomous beast and a storm.

House, your prince (is) a great lion, the
 enemy hangs down from his claw,
 Your lord (is) a furious and strong storm,
 the 'heart of the battle',
 In the combat he goes like, his(!)
 lofty arm (holds) the shield,
 (It is) a net over the widespread people,
 the foe cannot escape from his hand

The object this divine onslaught is directed against is described as 'the hostile land', the 'enemies' land', 'the rebellious land', 'the disobedient', 'the enemy', 'the evildoer' and so on, but the more generalised phrase 'the widespread people' seems to indicate that this divine retribution carried beyond the bounds of vengeance on oath-breakers to any not in friendly relations with the city. The stock phraseology has probably been taken over from Ninurta poems.

It is not a far step from describing the god of a local temple as a Divine Net to the personification of the temple itself, for the association of deity-temple-city was exceedingly close in Mesopotamia, as is witnessed time and again by its survival of foreign invasions and destructions. Two examples of this personification occur in the collection of hymns already referred to, and they may be amplified by some additional references and a consideration of the Hymn to Enlil.

In No. 15 and No. 40 of Enheduanna's collection, she describes the temple itself as the Net of the gods. In the one instance, it is Ninguishzida's temple Gishbanda, in the other the house of Inanna (= the Akkadian Ishtar) goddess of love and war in Urmash.

Gishbanda, neck-stock, fine-meshed net,
 bond of the 'great earth', no one can
 draw his foot from it
 Your ... 'back' is lofty, ... like a trap

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1. šen-šen-na SA₄-gim DU á-mah-bi kušE-ĒB-ūr-ra
 sa-pār-un-dagal-la erím šu-na nu-è (lines 441-442)

Sjöberg: Temple Hymns, 42f text & translation; 132ff commentary.

Ulmash, 'upperland', ... of the land,
 Ferocious lion, raging against a wild bull,
 Net spreading over the enemies,
 It makes silence fall upon the hostile land,
 As long as it is not submissive poisonous foam
 is poured out upon it ₁

In the first poem the metaphor appears somewhat gratuitously unsupplemented by like imagery. The second quotation opens the poem in question and does fit in with the rest of the imagery for Inanna is a warrior who 'opens the "door of battle" ' and is surrounded by blood and weaponry (lines 514-516).

Now a newly published hymn to 'Nungal in the Ekur' illustrated extremely well the sharing of rôles by the personified temple and its goddess.² The first 26 of the 120 lines follow the pattern of Sumerian temple hymns, personifying and extolling the numinous power of the temple over mankind, discerning and judging the wicked. It is compared to animals such as a great dragon, a scorpion, a bird of prey, a raging lion, a poisonous snake and so on, and the numinous phenomena of furious storm, raging sea, flood, green evening light and the rainbow strengthen the poetic comparison. In this section the following two lines occur, echoed later by a third:

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1. giš-bàn-da^{ki} si-gar igi-ten-en gán ki-gal giri nu-e₁₁
 bar gi₄-a nim-ma giš^{es}-ad-gim rib-ba
 (Temple Hymns, No. 15 line 190f = SGL 2, 85-88)
 gū-erim-gal-šê sa bàra-ga
 (ibid, No. 40 line 509)

2. A.W.Sjöberg: AfO 24(1973),19-46 "Nungal in the Ekur". The 43 texts and fragments on which his edition is based all date to the Old Babylonian period, but the greater age of the composition is indicated by its inclusion among the literature of the received Sumerian tradition represented by the Literary Catalogues, eg. C.J.Gadd: UET 6/I, No. 123 = S.N.Kramer: RA 55(1961),169-176 "A New Literary Catalogue from Ur", line 14 and the parallel texts B,L & P in Kramer's sigla.

House, trap which lies in wait for the evil,
 which makes the body of the wicked tremble,
 House, net whose fine meshes are skilfully woven,
 which gathers people as booty.

House, it surveys heaven and earth, a net spread out,
 The evil man cannot escape its arm,
 it drags around the evil doer 1

The poem continues by introducing the goddess Ningal who is depicted as taking her seat on her dias in the shrine and observing and supporting the king and the judge in their tasks of administering justice, law and order. Her gaze is benevolent as she watches over the black-headed people (line 76), for she frightens no one and is filled with mercy and compassion (line 75), but to the wicked she is inimicable. The strongly moralistic tone which was sounded in connection with the rôle of the temple becomes a refrain in the description of Nungal's action - she 'clamps down on the one who does evil to her, he cannot escape her arm' (line 61). She says, 'The evil man cannot escape my arm, I know what they have done' (line 78). This recapitulates what has been said of her companion Ninegala who acts as her deputy, handing over people to hungal (line 42). Of Ninegala, it is said:

Ninegala has proudly taken her seat on its dais
 (which is lustrous like) lapis lazuli
 She has set her eye upon the judge who makes the
 decision, she knows the false and the righteous,
 Her net is (made of) fine meshes, she has stretched
 it over the land,
 The wicked man does not grasp her foot, he cannot
 escape her arm 2

1. é gis-es-ad ne-ru-du-sè ná-a hul-gál-la su dúb-bu
 é sapar_x igi-te-en-bi galam-kad₅ un nam-re-es ur₄-ur₄-ù
 é-e an-ki-a igi mi-ni-in-gál sa-par_x(=KISAL)-ra al-lá
 (art.cit., 29 & 31, lines 5f & 25)

2. Lines 36-39; line 38 reads in Sumerian:

sa-par_x(KISAL)-ra-ni igi-te-en hé-a kalam-ma mu-un-na-an-lá

The case is then quoted of the man 'who has not spoken to his (personal) god'. Quite clearly this does not fit into the treaty framework, but it is interesting that the results of this lapse into personal sin have somewhat parallel effects to that of a broken treaty oath. For example, in Sjöberg's words:

he is naked and has covered his face with a cloth (line 45). He has broken all contact with his friends and acquaintances; he leaves the city to dwell in ruined cities (line 49) ¹

One is reminded both of Job in silent isolation on the ash-heap and of the treaty curses of banishment to wandering on the steppe and being stripped naked and publicly exposed. The concept of rejection is common to both human and spiritual planes and acts as a powerful psychological deterrent from personal or treaty sin. In the hymn under consideration it is the personal rather than the collective sin which occasions the use of the Divine Net. This appearance of the Divine Net in a context of personal sin illustrates the range of Mesopotamian sin theology and suggests the generalisation that is borne out by much later texts that sin is individual in hymns and prayers and collective in historiographical texts such as the Assyrian royal records.

Before going on to the main text, the Enlil Hymn, we may conveniently gather up a number of parallels for the personification of Temples as the Divine Net from scattered contexts. A Pennsylvania tablet cited by Falkenstein in support of his translation of the Enlil Hymn uses several phrases to convey the idea of the Divine Net:

é giš^šes-ad-erím-du: Haus, Schlinge für den Bösen...

é sa-pàr: Haus, Fangnetz

é zi-du erím-du igi-gala, hul šu-bi nu-è: Haus,
das den Guten (und) Bösen erkennt das den Bösen
aus seiner Hand nicht entkommen lässt ²

1. art. cit., 20

2. Tablet UMBS 12, 40:5 (see HKL I, 289 No. 40) cited in SGL I, 26ff in support of line 17 of the Enlil Hymn translation. The phrases quoted above are in parallel with each other.

Then there is the door-socket inscription of Amar-Suen(2046-2038 bc) which describes the temple of Nanna in the following line:

sa-bar-a-ni lû erím RN nu-è

his net, the enemy of the divine Amar-Sin does
not escape ₁

An extension of the idea from god to temple and then to city is attested in the Lugalnanda Epic where the city of Uruk, or more precisely its walls, are described in terms of the Net metaphor:

bàd-unu^{ki}-ga gu-mušen-na-gim edin-e hé-ni-lá-lá

die Mauern von Uruk sollen wie eine Vogelschlinge in
der Ebene gespannt sein ₂

To judge from the texts quoted and the Enlil Hymn to follow, it seems valid to read in these metaphors something more than a haphazard literary stroke.

In the Enlil Hymn, unlike the Eannatum inscription where Enlil wielded the Net, it is his city Nippur which is personified as his Net. Nippur, as the city of the panteon's head, had tremendous religious prestige in the Sumerian period, and it is to discoveries made in it that we owe our knowledge of Sumerian literature. Attached to the temple complex, the E-kur, was the scribal academy or Edubba, and very

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1. Barton's translation (RISA,290); but IRSA, 147 IIIA3c renders: 'son ...que les enemis d'Amar-Suena ne gravissent pas' and adds a note on the omitted word sa-bar - 'peut-être d'après le contexte "terre-plein, éminence" '. The subject is the temple of Nanna, described as 'son tribunal' in the previous phrase with which a description of it as a Net would appear to fit very well, but a final decision must be left to competent Sumerologists.
 2. Cited by van Dijk: SGL 2, 87 note 20 in discussion of TH No. 15 and from 'Lugalbanda & Enmerkar' (OECT 1,8 III:38). See now C.Wilcke: Das Lugalbandaepos, 1969 , p. 118f & 124f for lines 305 & 371. This edition also carries a full introduction and discussion.

likely the Hymn to Enlil is a product of this seat of learning.¹

After an initial paeon of praise to Enlil who has set up his seat in the 'bond of heaven and earth', the poem describes the religious significance of the city. It is characterised by truth, righteousness and social justice which are exemplified by the orderliness in human relations, the son honouring his mother, dealing kindly with his brothers and respecting the authority of the elders. In this context, we learn that Nippur punishes the wicked:

It (Nippur) is a trap that serves as a pit
and net against the rebellious land
(line 17)

2

There follows a long list of sins of speech and deed, which is summed up by line 25: '(All these) evils the city does not tolerate'. This line is immediately followed by the Net imagery with the city being personified:

Nippur, whose 'arm' is a vast net,
Whose 'heart' is the fast-stepping hurin-bird
Whose 'hand' the wicked and evil cannot escape;
(lines 26-28)

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1. See S.N.Kramer: The Sumerians, chaps 5 & 6 on Edubba and Temple. His translation of the Enlil Hymn (ANETS, 137/573ff) is based on Falkenstein & Reisman's unpublished textual dissertation. Sumerian quotations will be taken from Falkenstein: SGL I, 11ff.

2. The basic idea seems secure in the light of the lexical evidence cited by Falkenstein. See ŠL, 472 35;36;37 - éš-sa-ad, éš-sa-du, giš-és-sa-dù = nahbalu; and ŠL, 104 17 - sa =šētu

giš-és-ad ki-bal-a ub₄ sa aka-a

Sie ist für das aufsässige Land eine Schlinge,
bereitet ihm die Fallgrube (und) das Netz
(SGL I, 11 & 20)

3. nibru^{ki} á-bi sa-pâr-gal-la-àm: Nippurs 'Arm' ist ein grosses Netz (SGL I, 12 & 20; line 26)

Vielleicht lässt sich an Wendungen denken, in denen ein Gott als 'rechter Arm' einer Stadt bezeichnet ist. Dann wäre hier wohl auf Ninurta verwiesen. (Ibid, 37)

See further his note on the Hymn to Ninurta op.cit., 118 line 66.

There is a fundamental unity therefore between the passages cited from the Stele of Vultures, the cones of Entemena and Sargon II's 8th Campaign report. That the Net metaphor carried across from the Old Sumerian canon to the Neo-Sumerian canon where it appears in royal hymns from Isin and Larsa is proved from its appearance in recently published material.

For example, in a republication by Ake Sjöberg of an Adab-song to Nergal with a prayer for king Shūlishu of Isin (1984-1975 bc), Nergal is requested to 'pile in heaps for him (the king) his evil enemies', and is compared at length to storm, hurricane, flood and dragon, as well as to 'a lusty wild bull' whose great horn has smitten the enemy. Perhaps his rôle as executor of treaty curses is referred to in the lines 'Nergal smites the enemy whom he has cursed, (and the enemy) is counted as nothing'; 'Nergal huge trapping-net (sa-sū-us-gal) for the evil one covering all enemies; Heroic warrior, you are a great furious storm upon the land which disobeys your father'.¹

Similarly, the god Numushda is addressed as 'grand aurochs (sūn-gal) 'qui encorne les pays rebelles' in a hymn with a prayer for Sīniqīšam (1840-1836 bc), the 11th king of Larsa. It continues: 'Ton bras est un filet de guerre (sa-pār-ām) pour le pays qui ne connaît pas le blé', which the editor sees as an allusion to the god's intervention against Martu peoples, the Amorite nomads which Shū-Sin's 'Amorite Wall' failed to keep out of Mesopotamia.² This roots Numushda's action in history, however loosely, and that is significant.

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1. A.W.Sjöberg: ZA 63(1973), 1-55 "Miscellaneous Sumerian Hymns", No. 1 (E.Chiera: SRT 12 A = CBS 14074 B), p. 2ff; lines partially or entirely quoted are 32, 49, 7 & 46f. On the concept of a Neo-Sumerian canon, see W.W.Hallo: Festschrift Speiser/JAOS 88.1 Vol. 53, 71-89 "Individual Prayer in Sumerian - the continuity of a tradition", p. 73 with which compare his article JCS 17(1963), 39-51 "Royal Hymns & Mesopotamian Unity", where he notes that 'we have a virtually unbroken succession of royal hymns from Ur-nammu to Abi-esuh, ie. from about 2100-1700 bc', p. 42.
 2. M.A.Dupret: Or 43(1974), 327-343 "Hymne au dieu Munušda avec prière en faveur de Sīniqīšam de Larsa"; lines quoted are 10 & 19. On the MAR.TU = Amurrū - the Amorites, see J-R.Kupper: Nomades, 159f and I. J.Gelb's important review article "The Early History of the West Semitic Peoples", JCS 15(1961), 27-47; cf. CAH I:Part 2, 562ff & 631ff on the issue and on the Isin-Larsa period; W.H.Ph. Römer: Sumerische 'Königshymnen' der Isin-Zeit, Leiden, 1965 .

We have seen, then, that beyond coincidence of metaphor or simile a theological unity emerges in Sumerian literature with reference to the Divine Net. This theological unity lies in the concept of divine punishment for sin. The instances from hymns, by describing the permanent dwelling of the god as a retributive Net vividly convey the god's permanent war on sin and sinners. Naturally the temple personnel and the citizens would be inclined to think that aggression against their city and temple was the most heinous form of sin - this is the rationale of the Vulture Stele and the Entemena Cones. Yet the passages from the Hymn to Enlil do exhibit a broader concept of sin (lines 18-34), and ultimately a link with biblical concepts need not occasion surprise.

(b) The Divine Net at Mari.

Heintz has drawn attention to three of the letters from Mari in connection with the Divine Net theme, all of which belong to the prophetic corpus, and which should be studied in this wider context, though that is beyond our scope here.¹

Inibshina, daughter of Zimri-lim king of Mari (1782-1759 bc) and priestess of the storm god Adad, relates an oracle given through a prophetess of Dagan from Terqa warning the king that the king of Eshnunna is playing him false in his overtures for a peace-treaty.

salimātum ša LÚ CN dāštum-ma šapal IN.NU.DA mû
illakū ana šētīm ša uqaššaru akammissu ālšu
uḫallaq u makkūršu ša ištu aqdami lā šulputu
ušalpat

The peace-moves of the man of Eshnunna are sheer deception. Beneath the straw the waters course, but I shall gather him into a net which holds fast. I shall put an end to his city, and his property which from ancient times has not been destroyed I shall destroy. 2

The Pres. Subj. D-theme of qašāru/kašāru - 'to bind' could be either 3rd Sing. or 1st Sing. - 'que je tiendrais serré', as Heintz points out, but the former is preferable. The god Dagan does speak in the 1st Person, however, in the promises of conquest - the D-theme of roots kamāsu - 'to gather, heap up' and ḫalāqu - 'to lose, disappear' and the Š-theme of lapātu - 'to touch'. The verbs of destruction leave no doubt

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1. Heintz:art.cit, 129-133. Bibliography in the Mari prophetic texts is rapidly expanding, but see Heintz' article, E.Ellermeier: Prophetie in Mari und Israel, Theologische und Orientalistische Studien I, 1968 with Heintz' review thereof in Biblica 52(1971),543-555 with its Bibliographie Complémentaire on pages 554-555 .
 2. ARM 10, No. 80; but see W.L.Moran:Biblica 50(1971),15-56 "New Evidence from Mari on the History of Prophecy", p. 52 No. 13 for text, translation & notes differing from Dossin at key places. On Inibshina, see p. 33, the notes on line 3 of No. 3 with references.
 3. Lines 11-19 in Moran's translation. Note that Dossin's še-im is undoubtedly wrong, for as Heintz & Moran point out the cuneiform copy reads še-tim = šētu- 'net' .

that we have here in oracular form what so frequently appears as a terminal curse formula. In the latter, it is generalised and vague, while we have the advantage here of a specific historical situation to bring the formula to life. It is a paradigm of divine intervention through battle and just the place to find the Divine Net theme.

Of note too is the diplomatic situation. In the changing pattern of coalitions in the period, treaties were made and broken as the protagonists saw their advantage. Eshnunna is found fighting against and for Mari, for expediently at one time she was in alliance with Assyria and Babylon against Zimri-lim, while at another she supported Yamhad, Babylon and Mari against Ishmi-Dagan.¹ One cannot tell at what stage the salimātum were when the oracle was given. Moran's translation 'peace-moves' suggests the opening of negotiations, that is, 'peace feelers' being put out. The vengeance decreed does suggest that some sort of promises had been made which Eshnunna was now intending to break. This granted - and a more formal stage of ratified agreement cannot be ruled out - we find a very similar theological framework for the Divine Net theme to other texts cited, namely covenant and oath between states.

Mukannishum writes another letter to Zimri-lim just after he had completed the sacrifices for the life of his lord when the répondant (aplûm) of Dagan of Tuttul arose (itbēma) and spoke as follows:

1. For a synopsis, see J.M.Munn-Rankin: Iraq 18(1956),68-110 "Diplomacy in W.Asia in the Early 2nd Millenium bc", p. 69 and note 6, p. 70 and note 1 & 2. In more detail, see H.Klengel: Geschichte Syriens im 2 Jahrtausend v.u. Z., 1965 and Kupper in CAH II:Part 1, chap 1 "Northern Mesopotamia & Syria". All unfortunately pre-date the ARM 10 letters. The names and brief inscriptions of the Eshnunna kings of this period, but not the dates, are known - see IRSA, 240f IVE. Tell Asmar(Eshnunna), 55 miles N-E of Bagdad in the Diyala region was excavated by the Oriental Institute Chicago, but 'the main bulk of the tablets...remains unpublished' (AM,394).

CN mīnam tettenēpeš ana pūgim upahharka ...bitāt
7 awīlī athī u mala makkūršunu ana qāt RN lumallēm

O Babylon ! How must you be constantly treated ?
I am going to gather you into a net... I will
deliver you into the power of Zimri-lim the houses
of the seven confederates and all their possessions

... 1

Again the threat of conquest is delivered in the 1st person by the god (D-theme of root pahāru - 'to gather, assemble'), and the Divine Net descends in preface to the destruction and looting of the city. But most important to our general study is the overt allusion to treaty-making and, one may suppose, by inference to treaty-breaking. The bitāt 7 awīlī athī² is a coalition hostile to Mari under the leadership of Babylon, and very likely included former allies of Zimri-lim who had broken their oaths to him.

Alliance to Babylon itself had been a cornerstone of Zimri-lim's policy in midst of the shifting balances of power, for Mari's economic prosperity relied upon the trade route from northern Suria to Babylonia. Hammurabi who, as we know from the famous Itur-Asdu letter, was not 'mighty by himself', but simply one of five or more kings at the head of coalitions ten to fifteen strong, must by the time of this prophecy have been ready to turn on his ally after subduing a wide region. His date formulas for his 33rd and 35th years record the defeat and destruction of Mari. Our letter may date to just before Hammurabi's 33rd year.³

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1. Text - ARM 13, No. 23:8-15 with Moran's translation, ANETS, 625. Note his reading of the Ntn-theme tettenēpeš instead of the active Gtn-theme tēteneppeš of root epēšu. The style of address is reminiscent of Yhwh's word to Israel: 'O Ephraim, what shall I do with you ? What shall I do with you, O Judah ?' (Hos 6:4). In line 10 īl-kari-im: 'your god is a wild-ox' (?) is omitted - see ANETS, 625 note 34.
 2. '7' is used symbolically, cf. the OT, for 'all, the complete number'. athī are members of a group of persons of equal status and age, partners in an ahhūtu relationship - see CAD A.2, 492f athū.
 3. On the Itur-Asdu letter (G. Dossin: Syria 19, 1938, 117) and Shamshi-Adad's letter to Kuwari, which give a vivid picture of the political chicanery of this period, see ANETS, 628. Kupper thinks 'it is probable that ... Zimrilim had sought a retrial of his lost cause either by resort to arms or in the diplomatic field' (CAH II:1, 28) in the intervening period. See too Gadd (CAH II:1, 176-184) on "Hammurabi & the end of his Dynasty".

It is therefore of paramount importance for reconstructing an Ancient Near Eastern theology of history that this phenomenon of prophecy at Mari as it relates to inter-state relations be seen in the framework of treaty-oaths. There is thus far more than a figure of speech in common linking the previous Sumerian and later Assyrian and biblical passages where the Divine Net appears.

The third letter is unfortunately rather broken at the crucial passage for this study, and Assyriologists restore it differently, some in a way that eliminates the Divine Net imagery. Nevertheless, we feel that Heintz has made out a good case for the appearance of the Divine Net, and one which he had the opportunity to defend subsequent to the publication of other scholars' restorations.¹

The letter to Zimri-lim recounts the dream of Malik-Dagan from Shakka, who had seen himself in the temple of Dagan in Terqa, and heard the god speak a complaint against the king for not laying full reports before him. "Had this been done," says Dagan, "I would long ago have delivered the kings of the Yaminites into the power of Zimri-lim".²

This throws an interesting side-light on the *Gottesbrief* and

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1. See Heintz' review of Ellermeier's work in *Biblica* 52, p. 544 - the notes on lines 37f. The text, originally published by Dossin (RA 42 1948, 128ff), has been worked on by W. von Soden (WO I/5, 1950, 398f) and A. Malamat (E-I 4, 1956, 81-83) and A. L. Oppenheim (*Dreams*, 195), and is translated with notes on the crux by Moran (*ANETS*, 623).
 2. Moran's translation; he draws attention to the parallel between the Akkadian phrase ana qāt X mullûm and the biblical phrase nātan bēyad in the oracles of Yhwh's wars - Deut 2:24, 3:2, Josh 6:2, 8:1, etc.

provides a gratuitous link with the 8th Campaign report.¹ The letter continues with Dagan's command to lay a full report before him with the promise:

u šarrāhi] [ša DUMU.ME]Š-Jamīna ina ^{giš}sussul
lūbā'iri lupalššilšunūti-ma mahrika lluškušnšunūti

alors je traînerai les scheiks des Jaminites dans
la nasse des pêcheurs et je les poserai devant toi,²

Divine Net, prophetic oracle and conquest of the enemy are once more found together, while there is a possibility that the theological framework of oath and treaty might be present too.

Treaties were not unknown among the Yaminites - indeed great attention has been devoted to the treaty-ceremonies in vogue among the tribes of this era because of their link with Old Testament customs, but as Kupper remarks, Mari's 'relations with the settlers were most frequently strained, if not openly hostile, especially during Zimri-lim's reign',³ so that there is the overall pattern of hostility between Zimri-lim and the Yaminites which weighs against there having been a treaty in operation, and hence against putting this promise of divine retribution upon the Yaminites within the context of broken treaty-oaths. The letter itself makes the exact

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1. Heintz notes the relevance of the *Gottesbrief Gattung*, describing the context as 'de guerre et de promesse - ici conditionnelle - de victoire par la divinité, en liaison étroite avec le phénomène "prophétique"' (*Biblica* 50, 545). His study entitled "Lettres royales à la divinité en Mésopotamie et en Israël antiques: esquisses d'un genre littéraire" read at the Congress for the International Association for the History of Religions, Stockholm, 1970, has not been available to me.
 2. Heintz' translation and restorations (*VTSupp* 17, 129f) with lexical evidence supporting *sussul* - 'net' (*ibid.*, 130 note 2) along with von Soden (*WO* 1, 398) but against Malamet and Moran's 'cooking-instrument' - but see now Moran in *Biblica* 50, p. 54 where he lists *ARM* 13: 23 in noting 'the relative frequency in these prophecies of the net metaphor'. The root *pašālu* - 'to pull, drag' in the D-theme is the best restoration, not von Soden's S-theme or Malamet's *bašālu* 'to cook'.
 3. *CAH* II:1, chap 1, p. 25. See *Nomades*, chap. 2 on the Benjaminites. M. Held: *BASOR* 200 (1970), 32-40 "Philological Notes on the Mari Covenant Rituals" lists the occurrences to date of the idiom *hayarum qatālu* (cf. *kārat bēřît*) in the Mari archive - p. 33 note 4.

relation between the two groups more difficult to assess if anything, for on the one hand the god asks whether a treaty has been drawn up but on the other hand promises outright defeat and subjugation of the Yaminites. How are we to understand Dagan's question -

"Did the kings of the Yaminites and their forces make peace with the forces of Zimri-lim who moved up here?" I said, "They did not make peace."
(ANETS, 623)

Was the god genuinely asking for military-diplomatic information? If so, he seems to have envisaged a treaty as a possibility. In favour of its being a genuine request for information is the main theme of complaint about the lack of full reports - no doubt this deficiency made accurate 'prophecies' more difficult. On the other hand, the question could be ironical: Dagan was bound by no treaty stipulations whatsoever, and hence nothing prevented him turning on the Yaminites in wrath and slaughter, and this is what he promised to do. A certain ambiguity remains, therefore, and we cannot be sure whether the situation was one of unmitigated hostility, of treaty negotiations, of treaty renewal or of treaty breach. Perhaps it is much the same situation as that reflected in the first letter quoted (ARM 10:80).

In conclusion, we agree with Heintz' exposition of the Divine Net motif as the

arme omniprésente et englobante de la divinité souveraine, destinée à châtier ceux qui ont rompu le statut de dépendance juridique (Jaminites) ou d'alliance (Hammurapi de Babylone) vis-à-vis du souverain de Mari¹

This, we feel, is the basic significance of the Divine Net theme, rather than a victory ritual on which Heintz lays great stress. Certainly the Divine Net implies victory, victory over specific historical enemies with whom the king was in conflict, but its fundamental connotation is of divine retribution in parallel with maledictions about the shattering of weapons and slaughter by the sword. Its theological framework is the treaty-covenant in which it operates as a treaty-curse from the earliest records and with a sustained longevity.

1. art.cit, 133.

(c) Hammurabi and the Divine Net.

The man who put paid to Mari by breaking his treaty-oaths was not in the least embarrassed theologically by this Machiavellian move as one glance at his famous Code's prologue shows. He presents himself as a just ruler in time of peace and a just conqueror in war. We draw attention to two passages in this connection, one from the Code's prologue and the other from a hymn in the royal idiom.

The opening lines of the prologue dwell on the divine call and the divinely decreed task given Hammurabi -

To make justice to appear in the land, to destroy
the evil and the wicked that the strong might not
oppress the weak, to rise indeed like Shamash over
the dark-haired folk to give light to the land,

Of note is the identification of the king with the Sun god, elsewhere expressed even more directly as 'RN..the sun-god of Babylon who makes the light to rise on the land of Sumer and Akkad'.² A long section of self-praise presents the king as temple-builder and conqueror, and one of the royal epithets used involves the Divine Net - sapar nakiri.³ The king pictures himself as the Net with the directness evident in his sun metaphor. Hammurabi dispenses both justice and retribution. This is the message.

The second text is a paean of self-praise which celebrates the military prowess of Hammurabi in 29 lines of Sumerian, of which those with a bearing on our theme are set out in their editor's wording:

1. Driver: BabLaws, 7 CH ia lines 32ff.

2. *op.cit.*, 13 CH va lines 4ff.

3. *ibid.*, 8 CH iia line 68 'net ensnaring the enemy' .

lugal....

sa-pâr lú-erím-šè lá-a-me-en

ein Netz, das über den Feind gebreitet ist

sa^ašú-uš-ga^l xlx sá-gá-ne šú-a-me-en

ein grosses Fangnetz, das die [Bös]les Sinnenden zudeckt

1

The conquest by the sword is qualified by aligning it with the eradication of evil, which means the subjugation of territories which were unsubmitive to the gods of Babylon.

Das Land, das sich nicht vor Marduk beugt,
schlage ich ihm mit meiner starken Waffe nieder,
wie ein Land, das Enlil zu vernichtten befohlen hat,
zerschlage is es. (lines 12-14)

The final line too imparts a tone of righteousness designed to complement the just war apologetic which precedes: 'Hammurabi, der König der Gerechtigkeit, bin ich' (line 29).

1. A.Sjöberg: ZA 20(1961),51-70 "Ein Selbstpreis des Königs Hammurabi von Babylon", lines 6 & 8. See also the references cited by Sjöberg in the notes on these two lines (p. 59f), which include:

- (i) Hymn to Enlil & Shulgi: CT 36,26:7 sa-pâr-maḥ an-ki šú-a tug kur-kur-ra lá-a: 'Grosses Fangnetz, das Himmel und Erde zudeckt, kleid, das über alle Lander gebreitet ist'
- (ii) Bilingual Cultic Hymn: IVR₂, 26 4:43f e-ne-èḡ-zu sa-pâr-maḥ an-ki-ta ša-mu-un-lá: amātka saparra šīru ša ana šamē u eršetī taršat: 'dein Wort ist ein grosses Fangnetz, das über Himmel und Erde gebreitet ist'
- (iii) Lugal I:13 ur-sag sa^ašū-uš-kal-bilú-erim-ma šú-a qarrādu ša šūškallašu ajjābu isahḥapu : 'Held, dessen Fangnetz über den Feind gebreitet ist'

Broken treaties were the best apologia for a just war, but this hymn bristles with an aggression not strictly regulated by a treaty theology of war, one suspects. Yet clearly the king felt the need to clothe his conquests in theological language and he has used the Divine Net personification to give his self-glorification a righteous cast. If the Divine Net properly belonged to the theological apparatus of treaties, that is, as the imagery of divine retribution for oath-breaking, then one can see the point of Hammurabi's self-description in these terms to strengthen his image as a righteous conqueror.

(d) The Divine Net in Myths.

It is striking that the Divine Net theme occurs in two of the major Akkadian myths - Etana and Enuma Elish. The first of these is certainly very old, for copies exist of an Old Babylonian recension,¹ and before that there are cylinder seals from the Old Akkadian period which depict a man astride an eagle rising heavenwards as dogs gaze upwards at the departing pair, while on the left a shepherd herds his sheep which also look up with a startled air.² Together the figures recall 'Etana, a shepherd, the one who to heaven ascended'. Speiser accords the Etana myth a very important place in the Mesopotamians' understanding of history and civilisation, and puts it third in a list of crucial stages as recorded by tradition, which includes the beginning of civilisation, the Flood, the crisis under Etana, the conflict between Kish and Uruk epitomised in Gilgamesh and Agga, and the period of Sargon and Naram-Sin. In demythologised terms he regards the tradition as reflecting the crisis before government by assembly had come into being. Whether he is right in this or not, he is surely correct in drawing attention to the Mesopotamians' own estimate of Etana's importance.³

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1. For the text of Etana, see S.Langdon: Babyloniaca 12(1931),1-56 I-XIV and E.Ebeling: AFO 14(1941/44),298ff to which add J.V.Kinnier Wilson: Iraq 31(1969),8-17 "Some Contributions to the Legend of Etana" for the Middle Assyrian version with three new pieces added and ibid.: JNES 33.2(1974) Geer's Vol. Part 1 "Further Contributions to the Legend of Etana".
 2. See H.Frankfort: Cylinder Seals, 1939, p. 138f & pls. 24-h. An excellent photo of the Berlin Museum seal VA 3456 from the second half of the 3rd Millenium bc is reproduced in Parrot: Sumer, 188 fig 226 and ibid.: N&B, 288 fig 359 .
 3. Speiser "Ancient Mesopotamia" section 4: 'The Past as Seen by the Mesopotamians', IHANE, 55ff . Besides the myth, Etana features in an omen, a bilingual text about the Seven Sages and the Sumerian King List - see H.G.Güterbock: ZA 42, p. 22 and Jacobsen: The Sumerian King List, AS 11, 1939, p. 80 note 67. On the relation of traditions about the Flood and the Seven Sages, see W.G.Lambert & A.R.Millard: Atrahasis, 15ff (ii) The Early History of Man and the excursus 'Early Human History', p. 25ff, (ii) The Sages .

The parts of the myth which involve the Divine Net do not concern Etana himself, but the friendship between the eagle which bore him to heaven and the serpent.¹ These two swore an oath to each other and lived communally, the eagle in the branches of the tree above and the serpent with his brood at the bole beneath. The eagle's evil intentions transgress the friendship, and despite warning of retribution from his own fledglings, he devours the serpent's young. Desolate the serpent prays to Shamash, witness of the eagle's oath, to avenge his murdered offspring. The Sun god discloses a means of revenge to the serpent, who lurks in a choice carcass and seizes the hungry eagle who has alighted to feed. Having plucked and mutilated him, the serpent leaves him in a pit to die of starvation, a just reward for his treachery.

The oath is extant in the Old Babylonian, Middle- and Neo-Assyrian versions,² though it is only the last which includes the mention of the Divine Net, and is given here in Speiser's translation:

Come let us arise [....] ,
 We have sworn by the nether world [...] !
 The oath that they swo[re] before valiant Shamash :
 [He who transgresses] the boundary of Shamash,
 May [the mountain] remove from him [its] pas[sage] !
 May the darting weapon [head straight] for him,
 May the snare, the curse of Shamash, overthrow him
 and catch him ! (C-2:8-16)

In typical epical style there is a repetition of this oath, this time as a warning from the fledgling, 'the little fledgling exceeding wise' :

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1. Summaries of the whole story may be found in Saggs: Greatness, 423ff; Oppenheim: AM, 266f; G. Roux: Ancient Iraq, 111f; see ANET, 114-118 plus ANETS, 81/517 for a translation; HKL I, 276 for bibliography.
 2. ANET, A-2:1-4(OB), B:1-4(M.Ass) & C-2:8-17 .

Eat not, my father ! The net of Shamash may catch thee],
The snare, the curse of Shamash, may overthrow thee and
catch thee !

He who transgresses the boundary of Shamash,
[Him] Shamash [will hand over] for evil to the
executioner ! (C-2:38-41)

But this excellent piece of theology is ignored, and the eagle
devours the snakelets, whereupon the serpent weeps before Shamash:

[Thou knowest] , O Shamash the evil which he did to me.
Verily, O Shamash, thy net is the [wide] earth,
Thy snare is the [far-away] sky.
May [the eagle] not escape from thy net,
That the evildoer, Zu, who upholds [evil against his friend]
(C-3:9-13) 1

The serpent is also at pains to point out to Shamash that he is
blameless, having kept the terms of the oath to the letter:

I put my trust in thee valiant Shamash;
To the eagle I extended good will.
I revered and honoured thine oath,
I upheld not evil against my friend.
(A-2, rev. 11-14)

What we have, then, is an exposition of treaty theology. There are
mutual oaths with the divine witness to them, and the stipulations of
the relationship of friendship both negative - not to countenance evil

1. The Neo-Assyrian text complements the OB passage -

Thou knowest, O Shamash, that he pursues evil.
Thy net is the wi[de]field,
Thy snare [is the far-away sky] ,
May the eagle not [escape] from thy net,
The doer of evil and abo]mination,
Who upholds e[vil] against his friend !
(A-2:19-24)

against the other, and positively - to succour and help each other, which is exemplified by sharing their kills, in turn somewhat reminiscent of the communal covenant meal which sometimes accompanied treaty making. The curses too inevitably remind one of treaty documents where there are verbal parallels.¹

The theology of the fledgling finds echoes in that of Sargon II's 8th Campaign report, for in the latter we have noted the description of Rusas as an oath-breaker which uses the phrase itê DN etêqu in parallel with lā kabbidu māmīt DN (Sg 8:148), while the first of these phrases is used in Etana to state a general theological principle (C-2 40), and māmītu in its nature as a curse is described in terms of the Divine Net:

šētu ša šamaš iba[rka]
gišparru māmīt šamaš ibbalakkitūma ibarrūka
(C-2:38f)

1. The OB & MA variants of the curses are:

May the path be lost for him that he finds not the way !
May the mountain withhold from him its passage.
May the darting weapon head straight for him ! (A-2:1-3)

May the da[rt]ling[weapon]head straight for him,
May Shamash single him out from among the killers,
May Shamash hand over the wicked one to the executioners !
May he place the wicked demon upon his land ! (B:1-4)

For verbal parallels, see eg EVT,649-651 discussed below. Speiser made a general remark on the oath being a familiar concept to the audience (IHANE,58 note 58), and drew attention to a parallel curse in Abban's grant to Jarimlim: Ištar ana qāti mukaššidišu limallišu - 'may Ishtar deliver him into the hand of his conquerors' (Wiseman: AT, No. 1 line 18).

2. CAD B, 4 ba'āru 2¹ wants to make gišparru plural, as above, in view of the verbal forms presumably (cf. CAD G,106 gišparru, b), and adds an interpretative gloss in its translation: 'the traps (by which was sworn) the oath to Shamash' (cf. CAD G,106 'the g-traps of the curse of Shamash'). To us, the plural seems odd here both because of the parallels with the previous line šētu//gišparru, and the stock-phrase character of gišparru sa DN. Perhaps, then, gišparru & māmītu are dual subject of nabalkatu & bu'āru ('the trap [of Shamash][and] the curse of Shamash, they will...'), or we have Subjunctives, as Speiser appears to read - 'The snare, the curse of Shamash, may overthrow thee and catch thee'). The stock-phrase, singular, occurs with šētu//gišparru at A-2:20-21 rev. = Bab. 12, 4:11 .

The eagle is reminded that wherever he flees, whether he takes to the air or alights in some remote region, he cannot escape the Net of Shamash:

šētkā eršetu rapaštu gišparruka šamû [rūqū]tu,

Divine retribution is inevitable and inescapable, just as Yhwh is inescapable in the poetic imagery of Psa 139:7-12 or Amos 9:2-4. The Etana myth sets the Divine Net in the context of cosmic justice where it embodies theodicy at the same time as it bears relation to the use of the Divine Net imagery in specific inter-state or inter-tribe relations because the myth involves the oath and the māmītu, which belong to historical, judicial circumstances.

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1. Bab. 12, 14, 11 = C-3:10f. Speiser's translation is given on p336 above, where the translation of C-2:38f on p. 337 is also found.

The second major myth to make good use of the Divine Net theme is the Babylonian creation story known by its opening as *Enuma Elish* - 'When on high...' . It runs to seven tablets of between 115-170 lines each, and is in Heide!el's phrase 'a literary monument in honour of Marduk', justifying his promotion to the head of the pantheon. In the mid 1st Millenium at any rate, it was recited in full to his statue on the fourth day of the New Year Festival. There is evidence to suggest that this ritual usage of the myth was secondary, and that the myth which retains some Sumerian traits has a long literary history prior to its later form, though scholars are divided on this issue, some arguing for a literary origin in the Old Babylonian period, others preferring the Kassite period, while most recently some evidence has been adduced which would push at least its oral transmission back into the 3rd Millenium bc.¹

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1. The publication of W.G.Lambert's Babylonian Creation Myths with the competence one can expect from this editor is bound to bring a deeper appreciation of *Enuma Elish* against the background of other Mesopotamian material. His cuneiform teaching text (OUP, 1966) shows that appreciable gaps remain only in Tablet 5. For transliteration, see R.Labat: Le Poème Babylonien de la Création, Paris, 1935 plus the literature cited by Borger: HKL I, 259f. A.Heide!el: The Babylonian Genesis, 2nd ed. Chicago UP, 1951 offers an excellent introduction p. 1-17; translation; related material, p. 61-81; OT comparative material, p. 82-140; appended texts, p. 141-153; illustrative iconography, pl. 1-17. English translations include Speiser's ANET, 60-72 + ANETS, 65/501ff and exerpts with notes by Kinnier Wilson: DOTT, 3-16. A summary is given by Saggs: Greatness, 409-416 and some pertinent remarks by Oppenheim: AM, 177f, 232f, 264ff.

Of great interest for their bearing on the literary history are the following recent articles - T.Jacobsen "The Battle between Marduk and Tiamat" (Festschrift Speiser/JAOS 88, Vol 53, 104-108) suggesting an origin on the Mediterranean coast (cf. the Ugar. Baal myth) and transposition to Mesopotamia by the Amorites; Y.Yadin: IEJ 21(1971), 82-85 "A Note on the Scenes depicted on the ^CAin-Samaya Cup" + the excavation reports by Shantur & Labadi, p. 73-77 and by Yeivin, p. 78-81 - the Janus-figure grasping a plant, the serpent and dragon, the bar held by two figures in Sumerian dress below a faced 12-petalled disc (see fig 2, p. 79 & photos, pls. 9, 10) are interpreted in terms of the text and theme of *Enuma Elish* and Marduk's battle with Tiamat. The MB I date (= Kenyon's EB-MB Intermediate Amorite period, c. 2100-1900 bc) has wide implications as does the Palestinian provenience. See further R.Grafman: IEJ 22(1972), 47-49 "Bringing Tiamat to Earth" who notes that the Isin-Larsa (c. 2030-1760 bc) period Khafaje plaque tallies exactly in detail with the binding, clubbing and splitting of Tiamat, and that 'on the ^CAin-Samiya goblet, it would seem logical to seek in the curved strip beneath the face of Tiamat a depiction of this net' - ie. the Divine Net so prominent in Marduk's defeat of Tiamat in *Enuma Elish*.

Tablet 4 of the epic recounts the fight between Marduk and Tiamat and has long been a centre of debate between Old Testament and Ancient Near Eastern scholars, spurred on by the supposed equivalence of Ti'āmat the defeated monster and tēhôm - 'the deep' in Gen 1:2.¹ This detail cannot now detain us except to remark that the case for the Old Testament's borrowing of the Divine Net theme would appear to be more broadly founded by comparison than the alleged similarities between the Babylonian and Hebrew creation stories, and in any case quite independent of the literary history of Genesis and Enuma Elish.

At the beginning of the tablet, Marduk is invested and armed, the other gods giving him 'matchless weapons that ward off the foes' (4:30) and their blessing. He then makes further preparations, manufacturing a bow and arrows with a quiver, and grasping a mace in his right hand, being surrounded by lightning. His final weapon is the Net:

īpuš-ma saparra šulmû qerbiš DN
irbitti šārē uštešbita ana lā ašî mimmiša

iduš saparra uštaqriba kišti abišu DN

(4:41-42 & 44)

He made a net to encircle Tiamat in it;
The four winds he stationed to prevent her escape

At his side he gathered the net, the gift of his
father, Anu

-
1. Examination of the usage of Heb. tehôm, and indeed Ugar. thmt (eg in the Aqhat and Baal poems) shows that this common Semitic root could be used without any personified and mythological connotations and hence the supposed equivalence is an over-simplification. See Heidel's discussion of this point (op.cit., 98-101) and of the wider issues of inter-relationship (chap 3, p. 82-140); cf. Lambert: JTS 16(1965), 287-300. Kinnier Wilson goes further, remarking that -

It is now, however, recognised that, since the two words have different meanings - for they cannot be used interchangeably - it is of no importance whether they are etymologically connected or not..... We believe the comparison (the sequence of creation and wider issues) to be partly artificial, partly explainable in terms of coincidence. Thus it seems very probable that the epic has no connections of any kind or at any point with Genesis, and that each is *sui generis* (DOTT, 14)

Thus equipped, and accompanied by the seven terrible winds, Marduk mounted his chariot and rode off to challenge Tiamat to single combat. This section of the poem is fast-moving and powerful as both contestants work themselves up into a fury and clash in head-on battle. The fight is over quickly, for Marduk's net enmeshes Tiamat preventing her getting at him or escaping, and as she opens her jaws, the winds rush in and swell her belly and a well-placed arrow splits her heart.

šašmiš ittibbū qitrubū tāḡāziš
ušparri-ma bēlum saparrašu ušalmiši
(4:94f)

Into single combat they advanced, they drew near
to battle
The lord (Marduk) spread out his net and enmeshed her,

Her supporters were meted out a like fate, and found themselves sitting in Marduk's net, his captives, despite their attempts to flee.

nīta lamû napaššudiš lā le'ê
ēsiršunūti-ma kakkēšunu ušabbir
saparriš nadū-ma kamariš ušbū
endū tubqāti malū dumāmū
šērissu našū kalū kišukkiš (4:110-114)

Tightly encircled they could not escape.
He made them captives and he smashed their weapons
Thrown into a net they found themselves ensnared;
Placed in cells, they were filled with wailing;
Bearing his wrath, they were held imprisoned.

The final mention of Marduk's net occurs in tablet 6, where the gods are meeting in banquet to celebrate the building of Babylon and Esagila, and the relief gained from toil by the creation of man - another demonstration of Marduk's finesse. When gathered like this and about to recite the fifty names of Marduk, his great victory over Tiamat was recalled by the display of his weapons which were laid up

1. Langdon reads it-tib-bu from the root tebû - 'to rise up and go'; Heidel reads id-lu-pu - 'they pressed on', so Speiser id-lu-bu - 'they swayed' following Landsberger (ANET, 67 note 77). AHW, 153 dalapu, dalabu - 'aufstören; schlaflos sein' omits reference to this passage, nor does CAD D, dalāpu offer support.

in the temple - one is reminded of Goliath's sword laid up behind the ephod in the shrine at Nob.¹ The bow receives the most attention, being given various praise-names, but the net is also mentioned.

sapar ša iteppušu imurū ilāni abbēšu(6:61)

The net which he had made his father gods beheld

As can be seen from the references collected, the Divine Net plays an important rôle in this national epic. No treaty framework for it is given, though of course Tiamat and Kingu are rebels against the pantheon with whom they should have been in alliance. The Net serves as an instrument of retribution following a declaration of war and a challenge to ordeal by battle.² Marduk makes a speech of indictment against the rebels (4:76-86) in much the same manner as a rebellious vassal would have been issued with a threat to trial of arms. The Divine Net in Enuma Elish can therefore be seen as of a piece theologically with its appearance in the theological historiography of Mesopotamia.

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1. 1 Sam 21:8f, which is just one of a number of points of comparison between the two stories - compare, for example, the previous low rank of David, the fear and irresolution of Saul in contrast to the heroic young David, the monstrous proportions of Goliath, the issue decided by single combat, the flight and conquest of the Philistine host, the dismembering of the slain giant, the praise-songs to David and his eventual coronation. This is not to suggest that the Samuel historiography is mythical, but rather that Enuma Elish reflects features of ANE warfare.
 2. On Ordeal by Battle, see Iraq 25(1963),164 "Warfare of the Hittites from the Legal point of view" by V.Korosec; F.C.Fensham "Ordeal by Battle in the ANE & the OT" in Festschrift Volterra, 127-135.

Addendum:

In a recently published Nabû Litany which draws on material in honour of Ninurta, the hero is described as the one who took the Zû bird captive in his net:

MUŠEN DINGIR. IMDUGUD SA BI. IN. LAḤ. A. NI
iṣṣūru dZâ ina šētu İbilu 1

In a note on the line, the editor says:

This refers to the episode of the Akkadian Zû Epic alluded to in Lugal.e (SEM, 44 obv. 13 = 45, obv. 11) and Angim (CT 15, 42 K. 4864+ end). A Ninurta litany also alludes to the episode: mušen dIm.dugud im.ma. ni.in.dib.bé.en = ka-mi iṣ-ṣu-ri dZi-i (SBH, 38, 26)

2

The Lugal.e Epic is one of at least three slaying-of-the-dragon myths, and probably provides the proto-type for the hero add battle in Enuma Elish.³ Some fragments published by Kinnier Wilson forming joins with others already known refer to Ninurta as a wielder of the Net:

ur.sag a.šux.ub sašú.uš.kal.mè.a
[qar-ra]-du mu-sam-[qit saṣu-uš-kal ta-ḥa-zi
O warrior who lets fall the net of battle
(ZA 54, 8)

4

The warrior Ninurta is here being addressed by his personified weapon Sharur.

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1. W.G.Lambert " The Converse Tablet: a litany with musical instructions" Festschrift Albright, 335-353, p. 344 & 347, line 14.
 2. *ibid.*, 350
 3. See History Begins, chap 22 "The First 'St.George' " & chap 3 "Myths of Kur", p. 240ff & 76ff; cf. Sumerian Mythology, 117 note 76 .
 4. Kinnier Wilson: ZA 54(1961), 71ff "Lugal ud melambi nirgal: new texts & fragments" .

(e) The Divine Net in Magical Texts.

In this group of texts we meet the Divine Net or Trap in a slightly different guise, though there is a fundamental link with other texts, for it is still an instrument of punishment, a māmītu, a curse decreed by gods or demons. Sometimes it is a little less, more a metaphor describing the effects of such a curse.

The first passage is selected from a series of bilingual incantations against fever, headaches and various sicknesses thought to be caused by malicious demons. Cleansing water was sprinkled and curses pronounced upon any demon who would thereafter dare approach the victim.

Ban ! Ban ! Barrier that none can pass,
 Barrier of the gods that none may break,
 Barrier of heaven and earth that none can change,
 Which no god may annul,
 Nor god nor man can loose,
 A snare without escape, set for evil,
 A net whence none can issue forth, spread for evil,
 Whether it be evil spirit, or evil demon, or evil ghost,
 Or evil devil, or evil god, or evil fiend,
 Or hag-demon, or ghoul, or robber-sprite,
 Or phantom or night-wraith, or handmaid of the phantom,
 Or evil plague, or fever sickness, or unclean disease,
 Which hath attacked the shining waters of Ea.
 May the snare of Ea catch it;
 Or which hath assailed the bonds of Nisaba,
 May the net of Nisaba entrap it;
 Or which hath broken the barrier,
 Let not the barrier of the gods,
 The barrier of heaven and earth, let it go free !
 Or which reverenceth not the great gods,
 May the great gods entrap it;
 May the great gods curse it. 1

1. Text - CT 17, 34:1-40 transliterated & translated by R.C.Thompson:
Devils 2, 118ff

māmīt māmīt ušurtu ša lā eteqi (SAG.BA)
 ušurāt ilāni ša lā nabalkuti
 ušurāt šamē u eršitim ša lā uttakkaru
 ilu ištānu lā mušpilu
 ilu u amēlu lā ippaššarū
 gišparru lā etēqu ša ana limni ritu (GIŠ.PAR)
 saparru lā āši ša ana limni taršu (SA.PAR) (lines 2-14 Akk.)
 gišparru ša DN libar[šu]
 saparru ša DN2 liksušu (lines 26,30)

Gišparru and saparru appear in parallel as the instruments of the gods, only this time they are operative on a spirit plane rather than that of inter-city warfare. Ea, the friend of mankind is to act in retributive judgement on demonic troublers. Note too the idea of a divine curse which is also implicit in treaty oaths:

ša niš ilāni rabûti lā ipallaḫu
niš ilāni rabûti liksušu
ilāni rabûti lîrurûšu
(CT 17, 34 36 38 40)

Vassals had to take an oath by the life of the gods - niš ili zakāru/tamû - were urged to fear it, and threatened with curses were it to be broken.¹ Divine retribution is the common denominator in the theology of oaths and curses in such varied contexts as treaties, boundary stones, law codes and incantations, and was thought to operate in the corresponding spheres of international relations, civil life, and the spiritual realm.

Turning from Utukkî Limnûti to the great collection of incantations known as Maqlû, we find that the perpetrators and activities of black magic are described in terms of the Net. The Maqlû corpus is official or counter-magic directed in the main against human sorcerers who had laid a spell and curse upon the sufferer who remained ignorant of the identity of his adversary, and therefore had to resort to the gods for release and retribution upon his bewitcher. The fire gods Girra, Gibil

1. Compare [ṭuppu] ša niš ilāni describing the Niqmepa + Ir^dIm treaty (AT, No. 2 line 2) and the Idrimi + Pilliya treaty (AT, No. 3 lines 1-3) [ṭuppli rikši enūma RNN niš ilāni izkurū - see AHW, 797 nišu II for other occurrences of the phrase niš ilim. For the curse of the gods, compare:

ilāni rabûti ša šamê u eršitim ilāni māt Aš[šur]
ilāni mātAkkadî ilāni Ebir-nāri arrat lā napšuri lîrurûkunu
arratu maruštu aggiš lîrurûkunu
(EBT, iv:8f & EVT, 475)

See Frankena's discussion of arratu, māmîtu and other treaty terminology, with copious references - OTS 14(1965), 134-140.

and Nusku were the customary agents invoked to destroy the sorcerer, and images of wax, wood, bronze or tow were burnt as an accompanying rite to the incantation - hence the title Maqlû, which means 'burnings'.¹ Sometimes the sorcerer is described as a hunter with a net:

bā'ertu ša bā'erāti kaššaptu ša kaššapāti
 ša ina šūqātā nadātu šessa
 ina ribīt āli ittanallaka ēnāša (7:84-87)

Huntress of huntresses, sorcerer of sorceresses
 Who spreads her net in the streets,
 Whose eyes traverse the city-square

cf. bajjartum ša mūši (3:46)

Before further comment, we may note that the net similes used to describe the evil effects of the spells on their victims. One passage takes each comparison of suffering and wishes it upon its originator in the name of Marduk, thus -

kīma kīti akappilšunūti
 kīma buhāri asahhapšunūti
 kīma kāpi abbassunūti
 kīma šēti akattamšunūti (2:172-175)

like a mat I roll them up
 like a trap I clamp down upon them
 like a rock I shatter them
 like a net I overwhelm them

Another passage uses no less than four net/trap similes along with one comparison to a man-eating lion :

1. The standard edition with German translation is by G.Meier. For ancient commentaries and related texts, see the references cited by HKL I, 339f . Compare E.Reiner: Šurpu, a collection of Sumerian and Akkadian incantations which deal with the sufferer's sins by transferring them to an object which was then burned; cf. idem: JNES 15(1956),129ff "Lipsur Litanies" . Saggs: Greatness, chap 10 gives a good general introduction to Mesopotamian thought, bringing out the obvious predominance of incantation and omen literature (cf. Ashurbanipal's famous library directives - CT 22,1 = SLA,No 256) over literary documents in the Western sense.

rittu-ma rittu
 rittu dannatu ša amēlūti
 kīma nēši iṣbatu amēlu
 kīma huḫāri iṣḫupu eṭlu
 kīma šēti ukattimu qarradu
 kīma šuškalli ašariddu ibarru
 kīma gišparri iktumu danni (3:158-164)

Hand, hand !
 Powerful hand of man
 Like a lion it seized a man,
 Like a trap it clamped down on a human being,
 Like a net it overwhelmed a hero,
 Like a net it caught the leader,
 Like a net it overwhelmed the strong.

The question is whether the use of šētu, huḫāru, šuškalu and gišparru bear any relation as similes here to their use as maledictions elsewhere. Taking the last passage, we can show that the first simile does in fact appear as a treaty curse in Esarhaddon's Baal treaty.

DNN ina qātē nēši ākalli [limallū]kunu
 (EBT, iv:6f)

Besides the Net and Lion treaty curses, there is the link of ritual action between the incantations and treaties. Many of the 'Just as ...' (kīma ša) curses must have been acted out in front of the vassal's eyes, probably with magical overtones rather than being simple deterrents.² Compare the reference to figurines in magical rituals and this clause from the Esarhaddon treaty:

Just as one burns a wax figurine in fire,
 dissolves a clay one in water,
 so may they burn your figure in fire,
 submerge it in water.
 (EVT, \$89:608ff; ANETS, 540)

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1. Erica Reiner has added another example in her translation of EVT, 466f - 'May [...] hand you over to a man-eating lion' which has the support of the EBT parallel and some EVT traces which Borger gives as a two-line curse including ina šu² [UR].MIAḫ [...]: 'into the clutches of [li] [lon]' (Borger: ZA 54,190; ANETS, 539). Compare Lev 26:22 - the wild animal malediction; Ezek 14:21 - wild beasts as one of the four scourges of Yhwh (also Ezek 5:17, 33:27, 39:4); 2 Kgs 17:25ff - lions sent by Yhwh against Samaria; Sefire I, A:31 - panther, etc & II, A:9 - lion, etc in the treaty curses.
 2. Note the occasional use of the demonstrative pronoun - 'Just as this (annitu)...' (eg. EVT, 547f & 612f). See Wiseman's remarks on the ritual accompaniments of the treaty oaths (Iraq 20, 26; cf. Frankena: OTS 14, 138f) and compare the wax figurine rituals of the Sefire treaty - Sefire I, A:35-42.

The fundamental similarity is obvious. It is therefore not far-fetched to believe that we have more than a random simile drawn from hunting in the magical passages. Simile curses lead us back to treaty texts, and these lead us back to the Sumerian political scene of the mid 3rd Millenium, though allowance has to be made for the possibility that there is an element of common experience rather than common literary tradition involved. There is also the question as to whether the Net was the prerogative of the gods who wield it in the very early texts, and indeed in the first magical text quoted it was in the hands of Ea - gišparru ša DN libâr[šū] . Have the demons and evil powers usurped the Net of the gods ? In the Mesopotamian tradition there are certainly stories of mythological theft such as the snake's theft of Gilgamesh' plant of eternal life or Inanna's appropriation of Enki's me's. On the other hand, the Net could be understood simply as expressing power in the hands of evil spirits without this having raised the problem of evil and the suggestion of the Net as the personal property of a god or gods, or misappropriation of the divine authority to utter curses.

Closing this section of our study on the Divine Net and to introduce the next which revolves around the Sun god, we may quote a prayer to Shamash using a little flattery to oil the machinery of divine retribution with the affirmation - 'Your great divinity knows them, but no other god knows them', continuing :

attā-ma tīdu anāku lā Idu
 DN ša kaššāpija kaššāptija
 ēpišija u mušt ēpištija rāḥija u rāḥitija
 kišpišunu ina šaplānika kīma gišparri libbalkissunūti
 šāšunu libârūšunūti DN ūmka izzu likšussunūti

You know them, but I do not know them.
 Shamash, as to my sorcerer and sorceress,
 My wizard and she who has had me bewitched,
 my male and female charmers,
 Let their sorceries overwhelm [them] beneath
 you as though with a net,
 And let the sorceries catch them.
 Shamash let your fierce storm overtake [them]

1. W.G.Lambert: AfO 18(1957/8),288ff " An Incantation of the Maqlû Type", page 294, lines 71-74.

The lines immediately following the section quoted have further imprecations, line 76 in particular recalling the figurine rituals - 'Let them melt, dissolve and run down' - which are common between magical and treaty texts. Community of imprecations is further illustrated by this text and the Ramataja treaty in two more paragraphs, for line 77 reads:

Let their life come to an [end] like water from a skin
cf. EVT, 652-655

Just as this waterskin is slit and its water runs out,
so may your waterskins be slit in a region of thirst
and famine, and you die of lack of water.

While immediately before this curse in the Esarhaddon text comes the gišparru-curse of Shamash:

May Shamash clamp his bronze trap (huḫāru) over you,
throw you into a trap (gišparru) from which there is
no escape, and not save you (from it).

Thus we find Shamash-trap and Waterskin curses adjacent to each other in the vassal treaty, and gišparru and Waterskin similes in the same incantation passage addressed to Shamash. Coincidence or independent literary creativity would not seem to be an explanation for this sequence and deity addressed. The Lion and Figurine curses have already been mentioned, and no doubt a wider study would reveal other instances of parallels between treaty and magical curse lists. We conclude, then, that this is another witness to a common pool of curse material on which treaties, magical texts, kudurrus and prophetic oracles would draw, though the last differs in its 'ego-theological' approach from the 'mechanistic', magical execution of the other texts.¹

It may be coincidence that excavation has presented us with the Sumerian treaty texts as the oldest embodiment of curse material. Magic appears to be as old as man and it would be odd if Šurpu, Maqlû and Utukkī Limnūti had no very ancient precedents contemporary with the Stele of Vultures.

1. See F.C.Fensham: ZAW 75(1963), 155-175 "Common Trends in Curses of the Near Eastern Treaties & Kudurru-inscriptions compared with Maledictions of Maos & Isaiah". Fensham draws attention to the

differences between, as well as the communality, of ANE & OT curse material. By 'ego-theological' is meant that 'the "I", the ego of the Lord is the focal point of the threat', cf. Isa 13:11f. To take another example, compare the Lion curses with Hosea's oracle where Yhwh is personified:

So I will be to them like a lion,
 like a leopard I will lurk beside the way.
 I will fall upon them like a bear robbed of her cubs,
 I will tear open their breast,
 and there I will devour them like a lion,
 as a wild beast would rend them.
 (Hos 13:7f)

The whole question of the Semitic-Sumerian contributions to Mesopotamian literature needs further careful study now it is known that Semites were already present in Mesopotamia much earlier than was previously suspected from a literary point of view - see R.D. Biggs: Or 36(1967), 55-66 "Semitic Names in the Fara Period" and the literature cited there, in which he remarks :

The significance of the Semitic names in the colophons lies not only in their being Semitic, but in their being names of scribes, thus suggesting that, at least in this particular city (Abū Ṣalābīkh, not identified with its ancient name yet, see the preliminary report - JCS 20(1966), 73-88), Semites were well established and were active in the intellectual life by about the 26th Century bc .

To take an example, was the Flood story originally Sumerian or Semitic ? The commonly held view - 'it is quite clear that the Hebrew story is derived directly or indirectly from the ancient Sumerian' (J. Bright BAR 1, 39) - may prove incorrect. The Sumerian version (CBS 10673) may be secondary to an earlier Semitic original. See Lambert & Millard Atrahasis, 14ff and M. Civil's remarks, p. 139 on the Late OB tablet which has Sumerian characterised by 'grammatical and lexical irregularities' .

(f) The Divine Net in Shamash Texts.

The Divine Net has appeared in the hands of a variety of gods - Ningirsu, Dagan, Marduk and Ea, yet there is a sense in which the Net belongs especially to the god of justice. Though he was never elevated to the head of the pantheon by a process of theological evolution such as involved Ninurta and Marduk, he was nevertheless popular over a long period and did not suffer the eclipse that was the fate of other deities. As god of justice, Shamash is associated with law which reached a highly developed level of theory and practice in Mesopotamia. This association is neatly illustrated by Hammurabi's black basalt stele found at Susa where Shamash, identified by the conventional flames issuing from his shoulders and holding the rod and ring, receives the king. In the epilogue, Hammurabi describes his relation with Shamash as follows:

Hammurabi king of justice (mīšarim) to whom Shamash has presented righteousness (kinātim išrukušum) am I..... At the behest of Shamash great judge of heaven and earth let my justice go forth in the land May Shamash the great judge of heaven and earth who directs aright living creatures... 1

The iconography and text of the Code combine to underline the prominent place of Shamash, the dajjānum rabium, in Mesopotamian thought.

The following four selected proverbial texts illustrate the relationship between justice, the king and Shamash:

The command of the palace, like Anu's, is sure.
Like Shamash, the king loves righteousness and hates evil.

-
1. CH 25:95ff, 24:84ff, 27:14ff. Compare the Hammurabi scene (Parrot: Sumer, 305 fig 373) with mid 3rd Millenium cylinder seals depicting Shamash-UTU (ibid, 193, fig 237) and the 9th Century Sippar stone-tablet of Nabu-appal-iddin with rod & ring minus rays (N&B, 168 fig 215 & 166, fig 213).

As a support to your palace, though your king
knows nothing, Shamash will speak to him.

The sychophant stands in court at the city gate.
Right and left he hands out bribes. The warrior
Shamash knows his misdeeds.

The maligner speaks hostile words before the ruler,
Talking cunningly, uttering slander.

The ruler, thinking it over, prays to Shamash,
"Shamash, you know. Hold him responsible for the
blood of his people" 1

The justice of Shamash was a corollary of his omniscience, as the latter three texts above illustrate, and the Maqlû-type text already quoted concurs with this in attributing to Shamash a knowledge of a secret past event - for Shamash must have seen the sorcerer casting his clandestine spell. Perhaps more virtuous still is Shamash' knowledge of the future, for the Sun god was regularly consulted by the Sargonids on matters of state policy, moves of the enemy, and so on. Thus past, present and future were under his jurisdiction.²

1. Lambert: BWL, 233f .

2. Compare the characteristic phrases addressed to Shamash in -

(i) the incantation text: attā-ma tīdu anāku lā idû

(ii) the oracular enquiries: DN bēlu rabû ša ašalluka anna kēnu
apallanni

(iii) the proverb: DN lū tīdi

J.Aro is to publish with additions the oracular enquiry texts collected in J.A.Knudtzon: AGS and E.G.Klauber: PRT, while Lambert is to publish the related tamitu texts addressed to Shamash and Adad. See their preliminary papers in Divination, 109-117 & 119-123.

Since Shamash stands for justice and the Net for judgement, one would expect the two to be linked more consistently than in the case of other deities. This expectation is borne out by texts from the Old Babylonian period onwards which describe one of the Sun god's emblems as a huḫāru. Thus in a contract from Larsa we read of an oath administered by the emblems of Shamash:

They made PN take an oath by Shamash and (for this purpose) the (stone) double-axe of Shamash and the huḫāru-trap of Shamash were set up. 1

The form of the emblems - axe and trap - would surely have communicated the threat of retribution as well as the oath at the temple gate, that is in the god's hearing, adding a great solemnity to the proceedings.

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1. TCL 10, 34:12 in translation by CAD H, 224 huḫāru - (2)'emblem of Shamash; from OB onwards' :

ŠEN.TAB.BA ^dUTU ... GIŠ. huḫārum ^dUTU iššaknu.

cf. the following additional references -

ina huḫār DN azakkarakkum : 'I shall state for you under an oath (sworn) by the huḫāru-trap of Shamash' (YOS 12,325:11)

ina KÁ DN NA₄.ŠEN.TAB.BA u HAR.MUŠEN.NA ša DN: '(an oath taken) in the gate of the Shamash (temple) (by) the stone double-axe and the huḫāru-trap of Shamash' (YOS 12, 73:9)

Shamash was worshipped in Larsa and Sippar especially, and the oaths by the emblems of the Sun god as quoted above should be compared with oaths by the GIŠ.TUKUL (kakku) of Shamash in OB texts from Sippar and Larsa, which are drawn together in the study of Rivkah Harris "The Journey of the Divine Weapon" (AS 16, 217-224); cf. AHw, 422 kakku, (3) 'als Symbol', with references.

Passing on from the Divine Net of Shamash in legal, magical, treaty and epical texts, we come to the great Shamash Hymn. Its literary history is uncertain, having a puzzling combination of older and later elements, but it achieves a high degree of poetic merit. Its main thrust is the omniscience of the Sun god as he climbs the heavens lighting up mountain and sky, and his rays reach down to touch men about their daily tasks, not only in Babylonia, but -

Of all the lands of varied speech,
 You know their plans, you scan their way.
 The whole of mankind bows to you,
 Shamash the universe longs for your light.
 (lines 49-52)

As god of justice, Shamash is, of course, aware of all kinds of human wickedness, from the rogue's banditry and dishonest business dealings to corruption on the judicial bench. It is in connection with the punishment of such evil doers that the net of Shamash is brought in. Unfortunately this is one of the broken passages which still remain after a compilation of all the extant manuscripts, but its overall content is clear enough for our purposes:

Shamash, in [your] net [.]
 From your meshes [.....]does not [escape]
 He who in taking an oath .[.]
 Who does not fear ..[.]
 Your wide net is spread [.]
 A man who covets his neighbour's wife
 Will [.....] before his appointed day.
 A nasty snare is prepared for him ..[.]
 Your weapon will strike at him, and there
 [will be] none to save him.
 [His] father will not stand for his defence,
 And at the judge's command his brothers will not plead.
 He will be caught in a copper trap that he did not foresee.
 (lines 83-94)

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1. Lambert: BWL, 121-138 introduction, text & translation; 318-323 philological notes.
 2. The fact that šuškallu, gišparru, šētu, kippu & buhāru are all used to convey the same idea with the same deity justifies the subsuming of all these terms under the title of the Divine Net, as we have done in this study - cf. the use of sussul, šētu & pūgu synonymously in the Mari letters quoted.

It seems that three offenders are dealt with in this passage, an unnamed offender (83f), and oath-breaker (85ff) and an adulterer (88ff) using kakku plus five synonyms for the net/trap imagery. Given the background of justice, the huḫāru and Net imagery for retribution, it is not surprising to find such a full poetic expression of the Divine Net motif in a hymn to Shamash.

As a post-script to the Net in Shamash texts and because it does not fit in elsewhere, we may note the occurrence of the Net motif in another Wisdom context, namely, the fable of the Fox. Only two small tablets remain of this composition which originally filled a tupgalli, that is, 'a monster tablet'. Lambert gives a full introduction to the manuscripts and story of the Series of the Fox, and reference should be made there for details.¹ We simply note that the speeches are apparently made during a trial before Shamash in which the Dog, Wolf and Fox issue accusations and counter-accusations. However, the passage which alludes to the retributive Net occurs in a speech which the Wolf makes to the Dog who had just chased him and the Fox into their respective holes. The Wolf flatters the Dog's qualities as guardian of the flock and hunter of its predators:

[]in your net is enmeshed the fleet, the swift,
[You sit] like a god, (clothed) in awe and dread²

Clearly, it is the šētu of the gods to which the Wolf is alluding. He compares the hounding of predators by the Dog to the retributive judgement wrecked on enemies by the gods. We therefore have yet another witness to the Divine Net, this time in a Wisdom context.

1. BWL, 186ff.

2. BWL, 194f tablet VAT 13836 restored from photo Assur S 6814:rev. 5f .

(g) The Divine Net in the Old Testament.

The best method of presentation of the material under this heading will be to begin with the clearest illustration of the Old Testament's use of the Divine Net motif in the Ancient Near Eastern tradition and then to look at other passages which may or may not be part of that tradition. Heintz deserves recognition for pointing out the connection between the Sumerian, Mari and Old Testament material, whether or not his related thesis on the connection of herem - 'the ban' and ḫērem - 'the net' is accepted.

Ezek 17:11-21 is the primary passage for this study. The historical situation is as follows. Zedekiah was on the throne in Jerusalem subsequent to the deportation of Jehoiachin after Nebuchadnezzar first sacked the city. Instead of remaining a loyal vassal with a certain freedom, Zedekiah began intrigues with Egypt, so breaking the terms of his oath and launching Babylonian reprisals. The best commentary on the period is provided by Jer 37 following, while Ezekiel's oracle must be dated to about 590 bc, a couple of years before the second sack of Jerusalem.²

Ezekiel speaks of the covenant oath taken by the royal scion and the way it was despised by him, and asks the rhetorical question - 'Will he succeed? Can a man who does such things escape? Can he break the covenant and yet escape?' (Ezek 17:15). Then follows an oracle in which Yhwh describes the oath and covenant as his own:

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1. See Heintz:art.cit., 135-138 for the all too brief development of both theses. He justly cites C.H.W.Brekelmans' study De Herem in het O de Testament, Nimègue, 1959 to the effect that no satisfactory philological explanation of herem has hitherto been offered.
 2. A.Malamat: IEJ 18(1968), 137-156 "The Last Kings of Judah & the Fall of Jerusalem - an historical-chronological study" discusses many passages from Jer & Ezek in correlating the biblical and Babylonian material; see p. 145 on Ezek 17:12ff. He places the breach of Jerusalem's walls in the second siege on 18th July, 586 bc ten years after the first sack of the city.

Because he despised the oath and broke the covenant, because he gave his hand and yet did all these things, he shall not escape. Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: As I live, surely my oath which he despised, and my covenant which he broke, I will requite upon his head. I will spread my net over him, and he shall be taken in my snare, and I will bring him to Babylon and enter into judgement with him there for the treason which he has committed against me. (Ezek 17:18-20)

1

Ezekiel's high view of the vassal treaty forced upon Zedekiah probably owes as much to his understanding of Yhwh's sovereign control of history as it does to the likely fact that Zedekiah took oath in the name of Yhwh as well as by the Babylonian gods during the treaty ceremony. It is no more startling than the designation of Cyrus as Yhwh's servant and anointed shepherd. In other words, it would seem unlikely that the prophet had an *ex opere operato* view of an oath taken under duress, and more likely that he fastened on the broken vassal oath to bring home Zedekiah's disobedience to Yhwh's decrees in a theological schema familiar to his audience.

He thus concurs with his contemporary Jeremiah in affirming that it was the Great Suzerain's will for Judah to submit to Babylonian overlordship at this juncture, for exile and the captivity were the punishments borne by Israel for her unfaithfulness to her covenant with Yhwh. Thus, accepting bondage to Nebuchadnezzar was accepting submissively the righteous judgement of God - so Jeremiah and Ezekiel would have understood it.²

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1. ḥay-'ānī 'im-lō' 'ālātī 'āšer bāzāh ūbērītī 'āšer hēpīr
ūnētattīw bēro'sō: ūpārāštī 'ālāyw rištī wēnitpaš
bimēšūdatī (MT 17:19b-20a)

For textual and general discussion, see W. Zimmerli: Ezekiel I, BKAT, 1969, 372ff & 386ff. On the Heb. pr in relation to Akk., Ugar., and Hittite terms, see F.C. Fensham: ZAW 74 (1962), 1-9 "Malediction & Benediction in the ANE Vassal Treaties & the OT", p. 3ff. Compare nātan yādō (18b) with means of concluding covenants mentioned in EVT, 153-156 (ANETS, 100/536 §13).

2. For the opinion that Ezekiel differs from Isaiah and Jeremiah regarding perjury and vassal oaths, see M. Tsevat: JBL 78 (1959), 199-204 "The Neo-Assyrian & Neo-Babylonian Vassal Oaths and the Prophet Ezekiel".

The framework of the covenant and the principle of divine retribution could not be more evident than in this brief section of Ezekiel. The Divine Net motif is thoroughly at home in this setting. The principle of requital is stated in verse 19. The net/snare combines the human agency and the divine origin of the retribution attendant upon breach of treaty oath. The divine origin is conveyed by the use of the 1st Sing. verbs (eg. pāraštī) and the 1st Sing. suffixes (rištī, mēšūdatī), while the context of war and sword with the implication present in the Net motif of capture and victory for the enemy reminds the audience that human agents would be used to administer divine judgements.

Heintz would like to see in the Divine Net motif a reflection of a victory ritual which he divides off from the immediate context of war.¹ The above passage does not suggest a ritual in any way, and it uses the Net imagery to convey the capture of the Judean king prior to his transportation to the royal presence in Babylon for the passing of sentence. All points to the operation of a treaty curse via divine-human intervention. This provides us with a direct link with the Net treaty curses of the Vulture Stele and the Entemena Cones.²

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1. Heintz: art.cit, 135 'La réalité de ce thème et la signification précise qu'il acquiert à la lumière de son *Sitz im Leben* primitif, celui d'un rite de victoire, nous autorisent à en rechercher les prolongements dans l'AT'; and after quotation of of Ezek 17:19f he adds - 'ce châtement divin s'effectuera le plus souvent, dans le cadre d'un rituel de victoire, en présence du souverain et de son armée, ou bien, selon un développement littéraire plus tardif, d'une assemblée formée de peuples nombreux', p. 136.
 2. This point is entirely missed by many modern commentaries on Ezekiel - eg. Zimmerli: Ezek. I, 373ff on 17:20, p. 386ff; on chap. 12, p. 254ff; on 12:13 to be discussed below, see p. 266f where the only suggestion he makes about the Net is to refer to Ezek 19 - 'Das Bild vom Fang mit dem Netz dürfte im Gleichnis vom Löwen in 19:8 seinen ursprünglichen Sitz haben'. W. Eichrodt: Ezechiel, SCM, 1970, p. 146ff eliminates the Net verse - 'it can hardly be attributed to Ezekiel himself' - at 12:13, and by-passes the Net theme altogether at chap 17, (p. 223ff) !

The second key passage is also from Ezekiel's prophecy, and follows on from his acted out parable of flight and exile when he dug through the wall of his mud-brick house and shouldered an exile's baggage. This sign was then interpreted verbally, and included the threat of retribution under the Net metaphor.

And I will spread my net over him, and he will be taken in my snare; and I will bring him to Babylon in the land of the Chaldeans, yet he shall not see it; and he shall die there. And I will scatter toward every wind all who are round about him, his helpers and all his troops; and I will unsheathe the sword after them. (Ezek 12:13f)

Again the leading thought is that there is no escaping divine retribution. Digging through the house wall appears to presage Zedekiah's futile attempt at flight after the breach of Jerusalem by the besieging armies. He was overhauled and brought to book. This is claimed as Yhwh's doing.

Although covenant as such, either that with Yhwh or the vassal treaty, is not mentioned in this passage, covenant curses are prominent throughout the oracle. We should note the standard resumé of covenant curses in verse 16 - sword, famine and pestilence, as well as the former group of exile, darkness and the Net in verse 13. The covering of the eyes, or more accurately of the face (v. 6, cf. v. 12), perhaps implies a disguise to facilitate escape, but in v. 13 the phrase 'yet he shall not see it (Babylonia)' seems to imply a going into darkness, that is, the not uncommon fate of blinding which in fact Zedekiah was to suffer.¹

Certainly examples of this fate as a treaty curse occur in the Old Testament and Ancient Near Eastern treaty texts. From the EVT and Deuteronomy, we may quote the following sections:

1. The Hebrew of 12:12b reads: pānāyw yēkassēh ya^can 'āšer lō'-yir'eh lā^cayin hū' 'et-hā'āres. Eichrodt suggests the covering of the face indicates grief (op.cit., 146ff). On Zedekiah's judicial fate, see F.E.Deist: JNSL 1(1971), 71f "The Punishment of the Disobedient Zedekiah" .

May Shamash the light of heaven and earth not give you a fair and equitable judgement, may he take away your eyesight; walk about in darkness

Your days should be sombre, your years dark, may they decree for you an unrelieved darkness.

Yhwh will smite you with madness and blindness and confusion of mind; and you shall grope at noon-day as the blind grope in darkness ... 1

Further examples could be cited from other documents, such as the Ashurnirari V + Mati'ilu treaty (rev. 6:2), the Sefire stele I (A:39), the Hittite Soldier's Oath (ANET, 353f), and curses protecting a votive inscription, a boundary stone and a law code.² Studies have noted this commonality of curses.³

Exile - which is so forcefully presented through the dumbshow and the oracle - is similarly at home as a treaty curse, as may briefly be shown from the following quotations:

They shall go into exile, into captivity...
They shall know that I am Yhwh, when I disperse them among the nations and scatter them through the countries.

1. EVT, \$40 & 56, lines 422-424 & 485f; ANETS, 538f; Deut 28:28f .

2. Sin ...eklētu pānišu lirim: 'may Sin ...cover his face with darkness' (Bauer: IAsb, 90 K. 2564:rev. 12 corrected by von Soden: AHw, 64 arāmu 2; King: BBS, 41 No. 7 Marduk-nādin-ahhē Col 2:19f; CH 26:68f eklet lā nawārim .

3. For example, F.C.Fensham: ZAW 75, p. 170f .

Yhwh will bring you and your king whom you set over you to a nation that neither you nor your fathers have known...And as Yhwh took delight in doing you good and multiplying you, so Yhwh will take delight in bringing ruin upon you and destroying you; and you shall be plucked off the land which you are entering to take possession of it. And Yhwh will scatter you among all peoples, from one end of the earth to the other....

May Melqart and Eshmun deliver your land to destruction, your people to be deported; from your land

... 1

In view of the strong tie between a country and its national gods, it is apt that Esarhaddon in the quotation above taken from his treaty with Baal of Tyre, should make the local Phoenecian gods the executors of the malediction of exile. So too, though for reasons of Yhwh's sovereignty *vis-à-vis* pagan deities, does the Old Testament present Yhwh as the executor of Israel's exile.

Granted that exile and darkness have a treaty curse background, it would be *a priori* likely that the Net/Snare imagery which appears in association with them should also share the treaty curse derivation. This is substantiated by the extra-testamental documentation.

Another possible reference to the Divine Net in the spirit of the Ancient Near East tradition occurs in one of Job's speeches -

1. Ezek 12:11b & 15; Deut 28:36 & 63f; EBT, iv:14f ; cf. Lev 26:33 & 38ff .

Similar to the Job passage in some respects is a verse from Psa 66 mentioning the Net in a context of trial and affliction:

For thou, O God, hast tested us;
 thou hast tried us as silver is tried.
 Thou didst bring us into the net;
 thou didst lay affliction on our loins;
 thou didst let men ride over our heads;
 we went through fire and through water;
 yet thou hast brought us forth to a spacious place.
 (Psa 66:10-12)

If the MT of verse 11 is allowed to stand,¹ then it seems that a translation of the metaphor indicates that Israel had suffered captivity at the hands of some human victors - a fate allowed by Yhwh, indeed ordained by him as a test of fidelity. This trial had ended, and once more liberty was enjoyed. Exegetical problems remain. Does this relate to slavery in Egypt? The Exodus is certainly referred to in verse 6. Or is it some more recent military defeat? Sufficient clues are lacking, and the answer is partly determined by literary analysis - whether vv. 8-12 and the other sections of the psalm originally belonged together. In any case, the Net metaphor would be entirely appropriate in v. 11, depicting along with v. 12a the judgement of conquest by the sword at divine instigation.

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1. hābē'tānū bamměšûdāh śamtā mûcāqāh bēmotnēnū
 Thou hast caught us in a net,
 thou hast bound our bodies fast;
 (Psa 66:11 MT & NEB)

Cf. BDB, 845: měšûdāh - 'net' - 'Psa 66:11, in fig. Yhwh's judgement'

This seems satisfactory to us, but see against this H-J. Kraus: Psalmen, BKAT, 1959, p. 455ff. He translates without altering the MT

Du brachtest uns in *schwierige Lage*,
 hast Bedtāngnis(?) um unsere Hüften gelegt

Zur Bedeutung des Wortes vgl. KBL, 555: měšûdāh II; eine Korrektur (z. B. bammāšôr) ist unnötig.

We now move on to a passage where it is dubious whether we have an echo of the Divine Net imagery, though still possible. The oracle of prophetic complaint (Hab 1:12-17) continues the opening oracle of the book in which Habbakuk speaks in anguish of the triumph violence over justice and righteousness. He accepts with half of his mind that Yhwh uses wicked nations to execute his judgements, yet recoils from so unholy a partnership by One who is 'of purer eyes than to behold evil'. The incongruity of association is furthered by the wantonness of destruction, pictured in terms of repetitive hauls of fish.

He brings all of them up with a hook,
 he drags them out with his net,
 he gathers them in his seine;
 so he rejoices and exults.
 Therefore he sacrifices to his net
 and burns incense to his seine;
 for by them he lives in luxury,
 and his food is rich.
 Is he then to keep on emptying his net,
 and mercilessly slaying nations for ever ?
 (Hab 1:15-17)

The question we must ask is why the prophet chose to develop the fish and net metaphor which has its non-figurative counterpart in 1:6-11, aside from the illustrative similes there. In 1:6-11, the Chaldean army and siege warfare is described in poetic but straightforward language. In 1:15-17, the same subject and action is wholly covered by the net and fish figure of speech. Does 1:15-17 spring from v. 14 alone ? In other words, the prophet hits on a shoal of fish to describe the conquered because they are multitudinous, disorganised and terror stricken. Or is he developing the figure of the net because there was a common image available to him through tradition, that is, the Net as a means of conquest and retribution in the Ancient Near Eastern tradition we have documented ?

It is difficult to decide. Verse 14 seems an adequate explanation on its own - that is, we have a random choice of imagery drawn from everyday life and appropriate because people *en masse* resemble a shoal of fish when the circumstances of war, panic and capture arise. On the other hand, the combination of divine judgement, the sword, conquest capture and the net is a pattern we have encountered over and over again, and we know from Ezekiel that the Ancient Near Eastern tradition was not only known but used prophetically in Israel in the mid 1st

Millenium . Did the net imagery come to the prophet's mind, then, for this reason, and has he developed it according to his own genius ? The oracle is poetic in diction, and deliberately contrived, so that the net imagery could equally well have preceded the fish imagery in the flow of the prophet's thoughts. Indeed for one steeped in the Ancient Near Eastern traditions, the major thought of 1:1b - 'O LORD, thou hast ordained them as a judgement; and Thou, O Rock, hast established them for chastisement' - could well cause the Divine Net to spring to mind as a metaphor exemplifying divine retribution. Dubious but possible is the verdict we would return on the appearance of the Net in the spirit of the tradition under study.

Another passage which we would place in the same category is from Hosea:

Ephraim is like a dove,
 silly and without sense,
 calling to Egypt, going to Assyria.
 As they go I will spread over them my net;
 I will bring them down like birds of the air;
 I will chastise them for their wicked deeds.
 (Hos 7:11-12) ¹

Again we notice how apt poetically is the imagery from the courting and panic behaviour of doves - quite sufficient in itself to generate the whole poetic composition. Yet a glance at the theological ethos of Hosea reveals how well at home the Net as a covenant curse would be.

Literary criticism of Hosea has done an about face since the days of Wellhausen who proposed to excise the covenant concept from this prophet's writings on the grounds that he lived too early to be acquainted with such an 'advanced' theological concept as covenant. Numerous contemporary studies of covenant have drawn on material in

1. For emendations suggested for 12b: 'ayēsīrēm kēšēma^c la^cādātām, see C. van Leeuwen: Hosea, POT, Nijkerk, 1968, p. 160f and H.W. Wolff: Dodekapropheten 1, Hosea, BKAT, 1961, p. 161ff .

Hosea, who is now seen as a classical exponent of the covenant of Yhwh, following a long tradition reaching back through Samuel to the earliest period of national covenant with Yhwh, and heading a new tradition of classical or writing prophets along with Amos.¹

1. Note the following statements from Wellhausen:

In this way arose, from ideas which easily suggested it, but yet as an *entirely new thing*, the substance of the notion of covenant or treaty. The name Berith, however, *does not occur in the old prophets, not even in Hosea*, who certainly presents us as clearly as possible with the thing, in his figure of the marriage of Jehovah and Israel (Isa 1:21). That he was *unacquainted with the technical usage of Berith* is strikingly proved by 2:20 and 6:7 ; and these passages must decide the view we take of 8:1, a passage which is *probably interpolated* (J.Wellhausen: Prolegomena to the History of Israel, A&C.Black, 1885, p. 417f - italics mine)

This passage from a doyen of another day is shot through with irony for present readers who have benefitted from more objective criteria furnished by discoveries and a comparative ANE methodology. Particularly disconcerting is the tone of plausibility masking a disastrous methodology - the manipulation of the primary data to fit a pre-conceived theory. In contrast to the above conclusions, compare Bright's summing up of the classical prophets which relates directly to Hosea:

Their entire attack on the sins of society was rooted in an overpowering sense of Yahweh's sovereign lordship over Israel, and of Israel's obligation unconditionally to obey the stipulations of his covenant...Their entire message moved from a profound understanding of Yahweh's covenant and its demands . (HI, 262f)

Cf. Baltzer: CF, p. 1 quotations from Wellhausen and discussion of the bĕrît debate, Part I: A, p. 1-8 .

Besides the occurrence of berît itself some five times in its technical sense,¹ *pace* Wellhausen, there is a two-fold technical use of rîb which is indicative of the prominent place which the Covenant Lawsuit *Gattung* occupies in the book,² and evidence of extra-Israelite covenant ceremonial practices.³ Add to this all the treaty curse material highlighted by recent studies, and Bright's summation is overwhelmingly borne out for the book of Hosea.⁴

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1. MT references are: 2:20 - eschatological covenant; 6:7 - past breach of covenant; 8:1 - present breach of covenant; 10:4 - spurious pacts; 12:2 - political alliances .
 2. MT 4:1 & 12:3. Note that C.Westermann: Basic Forms of Prophetic Speech, 199ff delineates the Lawsuit speeches more widely than only those passages containing the word rîb, ie. Hos 2:4-17, 4:1-3, 4:4-6 & 12:3-15 . A basic study of rîb which includes the Hosea passages is J.Limburg: JBL 88(1969),291-304 "The Root Rîb & the Prophetic Lawsuit Speeches", to which add previous important articles by B.Gemser "The Rîb or Controversy Pattern in Hebrew Mentality", (VTS 1 = Ad Huc Loquitur, POS, chap 5, p. 96-115); H.B. Huffmon: JBL 78(1959),285-295 "The Covenant Lawsuit in the Prophets"; J.Harvey: Biblica 43(1962),172-196 & idem: Le Plaidoyer Prophétique contre Israël après la Rupture de l'Alliance, 1967 and other literature listed there.
 3. At 12:2, for instance; see D.J.McCarthy: VT 14(1964),215-221 "Hos 12:2 - Covenant by Oil" with K.Deller: Biblica 46(1965),349-352 "Šmn b11 (Hos 12:2) - additional evidence".
 4. Eg. Hillers: TC/OTP, with biblical index & idem : Covenant, chap 6; cf. Fensham: ZAW 75,155-175 & idem "The Covenant Idea in the Book of Hosea" (OTWSA, 1964/5, 35-49) & idem "Father & Son - Treaty & Covenant" (Festschrift Albright, 121-135, esp 132f); Moran: CBQ 25 (1963),77-87 "The ANE Background of the Love of God in Deut"; Lohfink: CBQ 25(1963), 417 "Hate & Love in Osee 9:15"; Huffmon: BASOR 181(1966),31-37 "The Treaty Background of Heb Yāda^c" in which Hos 13:4f, 8:2, 2:22, 5:4 & 4:6 are all discussed . Compare the study of forms in Hosea by W.Brueggemann: Tradition for Crisis, in which he concludes that judgement-speech, indictment, sentence, salvation-oracle and warning-speech 'are employed by the prophet ... to bring every aspect of his message into close connection with the older traditions of covenant', p. 89.

So much for the general setting of the oracle. In the immediate context, violation of the covenant stipulations is very prominent too. Throughout the prophecy three charges of covenant violation are laid; there is moral depravity in breach of the Ten Commandments, especially the first one of religious infidelity, and the seeking of political alliances which compromise Israel's agreement to have no other lord than Yhwh. The latter indictment forms the theme of 7:11-13 and compares with the explicit mention of foreign alliances at 8:9f and 12:1. Overtures to Egypt and Assyria amount to conspiracy against their Great Suzerain to whom they had promised an unswerving loyalty.

In 7:11-13, Ephraim is indicted for straying (nādad), rebelling (pāša^c) and speaking lies (dibbēr kēzābīm). The background of these concepts lies in the terminology of international treaties where a vassal took oath to have no other lord than his suzerain¹. The main thrust of the EVT revolves around this unalterable loyalty. The vassals are warned repeatedly in these terms:

If you sin against him (haṭū), lift your hands with evil intent against him, set afoot a rebellion (epšu bārtu) or woong or evil plans against him, if you remove him from the kingship of Assyria... and install another king, another lord over yourselves and swear the oath of loyalty to another king or lord -
(EVT, \$5:66-72; ANETS, 99/535)

-
1. This point of comparison between OT & ANE treaties is well made by Baltzer commenting on Josh 24:

The point is absolute loyalty toward Yahweh. This loyalty presupposes rejection of the service (ie. the cult) of 'foreign gods'

He then cites passages from Hittite treaties and comments:

Cf. F 1 \$8, i:32 - 'And do not set your eyes upon another
F 3 \$11, D:40-41 - 'No foreign sovereignty however shall you desire, henceforth hold to the Sun with respect to sovereignty'; F 6 \$3, i:14f - 'Henceforth however recognizeno other lord'. Here in the political realm, then, we find the parallel of a strict exclusiveness of association such as is not found in the religious sphere outside of Israel. (CF, p. 21)

The speaking of lies about Yhwh (wēhēmāh dibbērū cālay kēzābīm - 7: 13b) also has its counterpart in the 1st Millenium treaties. Thought and speech about the suzerain get a good deal of attention in the EVT, for example:

If you do not always offer complete truth (kittu šalimtu) to the crown prince ...; if you do not treat them with proper loyalty (ina kīnāte taršāti), speak to them with a true heart (ina kitti ša libbikunu) ...

If any (of you) hears some wrong, evil, unseemly plan (Ass. abutu = Bab. awātum, amātum - 'word') which is improper (lā taršatūni) or detrimental (lā ṭābatūni) to the crown prince ...

If one of his brothers, his father's brothers, his cousins, his kin, or any member of his father's lineage, or a descendant of former kings, or any prince, governor, Assyrian or foreigner involves you in a plot and tells you, "Denounce (qabū karšī: karšu - 'slander') the crown prince designate Ashurbanipal to his father, speak wrong and evil things about him", (if) you (thus) cause strife between him and his father, and incite them to hate each other -

1

Even the harbouring of evil thoughts about the suzerain is treasonable, before they find expression in word or deed (EVT, §16:180ff).

The Aramaic treaty Sefire III likewise makes specific mention of slander of the suzerain:

[...And whoever will come to you] or to your son or to your offspring or to one of the kings of Arpad and will s[pea]k [ag]ainst me (mll c1) or against my son or against my grandson or against my offspring, indeed any man who rants (zy yb^{ch} rwh 'pwh) and utters evil words against me (wymll mln lhyt l^{cly}) [.....] you must [not] accept such words from him

2

Clearly lies, slander, and words of revolution all amount to much the same thing. The character of the suzerain is impugned as a preliminary to casting off his shackles.

1. EVT, §8, 10 & 27 ; lines 92ff, 108ff & 318ff; ANETS, 99/535ff .

2. Sefire III, 1-2 translated by Fitzmyer: Sefire, 96f & notes 104f .

One can also point to the reflex of this treaty terminology in the Assyrian war records, which according to our thesis are documents of treaty theology. We have already noted this feature of the 8th Campaign report which states its purpose to have been the punishment of sins of speech - 'to muzzle the mouth of the rebellious'.¹ The faithless Rusas is depicted as 'speaking lies, his lips uttered vulgarities', and Sargon prays for the gods to 'bring his insolence down on his head'.² From Ashurbanipal's accounts we saw that seditious and slanderous speech was reckoned as blasphemy against the gods of Assyria who had witnessed the vassal oaths and who set in motion the treaty curses which led to the retributive mutilation of the captive vassal's lips and tongue.³

1. aššu ḥaṭām pī muštarḫī - Sg 8:9 .

2. dabāb tuššī nullāti tišpura šaptašu and iriḫ pišu elišu turrim - Sg 8:93 & 124 .

3. The references are to Asb. B, 5:25ff; A,4:66ff; B,6:85ff. Compare -

(PNN) ša eli DN ili bānija iqbû sillatu rabītu
lišanašunu ašlup ašḫuṭa mašakšun

(PNN) who had uttered monstrous vulgarities against
Ashur my divine begetter - their tongues I slit and
I tore off their skin.

(3R, 37 = Streck, 316 = ARAB 2, 393 \$1034.7)

Attention to the general and immediate setting of the net in Hos 7:11-13 reveals that it is not unlikely that the metaphor follows on in the Ancient Near Eastern Divine Net tradition as Yhwh's means of judgement following on from Israel's infidelity to the covenant.¹

There is a third passage from Ezekiel which deserves consideration under the Divine Net theme, though a positive or negative decision about the traditional usage is difficult to reach. Heintz appropriates it as an example, as he does the Hosea passage above, but without elaboration or an argued defence of his position. Of course, the clear two-fold appearance of the Net theme elsewhere in the prophet must be taken into consideration, at least as evidence of its possibility here.

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1. Many works on Hosea are aware that the Net is a metaphor known outside the OT yet entirely miss the connections and implications drawn out by Heintz and this study. For example, H.G.Mays: Hosea, 107ff thinks of it as 'one of his(Hosea's) ready metaphors'; M.J. Buss: The Prophetic Word of Hosea, 84 points out that 'Psalms of lament often describe enemies as laying traps. It is indeed common not only in the OT but also elsewhere, to picture the deity as coming with a net'(note 17), but he fails to explore the common concepts of curse and retribution; similarly C.van Leeuwen: Hosea, 160f and H.W.Wolff: Dodekapropheton 1, Hosea, show awareness of the Mari and hymnic parallels without elaborating on the theological commonality. Compare the misguided explanation by C.J.Labuschagne, who is probably misled by the Afrikaans duif which does dual duty for dove and pigeon into commenting that 'Hosea chooses the image of the dove exactly because of its excellent sense of direction', which is zoological nonsense and certainly not supported by the Noah story, since any garden bird will return to a known food source ("The Similes in the Book of Hosea", OTWSA 1964/65, 64-76). These works which miss the significance of the theological framework and tradition of the ANE Divine Net motif underline the need to go beyond similarities in words or figures of speech in OT & ANE studies to the theological context. When this is done, for instance with the animal imagery in Hosea - Yhwh as moth, lion, leopard & she-bear - it is soon seen that poetic licence is no explanation, but rather a long ANE & OT tradition with a theological context - see Hillers: TC/OTP, 54ff .

The oracle is grouped in the Egyptian portfolio, and dated to 1/12/12, that is March 585 bc,¹ by which time the Judean exiles from the second destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar would have been settled in Babylonia, and no doubt Ezekiel had had the opportunity of hearing details of the seige and Egypt's abortive intervention from them as well as from the fugitive who arrived on the 5/10/12 (Ezek 33: 21). Bitterness at Egypt's failure and escape hitherto probably prompted the use of the funeral-dirge form, the qînāh.² For brevity's sake we quote only verse 2-4 of the section which runs through to 32: 16.

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1. Some, such as Eichrodt (op.cit., 433), prefer to work with a March 586 bc dating. The basic work is R.A.Parker & W.H.Dubberstein: Babylonian Chronology: 626 bc - ad 75, Brown UP, 1956 but interpretation rather than mathematics must decide whether a vernal or autumnal calender was followed by the Hebrews at this period. As regards Ezekiel, see conveniently J.B.Taylor: Ezekiel, TP, 1969, page 36 & note 2 for a table with a cautionary word. For historical discussion, see Malamat: IEJ 18, 137ff .
 2. On this literary type, see Eissfeldt: OTI, 91-98 §13 'Mocking Songs & Funeral Dirges' .

You consider yourself a lion among the nations¹
 but you are like a dragon in the seas;
 you burst forth in your rivers,
 trouble the waters with your feet,
 and foul their rivers.
 Thus says the Lord GOD:
 I will throw my net over you
 with a host of many peoples;
 and I will haul you up in my dragnet.
 And I will cast you on the ground,
 on the open field I will fling you,
 and will cause all the birds of the air to settle on you,
 and I will gorge all the beasts of the whole earth
 with you. (Ezek 32:2-4)

The question is where the prophet found the imagery. He could have drawn on the oracles of previous prophets, for he shows a deep awareness of his forerunners, the *nēbī'ê Yiśrā'ēl hannibbē'im bayyāmim hāhēm šānīm* (Ezek 38:17). He could also have been drawing on extra-

1. RSV from MT: *kēpîr gôyim nidmêtâ*
wē'attāh kattannim bayyammim

Cf. the NEB : Young lion of the nations, you are undone
 you were like a monster
 in the waters of the Nile

The problem is the root *dmh*. NEB takes it as *dāmāh* II - 'to cease, cause to cease, cut off, destroy' (BDB, 198; Holladay, 72 *dmh* III) with *kepîr gôyim* as an apostrophe - 'O lion..'; RSV prefers *dāmāh* I - 'to be like, resemble', and makes the Waw conjunction introduce a strongly contrasting comparison - 'but in reality you are like...'. Eichrodt suspects that lines have dropped out, and thinks, perhaps unnecessarily, that 'the abrupt juxtaposition of the two animal metaphors and the unsatisfactory form of the wording cannot be attributed to the original poem' (op.cit., 432). Perhaps this is to judge too much by Western canons. On this and other textual problems here, see the discussions in G.Ch.Aalders: *Ezechiël II*, 118ff & Zimmerli: *Ezekiel*, 762ff. They do not affect the study of our theme significantly.

Israelite literature, for the clay tablets of Boghazköy, Ugarit, Palestine and Egypt already discovered have revealed the wide dissemination of certain myths at an early period.¹ Besides this, Ezekiel was living in Babylonia which for many centuries had been the fount of religious culture. The issue is in fact too wide for us to tackle, and we can only indicate some possibilities in a sketchy manner, as do the various commentaries already referred to on matters of form, text and historical background.

The theme of capture, corpse and cosmos in Ezek 32:1-8 appears to combine imagery from the defeat of a Chaos-monster and from the Day of the Lord. Myth from the beginning and apocalyptic of the end unite to portray the complete triumph of Yhwh over all his enemies, supernatural or historical. The Chaos-monster recalls the proof of Yhwh's supremacy at the beginning, whether this be at the creation or at some time subsequent to it.² In the Old Testament, the cosmic battle is left in generalised poetic terms, or applied to the Exodus and so related to redemption-history, or used of contemporary Egypt, or applied to a future divine intervention in an apocalyptic

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1. For example, some of the best known instances are the finding of the myths of Adapa and Nergal & Erishkigal at Amarna in Egypt; Atrahasis at Ras Shamra in Syria; Gilgamesh at Boghazköy in Turkey and at Megiddo in Palestine.
 2. This whole area is still under discussion and very far from solution, though Lambert's promised Babylonian Creation Myths may be expected to advance our knowledge, if mainly on the Mesopotamian side. Relations between Genesis, Enuma Elish and the Baal Myths are uncertain, and the meaning for the latter two audiences is not clear - eg, whether Tiamat is the salt-waters, a mother goddess, a monster or all three simultaneously (see Heidel: op.cit, 82-140 & Kinnier Wilson: DOTT, 3-16). For Mesopotamia, there is not one canonical creation story, nor one god versus monster battle but several with plagiarism and adaptation complicating any study of their literary history, besides their fragmentary preservation. See Kramer: History Begins, chaps 22 & 23 and Sumerian Mythology, chaps 2 & 3.

manner.¹ The whole time span from beginning to end is thus embraced. The salvation of Yhwh's people is related to his triumph over and eradication of all powers of evil serried against them or himself.²

Verse 7-8 add to the complexity of the passage, and enforce its cosmic scope, already indicated by the Chaos-monster imagery.

When I blot you out I will cover the heavens,
and make their stars dark;
I will cover the sun with a cloud,
and the moon shall not give its light.
All the bright lights of heaven
will I make dark over you,
and put darkness upon your land,
says the Lord.GOD. (Ezek 32:7-8)

1. The OT references are as follows:

generalised - Psa 89:9f, Job 9:13, 26:12, 38:8ff, 41:1-34
applied to the Exodus - Isa 51:9f, Psa 74:12ff, cf. Hab 3
Egypt as monster - Isa 30:7, Ezek 29:1ff
a future triumph - Isa 27:1, Ezek 32:1ff

2. Prophecy and Apocalyptic cannot be neatly divorced - see G.E. Ladd: JBL 76(1957), 192-200 "Why not Prophetic-Apocalyptic ?", and as a specimen study D.H.Odendaal: The Escatological Expectation of Isa 40-66 with special reference to Israel and the Nations, 1970 .

This is the language of eschatology and strongly recalls descriptions of the yôm Yhwh in which the dimming of the sun, moon and stars is associated with judgement of transgressors.¹ It also has affinities with, if not its roots in, the language of curses on transgressors of boundaries, treaties and the like.² This is also true of the imagery of the Banquet of Flesh in verse 4, and here again it links up with apocalyptic passages.³

Finally, we should not pass over the affinities of the imagery of Ezek 32:4-6 with the language of the Assyrian royal war records. Older commentators noticed passages from Tiglath-pileser I's inscriptions but left much unexplored. Two passages may be quoted and then followed by an Assyrian text of another genre:

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1. On the yôm Yhwh, see the studies of G.von Rad: JSS 4(1959),97-108 "The Origin of the Concept of the Day of Yahweh"; idem: OT Theol 2, 119-125; M.Weiss: HUCA 37(1966),29-60 "The Origin of the 'Day of the Lord' - Reconsidered"; and most recently J-G.Heintz: VT 21(1971), 528-540 "Umusu qerbu (ARM 10, 6:8) - aux origines d'une expression biblique ?", together with the literature cited there. The most important passages from the OT include Isa 13:9f, Joel 2:10f & 30f, 3:14bf (cf. Matt 24:29, Mark 13:24f, Lk 21:25f, Acts 2:19f, Rev 6:12 ff, 8:12, 2 Pet 3:10). Compare too Isa 29:5ff, 66:15f, Jer 46:10, Ezek 13:5, Obad 1:15, Zeph 1, Zech 12-14 .
 2. See Fensham: ZAW 75, 170f 'Turning of Light into Darkness', and idem : OTWSA 1966, 90-97 "A Possible Origin of the Concept of the Day of the Lord" .
 3. On the Banquet of Flesh, see the treaty curses EVT,425ff, 472ff & 519 and compare Deut 28:26; as apocalyptic imagery, see Ezek 29:5 Pharaoh as hattannîn, a parallel to 32:1ff, 39:4 & 17ff the fate of Gog the apocalyptic Enemy; 2 Baruch 29:4 Behemoth & Leviathan eaten as food; Rev 19:17ff echoing Ezekiel's Gog oracle. On the Banquet of Flesh as a realised treaty curse - see Part I, Asb. section H: The Fate of the adê Violator, p.178ff .

RN šarru dannu šuškal lā māgirē sāpinu qabal targīgī
 abiktašunu aškun šalmāt qurādīšunu ina gišallāt šadē
 kīma rāhiši lukemmer dāmēšunu ḥurri u bāmāte ša šadē
 lušardi

Tiglath-pileser the mighty king, the net of the unsub-
 missive who overwhelms the resistance of evil doers

I accomplished their defeat: the bodies of their warriors
 on the ridges of the mountains like the storm (god) I
 strewn, I made their blood course down the mountain
 valleys and slopes 1

As commentary on the second passage above with its parallels in
 the inscription as noted, the Sîn-šar-iškun oath text may be cited:

If you sin against this treaty of Sîn-šar-iškun
 king of Assyria, his sons (or) his grandsons, may
 Nergal, the perfect lord, cause to flow your blood
 into the gorges and valleys of the mountains

2

Frankena describes this text as a treaty, while Borger more
 cautiously refers to it as a '*Vereidigung für RN*', but in either
 case the theological structure is the same, and it raises the ques-
 tion of historical narrative being written under theological influence
 to produce realised treaty curses.

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1. AKA, 52 & 51, Col 3:32-34 & 23ff; compare the similar lines from
 other places in the inscription - Col 1:77ff, 2:13ff, 2:21ff, 3:
 52ff, 4:18ff, 4:91ff, 5:92ff; AKA, 36,39,40,54,61,67 & 77; ARAB 1,
 74f, 78, 80f & 84, \$221f, 229, 233, 236 & 242 .
 2. Translation by R.Frankena: OTS 14(1965),125 who collated the text
 originally published by E.F.Weidner: AfO 13(1939/40), 215 Anm 69
 Assur 13955z & t. 14 .

Those who fled before the stroke of the iron dagger, famine, hunger and flaming fire, and reached a place of refuge the Net of the great gods my lords which is not to be escaped overwhelmed them. Not one escaped, not a rebel whom they destined to fall into my hands went free...As for the rest of the people...their severed flesh I fed to the dogs, pigs, wolves, eagles, birds of the air and fish of the deep

1

This excerpt from the civil war contains in realised form the threats found in Ezekiel's oracle (32:3f), as did the lines from Tiglath-pileser I. Granting that warfare generates certain descriptions whose language may overlap prophetic oracles, a more satisfying explanation seems to lie in relating Ezekiel's imagery to the treaty curse material, especially when the Hebrew idiom embraces the Divine Net, sword, famine, exposure of corpse and the Banquet of Flesh. So the juxtaposition of the Divine Net (sapar ilāni rabūti) and the Banquet of Flesh in Ashurbanipal's inscription may be taken to strengthen the case for Ezekiel's having used the Divine Net imagery in 32:1ff in the Ancient Near Eastern tradition.

A further interesting possibility for the Ezekiel and Assyrian passages is that they may have some connection with the Babylonian Enuma Elish. As mentioned, the Old Testament made use of some type of monster-slaying myth in its poetic imagery, and Ezekiel himself was in a position to appropriate what he wanted from Babylon, putting Yhwh in the title rôle for apologetic reasons. At 29:3 he refers to Pharaoh as hattannîm haggādôl and predicts a divinely effected Banquet of Flesh (29:5); at 32:2 he refers to him as kattannîm bayyammîm with a similar fate (32:4). Ezekiel's use of the Divine Net theme elsewhere and the parallel with Enuma Elish where Marduk wields the Net against Tiamat favour the Ancient Near Eastern idiom as a background to pāraštî cālêkâ 'et-rištî (Ezek 32:3).

1. Rassam, 4:59ff which is discussed in Asb. section H in Part I of this thesis.

To conclude this study of the Divine Net in the Old Testament, two passages will be cited which make use of net imagery but in a manner not likely to be connected with the Divine Net tradition.

The first passage describes Jerusalem sacked and captive subsequent to divine judgement with the main figure of speech being the Cup of Ordeal, the net simile being slipped in as a couplet:

These two things have befallen you -
 who will condone with you ? -
 devastation and destruction and famine and sword;
 who will comfort you ?
 Your sons have fainted,
 they lie at the head of every street
 like an antelope in a net;
 they are full of the wrath of Yhwh,
 the rebuke of your God.
 (Isa 51:19f)

This is certainly a graphic description of those in whom the covenant curses have exacted their toll. It would be too much to catalogue the covenant curse background of haššōd, haššeber, hārā^cāb and haḥereb within and without the Old Testament, but a brief look may be taken at 'fainting' (bānayik cullēpū, v. 20a) in this connection by way of illustration.

Fear and the attendant psychological collapse under stress is vividly conveyed by parallel curses from Deut 28 and Lev 26 :

Yhwh will give you there (in exile) a trembling heart (lēb raggāz) and failing eyes (kilyōn cēnāyim), and a languishing soul (da'ābōn nepeš); your life shall hang in doubt before you; night and day you shall be in dread (paḥadta) and have no assurance of your life.
 (Deut 28:65b-67)

I will send faintness (mōrek) into their hearts in the lands of their enemies; the sound of a driven leaf shall put them to flight, and they shall flee as one flees from the sword, and they shall fall when none pursues.
 (Lev 26:36)

In the Prophets, fear and prostration are linked to the terrifying yōm Yhwh with an 'out of the frying pan into the fire' sequence -

The earth lies polluted
 under its inhabitants;
 for they have transgressed the laws (tōrōt)
 violated the statutes (ḥōq)
 broken the everlasting covenant
 (hēpērū bērit cōlām)
 Therefore a curse ('ālāh) devours the earth
 and its inhabitants suffer for their guilt

Terror(paḥad) and the pit(paḥat) and the snare(paḥ)
 are upon you O inhabitant of the earth !
 He who flees at the sound of the terror
 shall fall into the pit;
 and he who climbs out of the pit
 shall be caught in the snare.
 (Isa 24:5-6a & 17-18a) 1

The English fails to bring out the play on words in verse 17a - paḥad, paḥat and paḥ . The first is itself a pun, for as a technical term it is part of the hunter's equipment ('hunter's scare' - NEB) along with pit and net, yet it is also the dread inspired by Yhwh coming in judgement on the Day of Yhwh (bayyôm hahû', v. 21).² The lines are repeated verbatim by Jeremiah in an oracle on Moab (Jer 48:43f), and both passages may owe something to Amos 5:18-20 -

Woe to you who desire the day of Yhwh !
 Why would you have the day of Yhwh ?
 It is darkness, and not light;
 as if a man fled from a lion,
 and a bear met him;
 or went into the house and leaned with his
 hand against the wall,
 and a serpent bit him.
 Is not the day of Yhwh darkness, and not light,
 and gloom with no brightness in it ?

The theme of the faintness due to fear caused by the yôm Yhwh is exemplified by Isa 13:6-8 given below:

Wail for the day of Yhwh is near;
 as destruction from the Almighty it will come !
 Therefore all hands will be feeble(rāpāh)
 and every man's heart will melt(māsas)
 and they will be dismayed(bāhal)
 Pangs and agony will seize them;
 they will be in anguish like a woman in travail.
 They will look aghast(tāmah) at one another;
 their faces will be aflame.

1. See H.Kosmala: Annual of the Swedish Theological Institute 4(1965), 91-113 "Three Nets of Belial - a study in the terminology of Qumran & the NT" for discussion of Isa 24:17 as quoted and interpreted in the Damascus Document, and the supposed allusion in Lk 21:35.

2. Cf. the words of the poet lamenting Jerusalem's desolation

paḥad wāpaḥat ḥāyāh lānū ḥaššē't wēḥaššāber:
 šod šādūnī kaššippōr 'ōyēbay ḥinnām:
 šāmētū babbōr ḥayyāy wayyaddū-'eben bī:
 (Lam 3:47,52f)

We have followed through the curse of psychological breakdown from its covenant background (Deut & Lev) to historical description (Isa 51 & Lam) to the extension of its application whereby it is foretold as a characteristic of the Day of Yhwh (Isa 24, Isa 13, Amos 5).¹ It appears in all three contexts because of its character as a divine judgement. In passages other than Isa 51, we have found it to be associated with net, trap and snare imagery (Isa 24, Jer 48, Lam 3). We must now ask if the net imagery of Isa 51:20 (kětô' mikmār) belongs to the Divine Net tradition under study.

The answer is negative. It is a simile rather than a metaphor describing divine retribution - notice, for example, that the divine possessive pronoun is not used here, as it was in Ezek 32:3(rištî, ħermî), Hosea 7:12(měšûdô), Ezek 12:13(rištî, měšûdatî) and Ezek 17:20(rištî, měšûdātî).

It does share something in common with the Divine Net theme, however, for like the latter this net simile is at home as a treaty-curse, and it is for this reason that we have been at pains to point out the treaty curse derivation of the language associated with kětô' mikmār in the Isa 51 passage, that is, the devastation, destruction, famine, sword and prostration. This conclusion is clinched by a glance at the simile curses of the EVT. No less than three are trap curses.

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1. This overflows into the New Testament with the equation of the Day of Yhwh with the Parousia, which is illustrated by the eschatological discourse of Luke 21 where the themes of cosmic disruption, prostration through fear and the return of the Son of Man are found in juxtaposition:

And there will be signs in sun and moon and stars, and upon the earth distress of nations in perplexity at the roaring of the sea and the waves, men fainting with fear and forboding of what is coming on the world; for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. And then they will see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. (Luke 21:25-27)

Just as a stag(ālu) is chased and killed so may your avengers chase and kill you, your brothers, your sons.

Just as a bird is caught by means of a decoy(ina dubaqi), so may they deliver you, your brothers, your sons into the hand of your avengers.

Just as a ḥarušḥu-beast is caught in a snare(ina kippi), so may you, your brothers, your sons and daughters be caught by the hand of your enemy.

1

These simile curses are separate and distinct from the ḥuḫāru/ gišparru curses of Shamash (EVT, \$101, 649f), and we would maintain that both groups have their counterparts in the Old Testament, Isa 51: 20 being the counterpart of the simile group, and the previous texts cited in this study being the counterpart of the latter curse.

In passing we may note that EVT, \$80 - the trapped bird - has apparently left its mark in one of the myths, the Erra Epic. The angry god has been decimating the population by various means when his lieutenant speaks up and tries to deflect him from his course of implacable destruction, saying:

As for those inhabitants of Babylon - they are the bird and you are their decoy; into the net you forced them, caught them, destroyed them, O warrior Era.²

Though the god uses the net, the simile aspect is specifically indicated which separates it from the Divine Net usage in our tradition.

As Hillers has pointed out, the bird-in-trap imagery occurs not infrequently in the royal inscriptions. He does not develop the point, but the question must be asked as to the theological implications of the imagery in the royal war records. Is it simply stylistic, that is vivid language to grace the composition? Or does it relate back to

1. EVT, \$78, 80 & 82 lines 576f, 582f & 588f .

2. Erra Epic, 4:18f . See conveniently the recent French translation by R.Labat in Les Religions du Proche-Orient asiatique, 1970, p. 114 -117 with introduction and text-sources, p. 114 note 1 .

the treaties and their graphic curses with the intention of presenting the king as the executor of the treaty curses ? One supplementary reference may be added here to those in Part I. In Sargon's records we read -

mātāti šâtina kīma [tibûtu] aribî aktum-ma CN
... huḫāriš aš[up] (Lie, 14 lines 85f)

Those lands I overran like [an invasion of] locusts;
Izirtu I overwhelmed as though with a net

The net simile curses have already been documented. The Locust curse which may well lie behind this record has a wide distribution over Hebrew, Aramaic and Sargonid sources.¹ With the two similes occurring together the case for dependence on simile curses seems strengthened.

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1. References for the Locust curse include Deut 28:38, Sefire I, A:27, and EVT, \$47 lines 442f. The net simile in royal inscriptions yields such examples as

kīma šuškalī asahḫ[ap] kīma huḫāri akattam (KAH 2, No. 84:21)
ina gišparrija ul ipparšid ...kīma iššūri ultu qereb
šadê abāršu...ina saparrija ajjumma ul ūši (Asar,58:12ff)

Root saḫāpu + huḫāriš: Sg 8:194, Lie,74 line 5, Iraq 16,177
line 47, Iraq 7,10: line 25f

Root saḫāpu + kīma saparri: ARAB 1, 255 \$716(= 1R,pl. 29ff)
ARAB 1, 283 \$789(= Rost: TigL III,
lines 54ff)

Cf. kamāriš: saparriš nadū-ma kamāriš ušbū(Enuma 4:112)

kamāru šakānu: AHw,430 kamāru I,(2) 'Fanggarn auslegen,
vernichtend schlagen'

RN ana kakki ūši-ma abiktašunu imḫaš
kamāršunu iškun ummānšunu rapaštīm
ušamqit (King:CCEBK, 6:12f,cf. 7:16,33:32)

ša nišē āšib libbišun kamāršunu aškun
(Rassam, 5:118)

IV.2: The Divine Net and Adê Theology of the Tukulti-Ninurta Epic.

The Tukulti-Ninurta Epic actually falls outside the chronological boundaries of this thesis in belonging to the end of the 2nd Millennium in which the king's reign comes (1244-1208 bc), and hence, as Harvey points out, it is almost contemporary with the Exodus and is the contemporary of the *Bundesformular hittite*¹. It therefore bridges the gap between the early Sumerian treaty texts in which the Divine Net motif appears and Ashurbanipal's use of the motif in his adê historiography towards the end of the 7th Century bc.

To quote Lambert, 'this text is the only large scale Assyrian epic which has come down to us, and must have consisted, when complete, of not less than 700 lines'.² It is regrettable that a work of such literary, historical and theological interest should still be in such a fragmentary state of publication, though Lambert's work on extant fragments has clarified the plot so that a brief resumé may now be given.

Kashtiliash, the Kassite king, has ruptured the relationship with Assyria under Tukulti-Ninurta I, thus provoking the wrath of the gods. Babylonian merchants with a document written by Kashtiliash fall into the Assyrian's hands, and he lays the letter before Shamash charging the Kassite with sin. Tukulti-Ninurta sends a letter to his adversary which begins by outlining previous relations much in the manner of historical prologues to treaties, but here serving as an indictment. In Col. 3 charges are renewed before the Sun god, and the king declares war on the Kassite who first engages and then flees to fight another day. The climax is reached in a great battle whose outcome is determined by the intervention of the gods who fight on the Assyrian's side. The epic concludes with Tukulti-Ninurta carrying off booty which includes Babylonian literature, and giving honour to the gods of Assyria.

1. J. Harvey: Plaidoyer, 127; see chap 5, A - p. 121-128 on the Epic.

2. W.G. Lambert: Afo 18(1957/8), 38-51 "Three Unpublished Fragments of the T-N Epic", p. 38. The re-ordering of text columns as given by Thompson-Ebeling is fundamental; for bibliography, see Lambert's article, Borger: HKL 1, 108 on E. Ebeling: MAOG 12/II(1938) and the works cited in Harvey's footnotes. Kashtiliash IV's reign runs from 1242-1235 bc; see further E. Weidner: ITN and Borger: EAK I, 98ff.

Harvey's analysis of the form is useful. It divides the poem into part A: The *Réquisitoire* of Tukulti-Ninurta and part B: The *Réaction* of Kashtiliash. Part A has three subdivisions:

1. *Déclaration des fautes* de Kashtiliash:
 - *interrogatoire* (2-4)
 - *accusation* sous forme déclaratoire (5-8)
2. *Procédure* juridique rituelle:
 - le roi *proclamera le traité devant Šamaš* (9)
 - et montrera la malice de Kashtiliash par un *réquisitoire historique*, comprenant ses bienfaits et les fautes du partenaire cassite (10-12)
3. *Déclaration de la guerre-judgement*:
 - la guerre sera le *vrai procès*, où Tukulti-Ninurta sera à la fois plaignant et maître (13-14)
 - *aucun arrangement* n'est plus possible; seule la mort du coupable montrera qui avait raison (15-20)

1

Part B is then divided into the Transition, in which Tukulti-Ninurta is full of confidence because of his fidelity to the treaty (21) while the Kassite is thrown into dismay by the contemplation of the divine ordeal, and the Confession by Kashtiliash of his treaty guilt which embraces the past - he acknowledges breach of the treaty, the despising of the Assyrian's messenger and ingratitude, the present - he knows himself to be already found guilty and under sentence for the text of the treaty and his fathers' seals prove it as does Tukulti-Ninurta's indictment, and the future - he acknowledges leading his people into unavoidable misfortune and that all recourse to rituals are in vain. This needs to be read against the background of Harvey's study of the Old Testament *rîb* in its five element form:

- I. Préliminaires du procès
- II. Interrogatoire
- III. Réquisitoire
- IV. Déclaration officielle de la culpabilité
- V. (a) Condamnation sous forme de menaces
- (b) Décret positif 2

1. Harvey: *Plaidoyer*, 123ff .

2. *ibid.*, 54ff ; see conveniently the tables on pages 54 & 80f .

Moving on to the text itself, we find that the Divine Net occurs in a vexingly broken passage which belongs to the final column as attested by one of Lambert's fragments:

...] šá ma-mi-it ilānimeš i[...
 ... rle-e giš-pár dšá-maš palēmeš x[...
 ... ma-mli-it ilānimeš na-šir me [...
 ...] who the oath of the gods .[...
 ...].the net of Shamash, reign . [...
 ... the oath of the gods, the keeper of .[...
 1

Judging from the context this is a description of the Assyrian king as one endowed with righteousness and supported by the gods who punish oath breakers but take the part of those who honour the treaty. This would be a standard theological principle which the foregoing story would have illustrated.

This may be better appreciated when the theological development of the Epic is followed through. It is a moot question as to what motivated the poet and how his composition was used. Was he intent on exonerating Tukulti-Ninurta from the sack of the holy city of Babylon as some of his successors attempted after Sennacherib's attack? Ebeling is perhaps correct to label the Epic a 'politischen Propaganda-gedichtes aus ein assyrischen Kanzlei', but it needs to be remembered that politics, history and religion were not three separate spheres and disciplines as they are today in academic circles. Harvey thinks that its *Sitz im Leben* might have been a public reading to 'l'assemblée du peuple ou des nobles assyriens dans la célébration du retour de l'expédition militaire', and emphasises how valuable this would have been pedagogically if other Assyrian vassal kings were present.² This would make it analogous to the Sargon *Gottesbrief*, and we may agree that it stands in the tradition of adê historiography.

1. Afo 18, 45f BM.98730:38-40 (=B, rev.) .

2. Plaidoyer, 128; cf. Lambert's comment, art.cit., 41 -

The history, as it comes from Assyrian hands, is no doubt tinged with a patriotic bias which has denigrated the Babylonian king, and to this extent Ebeling is correct in calling the work propaganda. But to suppose that this was its prime purpose is as far from the truth as regarding the Iliad as an apologia for the sacking of Troy. Tukulti-Ninurta is seen as one of the great figures of Assyrian letters.

The dominant theological tone of the poem is set out in the first column whose motif is the gods' wrath with Kashtiliash.¹ The reason for the divine anger is spelled out - broken treaty oaths:

ana ētiq māmīti PN ilānu šūt šamē[erṣeti...

šaJr Kašši išiṭ māmīta

]māmīt ilāni išiṭu

]niš ilāni ini' māmīta

against the oath-breaker PN the gods of heaven[and earth...

the king of the Kassites despised the oath

]the oath of the gods he/they despised

]the life of the gods, he altered the oath²

Col 1 ends with a hymn of praise to the Assyrian king, the function of which in the theological schema is to show that he is elect to punish the irreverent and disobedient.³

Col 2 picks up the narrative thread but again is basically theological with the indictment before Shamash of the Assyrian's enemy. The king reminds Shamash of the intimate relationship which existed between the Sun god and his forefathers:

1. See BM.98730:33ff Col 1; AfO 18, 42ff.

2. Col. 1, B obv. = BM.98730:33 ; Col. 1, A 6 = BM.121033:28,6 & 25 ; MAOG 12/II, 21f .

3. See AfO 18, 48ff; Col. 1, F col. y (Rm 142 + BM.121033:2f) which mentions those to be punished: [lā]ādirī & lā šēmī. On Tukulti-Ninurta's divine creation and election, see lines 8ff :

By the fate (šimat) assigned by DN his form is reckoned as divine nature (mani itti šēr ilāni mīnašu),
By the decree (purussê) of the Lord of the lands his forming proceeded smoothly inside the divine womb,
He is the eternal image of Enlil (šūma ṣalam DN)
Enlil, like a physical father, exalted him second to his first-born son.

Cf. the language of Psa 139:13ff, Jer 1:5, etc. and Atrahasis, Col. 1:208ff and the passages cited by Lambert:art.cit., 50 notes 8ff.

enūma [ina] maḥar ilūtika dīškulnu rikilta abbūni
 ukinnu māmīta ina bērišunu rabūtka issaqrū
 ša ištu maḥra dajjān abbēni lā mušpilu qurādu attā
 u ša inaḥnā āmer kinātīni multešeru ilu attāma

When our fathers established a bond in your divine
 presence,
 Made sure an oath between them, extolled your greatness
 You who are a hero, from of old the judge for our
 fathers, you who do not change,
 Even now you are the one who sees our faithfulness, you
 who are the director god 1

He then holds up the perfidious conduct of Kashtiliash before the gods
 for Shamash' adjudication:

ammīnim ētiq] ? ištu maḥra šar Kašši ešutaka
 šipparaka ipsus
 ul išḥuff] māmītka ētiq šiparraka zapurta iḥmil
 ušeqlila qillatišu maḥraka dšamaš dīnanni

Why did the king of the Kassites [transgress?] your
 bounds from of old, annul your decree,
 Not reverence your oath, transgress your decree,
 plan evil,
 Heap up his sin before you ? O Shamash, give me
 a ruling ! 2

He describes himself as a keeper of the oath (nāšir māmīti, l. 23), as
 were his forefathers whom he lists, such as [Kuri]galzu māmīt ili
 radid (l. 30). In contrast, there are those like Kashtiliash who could
 expect to perish in battle for their perfidy: [lā nāšir] šiparrika ina
 abikti ša tuqunti nišē[šū] ḥul[liq] (l. 24).

The treaty is still very much to the fore in Column 3, for it
 opens with an indictment of Kashtiliash for violation of Assyria's
 borders - the definition of borders being one of the features of
 certain treaty documents.³ The Assyrian rīb involved a literal

1. Col. 2, A 5 = BM.121033:15-18; MAOG 12/II, 18.

2. *ibid.* lines 19-21.

3. An excellent example is the Abban + Jarimlim treaty - see D.J.
 Wiseman: JCS 12(1958),124ff "Abban & Alalakh"; cf. the Ugaritic
 documents relating to treaties and international relations which
 touch on cities and boundaries, eg. Nougayrol: PRU 4,48ff, Edict
 of Suppiluliuma RS. 17.340 & 17.369A; Edict of Mursilis II RS. 17.
 62 & 17.237 and RS; 17.335+379+381+235. From the OT, cf. 1 Kgs 9:10ff
 & 5:12 Solomon + Hiram treaty, 1 Kgs 9:16 & 3:1 Solomon + Pharaoh
 treaty, 1 Kgs 20:34 Ahab + Benhadad treaty.

In a confession wrung from his lips he admits that he is as good as lost:

ul ušellimšu ina maḥra ḥimiltašu damiqta ul amgur
inanna abrâ gellēt mātiya šupšuqa imīdu arnū
issahḥpanni šēret lā nablaṭi kasanni mūtu
tasagganni-ma māmīt DN tukijal qanni

In the past I did not maintain friendly relations
with him, I did not agree to his beneficent plan.
Now I see that the crimes of my country are serious,
its sins are numerous.

A punishment without reprieve has overwhelmed me,
death grips me;

The curse of Shamash tries me, it grasps my hem. 1

The treaty terminology is most prominent with māmītu central and the positive aspects of the treaty - now null and void - are attested by the D-theme of šalāmu and the adjective damqu.² Attention then moves to the actual clay document which provides irrefutable proof of the Kassite's obligations and hence of his guilt:

tukinanni ṭuppi lā enē birimtū ab[bēj]la
šunu šuzuzzū ina maḥrija ša lā tuttakkaru qibīs[sunu]
rikilti abbēja ša lā naprukki piša anni[
ukinnanni-ma dajān kināti lā mušpīlu qur[adu]

1. MAOG 12/II, 15; Col. 3 [B=A4]:26-29 .

2. Compare such phrases as šalma epēšu, ṭūbtu u salimmū, salīmu balu mithuši// ṭūbtu balu šitnunimma(TnEp) , ṭābūtu, ṭūbu, ṭābūta epēšu, damqātim, awātim damqātim, ana salīmum u damqātim - references for all of these are given by W.L.Moran: JNES 22(1963),173-176 "A Note on the Treaty Terminology of the Sefire Stelas"; compare the further Akkadian and biblical phrases cited in D.R.Hillers: BASOR 176 (1964),46f "A Note on Some Treaty Terminology in the OT"; A.R.Millard: IB 17(1966),115-117 "'For He is Good'" ; J.M.Munn-Rankin: Iraq 18(1956),68-110 "Diplomacy in W.Asia in the Early 2nd Millenium bc", p. 84ff .

You have convicted me with a tablet which is
unalterable, with the sealings of my forefathers.
They stand before me with words which cannot be
changed

The bond of my fathers which cannot be falsified,
its words [] my sin,

The true judge, undeviating, the hero convicts me

1

The Kassite admits that he has doomed his people with inescapable circumstances like a steep-sided pit into which an unsuspecting animal falls, and he faces his guilt before the god of justice:

midū arnūja ina maḥar DN šērētū[] ja []
mannu ilu ša igammilu nišēja ina []
kajjānamma Aššurū kala ilī upaqqū
(Col. 3:37-39)

Numerous are my sins before Shamash [my] crimes []
Which is the god to ransom my people from [] ?
Continually the Assyrians pay heed to all the gods !

This dramatic confession is the theological crux of the Epic. Not only has the Kassite been indicted before Shamash by the Assyrian king and indicted also by letter sent as an ultimatum, but now he indicts himself. This creative touch must have been well received by the Assyrian audience which we imagine listened to the Epic being recited. Action cannot be delayed. But for a moment it seems that the Kassite king shakes off his guilt and claims he only awaits the signal from the gods to launch his decisive attack.

RN lū tušeškun ummānka adi adān DN ikunna
[u slimān tāhāziya ikaššada qabalka ē tadkī
m[ā] annū ūmu ša dām nišēka umakkaru namē qirbēti
u eli karāšika kīma ^dAddi ušettaqu abūbu našpanti
(Col. 4 [B+A3]:30-33; MAOG 12/II, 11)

O Tukulti-Ninurta, hold your army at the ready
until the moment set by Shamash becomes evident
to me

And the right time for me to engage arrives; do not
disarm your force !

This is the day when the blood of your people will
soak the fields and meadows,
and will like Adad send a devastating flood over
your camp

1. Col. 3:30-33; on rikiltu, rikis/štu - 'treaty' from root rakāsu- 'to bind', see AHw, 984 for 2nd Millenium references, and Weinfeld: DDS, 66f; cf. riksu, AHw, 985 (C); on māmītu, see AHw, 599, esp. (2b, c, d, e).

Col. 5 sees Tukulti-Ninurta's men urging him on to put a speedy halt to the insolence and aggression of the Kassite king, and battle is joined with the primary focus on the gods who sweep across the field spreading terror and slaughter among Assyria's enemies. Images of fire and storm abound: Ashur blasts the enemy with devastating fire (išāt našpanti napāḥu, 5:25); Enlil sets them alight with fire-bolts (nablu qatāru Š-theme); Anu lays about them with his unsparing divine weapon (meṭṭa lā pādâ, 5:27); Sin launches a crippling attack (namungat qabli, 5:28); the storm-god Adad unleashed a flood on their battle lines (abūbu redû Š-theme, 5:29); Shamash the Sun god blinded their troops (ēn ummānāt etû II, D-theme); Ninurta shattered their weapons (kakkē šebēru, D-theme, 5:31); Ishtar smote them with her rope (keppû maḥaṣu, 5:32). The lines are very vigorous, and besides being dramatic poetry they have a theological thrust for behind them lie the treaty curses of fire and storm and shattered weapons and blinding.¹

The final column draws the moral with its allusion to the Divine Net in the adê framework. This theological framework pre-dates the adê historiography of Sargon, Esarhaddon and Ashurbanipal in the 1st Millennium, but reveals its roots in the 2nd and even 3rd Millennium world of international treaty making. The Tukulti-Ninurta Epic displays the schema of vassal oath with stipulations, transgression of that oath, the ultimatum sent by messenger indicting the offender, the insult to the messenger, king and gods, the prayer of indictment before the gods, the true affirmative from Shamash, divine intervention in battle, the fate of the treaty breaker with realised curses, and the honouring of the gods in victory. The Tukulti-Ninurta Epic is therefore significant not only because it is the sole surviving Assyrian Epic, but because it witnesses so clearly to an adê theology of empire and the gods.

1. References to these treaty curses are given in the works of Fensham (ZAW 75), Hillers (TC/OTP), Fitzmyer (Sefîre), Frankena (OTS 14) and in the discussion of the Assyrian royal inscriptions in Part I above.

IV:3. Deracination and Shattered Weapons - a Reference Profile of Two Treaty Curses.

In the important theological statement of Sg 8:117-122 quoted with translation in Part I, A.1: The Theological Structure of the *Gottesbrief* on page 14ff, Sargon referred to the gišparru of the gods inescapable by the treaty breaker, and to the fate of being uprooted and having weapons shattered. The Divine Net motif has already been covered in some detail in the first two excurses so that a good idea of its chronological and literary distribution has been gained. A profile of references without discussion will now be given for the curse of Deracination with a shorter section devoted to the curse of Shattered Weapons.

The Curse of Deracination.

- (a) In early royal inscriptions: see conveniently Sollberger & Kupper: IRSA with details of the best transliterated editions of each text given on page 265.

IRSA, 98,101f,105ff,109,112,124f,127,129,154,242,255 & 257.
Kings & Gods involved in the root & progeny curses:

Sargon I + Shamash; Rīmuš + Enlil, Shamash; Man-ištūšu + Enlil, Shamash; Narām-Suen + Shamash, Lugal-marada; idem + Nin-gubla, Shamash; Šar-kali-šarri + Enlil, Shamash; Puzur-In-Šušinak + In-Šušinak, Inanna, Narundi, Nergal; idem + In-Šušinak, Shamash, Enlil, Enki, Inanna, Suen, Nin-ḫursaga, Narundi & pantheon; Lā-'arāb + gods of Gutium, Inanna, Suen; Šu-Suen + Enlil, Ninliltum; Puzur-Eštar + Inanna, Dagan, Enki; Tākil-ilišu + Ea, Damkina; Indattu-In-Šušinak + In-Šušinak, Shamash, Eštar, Sin .

- (b) Code of Hammurabi: CH 27b:31-37.

awātum maruštum ša Šamaš arḫiš likšussu eliš ina balṭūtīm lišsuḫšu šapliš ina eršitim eṭimmušu mē liššašmi: 'May the baleful word of Shamash quickly overtake him, uproot him from among the living (in the world) above, and make his ghost thirst for water in the world (below)' (Driver: BabLaws102f)

cf. nasaḫ išid šarrūtišu - CH 27b:28f .

(c) Babylonian Boundary-stones:

lū rābišu lemuttišu šūma liqamma šuršišu - Hinke: NBSt, 152
Nbk I, Col. 4:26f.

ešissu lissuḥḥū liḥalliḳū piriḥšu lissuḥḥū lišēlū nannabšu
(King: BBS, 46 Marduk-nadin-ahhe, Col. 3:27-30)

šumšu zēršu perē'šu lissuḥḥū - Scheil: MDP 4, 164 Melisihu
pl. 16, Col. 2:9f .

Cf. the root nasāḥu + išdu/kudurru: NBSt, 150 Nbk I, Col. 4:19
MDP 2, 113:3
BBS, 41 No. 7, Col. 2:27
IR, 70 Col. 4:3f
ibid., 3:9-12
BBS, 29 No. 5, Col. 3:35f
NBSt, 67, 4
BBS, 62 No. 9, Col. 2:15f
ibid., 78 No. 11, Col. 2:25

(d) An Oracle for Ashurbanipal:

šūt epšētē annātē lemnēti š[ā Šamaš-šum-ukin ēpušu elika išid
kussī šarrūtišu assuḥ palāšu [] sapiḥ māt Akkadī kališa
(Bauer: IAsb, 79 K. 2647+Rm. 2, 99:3f)

(Because of) those evil deeds which Shamash-shum-ukin
perpetrated against you, I will uproot the foundation
of his royal throne, his dynasty [] the overthrow
of the whole of Akkad

This is in fact a treaty curse on the lips of the deity giving
the oracle, as the whole theological ethos reveals - cf. the
following theological statements from it:

Šamaš-šum-ukin ša adēja lā iššuru-ma iḥṭū ina ṭābti Asb.
[Šam]aš-šum-ukin nizirtē bēlūtiša ša ārurušu

(e) Esarhaddon's Vassal Treaty:

eliš ina balṭūtīm lissahḥūkunu šapliš ina eršetim eṭimmākunu
mē lišamū

On earth may they uproot you from the living, below may they
deprive your spirit of water (libations)
(EVT, 476f; ANETS, 103/539 \$56 plus note 21a reading Prec. Plur. of
root nasāḥu with Frankena: OTS 14, 132 instead of suḥḥu, and adding
ina from the cuneiform before balṭūtīm)

Frankena would also restore this curse in the very fragmentary
treaty(?) of Sin-sar-iskun - Clay: BRM 4, No. 50: rev. 6'-10' .

[] e ilāni rabūti i-pa-a[š] ?]
[] šā šamē u eršetim ar-rat lā n[ap-šu-ri] ?]
[] x li ri-im-šū-nu e-liš i-na x []
[] x-nu šap-liš i-na eršetim e[ṭemme-šu]]
[mē] lu-u-za-am-me dSin dNannar d[]

Cf. also K 82-5-22,130 (= H 1105), the loyalty oath to Ashurbanipal with curses such as:

Rev. 13 ^dEa šar apsi mē nagbi []
 14 lissuhannašu šap^rliš^r]

Cf. K 1033 (= H 58) an Ishtar oracle to Esarhaddon promising the defeat of 'those not faithful', ie breakers of the loyalty oath, and hence the judgements are treaty curse pronouncements:

Rev. 6 mā ša itti šarri bēli[]
 7 lā kīnūni mā ištu māt Aššur
 8 [a-]nassaḥšu []
 9 ištu māt Aššur linnīsiḥ]

'Whoever is not true to the king, [] lord, from the land of Assyria I will surely uproot him [] from the land of Assyria let him be uprooted'

(f) Related Usages:

Il vainquit aussi les villes de l'Élam et il détruisait leurs remparts et [il extirpa du pays d'Élam] la racine de Barahsi (IRSA, 103 Rimus)

Je couvritis les villes de mes adversaires en tells et en terrains vagues, j'extirpa du pays la racine de l'ennemi et du méchant, je fis demeurer la totalité du pays conformément à mon ordre (IRSA, 222 Samsu-ilūna)

CH 24b:30f nakrē eliš u šapliš assuḥ - BabLaws, 94f .

CH 25b:91f ina mātišu raggam u šēnam lissuḥ - ibid, 98f .

Sg records: nāsiḥ šuruš māt Amatte - ARAB 2, 61 §118 Sg, Cyl. 25 .

: amēlē CNN milik lemuttum ša nasaḥ šuršē māti imtallikū...ina ḥīṭi iḥṭū ultu ašrišunu assuḥšunūti (ARAB 2, 3 §6; Lie, 10 line 66f)

Esar. : šuruš māt Kūsi ultu māt Muṣur assuḥ - ARAB 2, 227 §580; Asar, 99 line 45b-46a .

Compare the use of nasāḥu - 'to deport' in the Assyrian royal inscriptions (see AHw, 750 & 753 nasāḥu 13d & nashu 5 for references, and the use of nsh & ntš in the OT - eg, Deut 28:63, 29:26f, 2 Chron 7:20, 1 Kgs 14:15 . Other uses of nasahu related to the uprooting idiom may be found in AHw, 750 nasāḥu 4 & 10 and p. 752, N-theme 7 .

(g) Marduk's Treatment of the Wicked:

Who with his holy charm has uprooted(nasāḥu) all the evil ones
 Who directs justice, roots out(nasāḥu) crooked talk
 ...who with the weapon roots out(nasāḥu) all enemies
 (Enuma Elish, Tablet 7:34, 39 & 43)

(h) Old Testament Usages:

nsh - Covenant curse with Yhwh as subject

And you shall be plucked off (wēnissahtem mē^cal) which you are entering to take possession of it (Deut 28:63)

Compare the general usage of the idiom; Yhwh as subject, the wicked as object - nsh + šōreš:

yissāhākā...wēšērešēkā mē'ereš hayyīm // nasāhu ina balṭūtīm (Psa 52:7 MT)

nsh// krt - Prov 2:22

ntš - Exposition of covenant curse with Yhwh as subject

therefore the anger of the LORD was kindled against this land, bringing upon it all the curses written in this book ('et-kol-haqqēlālāh hakkētūbāh bassēper hazzeh); and Yhwh uprooted them (wayyittēšēm) from their land in anger and fury and great wrath and cast them into another land as at this day (Deut 29:26 MT)

Cf. Yhwh's exposition to Solomon (2 Chron 7:20) ; Ahijah's exposition to Jereboam (1 Kgs 14:15)

In Jeremiah's call & message -

the prophet's rôle: ntš// ntš, 'bd, hrs / bnh, nt^c (1:10)
the principle of repentance & doom: ntš// ntš, 'bd/bnh, nt^c
(Jer 18:7 & 9)

doom oracle: ntš// 'bd (Jer 12:14f & 17)

Yhwh's work: ntš// hrs/bnh, nt^c (Jer 45:4)

reversal of punishment: ntš// hrs/nt^c (Jer 24:6)

reversal of punishment in the context of the New Covenant:

ntš// ntš, hrs, r^{cc}, 'bd/bnh, nt^c (Jer 31:28)

promise of reversal of judgement: ntš// hrs/bnh, nt^c (Jer 42:10)

(Note - Yhwh as subject and use of nt^c in contrasting parallel shows that it is the same idiom as ntš + šōreš)

- Other occurrences Amos 9:15 - covenant curse reversed

I will plant them upon their land,
and they shall never again be plucked up
(wēlō' yinnātēšû^côd)
out of the land which I have given them
says Yhwh your God. (Amos 9:15)

Cf. Psa 9:7 - Yhwh's action against wicked cities; Dan 11:4
- idiom applied to a kingdom; Ezek 19:12 - Israel as
an uprooted vine, cf. šōreš ntq , Ezek 17:9 .

šoreš + various verbs -

- Hos 9:16 - ybš: curse of barrenness against Ephraim
 Amos 2:9 - šmd + piryō mimma^cal wēšārāšayw mittāhat
 total destruction of the Amorites; cf.
 Job 18:6 - the fate of the wicked
 Isa 14:30 - mūt, ra^cab: doom oracle on Philistines; cf.
 Isa 5:14 - Israel as a vine.
 Mal 3:19MT - lō' ya^cāzōb lāhem šoreš wē^cānāp: the extinction
 of the wicked on the yôm Yhwh.

(i) Phoenecian usage -

'l ykn lm šrš lmt wpr lm^cl

Let there not be for them root downwards or fruit
 upwards (Sidon Eshmunazar, lines 11f).

The Curse of Shattered Weapons.

This is discussed by Hillers (TC/OTP, 60 curse No. 7 'The Breaking of Weapons') and by Fensham (Festschrift Volterra, 128ff). It is attested early, eg

Sargon of Agade (2334-2279 bc): H. Hirsch: AFO 20 (1963), 44.
 Abī-sarē of the Larsa Dynasty (1905-1895 bc): IRSA, 185 IVB6a.
 Yaḥdun-Lim of Mari (1825-1810 bc): IRSA, 244 IVF6a & 6b (= ANETS, 120/556f).

More important for our study is its frequent incorporation in treaties as one of the maledictions for breach of oath. Thus from Alalakh level VII comes the deed whereby the city is given to Yarim-Lim by Abban, a document related to a treaty very closely if not formally so (cf. Borger: HKL I, 635 No. 1 Vertrag):

^dHepat ^dIštar GIŠ.ŠI.NI-šu (šukurrušu ?) lišbirū
 (Wiseman: AT, No. 1:17)

The curse is known in the Aramaic treaty, Sefire I, A 4:38-39a -

w'yk zy tsbr wḥṣy' 'ln kn ysbr 'nrt whdd [qst mt^cll]
 wqst rbwh (Fitzmyer: Sefire, 14)

It is attested too in Late Assyrian treaties from Esarhaddon's reign -

^dAstartu ina tāhāzi danni qašatkunu lišbir(?)
 (EBT; Asar, 109 line 18)

qašatkunu lišbirū (EVT, 573)

Related to these are the prophetic maledictions of similar ilk from the Old Testament. For example, from Hosea, that book so full of covenant curse material:

wěšārbartî 'et-qešet Yiśrā'ēl (Hos 1:5)
cf. Jer 49:35 & the other biblical references
supplied by Hillers, loc.cit.

The Tukulti-Ninurta Epic with its theological adê framework as set out in Excursus 2 also has the Shattered Weapons curse as a realised malediction in the lines on the divine attack on Kashtiliash:

Ninurta qardu ašārid ilāni kakkēšunu ušebbir
(Col 5:31; MAOG 12/II,8 A2:31)

Numerous other instances of this curse could be documented such as those from kudurrus and Hammurabi's Code (see TC/OTP), but we shall draw attention to only one further passage for its interest and its link with other aspects of this study. From Marduk's battle with Tiamat and her allies comes the association of the Divine Net with the breaking of weapons, both of which with their background in curse material underline the fact of retributive punishment for rebellion, which also obtained in the case of disobedient vassals.

īširšunūti-ma kakkēšunu ušabbir
saparriš nadū-ma kamariš ušbū
(Enuma Elish, 4:111f)

Further references are given by AHw. and CAD K under kakku, but those referred to indicate the spread of the Shattered Weapons curse from 3rd Millenium royal inscriptions to Alalakh level VII, Aramaic and Assyrian treaty documents, in Assyrian theological Epic and Babylonian myth, and Phoenecian burial inscriptions as well as Old Testament prophetic oracles.

IV:4. Covenant and Covenant Meal.

In the course of the Sg 8th Campaign report we read of Sargon and Ullusunu sitting down to a meal together -

Before Ullusunu the king their overlord a laden table
I spread, and above Irzanu the father who begot him I
elevated his throne. Himself together with the Assyrians
I seated at the joyous banquet. Before Ashur and the
gods of their land they pronounced blessings upon my
majesty. (Sg 8:62f) 1

It was suggested that the context and the language pointed to this being a formal treaty meal such as EVT, 153ff envisages as part of treaty making ceremonial with its words - '(If) you establish this treaty before the gods who are placed (as witnesses), and swear by the laden table, by drinking from the cup...' . These lines from an actual 1st Millenium treaty document prove that the treaty meal was known in Assyria at this period, and we have interpreted the *Gottesbrief* report - consistent with its adê theology framework - as an actual historically documented instance of this treaty ceremony.

By way of amplification we may now look at the association of covenant meal with covenant in the biblical material to see what additional light is thrown on this traditional ceremony. We shall follow the chronological sequence given in the primary documents, though scholarship is divided, as one might expect, on the relation between the documents and history.

Genesis

(i) The Abraham + Abimelech Treaty: Gen 21:22-32.

The main centre of interest for us in this description of a mutual non-aggression pact sworn between Abraham and Abimelech lies in determining what function the animals served which Abraham gave to

1. See Part I, A.2 The Ullusunu & Rusas Incident, p. 22ff for the Akkadian and the discussion of the context.

Abimelech. Can a case be made out for a covenant meal or not ?

At the start, we should record our agreement with Speiser that 'the narrative can be logically interpreted as it stands', and not distributed between two sources or two occasions because two groups of animals are involved.¹ In Speiser's words:

The first group of animals symbolises the basic pact. The second group, on the other hand, which consists of seven ewes, is clearly labeled as a gift, the acceptance of which by Abimelech is to constitute validation (Cēdā) of Abraham's claim to the well. In other words, there is only one formal occasion with two parts to it instead of two separate pacts - or two different sources.²

The first group of animals consisted of an unspecified number of sheep and oxen, and these played a vital, formal rôle in the covenant ceremony, as may be seen from the wording of verse 27:

wayyiqqah 'Abrāhām šō'n ūbāqār wayyittēn
la'Abīmelek wayyikrētū šēnēhem bērit

The animals are handed over and then the treaty is formalised, and not the other way round. In some way, then, the animals form the prerequisite for the treaty. Abraham also swore an oath to Abimelech (see v. 23f), as did the latter to Abraham (v. 31), though we cannot tell whether this preceded the animals or followed them. The words of verse 27b (krt bērit) may be an alternative expression for 'swearing a covenant', or, as the Hebrew has 'swearing mutually' (nišbēcū šēnēhem). On the other hand, it has been suggested that the two phrases

1. Speiser: Genesis, 160. He credits 21:22-32 to E. This is a marked departure from the literary analysis of previous generations - for example, see Skinner: Genesis, ICC, 1910 p. 325 who notes that many and various scholars have undertaken to detect underlying documents and redactions, while he himself favours that of Gunkel who assigns verses 25,26,28-30 & 32-34 to J, and the rest to E.

2. *ibid.*

were kept apart in the early period,¹ and the lines from the Yarim-Lim + Abban treaty could be taken to support this:

Abban ana Jarimlim niš ilāni zakir u kišād l
immerim iṭbuḥ

Abban placed himself under oath to Jarimlim
and had cut the neck of a sheep²

There is a possibility, then, that we should look for both oaths and rites on this occasion of treaty making between Abraham and Abimelech. It would seem possible to argue that the sheep and oxen handed over by Abraham were used in the rites, and more specifically that what we have here is a communal meal, not excluding the possibility of sacrifice to the respective deities as well, since presumably the deities of Abimelech and Abraham were witnesses to their mutual oaths.³

This interpretation of the function of the sheep and oxen would gain support if it could be ruled out that they functioned as tribute. It seems clear enough that they did not constitute a bribe-gift to win favour, for this would imply that Abraham was the weaker party.

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1. So D.J.McCarthy: CBQ 26(1964),179-189 "Three Covenants in Genesis", p181 . He concludes - 'The point is that though taking an oath is part of covenant making, it is kept separate from the process of 'cutting a covenant' . At this early stage one swears an oath and also cuts a covenant; one does not swear a covenant' . It must be added that drawing this distinction within examples of biblical covenant making depends on his source analysis, which does not command universal agreement - he credits verses 22-24,27 &31 to E, and assigns 25-26, 28-30 & 32-34 to J (ibid, 179). Speiser as noted above disagrees. See M.Weinfeld: Biblica 56(1975),120-128 "Berît - Covenant v/s Obligation" for a review and comments on recent work in this semantic field, esp. p. 120 note 1.
 2. D.J.Wiseman: JCS 12(1957),124-129 "Abban & Alalakh", p. 126 .
 3. Surprisingly this possibility is overlooked by McCarthy; cf. idem: T&C,164 'the parallel from E, Gen 21:22-31, lacks the meal'; not so Kidner:G/TOTC, 142 'since covenants were usually sealed with blood, the animals of v. 27 may have been given for this purpose, leaving the 'seven ewe-lambs' as a goodwill gift. The lambs' use for breeding, as opposed to sacrifice, is made a possibility by their being female'; cf. A.van Selms:G/POT, 18 who assumes the oxen were 'offerdieren' . An assumption we make is that the posited sacrifices were not holocausts, but that some of the flesh was eaten.

Tribute is exacted by a stronger party from a vassal, but it seems clear that Abraham is on a par with Abimelech, if not in a superior position.¹ This emerges from Abimelech's acknowledgement in verse 22 - 'God is with you in all that you do; now therefore swear to me here by God that you will not deal falsely with me...' . The non-aggression pact was designed to relieve tensions. Abraham had been uneasy previously in the wife-sister narrative, but he was now beyond the immediate control of Abimelech in Beer-Sheba, whereas Abimelech is presented as the uneasy one in verse 22. In view of the close connection with the treaty ceremony and the omission of any mention of the male and female slaves, it would also be unwarranted to see in Abraham's gift a return of the compensation for Sarah's honour described in chap 20:14 .

Having ruled out a return of compensation, a bribe and tribute, we are left with the possibilities of simple generosity or purchase of certain rights or the furnishing of a communal meal sealing the pact. Since the seven lambs function as a guarantee of Abraham's rights to the well of Beer-Sheba, only generosity or menu remain as explanations for the handing over of the sheep and oxen. There is therefore a strong probability that a communal meal was involved in this early period against this semi-nomadic background.

(ii) The Isaac + Abimelech Treaty: Gen 26:26-31.

The parallels with the incident described above are so striking that literary and historical considerations can not be left aside in any discussion of this chapter, but first we shall consider the narrative as it stands before us.

Isaac is presented as a man to be reckoned with at the time when the treaty was concluded. Verses 12-16 convey this by describing his prosperity due to the blessing of Yhwh on his crops and herds. They also sketch the tensions between his household and the inhabitants of the city-state of Gerar.²

1. Compare McCarthy's judgement - '..it is the Hebrew patriarchs, Abraham(E,J) and Isaac(J), who are superior. This is counter to the etiological interpretation of the incidents current since Gunkel' (art.cit., 182ff).

2. Perhaps Tel Abu Hureirah; see BASOR 163(1963),47f note 59; IEJ 6 (1956),26-32; T.C.Mitchell in Arch&OT,405-427: if unoccupied during the Middle Bronze period, historicity becomes an issue.

The king requests him to quit the region - 'Go away from us; for you have grown far too powerful for our liking' (v. 16 in paraphrase). The fact that Abimelech goes across to Isaac to conclude the pact attests the same spirit of unease and respect towards this prosperous nomad. Indeed, Abimelech's attitude is coloured by numinous awe. He reveals a fear of divine retribution of the Rebekkah incident, and protected himself against it by extending his royal protection to the sojourners in a public proclamation (26:11). Now he comes to Isaac with an acknowledgement of the divine protection which that man enjoyed - 'We can see for ourselves that Yhwh is behind you' (v. 28).

In the king's speech there is preserved something of the flavour of treaty terminology. Thus, there is a brief historical recapitulation of past relationships (v.29) in which tôb and šālôm express the benefits of friendship.¹ Rudimentary stipulations lie in the wording of v.29a - 'im ta^cšēh ^cimmānu rā^cāh. These may be compared with 21:23 - wē^cattāh hiššābē^cāh lî bē'lōhîm hēnnāh 'im tišqōr lî ūlēnî ūlēnekdî, and with similar treaty phraseology from the Ancient Near East; for example -

whn yšqr Mt^c'l .[.1PN ...
whlnyšqr ^cqr Mt^c'l [1^cqr PN...]

[whn t]^cbd mrmt ^cly 'w ^cl bny 'w ^cl ^cqr]

Now if Matī^cel....should be false [to Bir-Ga'yah...]
[and if the offspring of Matī^cel should be false [to
the offspring of Bir-Ga'yah....]

[And if you do com]mit treachery against me or against
my sons or against [my] offspring (you will have been
false to all the gods of the treaty...)

šumma ina libbišu taḫaṭani qātunu ana limnitti ina
libbišu tubalani epšu bartu abutu lā ṭābu lā damiqtu
tepaššanišuni

1. See the literature cited on page 390 note 2. From Gen 21:23 compare šālôm hesed, and see N.Glueck: Hesed in the Bible; N.H.Snaith: DIOT, 100-110; H.J.Stoebe: VT 2(1952), 244-254; Millard: TB 17(1966), 115ff on the covenantal associations of hesed & tôb, and most recently M.Fox: BASOR 209(1973), 41f "Tôb as Covenant Terminology".

If you sin against him, lift your hands with evil intent against him, set afoot a rebellion, or wrong or evil plans against him... 1

The comparisons are very close for the root šqr is shared, while šh rācāh is semantically paralleled by both haṭū and qātu wabālu ana limnutti, while the extension of the stipulation to offspring and posterity is normal treaty procedure. Brief though the pericopes of Gen 21:22-32 and 26:26-31 are, they still bear the marks of vocabulary and procedure which are now known to be characteristic of treaty ceremonies over a lengthy time span in the Ancient Near East.

It is no surprise, then, to find a communal meal as part of the covenant making occasion between Abimelech and Isaac. Verse 30 reads: wayya^caš lāhem mišteh wayyō'kēlū wayyištū. On this occasion the oaths were sworn subsequently to the covenant meal (see v. 31), and Abimelech's party then left with relations governed by the treaty and hence peaceful - wayēlēkū mē'ittō bēšālôm.

The question now looms large as to how we should use these narratives (Gen 26 & 21) in compiling a history of covenant ceremonial. Should they be taken as authentic traditions from the Middle Bronze age, or as literary free creations from Iron age I or even II ? In point of fact from the focal centre of our study this matters little, for if they are authentically early, this is but one further indication of the fixity of form, terminology and rite in treaty ceremonies over a lengthy time span. On the other hand, if they are the free creation of later tradition, then they reflect 1st Millenium usage and hence are closer to the age of Sargon and Ullusunu.

In any discussion, three points demand attention, namely, the repetition of Abimelech and Philistines, the gentilic 'Philistines', and the naming of Beer-Sheba.² To begin with the names: Gen 26:26 has

1. Sefire I,A:14f & III,22 (Sefire, 12f & 100f); EVT,62ff; ANETS,99.

2. As Speiser points out a lot depends on whether we begin with the MT vocalisation or the consonantal text; consonants yield (i)šib^{cā} - 'seven', (ii)šib^{cā} - 'satedness, plenty', (iii)šēbū^{cā} - 'oath'. Add to this folk etymologies, ie. sound puns, and the demonstrably secondary nature of name etiologies (see Bright: EI/AHW) and arguments around this point look inconclusive, so we shall not dwell on the naming of Beer-Sheba further. See G/AB, 202 & 159f; W.J.Martin, NBD,137f.

Abimelech, Phicol and Ahuzzath, while at 21:22 Abimelech and Phicol appear.¹ According to the chronological schema offered by Genesis, at least forty years lie between the two incidents, and a period of double that duration seems more likely.² It follows, then, that it is difficult to think of the Abimelech and Phicol of chap 21 as being the same people as in chap 26.³ Two solutions have been offered which take their start from an acceptance of two occasions of treaty making involving a king and commander of identical name, but not identical persons.

The first, noting the occurrence again of the name Abimelech for a Philistine king, Achish, in the title of Psa 34, argues that Abimelech and Phicol are not personal names but official designations. They point out this use of 'Pharaoh' in the Old Testament. The second explanation notes the common phenomenon of papponymy in the Ancient Near East - and indeed to the present day in many cultures. Near

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1. The LXX & Old Latin, which add Ahuzzath at 21:20, are surely conflating, and simply indicate their interpretation of the incidents as having involved the same men. Why the king's intimate councillor should be named in one incident but unknown in the other is one of the quirks of tradition, probably inexplicable.
 2. Cf von Rad:G/OTL,268 - 'Abimelech and Phicol, the commander of his troops, also appear in the parallel narrative(21:22fff). But one can scarcely consider the two here and there identical, since a period of about eighty years lies between the two events'. Many scholars regard the chronological indicators in Genesis, attributed mainly to P, as late and artificial - 'P's chronology is self-consistent, but it cannot be integrated with the data of J & E' (G/AB,275). See Gen 25:20, 25:7, 17:1,17 & 18:14 .
 3. In the 13th Century Ramases II reigned 69 years, exceptionally long. The probability is that the earliest understanding of this parallel known - whether one calls the interpreter P or thinks in terms of some compiler or transmitter of the traditions - took the treaty making with Abimelech as having occurred on two separate occasions with a lengthy interval between.

contemporary examples to the patriarchal period are quoted by Kidner. Thus in Egypt, Ammenemes I appointed a provincial governor Knumhotep I, and then his grandfather Ammenemes II appointed Knumhotep II. In between, Sesostris I and II appointed Nakht I and II.¹ Sound methodology demands therefore that the possibility be left open that the Abimelech and Phicol of Gen 26 were the offspring of the pair named in Gen 21. In other words, there can be no *a priori* objection against

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1. Kidner: G/TOTC, 154 with acknowledgements to K.A. Kitchen; cf. CAH I:2, 464ff chap 20. Speiser contemplates but baulks at extending the papponymy/coincidence to Phicol:

If it were not for the fact that in both passages Abimelech is accompanied by a military aide who bears the unusual name of Phicol, it would be easy enough to assume two distinct local kings with the routine Semitic name of Abimelech. As it is, only one generation can be involved, contemporary with Isaac's as recorded by J; the other listing reflects not a separate generation but a different source. (G/AB, 200f)

He does appear to have overlooked data which might be taken to strengthen a case for two sar šebā'ō 's, for in the Indo-Aryan mariyanna we have an example of an ethnic, patrician class of warriors forming a military aristocracy among Hurrian peoples, thus linking hereditary and military leadership. Similarly, the Hyksos at one period constituted a dominant military group among whom it is easy to imagine leadership passing from father to son and grandson. Van Selm's suggestion that Phicol 'commanded a group of chariot-warriors, trained in the Egyptian'... 'probably he was a specialist, the commander of a small body of professional soldiers' (OTS 12, 1958, 182-213 "The Canaanites in the Book of Genesis", p. 199 & note 62). Unfortunately this lacks real evidence, and leans on a misinterpretation of Megiddo and Gezer stone pillars.

there having been two covenant ceremonies, the first between Abraham and the Philistine king, and the second between Isaac and the sons or grandsons of the Gerar dignitaries.

Papponymy appears to carry greater probability, though it must be admitted that official titles do sometimes appear misleadingly in the Old Testament - for instance, the Assyrian official, now well known from cuneiform sources, appears in Hebrew historical tradition without the definite article (wayyo'mer Rabsaqeh..., Isa 36:12). The omission of the article can be ascribed to its being a loan-word, but this means at least in theory that Phicol, which is sometimes derived from Egyptian, could be an official title.

Many scholars, perhaps the majority, set aside the papponymy theory in favour of the hypothesis of divergent traditions deriving from a single historical event. Speiser may serve as representative:

It may be regarded as certain that no two such events actually did take place. For even if one were to grant that a pact entered into by Abraham was subsequently renewed by Isaac, it is improbable in the extreme that the same Abimelech participated in both agreements; and since Phicol is the Gerar troop chieftain in both instances, one can hardly posit two rulers who happened to share the name Abimelech. In other words we again have a single incident which was differently reported in two independent sources. (G/AB,203)

His argument rests on the impossibilities of two Phicols and Abimelechs, not primarily on the distribution of the parallel passages between J and E, though he uses these sigla to explain the present text:

Evidently, tradition had preserved an old report of a treaty between one of the patriarchs and a local ruler of Gerar. In the version utilized by E, the patriarch in question was Abraham, whereas the material handed down to J placed Isaac in that position

Logically one can see no necessary step from a division between J and E to the positing of a single historical event. All that we have to work on is the end product of transmission. It is logically quite as admissible to posit an Abraham and an Isaac treaty in both J and E prior to the end product of Genesis, as it is to posit only a single incident diversely transmitted. Methodologically, then, Speiser has pressed his hypothetical reconstruction too far when he makes the statement that 'it may be regarded as certain that no two such events

actually did take place'. This explanation may command a high degree of probability in terms of contemporary Pentateuchal criticism, but in strict terms it remains a hypothetical reconstruction.¹

Matters are further complicated by the mention of Philistines. Van Selms thinks that the author was 'aware that the real Philistines arrived in Palestine at about the same time as or shortly after the Israelites under Joshua', because 'he never included the Philistines in his enumerations of pre-Israelite groups in Palestine'. Hence 'Philistines' is the name Genesis uses for people who dwelt in the region which was to be occupied by the historical Philistines a few centuries later'.² This explanation may well be correct, but cognisance should be taken of Kitchen's suggestion that the term 'Philistines' in Gen 26 may be 'a term of the 13th/12th Centuries bc here applied to some *earlier* Aegean immigrants into Palestine who, like the later Philistines (Amos 9:7, Jer 47:4) had come from Caphtor (Crete and the Aegean Isles)'.³ In the 18th Century there is indisputable evidence

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1. The hypothetical nature of *Überlieferungsgeschichte* needs to be stressed not only to preserve the logical base of biblical studies, but also in the light of the variable content covered by the phrase 'the assured results of modern criticism' over the last century or even the last thirty years. See, for instance R. Polzin: *BASOR* 221 (1976), 113-120 "Martin Noth's *A History of Pentateuchal Traditions*" for a new critical scrutiny of criteria and methodology in this field of study. Some scholars would not agree with Speiser, holding that two treaty events took place, while others would regard Speiser's single historical event with scepticism and would favour a later literary creation generated by political events of centuries later as the origin of these patriarchal stories. To be sure both these variants to Speiser's hypothesis probably stem from minority groups among contemporary OT scholars.
 2. Van Selms: art. cit., 193. This deliberate, conscious usage differs from von Rad's terse assessment - 'The mention of the Philistines is a gross anachronism' (*G/OTL*, 232).
 3. K.A. Kitchen: *AO/OT*, 80f ; cf. the use of Caphtorim in Deut 2:23.

for two-way trade communications between Crete and Syria-Palestine.¹ Caution is therefore in order, and it may be that new archeological discoveries will clarify the whole problem of Aegean trade and settlement in Palestine.² In view of the two suggestions explaining the use of 'Philistines' in Genesis, it would be wise not to use this term to date the treaty narratives.

Two approaches to Gen 21 and 26 can be discerned among literary critics. One group regards the parallels as due to historical accident in transmission, the other sees in them a didactic repetition, or a conscious use of two similar incidents for didactic purposes. We have already reviewed Speiser's treatment of these narratives, and he may be taken as a representative of the transmission-accident interpretation. Thus one strand of tradition has attached a treaty story to Abraham, another to Isaac, and it is difficult to decide which patriarch was involved in the single historical event which it is believed gave rise to the dual traditions. Speiser favours the patriarch Isaac.

The other approach can in turn be subdivided, for some see deliberate theological intention behind the two narratives where others see the political circumstances of the monarchy reflected in them. Cassuto serves as a representative of the former school of thought:

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1. There is, for example, Middle Minoan II pottery at Hazor, Ugarit and Upper Egypt, and epigraphic evidence from Mari, Ugarit and Egypt. In addition to the works cited by Kitchen (AO/OT, 80f notes 12-16), see now A. Malamat: IEJ 21(1971), 31-38 "Syro-Palestinian Destinations in a Mari Tin Inventory" based on G. Dossin's publication of tablet A.1270 (RA 64, 1970, 97ff). Mari is linked by this document to Hazor, Qatna and Laish (Dan) in Palestine, while a certain Caphtorite (Kap-ta-ra-i-im) also receives a quantity of tin, as does a Carian (Ka-ra-i-im), unless this is a personal name.
 2. For a masterly review of the present evidence for contacts between the Aegean and the Near East, see E.M. Yamauchi's essay "The Greek Words in Daniel in the Light of Greek Influence in the Near East" (NPOT, chap 12, esp. 177-182 and the long bibliography, 193-200). See now J. Yalcar: Anatolica 4(1971/2), 133-137 "Cythera & the Near East".

At the time when the Torah was written, there were current among the Ancestors a number of traditions concerning the Patriarchs...and the Torah chose from among them those that were able to advance its purpose. Three similar tales were in existence ...It is possible that all three flowed from one ancient saga...In our case the reason that induced the Torah to accept the three existing traditions was the concept that everything that is done twice or thrice is to be regarded as confirmed and established (cf. Gen 41:32) ...This is a case, then, of intentional recapitulation and not something that happened by chance in the course of the work of some late redactor. 1

He works out the recapitulation theory in more detail relating to the linguistic features common to the Exodus story and to the narrative of Abraham's descent and exodus from Egypt.

This type of exegesis is difficult to assess. Obviously there are going to be parallels in phraseology where similar circumstances and geographical movements are involved. Many of the cities conquered by the Israelites could have been visited centuries before by the patriarchs simply because they were there over that time-span and occupied strategic positions. There is no need to read a pre-Conquest conquest into the patriarchal itineraries. However, one cannot entirely rule out the possibility that this fanciful literary-theological frame of mind has a long history prior to rabbinic exegesis. Repetition is a stylistic feature of ancient epics, and marks the story-telling of many illiterate peoples, where a point is repeated or rephrased for effect, whereas by western canons this kills the whole effect and there reliance is placed rather on understatement, hint and implication. Cassuto, then, champions 'intentional recapitulation' .

In contrast, Mazar sees a political intention behind the Genesis accounts. This is directly related to his dating of Genesis. To convey his main thesis we need to quote fairly extensively from his article:

In my view it is much more within reason that the way of life and the ethnic and socio-political picture reflected in the patriarchal accounts generally correspond to the end of the period of the Judges and the beginning of the monarchy. That is to say: the *Sitz im Leben* of these accounts, part of which are certainly based on folk-legends from the time of the Israelite occupation of Canaan, derives principally from a time that preceded by

1. U. Cassuto: The Documentary Hypothesis, Magnes Press, ET 1961, p. 82f .

only a generation or two that very period during which the great historiographic work was given its original written form. 1

He goes on to say that in this respect the stories of the patriarchs in the Negev, in Beer-Sheba and the region west of it, that is, Gerar, are particularly instructive'.

The way of life and conditions of settlement reflected in these accounts do not differ from those existing in the days when David and his men resided in the Western Negev, in the territory of and under the protection of Achish, king of the Philistines, whose capital was Gath; and they correspond very well to all that the archeological surveys have revealed concerning the unwalled settlements of the semi-nomads of the eleventh century in that region. One may find in the accounts about Abraham, Isaac and Abimelech transparent allusions to the relations to the Judeans and their sub-groups in the Negev and the Philistine kingdom during the last quarter of the eleventh century. It is therefore not surprising that Achish is called by the name Abimelech in the title verse of Psa 34. ...There is no need to alter the text or to assign to it a later date. 2

According to Mazar's theory we should really regard Abraham and Isaac as the 'anachronisms'. He thinks that the organisation of the city-state of Gerar reflected in king, councillor, general and slaves of Genesis in actual fact is that of the 11th Century bc.

To the present writer this appears to go beyond the evidence on the one hand, and to leave unexplained exactly why such patriarchal stories were 'created' on the other, for it seems to necessitate some such word to describe such retro-projections of monarchical conditions into the patriarchal period. Mazar's archeological observations are not very convincing for they are by nature far too vague to prove anything. Could the site of Gerar be indentified beyond dispute, and could it then be shown not to have been occupied during the Middle Bronze age, this would obviously have a direct bearing upon any literary-historical appreciation of Genesis. This is the kind of objective evidence necessary to support Mazar's thesis.

One further interpretation of the parallel narratives of Gen 21

1. B.Mazar: *JNES* 28(1969),73-83 "The Historical Background of the Book of Genesis", p. 77.

2. *ibid.*, 78.

and 26 may be noted here. It falls into the category of conscious or deliberate employment of parallel accounts by the author-compiler of Genesis. Van Selms apparently espouses both the theological and political motivation theories. He rejects a documentary solution in favour of oral tradition:

Beschouwt men de drie verhalen als 'doubletten', afkomstig uit verschillende geschreven bronnen, dan komt de onbeantwoorde vraag op, hoe een zo zorgvuldig auteur als sie van ons boek juist bij deze stof, die waarlijk zijn hoofdpersonen niet tot eer strekt, in herhaling verviel.

Het is veel waarschijnlijker, dat achter de drie verhalen geen geschreven bronnen to zoeken zijn, doch mondelinge overleveringen ¹

He is here discussing the Wife-Sister motif (Gen 12:10-20, 20:1-18 & 26:1-17), but this cannot be treated by a methodologically different process from the Abimelech treaty narratives, and he himself refers back to this latter topic. Lkke Cassuto, van Selms sees a deliberate choice of parallel terminology in Gen 12, so that -

In A(12:10-20) dacht hij, vgl hoofdstuk 15, aan een parallel tussen Abrahams verblijf in Egypte en de geschiedenis van Exodus; wij hebben gezien dat de woordkeuze van A door die van de Exodus-traditie beïnvloed is ²

This of course involves him in a dating of Genesis subsequent to that of the book of Exodus, and in a literary finesse not envisaged by scholars such as Speiser and von Rad. He attributes the same intention in the case of the Abraham and Isaac stories.

Hij heeft door woordkeuze en verhaaltrant aangeduid, dat er parallellie tussen Abraham en Isaak was. Isaak is de ware erfgenaam, Abraham *redivivus*.

But the intention of the author is not only theological in his opinion but also the political education of his readers:

1. G/POT II, 70 .

2. *ibid.*

Uit esthetisch oogpunt mag het voorkomen van dit 'triplet' minder geschikt geacht worden maar de schrijver, die Egypte vreest, doch, wellicht mede deze vrees, goede verhoudingen met de Filistijnen wenst, offert de esthetica gaarne op aan wat hij van hoger belang acht: de politieke opvoeding van zijn lezerspubliek.¹

He suggests that Solomon and his sons may have constituted this reading public.²

It is not altogether clear to the present writer whether this conception of literary transmission represents the same view as that stated in van Selms' article published ten years previously. There, the markedly philo-Canaanite tendency of the Genesis narratives in the main is taken as evidence of the fact that the redactor 'did not alter the stories handed to him by tradition', and 'a written compilation of stories on the patriarchs as an intermediate stage between oral traditions and Genesis as it is now' is suggested, with a date 'in the later years of David's reign', but 'it is not possible to identify this compilation with the supposed works of the 'Jahwist' or 'Elohist' '.³

It should be abundantly clear at this stage that one cannot speak of a scholarly consensus when dealing with the patriarchal narratives. Do these stories authentically mirror the Middle Bronze age, and have they a secure base in history? At what point did the transmission change from oral to written, and when did the compilation of Genesis as we have it take place? To what literary canons did this compiler work? How much did he conserve and how much alter? Are parallel narratives intentional or accidental? To these and a host of other questions no transparent answer presents itself. To the present writer the negative aspects of the literary-historical discussion stand out more clearly than the positive. Thus, there is not precise agreement

1. *ibid*, 71.

2. *ibid*, 74 - '(koning Salomo en zijn zonen?)' .

3. *art.cit*, 212 .

on the distribution of the 'doublet' and 'triplet' accounts between J and E and later redactors. Further, there is no logical step from dividing Gen 21 and 26 between J and E to the positing of a single historical event. Whether J and E are imagined as documents or blocks of tradition, there is no way of demonstrating that each had only one Treaty narrative before they were dove-tailed into the supposed JE compilation.

The politico-didactic thesis does not convince for it appears to confuse an environment in which such stories would be preserved because of interest in them with the actual *Sitz im Leben* of the events narrated. In other words, relations with the Philistines in David's day or his possession of the land might well have provided a *milieu* of interest, the ethos in which ancient stories about the ancestors were treasured and transmitted, but this is quite different from supposing that the circumstances of the monarchy led to the literary creation of stories embodying promises to the Patriarchs and paradigms for political alliance, which were ficticiously projected back into the Middle Bronze age. Again, if the motivation and intention of these stories were the political education of Solomon or his successors in the divided kingdom, why is the style of the narrative so non-didactic? Why such restraint, when we know from the work of every other Hebrew historian from the editor of Judges to the Chronicler, not to mention the literary prophets, that men who undertook such work were not shy to draw theological and political lessons from history in no uncertain terms?

Caution with respect to both dating and the transmission of the treaty narratives of Gen 21 and 26 would thus seem to be in order. Nothing demands that they be sundered from their Middle Bronze age setting, nor is there conclusive proof that only one treaty between a patriarch and the king of Gerar was concluded. Many examples of treaty renewal, and specific and generalised examples of papyponymy and hereditary office - in fact the sole Ancient Near Eastern data involved in the discussion - show that it cannot be ruled out that the patriarch Isaac renewed a treaty with the city-state of Gerar subsequent to the death of his father Abraham.

(iii) The Jacob + Laban Treaty: Gen 31:44-54.

Again, it is the sharing of meals which draws our attention in this narrative, though if it is to be used in a history of covenant ceremonial the issues of literary and historical background cannot be ignored. Following the pattern of the previous discussion, we shall begin with a consideration of the passage as it stands.

Laban proposes the treaty using the terminology krt bĕrît (v. 44), and stressing the permanent effect it was to have by references to witnesses in heaven and on earth. It is not certain whether verse 44b is complete or deficient as it stands - wĕhāyāh lĕcĕd bĕnî ūbĕnekā. Speiser feels a difficulty because bĕrît is feminine whereas the verb hāyāh is 3rd Sing. Masc., and it is the accompaniment to the treaty, that is, the deities normally speaking - though here the stones as well - that constitute the witnesses, not the treaty itself. He then refers to verse 50 on the MT and to the LXX at v. 44, and adds before 44b - '[though no man be with us, God] will be witness...'. Grammatically this is not necessary since a feminine can often be coupled with a masculine verb when other words come in between separating them.¹ Nor does there seem a necessity for denying a short-hand way of speaking to Laban.

The proposal is met by Jacob's erection of a maṣṣēbāh.² Then at Jacob's instigation, Laban's party gathers stones together to form a heap (gal), and a communal meal takes place beside it - wayyōkĕlū šām Cal haggal (46b). The various names are given to the memorial, and Laban calls God to witness that Jacob has promised not to maltreat his wives. Verses 51-54 extend the terms of the agreement to a mutual non-aggression pact, taking the monuments as a boundary line between the two, which was not to be crossed with hostile intent. They swear

1. As pointed out by D.J. McCarthy: art. cit., 179 note 3 with reference to G.R. Driver: JRAS 71, 1948), 164-176 "Hebrew Studies"; McCarthy is here rejecting the division of verse 44 between different sources.

2. On maṣṣēbāh - 'standing-stone' as an alleged source marker see the discussion of the literary-analysis of the passage given later.

agreement on this in the name of their respective deities.¹ Jacob kills a sacrificial animal (wayyizbaḥ PN zebaḥ bāhār, v. 54), and invites members of the other party ('eḥāyw) to partake of the meal, which they did, spending the night on the spot.

The narrative, as it stands, is complex to say the least, for there are two monuments, two meals, two sets of stipulations and three names describing the stone memorials. Many see two covenants telescoped into one occasion, or a variety of sources interpreting one event diversely. Variants between MT, LXX and Samaritan versions do not lessen the difficulties which the interpreter faces.

Since most scholars look to a source analysis which distributes the verses between J and E and glosses for an unravelling of the complexity, we shall begin by reviewing some of these attempts. Immediately, two trends can be observed. One school eschews a precise clause by clause analysis, the other with some measure of confidence arrives at a very refined distribution. Speiser represents the more recent

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1. Verse 53 reads : 'ēlōhē 'Abrāhām wē'lōhē Nāhor yišpētū bēnēnū 'ēlōhē 'ābīhem. Since yišpētū is 3rd plural, two deities are involved according to the MT vocalisation, and this seems natural, for Laban would swear in the name of his god while Jacob swore by 'the Fear of his father Isaac'. How then are we to understand 'elohē 'ābīhem ? Many regard it as a gloss, taking the 3rd plural suffix as referring to Jacob and Laban, and the construct as referring to a single deity . It would then be an erroneous montheistic adjustment, doubly inaccurate if 'ābī is 'father' rather than 'forefather' and a stark contradiction of the previous genealogies of Genesis. Van Selms regards it so (G/POT,128). In fact, this solution is not without difficulties. Why add a gloss instead of vocalising the verb as yišpōt ; why add a genealogical glaring error ? The OT does not disguise patriarchal polytheism - see Gen 35:1ff cf, Josh 24:2 & 14f . Terah was the polytheistic father of both Abraham and Nahor, and the obvious candidate for the noun + suffix 'ābīhem . Further, 'ēlōhē is a plural form construct and can indicate the plural - 'gods of' . On Laban's lips it would be entirely natural to hear the remark - 'The gods of Abraham and the gods of Nahor, they will judge between us, the gods of their father'. In this way, Laban underlines two treaty factors - family division between his group and Jacob's, but common ancestry ('the gods of Terah, our forefather').

school of Pentateuchal criticism characterised by 'moderate documentary analysis';¹ Skinner and McCarthy will serve as representatives of the precise method with Hooke added for comparison. The hypotheses of both schools can be represented in tabular form thus:²

	<u>J</u>					:	<u>E</u>							
A	46	47	48	49	50	:					51	52	53	54
B	44	46	[]	48		:	45	[]	49	50				53b54
C		46	[]	[48]		:	44	45	[]	49	50			53b54
D	44	46	48	<u>50ab</u>		:	45	<u>47</u>	49	<u>51</u>	<u>52</u>	53	54	55

1. Speiser's own phrase (G/AB,275); cf. Albright's sweeping statement after the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls:

The discovery of relatively wide limits of textual variation going back before the 3rd Century bc makes the minute analysis of the Pentateuch which has become fashionable in certain twentieth-century circles completely absurd. While it is true that there is much less evidence for recensional differences in the Pentateuch than there is, for example, in Samuel-Kings, there is still enough to warn against building up elaborate analytic hypotheses and against finding different 'sources' and 'documents' wherever there appears to be any flaw or inconcinnity in the received text. Such a subjective approach to literary historical problems was always suspect and has now become irrational. (CBQ 25,1963, 1f)

On trends in Pentateuchal criticism, see for example C.R.North "Pentateuchal Criticism" (OT/MS, 48-83) and more recently R.J. Thompson: Moses & the Law in a Century of Criticism since Graf, VTS 19, 1970.

2. A = Speiser (G/AB,248ff); B = Skinner (G/ICC,399ff); C = McCarthy (CBQ 26,179f); D = S.H.Hooke (Peake,176). Square brackets indicate a gloss; [48] indicates J²; the line beneath verse numerals applied to rows B, C & D but not to A indicates their differences.

At a glance differences between B, C and D can be seen over verses 44, 47, 48, 50, 51 and 52. It is no surprise then that Speiser refuses to be drawn into a detailed analysis, but contents himself with a rough division (J:46-50, E:51-54) and recourse to a hypothesis of 'cross-harmonization',¹ with a footnote saying 'documentary distribution unclear at times'.² What does not appear at sight from the table above is the way in which the MT has been altered by proponents of the detailed analyses, for they have spelt out their ideas of the way in which cross-harmonization has occurred where Speiser has left it as a generalisation.

Taking Skinner first, one notes the *a priori* argument from vocabulary. He regards maṣṣēbāh as an exclusive vocable to E in Genesis.³ This leads him to the conclusion that 'all the references to maṣṣēbāh (51b, 52a b.) are to be deleted as glosses' from 51-53a, which he has assigned to J, to whom he allots the frontier treaty and the gal. McCarthy too wants to delete words from 51-52: 'I take verses 46 and 51-53a to belong to J, with the mention of maṣṣēbāh in 51 and 52 to be omitted as a harmonizing addition'.⁴ Both Skinner and McCarthy want to use maṣṣēbāh as a source-marker, but to delete it where it does not fit! In contradiction of their claim of maṣṣēbāh for E, apart from Skinner's exceptions (Gen 35:20 & Exod 34:13), one finds that both older and more recent scholars have assigned maṣṣēbāh to J in a

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1. 'One source appears to have coloured another, we may have here an instance where the hand is mainly E's, yet the voice is sometimes J's' (G/AB, 248).
 2. *ibid.*, 248 note (a).
 3. 'Since J *always avoids the word* maṣṣēbāh, we assume first of all that the monolith (and consequently Mizpāh) belongs to E, and the cairn to J. Now the cairn goes with the frontier treaty (51, 52 [removing glosses]: J), and Mizpah with the family compact (49:E)' - G/ICC, 399. On maṣṣēbāh see also p. 378 note 18 where the word is allowed to J at Exod 34:13 on the grounds of its connection with Canaanitish worship, and p. 423 where hesitatingly it is given to J at Gen 35:20, but definitely to E at 35:14, 15!
 4. CBQ 25, 179.

passage from Genesis where a divergent meaning from that in Gen 31 can scarcely be demonstrated.¹ For this reason, maṣṣēbāh can not be used to mark E. If J uses the word too, then in the first place there is no obligation to delete the maṣṣēbāh from 51b and 52 a b. on the grounds that this is a J passage. There may be further implications involved in the neutrality of maṣṣēbāh.

If the maṣṣēbāh is retained in v. 51, this seems to raise a comparable problem, for Laban says: 'See this gal and the maṣṣēbāh which I have erected (yārītî) between me and you'. But according to v. 45, it was Jacob who erected the maṣṣēbāh. This brings us to another change Skinner makes in the consonantal text, for to overcome the difficulty he would have us read: '(45) So [Jacob] he (ie. Laban) took a stone and set it up as a maṣṣēbāh (46) And [Jacob] he (Laban) said to his kinsmen, "Gather stones", and they took stones and made a gal; and they eat there by the gal'. Jacob is deleted in both verses as a misinterpretative gloss. While this would harmonise 45 and 46 with 51, it is not the only change possible.

Van Selms has pointed out that in the consonantal script the 2nd Sing. Masc. Perfect would not have differed from the 1st Sing., and hence confusion might be due to the Massoretic vocalisation: yrt vocalised as MT yārītî instead of yārîta.² Accepting his suggestion

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1. For example, BDB, 663 maṣṣēbāh, maṣṣebet: 1b) a stone, set up and anointed as memorial of divine appearance Gn 28:18,22 31:13 (all E), 35:14,14(J) set up in token of an agreement 31:45,51,52, 52 (all E). Compare Speiser:G/AB, 271 'J is probably to be credited with verse 14'. At Gen 35:14 therefore, BDB and Speiser contradict Skinner.
 2. 'Men zou verwachten, dat Laban zou zeggen: "...de opgerichte steen, die gij geplaat hebt". Jakob hat dat gedaan, vs. 45. In schrift zonder *matres lectionis* zijn beide vormen niet te onderscheiden; het werkwoord yārā ('werpen, schieten') komt nergens elders in deze betekenis voor; kopieerde de schrijver een oud document?' (G/POT, 128).

for the moment, what meaning does this give v. 51 ? Does Laban credit one monument only to Jacob or both ? The ambiguity of the Hebrew relative particle leaves us in doubt, but it would seem possible to understand v. 51 to imply that Jacob erected the pillar:

hinnēh haggal hazzeh wēhinnēh hammaṣṣēbāh 'āšer
yārītā bēnī ūbēnekā

See this heap [which I have set up], and see the pillar which you have set up between the two of us

On this interpretation, Laban first points to the gal which he erected and named (v. 46b-47), and then points to the maṣṣēbāh which Jacob had set up. Each has contributed a permanent monument as witness. This forms a parallel in stone to the oaths which each took in the name of his respective deity.¹

Certainly van Selms' suggestion involves less alteration than does Skinner's. In changing yārītī to yārītā, the consonantal text requires no emendation, and understanding v. 51 as explained above means that no emendation is required in 45 and 46, contrary to Skinner's solution.

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1. It is interesting to compare Exod 24:4 where Yhwh is represented by the altar (mizbēah) and Israel by the twelve pillars (maṣṣēbāh). The parallel is not direct of course since the covenant is being made between God and people and not between two human parties. Nevertheless, there does appear to be the parallel idea of a stone erection to represent each party, though they are not described as permanent memorials, that is, as witnesses (cf. Gen 31:52 ḥēd haggal hazzeh wēḥēdāh hammaṣṣēbāh). An altar could function as a witness - see the story of the Reubenite altar beside the Jordan Josh 22 esp. v. 34 wayyiqrē'ū bēnē-Rē'ūbēn ūbēnē-Gad lammizbēah kī ḥēd hū' bēnōtēnū kī Yhwh hā'ēlōhīm, but in this exceptional case the altar was not for sacrificial usage, see v. 26. Compare too the twelve stones taken from the Jordan river as a 'sign among you' ('ōt bēqirbēkem, Josh 4:6) and a perpetual reminder, ie, a witness (litzkārōn libēnē-Yisrā'ēl ḥēd-ḥōlām, Josh 4:7). Altars too were built from unhewn stones - Exod 20:24-26. There is no way of telling whether the twelve stones at Gilgal (Josh 4:20) were used for or associated with sacrifice. For stones with covenant stipulations inscribed cf. Josh 8:30-35, Deut 27:1-8 on plaster, Exod 31, 32, 34 stone tablets, and the Sefire stelae I, II & III.

Again, the criteria by which gal and frontier treaty are allotted to J, while maṣṣēbāh and the family treaty are given to E can be shown to be insecurely based for three reasons. Firstly, maṣṣēbāh can not function as a source marker for the reasons set out previously. Secondly, the deletion of maṣṣēbāh from 51 and 52a. b. and thus the separation of gal and maṣṣēbāh into different sources and different treaties is unwarranted, for no contradiction exists between Laban and Jacob's activities. Thirdly, in order to make their hypotheses tenable Skinner and McCarthy both delete Yhwh from verse 49, for having decided that maṣṣēbāh which appears at the beginning of the verse belongs indubitably to E their theory is severely embarrassed to find Yhwh in an E verse, whereas this would normally be taken as an indubitable mark of J.

Since this manner of source analysis depends upon alterations to the text which can be shown not to be obligatory and upon criteria that are decidedly dubious, it must be judged a failure in the last analysis. This judgement is only reinforced by taking further examples of the precise source-analysis into consideration. No two agree exactly; some rule out the criteria upon which others depend. For example Skinner makes reference to the analyses of Procksch, Wellhausen, Dillman, Kautzsch-Socin and others. Procksch arrives at a division approximately that of Skinner, but 'with the important difference that the parts of J and E are interchanged' !¹ The others mentioned differ again, but 'assign the cairn and the maṣṣēbāh to the same sources'.² These differences among such scholars as McCarthy, Hooke, Skinner, Procksch, Wellhausen, *et al* can only mean that objective criteria are lacking.

Since a distribution between J and E cannot be attained, there is a choice between regarding the account as composite in a way not discernible now, or of regarding the narrative as a unity faithfully reflecting two sets of terms agreed upon on the one occasion. If it is composite then it follows that one set of stipulations must be unhistorical, the product of literary free creation whose motivation must be sought in the *Sitz im Leben* of the compiler. No motivation is

1. Skinner: G/ICC, 399 .

2. *ibid.*

apparent to the present writer for creating a story which regulates Jacob's conduct toward his wives. This seems far too personal a circumstance to generate a didactic fable for the benefit of latter day Israelites. A general theological motive might conceivably be argued for - that Yhwh is witness to the treatment of wife, widow, orphan, etc - but its setting in the Jacob-Laban cycle would be curiously inappropriate since Jacob is presented so favorably, and Laban's daughter stipulations seem to reflect only his suspicious mind and double-dealing nature leading him to credit Jacob with similar dubiety. If this didactic motive - which is well and truly buried in the account if it ever lived - carries any conviction, there remains the possibility, if a composite account is assumed, that the boundary agreement is a later literary creation with a politico-didactic motivation.

This thesis has been propounded by a number of scholars without agreement, however, on which set of political circumstances gave rise to the story. Some think the period of the Syrian wars in the 9th-8th Centuries bc, others of Solomon's day, and others again of David's reign. All agree on discounting a personal boundary settlement between two individuals and their immediate families in favour of seeing in the Jacob and Laban story eponymous ancestors representing political kingdoms. In Skinner's words: 'the treaty of Gilead in J evidently embodies ethnographic reminiscences, in which Jacob and Laban were not private individuals but represented Hebrews and Arameans respectively'.¹ This is generally accepted, but between the older commentaries and the new a change towards conscious didactic purpose on the author's behalf has taken place. This is best illustrated by Wellhausen on the one hand and Mazar and van Selms on the other. A few quotations illustrate this new assessment of the author's work:

we attain to no historical knowledge of the patriarchs, but only of the time when the stories about them arose in the Israelite people; this later age is here *unconsciously* projected, in its inner and outer features, into hoar antiquity and is reflected there like a glorified mirage

1. op.cit, 403 .

In the patriarchal legend, however, the ethnographic element is always predominant. Abraham alone is certainly not the name of a people like Isaac and Lot: he is somewhat difficult to interpret. That is not to say that in such a connection as this we may regard him as a historical person: he might with more likelihood be regarded as a *free creation of unconscious art*.

The historic-political relations of Israel are reflected with more life in the relations borne by the patriarchs to their brothers, cousins, and other relatives. The background is never long concealed here, the temper of the period of the kings is everywhere discernible.

These lines from Wellhausen's Prolegomena to the History of Israel give a very fair idea to the approach to Genesis current at the end of the 19th Century. Quite how the invention of a character Abraham along with a number of stories about him can be reconciled with a theory of 'unconscious art' is not at all clear. 'Free creation' and 'unconscious art' would seem to be self-contradictory terms. Be that as it may, this methodology as applied to the Jacob and Laban treaty is thought to yield very clear-cut results:

In the story of Jacob and Laban, again, the contemporary background shines through the patriarchal history *very distinctly*. The Hebrew on his half-migration, half-flight from Mesopotamia to the land of Jordan, is hotly pursued by his Aramean father-in-law, who overtakes him at Gilead ... This answers to the actual state of the facts. The Hebrew migration into Canaan was followed by the Aramean, which threatened to overwhelm it. Gilead was the boundary between the two peoples, and the arena, during a long period, of fierce conflicts which were waged with each other. The blessing of Jacob, in the oracle on Joseph, *also mentions the Syrian wars* ¹

According to Wellhausen's theory, we are to imagine men of the 8th Century bc, suffering all the uncertainties of intermittent warfare with Ben-Hadad's Syrian forces, composing stories with wistful but unconscious literary genius about an agreed border between Israelite and Aramean populations in the long and far-off days. This represents one branch of the political interpretation school.

1. Wellhausen: Prolegomena, 318ff ; italics mine.

The similarities and dissimilarities in scholarship the best part of a century subsequent to Wellhausen can be seen in Mazar's article already cited in connection with the Abimelech treaties. His general approach and some specific fruits of of this methodology have already been quoted, and so it only remains here to notice his politico-didactic interpretation of the Jacob-Laban treaty. To judge from his general statements, he regards this treaty narrative as a product of conscious intention as opposed to Wellhausen's unconscious free literary creation:

Genesis reveals itself to us as a monumental historio-graphic composition, the product of rich and variegated material collected, combined, arranged, and worked into one harmonious tract, with the purpose of portraying both the beginnings of mankind and the origins of Israel in the spirit of the montheistic concept, *and with a didactic aim.* ¹

He thinks that 'it is within reason that Genesis was given its original written form during the time when the Davidic empire was being established', and he considers that the 'additions and supplements of later authors were only intended to help bridge the time gap for contemporary readers, and had no decisive effect on its contents or its overall character'.²

As already noted he regards the patriarchs as anachronistic and the Philistines and Arameans as contemporary with the writers. Hence in the Jacob and Laban treaty ...

What we have in fact is an enlightening portrayal of the relationship between Aram and Israel before the beginning of David's war against the kingdom of Aram-zobah and her allies in the Transjordan.

1. B.Mazar: JNES 28(1969), 74; italics mine.

2. *ibid.*, 74.

3. *ibid.*, 79 .

He follows Wellhausen, then, in the theory that the Jacob and Laban treaty reflects political conditions obtaining between kingdoms, but rejects Wellhausen's 8th Century dating in favour of an early 10th Century date, apparently regarding the narrative as a conscious didactic propogation.

Van Selms differs again from Wellhausen and Mazar, and boldly suggests that the priestly author composed the narrative before us by copying from an ancient treaty document with one eye on the political education of his readers:

De lezer krijgt sterk de indruk, dat de schrijver hier beïnvloed wordt door een gebeurtenis uit eigen tijd: het afbakenen van de territoria respectievelijk van de Arameers van Damaskus en van de Israelieten in Transjordanië. Uit 1 Kon 11:23-25 weten wij, dat tijdens Salamo's regering Israel zijn invloedssfeer zag inkrimpen door de opkomst van Damaskus. Blijkbaar zag Salamo zich, om het risico van een oorlog op grote schaal te vermijden, gedwongen om op een grensregeling in te gaan....Het schijnt alsof onze priesterlijke auteur kennis heeft genomen van het document, waarin dit verdrag beschreven is.

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His case for an old treaty document rests mainly on the unusual meaning of the root yārāh,² and he claims the name of the stone-heap, Yēgar Sāhādūtā, as the oldest piece of Aramaic which we have, if the dating to Solomon's day proves correct.³ Van Selms, then, belongs to the political-kingdom interpretation school, but prefers a date intermediate between that given by Mazar and Wellhausen. He is also a powerful proponent of the conscious purpose of the author/compiler of Genesis.

How are we to evaluate these attempts to explain the Jacob and Laban narrative as a reflection of later political relations between Israel and the Arameans? There seems little to commend Wellhausen's

1. Van Selms: G/POT, 130 .

2. *ibid.*, 128 & 130 .

3. 'de arameese naamvorm is dus de oorspronkelijke, en wel, als onze datering in Salamo's dagen juist is, het oudste stukje aramees dat wij hebben' - G/POT, 130 .

theory of a naïve and unconscious literary genius at work. Mazar and van Selms' view of a conscious literary and theological motivation behind the accounts does far more justice to the book of Genesis as we have it now. Yet doubt lingers in the mind of one seeking to discover why a writer with a politico-didactic purpose should have resorted to this form of communication. Why has he not applied his narrative? Laban is not connected with the Arameans of Damascus by the least hint, nor is there a suggestion that the treaty was still in force in the writer's day. It is not stated that the massēbāh and gal are still available for inspection 'to this day'. No reference is made to Yhwh's exaction of a penalty for either side's breaking of the treaty stipulations though this would have fully accorded with Ancient Near Eastern historiography and theology. It is little wonder that scholars who follow this method of interpretation of the narrative differ among themselves on the dating and political circumstances it is said to reflect. There is no application in the narrative itself on which to base a connection with monarchical politics.

The question therefore reasserts itself as to whether there has not been a confusion again between the *milieu* of interest which explains the preservation of the narrative and the historical *Sitz im Leben* of the original event. Nor does a *milieu* of intense interest in characters and events in the past necessarily mean that such data are distorted in order better to relate them to the transmitter's circumstances. It is one virtue of Speiser's commentary that this truth is recognised. Specific examples of the transmission of social and legal customs from the Bronze age lead Speiser to a respect for the transmission process.¹ The same can be said of van Selms' conclusions about the Canaanites in Genesis.²

Granted these proofs that traditions could be transmitted uncoloured by circumstances of the transmitter's day, Speiser's own

1. These are well-known and need not be repeated here - see G/AB 'The tradition behind the Documents', xxxvii-xliii, and more recently J.J.Finkelstein: Festschrift Speiser, 31-38 "An Old Babylonian Herding Contract and Gen 31:38ff" .

2. van Selms: OTS 12(1958), 211ff .

understanding of the historical foundations of the Jacob and Laban treaty is seen to be within reason. It is, in part, based on the ancient anthropological details in the associated narrative of Rachel's theft of the household gods, the těrapîm .

According to the Nuzi documents which have been found to reflect time and again the social customs of Haran, possession of the house gods could signify legal title to a given estate, particularly in cases out of the ordinary, involving daughters, sons-in-law, or adopted sons.¹

Having found such evident reflections of Hurrian law Speiser is led to the conclusion that -

E did not invent this story any more than J made up the wife-sister motif, since so much intricate background detail could not be improvised and still prove to be authentic by coincidence...the ultimate tradition points back to mid-second millenium Harran or earlier, the period to which the story itself is dated. One such example by itself may not be dependable. But when it is joined by others like it, the cumulative evidence becomes increasingly impressive.²

It is this kind of thinking which governs Speiser's interpretation of the Jacob and Laban treaty in the associated story. Thus, he appears to favour an authentic Bronze age *Sitz im Leben* for both parts of the treaty -

Both reports, incidentally, have the authentic ring of legal and political documents; they thus appear to hark back to an actual agreement between early Israelite and Amorite/Aramaeans elements; cf. the date formula in Alalakh Tablets 58 (Old Babylonian period)³

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1. G/AB, 250 - see A.E.Draffkorn: JBL 76(1957), 219ff "Ilāni/Elohim"; see further references in the commentary and K.A.Kitchen: AO/AT, 153-156 and 41-56 plus footnotes 28-105 for a convenient synopsis and bibliography on the patriarchal age and the ANE.
 2. G/AB, 251 .
 3. G/AB, 249 .

He seems to be affirming the historicity of the Jacob and Laban treaty here, and its 2nd Millenium date - otherwise, why mention the Old Babylonian period?¹ Needless to say, this is a marked departure from the views of an 8th, 9th or 10th Century *Sitz im Leben* which have thus far dominated Old Testament scholarship.

We find ourselves in agreement with Speiser, though wishing that more chronologically determinative Ancient Near Eastern data could be brought to bear on the narrative. Negatively, we have seen that a traditional documentary analysis does not yield helpful results. Likewise the politico-didactic theory fails to convince for want of positive evidence, for the non-aggression stipulations are by no hint related to the politics of the monarchical period. Nor does the assignment of the bridal stipulations to literary or theological free creation provide a satisfactory motive to the present writer's way of thinking. While on the positive side there are good examples of the transmission of narratives from the Bronze age, and specific examples of Bronze age treaties from Mari and Alalakh. Definition of boundaries occupies a prominent position in 2nd Millenium treaty documents. But all this on the positive side adds up only to a *nihil obstat* rather than to conclusive proof for the Bronze age *Sitz im Leben* of the Jacob and Laban narrative. There is nothing in the covenant ceremonial of Gen 31 which marks it as indubitably 2nd Millenium rather than 1st.

There is however one feature which might conceivably be used to argue in favour of an early date for the treaty narrative. It turns on the use of the witness in stone. A development is supposed from the erection of a simple uninscribed stone to the use of the same plus a written document and then to the employment of a written document plus an inscribed stone. McCarthy, who puts forward this hypothesis of development, explains it in this way -

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1. Old Babylonian is sometimes used loosely for approximately 2000-1600 bc; generally it is equated with the 1st Dynasty of Babylon whose dates are 1894-1595 bc (AM, 335-352). Speiser's use of the term 'early Israelite' is obscure, appearing as it does without definition. The school of Noth, for instance, dates the history of Israel as beginning at the time of the amphictony in the 12th Century bc, which is definitely not the date that Speiser would give to the narrative, hence the significance of his mention of the OB period.

The development is in the direction of making the monument a more satisfactory witness by providing it with a text¹

This is an attractive hypothesis but difficult to substantiate and to apply with any chronological fruits. Clearly it can be used as a chronological guide only when confined to one group of people, for the use of writing like the use of metals is a cultural phenomenon which affords chronological indications only within a particular group. Illiterate groups - and nomadic peoples fall into this category more often than do urbanised - by definition could only make use of uninscribed stones in treaty ceremonies. Literate groups had a choice, but one can imagine that ceremonial customs would be conservative, and hence that a literate group might continue to set up uninscribed stones for some time after they had the means to add an inscription to them.

Were Jacob and Laban literate or illiterate? In the light of present knowledge about such commercial centres as Harran in the 2nd Millennium, the balance of probabilities might be thought to favour the presence of a scribe among Jacob or Laban's retinue, though this can be in no way a certainty. Commercial dealings - in their case to do with livestock - lent themselves to record keeping as thousands of 2nd Millennium clay tablets bear witness. If there were a man with recording ability among them, and if there was a development such as McCarthy suggests, then Gen 31 would be seen to stand at the beginning of such a development and the Sefire stelae at the end. Intermediate are the variations of Exod 24, Josh 8 (cf. Deut 32) and Josh 24. The fact that uninscribed stones were used by Jacob and Laban would then favour an early date for the treaty making occasion

New interest has developed in 2nd Millennium covenant practices with the re-study of the MacAlister standing stones at Gezer.² It was found that only strata 2 and 1 concerned the 'High Place', while the

1. CBQ 26, 187 .

2. See the interpretation by A.M. Furshpan: BA 34(1971), 94-132 "Further Excavations at Gezer, 1967-71" .

three earlier strata 5-3 have no connection with the line of ten monoliths. 'An analysis of the pottery found in stratum 2 dates the construction of the "High Place" to MB IIC (ca 1600 bc), and the later modification in Stratum 1 to LB I or early IIA (ca 15th-14th Centuries bc)'.¹ This dating to the end of the patriarchal age seems significant if the parallels to be mentioned are rightly drawn.

The four main functions of all standing stones in Palestine, as analysed by C.Graesser² are - commemorative, memorial, cultic and legal. Furshpan regards the simultaneous erection of of the ten monoliths as ruling out the mortuary or memorial functions, and continues:

An examination of other groups of standing stones in Palestine is not particularly helpful. Those groups sharing most features in common with Gezer (Lejjûn and Beth-Shemesh) are the least secure in interpretation. Those most secure in interpretation (Byblos and Hazor) share fewest features with the Gezer stones, are mortuary in function, occur in a definitely cultic context, and differ in date. While the Gezer 'High Place' has some possibly cultic features (the stone block which could be explained as an altar or laver, together with the burned bone, which suggests some form of sacrifice or meat offering), it is not connected with a temple or an enclosed area, nor were cultic accessories of any kind found associated with the stones...Perhaps the explanation which fits best the data we have is to be found in a combination of the other two categories - the commemorating of an event and the witnessing of a legal contract between individuals or groups, specifically covenant-making.

She then goes on to discuss the features of the biblical examples in Gen 26, 31, Deut 27 and Josh, and concludes in a section worth quoting in full:

These brief examples show the close association between covenant-making and certain rituals which might serve to explain the data at Gezer - the alignment of stones, the altar or laver, and the burned bone. If, as in the literary tradition of Sinai or Gilgal, each covenant unit contributed its own stone, this would account adequately for the most striking feature of the Gezer 'High Place' - the alignment of stones and the great disparity in their sizes. The rectangular stone block serves best to contain liquids and it would be the place where a sacrifice of blood most probably took place, making it the focal point of the ceremony

1. art.cit.

2. 'Studies in Maṣṣēbôt' - unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Harvard University, quoted in the article above.

(as it is in legal traditions) and the central part of the installation. The burned bone and teeth could be explained as either a burnt offering or, in absence of any altar platform for burnt offering, as the remains of a *covenant meal* . 1

Obviously, if this interpretation is accepted, an archeologically attested 2nd Millenium covenant-making site at Gezer using uninscribed standing stones adds no little incentive to our emphasis on the importance of the covenant meal and our interpretation of the Jacob and Laban narrative.

A final objection to an early date for the latter should be mentioned though it raises a subject too complicated to be dealt with here, namely, the Aramaic character of Laban and his language. Mazar brushes aside the proto-Aramean theory discussed by scholars such as Dupont-Somer, Unger and Moscati, and argues that:

we have no convincing evidence for the appearance of the Arameans on the stage of history before the end of the 12th Century bc 2

For this reason he situates the patriarchal narrative in the second half, 'and more particularly the end, of the eleventh century' .

Verse 47 of our chapter which contains the Aramaic name of the heap of witness, Yēgar Sāhādūtā, has customarily been assigned to a learned glossator from a late period. On the contrary, van Selms has claimed it as the earliest fragment of Aramaic which we have. Speiser discusses it against the background of the Nahor traditions in Genesis and concludes:

The problem is complicated however by vs. 47(J), which shows Laban speaking Aramaic. The identification, therefore, was not only geographic but also linguistic. Accordingly, we must either attribute the confusion to the relatively early period of J, if not earlier still, or else we must entertain the notion that actual Aramaeans were on the scene a good deal earlier than is generally assumed. At all events, the

1. art.cit., 124.

2. JNES 28(1969), 78 & note 16 .

problem should not be minimized.¹

The biblical tradition of blood kinship with the Arameans is weighty and not to be lightly discounted,² while the Ancient Near Eastern evidence is still under discussion and could well be clarified by future discoveries.³ This would not be the first time that fresh evidence on the Arameans and their language would alter perspectives in Old Testament scholarship.⁴ Mazar's conclusions are therefore best regarded as premature. The problem of Laban's Aramean affiliation is not so

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1. G/AB, 246 ; the confusion he refers to is between Arameans and Amorites, the latter being the known inhabitants of the town al Nahur in the Mari texts.
 2. As Speiser points out in terms of the JEDP source analysis, the term Aramean in patriarchal contexts by E,P,J and Dt 26:5, the latter being one of von Rad's early cultic confessions.
 3. As a point of sound methodology it should always be borne in mind that our present knowledge is fractional in the light of the evidence lost, untouched or unpublished. On this, see for example P.Lapp: BA 26(1963), 121-134 "Palestine: known but mostly unknown", and E.M.Yamauchi "The Greek Words in the Book of Daniel in the Light of Greek Influence in the Near East" (NPOT, 170-174 'The Fragmentary Nature of the Evidence') and idem : The Stones & the Scriptures, IVP, 1973 chap 4 'Fragments & Circles'. For a positive discussion of the present evidence, see K.A.Kitchen in NBD, 55ff; his forthcoming Hittite Hieroglyphs, Arameans & Hebrew Traditions promises a wider treatment; cf. Bright: HI, 89f.
 4. For example the whole question of 'Aramaisms' as indicators of late date; note the fossilised error of previous scholarship in BDB, 881 qāṭal - 'poetic and late', when in fact it appears in cognate form in the Mari texts qatālum; see M.Held: BASOR 200(1970), 34 note 11 'The occurrence of the verb qatālum in so early a literature as the Mari letters speaks volumes on the fallability of using the so-called "Aramaisms" in the Hebrew Bible as a criterion for dating a Biblical text'. See his promised study on Prov 1-9 for discussion of methodology. Further examples and methodological comment can be found in Kitchen: AO/OT, 145f .

easily minimized as those suggest who simply attribute Gen 31:47 to a late scholarly glossator, nor can the Arameans be so decisively swept from the stage of 2nd Millenium history as Mazar would do.

Careful consideration leads us to the view that a sound methodology is best served by leaving the Jacob and Laban treaty in its Bronze age setting, and by refraining from reading into the account the record of a general political accord between rival Aramean and Hebrew kingdoms.

If the method and conclusions reached in this discussion of three covenant ceremonies in Genesis prove correct, then the Old Testament is found to provide early and perhaps the only indisputable evidence for a meal as part of the covenant ceremonial in the first half of the 2nd Millenium bc.

If, contrary to the conclusions reached here, the treaty narratives of Genesis are proven to be literary free creations, then they do not fail as witnesses to the covenant meal, but they would have to be taken as reflections of ceremonies current in their creators' day.

Exodus.

(i) The Sinai Covenant - Exod 24 .

Mentioned for the sake of completeness, this covenant occasion involves the binding together of a nation and its god rather than of two human parties such as Sargon and Ullusunu, yet the consensus of modern scholarship regards Israel's covenant as modelled on royal covenants and hence it is not without significance for our study that a covenant meal is included in the ritual. Besides the zēbāhîm šēlāmîm of verse 5, which may have sufficed all Israel or only representationally the načărēy bēnēy Yiśrā'ēl,¹ the seventy elders

1. The zēbāhîm selamîm are significant, for as F.C.Fensham remarks 'dat de "vredeoffers" (šēlāmîm) in nauw verband met het verbond functioneerd wordt meer en meer gezien; vgl. R.Schmidt: Das Bundesopfer in Israel, Munchen, 1964, 130v' (Fensham: E/POT, 182). The relation between 24:3-8 and the meal of 24:9-11 is bound up with the

plus Moses, Aaron, Nadab and Abihu witness a theophany and eat and drink in God's presence - wayyehēzû 'et-hā'ēlōhîm wayyō'kēlû wayyištû (24:11). Though dissentient voices are raised, recent studies have confirmed both the antiquity and covenant significance of this meal.¹ Pertinent to our study also is the rôle of the elders in the covenant ceremony.

controversial complexities of current source analysis. If the oxen of the zēbāhîm šēlāmîm were eaten after the blood-ritual of verses 6-8, this could constitute a covenant meal eaten by the people parallel to the one by the elders before Yhwh.

1. E.W.Nicholson, though rejecting the position of L.Perlitt: Bundestheologie im AT, Neukirchen, 1969 by allowing for the antiquity of the covenant, nevertheless wishes to reject the covenantal nuances of the meal of 24:11, taking the eating and drinking as a generalised term for rejoicing or worshiping. He wishes to avoid entanglement in the source analysis controversy of this chapter, but by detaching 24:9-11 from the context given it by the editor, he has begged the question of what the eating and drinking means here; see Nicholson's two articles VT 24(1974), 77ff "The Interpretation of Exod 24:9-11" and VT 26(1976), 148-160 "The Origin of the Tradition in Exod 24:9-11". Contrast Fensham who relates the theophany to the covenant - 'Van een verbondssluiting kan geen sprake zijn zonder ontmoeting tussen die twee partijen (vs. 9-11)' (E/POT, 181). See W.Beyerlin: Origins & History of the Oldest Sinaitic Traditions, 33ff, 36ff, 14 note 91 & 150 who vigorously supports the covenant nature of the meal at Exod 24:11 and 18:12, as does K.Baltzer: CF, 30 note 54; cf. Th.C.Vriezen: OTS 17 "The Exegesis of Exod 24:9-11", p. 113f and 117 note 4 .

(ii) The Jethro Treaty - Exod 18.

Three articles on Exod 18 have clarified the significance of Jethro's meeting with Moses and Israel, and rescued the incident from the web of speculation known as the Kenite Hypothesis, in which it was alleged that Yahwism was introduced into Israel from the Midianites via the mediation of Moses' father-in-law.¹ Before adding to the discussion of this chapter, we may summarise the points of these articles.

Brekelmans rejects the ideas that Jethro's exclamation (18:10f) constitutes either a conversion to Yhwh or a corroboration of a previously held belief in Yhwh, and points to the similar exclamation of Abimelech (Gen 26:28f). 'In both cases a non-Israelite tribe acknowledges in the person of a leader the blessing the Israelite God bestows on his people. And this blessing and the might of Israel call forth the desire to make a covenant with this tribe'.² He regards Jethro not merely as 'the priest of Midian' (Exod 18:1) but as a chieftain, noting that 'when two tribes make a covenant with one another, the chieftains act as the cultic leaders of the ceremony, as clearly appears from the covenants mentioned in the book of Genesis'... 'Jethro was no more and no less a priest than the chiefs of any other tribe'.³ He further supports his rejection of the Kenite hypothesis on the grounds of source criticism, taking Exod 18 as Elohist in its original form into which J has inserted the Yahwistic confession found on Jethro's lips. The sacrifices which Jethro offered were made to Elohim

1. The three articles in chronological order are - C.H.W. Brekelmans: OTS 10(1954), 215-224 "Exodus 18 & the Origins of Yahwism in Israel"; F.C. Fensham: BASOR 175(1964), 51-54 "Did a Treaty between the Israelites & Kenites Exist?"; A. Cody: Biblica 49(1968), 153-166 "Jethro accepts a Covenant with the Israelites". For a classic formulation of the Kenite Hypothesis, see H.H. Rowley: From Joseph to Joshua, London, 1950 .

2. art. cit., 219.

3. In support he quotes epigraphic South Arabian mkrb (=offering an oblation) designating the high-priest, also a title of Sabean kings; Cody disputes this analogy, art. cit., 154f .

(Exod 18:12) and not to Yhwh as one might expect if the point of the narrative were Jethro's conversion to Yahwism, or as natural were Yhwh Jethro's personal deity. Brekelmans is very assured on this point but his methodology is suspect for he admits a choice of divine names to the writer but then claims one as a source marker.

He goes on to reject the thank-offering interpretation and notes that offering and sacred meal commonly accompanied covenant making. We find his comparison of Abimelech's acknowledgement apt, as well as the point that connubium was unnecessary for covenant relations to obtain. Both Jethro and Abimelech went home after the ceremonies but with all future contacts between the covenanting groups regulated on a friendly footing.¹ Brekelmans' denial that this is a conversion story, at least in our sense of conversion, seems valid in the light of the overwhelming tendency towards syncretism in the Ancient Near East, not least among the people of Israel themselves who are repeatedly rebuked for serving foreign gods at the same time as belonging

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1. Cody suggests that because of the enmity which grew up between Israel and Midian later on (Num 25, 31 & Jdg 6-8) 'the eventual omission and replacement of preceding material, containing, presumably, some such details as the stipulations of a covenant, may have been judged opportune' (art.cit,158). The friendly relations down to the period of the monarchy which obtained between the Kenites and Israel, which Fensham thinks were due to the active operation of the treaty made originally with Jethro, suggest perhaps that we may have simple omission rather than suppression of detail, and that treaty relations obtained only between Israel and the Kenites rather than with the Midianites as a whole, who, in any case were made up of at least five sub-groups in Moses' time (Num 31:8). Consensus on the relation of the Kenites to the Midianites has not been reached. Note too that Heb. h̄tn in the consonantal text allows 'son-in-law, father-in-law, brother-in-law' (W.F. Albright: CBQ 25(1963),1-11 "Jethro, Hobab & Reuel in Early Hebrew Tradition"; RSV; NEB) - cf. Akk. batānu - 'relative by marriage' (CAD H,148); cf. T.C.Mitchell: VT 19(1969),93-112. This has implications for source criticism and historicity as well as on the Midianite-Kenite relationship.

to Yhwh. As for his confession that Yhwh is greater than all gods (18:11), this does not deny the existence of other gods, and we may compare the conventions of Akkadian prayers whereby the particular deity that is being petitioned is addressed in superlatives as though the supreme god of the pantheon, and omnipotent.¹

Fensham's article appeared next and independently argued for a treaty interpretation of Exod 18, pointing out that this would explain Jael's execution of Sisera (Jdg 4 & 5), for Israel's enemy was her enemy according to treaty stipulations presumed on analogy with numerous other treaties. Furthermore a non-aggression treaty would best explain Saul's action in warning the Kenites to withdraw from among the Amalekites in view of his impending attack (1 Sam 15:6). The time span between Moses' day and Saul's is no difficulty as may be seen from a parallel example - the treaty between Joshua and the Gibeonites which David recognised by handing over seven of Saul's sons for expiatory execution.² The treaty interpretation of Exod 18 this elucidates not one but three passages in the Old Testament, and further support is adduced from extra-biblical parallels for the custom of sacrifice and communal meal at treaty ceremonies, as well as the notable biblical parallel in Exod 24. The debatable points in the article fall outside of the biblical passages under discussion and

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1. R. de Vaux supports the historicity of the narrative since it is inconceivable that it should have been invented later in the light of the hostility between Israel and Midian. But the narrative is illustrative of a genre of stories in which Yhwh is acknowledged by foreigners. De Vaux writes:

Abimélek et Rahab n'étaient pas des Yahwistes et ils ne sont pas convertis à Yahwé. Cette reconnaissance du Dieu d'Israël par des païens est un thème qui revient dans la Bible, depuis l'histoire de Balaa,, Num 22-24, et celle des Gabaonites, Josh 9:9-10, jusqu'au discours d'Achôr dans Judith 5:5-21 (E-I 9, 1969 "Sur l'Origine Kénite ou Madianite du Yahvisme", 28-32, p. 31)

He also cites Gen 26:28 - another treaty context.

2. See further F.C.Fensham: BA 27(1964),96-100 "The Treaty between Israel & the Gibeonites". Compare too 1 Sam 30:29, a passage overlooked in the articles above, where relations between Israel and the Kenites are still good.

concern primarily the nature of the donkey-foal slaughter known from Mari and the Old Testament.¹

Cody in the third article to appear on Exod 18 as a treaty ceremony has pointed out that the dismembered lamb in the Ashurnirari + Mati'ilu treaty is specifically designated as not being a sacrifice (lā ana nīqi šēlûa)². Having added this caution, Cody nevertheless agrees that we have a sacrifice and a covenant meal in Exod 18 which fits into the general pattern associated with treaty making:

Nevertheless, there is throughout the ancient Semitic area a certain community of blood-rites, slaughter of animals, covenant meals, despite the sometimes very different ways in which those elements were understood.³

Two of the three extra-biblical parallels must therefore be regarded as inconclusive as evidence for sacrifice and communal meal at a covenant ceremony, the first because we do not know whether parts of the donkey-foal were eaten, the second because the translation of the text has not been indubitably settled.⁴ The third - the Abban + Jarimlim treaty - might be inconclusive also on analogy with the non-sacrificial nature of the spring lamb in the Mati'ilu treaty. This leaves us with the biblical parallels outside Exod 18, and these do afford conclusive evidence in the present writer's opinion.

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1. See C-F. Jean: ARM 2 (1950), No. 37:6-14 with M. Held: BASOR 200 (1970), 32-40 "Philological Notes on the Mari Covenant Rituals".
 2. For the Akkadian text, see E.F. Weidner: Afo 8 (1932/3), p. 18 line 10 in Erica Reiner's English translation in ANETS, 96/532f.
 3. Cody: art. cit., 156.
 4. For the Abban + Jarimlim treaty see Wiseman: JCS 12 (1958), 124ff; on the Idrimi + Sutarna (Barattarna) treaty, see S. Smith: The Statue of Idrimi, London, 1949 where reference is made to it and note that Oppenheim's recent translation (ANETS, 121/557f) removes all reference to sacrifice in connection with the treaty, but as Oppenheim remarks, certainty must await a fresh collation of the cuneiform. Note too that the Alalakh Tablets are being re-copied and collated by M. Dietrich & O. Loretz according to Lambert in a book review (JSS 16, 1971, p. 222). We might note that normal dietary practice is not a decisive argument against ritual consumption since a deliberate abhorrence may be introduced as in the reported Mau-Mau oath-taking ceremonies among Kikuyus in Kenya and Nguni special rites described by a modern African writer, Vusamazulu Mutwa; cf. the man, goat, puppy and little pig (UKU, MĀŠ.GAL, UR.TUR, & SAH.TUR) cut through in a ritual purification after defeat in battle by the Hittites (Gurney: The Hittites, 151).

The main thrust of Cody's article, however, is his interpretation of what Jethro actually did in the covenant ceremonies, for which Exod 18:12 is a crux:

wayyiwwah Yitro ḥōtēn Mōšeh cōlāh ūzēbāḥīm

The NEB renders this: 'PN...brought a whole-offering and sacrifices for God', while the RSV reads in the body of its text: 'PN...offered a burnt offering and sacrifices to God', but indicates in a footnote that it follows here the renderings of the Syriac, Vulgate and Targum whereas the Hebrew MT reads 'took'. According to Cody, the root lqh 'nowhere has the sense "to offer"', and he then cites the Gibeonite treaty for a parallel use of lāqah where it clearly means 'to receive and partake of' - wayyiqēḥū hā'ānāšīm miššēdām (Josh 9:14), which was the means of the ratification of the treaty.¹

In this he follows Noth, Stevenson and Schmid in regarding the figure of Aaron as weak in old traditions and not of priestly character.² On this point, comparison of Noth's estimate of Moses should be made, for using similar methodology he concludes that Moses 'was not especially firmly rooted in the Sinai theme' and that 'this suggests that Moses had no historical connection with the event which took

1. But note the use of min with the verb here. His second example (Gen 21:27-31) is less clear - Abraham says to Abimelech: 'You will accept (tiqqah) the seven lambs from my hand'. But it is the sheep and oxen which functioned in the sacrifice and covenant meal if there was one (against Cody: art.cit, 161). Nevertheless Cody seems justified in his observation that

The nature of the sign differs with the nature of the covenant rite, but its acceptance signifies the acceptance of the covenant, whether the Israelites are accepting the provision of food proffered by the Gibeonites, or Abimelech accepting lambs proffered by Abraham, or Jethro accepting the sacrifice made by the Israelites.

Note that Cody follows McCarthy's questionable distribution of the covenant meal alone as a mark of J, while the sacrifices (and sometimes a meal) are allotted to E. Some scholars would emend the Hebrew to remove the root lqh - eg K-B under lqh say 'read wyqrb'.

2. art.cit, 161 notes 1,4 & 5 .

place on Sinai'.¹ But these conclusions and the methodology involved have not satisfied other scholars who, contrary to the school of thought characterised by von Rad, regard the events of the Exodus and Sinai traditions as inseparable, and the traditions concerning Israel's early leaders as fundamentally reliable.²

Returning to the nature of the offerings at the covenant ceremony in which Jethro took part, we may note that Cody's rejection of the holocaust (ḥōlāh) does not inspire confidence, based as it is upon wholesale excision from a diverse collection of passages.³ He does, however, rightly draw attention to the rôle of the elders and this we shall return to later, while now we shall consider some points which favour the traditional rôle of Jethro as an active rather than passive recipient at the sacrifice.

Firstly, we may agree with Cody that lqh does not mean 'to offer'. Buber, as noted by Cody, denied that lqh is a sacrificial term here, but rather that it indicates that Jethro gathered the materials for the sacrifice. Cody sets this aside with a rhetorical question - 'what would the narrative's point be in going to the trouble of saying that Jethro gathered material for sacrifices, only to omit any description of what was actually done with that material?'. This hardly disposes of Buber's exegesis, and considerations which could be

1. M.Noth: History of Israel, 136; this is worked out in detail in idem: Überlieferungsgeschichte des Pentateuch/A History of Pentateuchal Traditions, ET 1972 by B.Anderson, where (i) the Exodus from Egypt (ii) Entrance into the Promised Land (iii) the Promise to the Patriarchs (iv) the Wilderness Wanderings and (v) the Revelation on Sinai are regarded as blocks of tradition *each with a separate history*. For rejection of this assessment of Moses' rôle, see for instance J.Bright: EI/RHW, 52f, 85f & 106ff .
2. See for example R.Polzin: BASOR 221(1976), 113-120 "Martin Noth's A History of Pentateuchal Traditions" on methodology; see H.B. Huffmon: CBQ 27(1965), 101-113 "The Exodus, Sinai & the Credo" who takes issue with von Rad, H-J.Krause and Noth for separating the Exodus and Sinai traditions with the corollary of the diminished historical reliability of both, and reaffirms their unity, making good use of ANE comparative material relating to covenant-making. Similar reason for agreement with Huffmon's position may be found in studies by Baltzer and Moran (CF and Moran's review Biblica 43 1962, 104). For a convenient review, see D.F.McCarthy: CBQ 27(1965), 217-240 "Covenant in the OT: the present state of inquiry".
3. The passages for excision are: Gen 22, Josh 22, Gen 8:20, Exod 20:24 & 24:5, Deut 27:7, Exod 10:25 & 18:12, Lev 8:18ff, Exod 29:35, Num 6:13.

taken in support of Buber may now be brought forward.

In the Keret Epic there is a parallel use of the root lqh in the sense and context of gathering materials for a sacrifice. After a dream-revelation Keret wakes and purifies himself prior to making sacrifice. We quote the ensuing lines in Ginsberg's translation:

He entered the shade of a pavilion,
 took(lqh) a lamb of sacrifice in his hand,
 A kid in the grasp of his hand,
 all his most tempting food,
 He took(lqh) a turtledove,
 Bird of sacrific[ice]
 In a bowl of silver he poured wine,
 Honey in a bowl of gold.
 He went up to the top of a tower,
 bestrode the top of the wall;
 Lifted up his[hands] to heaven,
 Sacrificed to Bull, his father El;
 Honoured Baal with his sacrifice,
 Dagon's Son with his[oblation].

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The passage is indubitably clear; Keret first gathers, then offers the sacrificial material. There is no possibility of lqh meaning to receive in this context. Therefore Jethro at least gathered the victims; he may also have offered them.²

1. ANET, 144 KRT A (iii-iv), 159-171. For another translation, see J. Gray: The KRT Text in the Literature of Ras Shamra, Leiden, 1964, text p. 11 & commentary p. 31f .

2. The Hebrew does not compel us to understand this, and the narrator may have intended us to understand that Jethro brought the victims for Aaron to sacrifice, since this would seem natural if the pre-conceived Kenite Hypothesis is discounted. On the other hand, Jethro may have offered the sacrifices himself and the Hebrew simply be taken as elliptical but intended to convey this (lē'lōhīm). Another possibility, but without textual evidence, is omission by haplography whereby the present wyqh PN ...^clh wzbhym l'lhym appears in place of an original wyqh PN...^clh wzbhym wyzbhm l'lhym: 'and Jethro took ... a whole-offering and sacrifices *and sacrificed them to God*'. This latter suggestion is, of course, entirely hypothetical.

It would seem possible, syntactically, to understand the other occurrence of the root lqh in this chapter (v. 2) as 'to take, gather up' - in other words in an identical manner to its use in v. 12. Admittedly this goes against the traditional translation of the verse which is acceptable in its parenthetical pluperfect form - 'Now Jethro had received Zipporah after her dismissal', but it has points in its favour. As all commentators observe, the narrator makes no attempt to expound the circumstances under which Zipporah returned from Egypt.¹ It makes little difference whether narrator, narrators or redactors are envisaged. The brevity of what stands in the text, though fully characteristic of Hebrew historiography, is apparent. He or his sources left Zipporah en route to Egypt (4:20ff) in a passage of archaic obscurity, and now she arrives under her father's supervision to be reunited with Moses. The whole centre of interest in Exod 18 lies in the clan leaders, Jethro and Moses, which again is exactly what one would expect in a Semitic narrative. In our view, it is possible to take wayyiqqah (v. 2) in sequence with the other Waw Consecutives Imperfect: 'And Jethro heard (v. 1)...and he took (v. 2)...and he came (v. 5): and someone said to Moses (v. 6)...and Moses went out (v. 7) ...and he bowed...and kissed him...and they enquired of each other's welfare...and entered the tent' .

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1. Contradictory traditions concerning Zipporah's whereabouts need not be thought of, for it seems entirely natural that Moses should have sent her back to her father's house when he saw that the situation had become dangerous in Egypt, as he was under threat from both Pharaoh and the disgruntled Israelites. Could it be proven on secure textual grounds that the singular 'his son' should be read instead of 'his sons' (4:20), this would heighten the probabilities of Zipporah's return to her father's house - pregnancy as well as the need for safety. In that case, Moses would have seen his second son for the first time on the occasion of the meeting described in Exod 18, at which time he called him Eliezer, commemorating the Exodus events. Cf. Fensham:E/POT,106 - 'Hij (de auteur) moest dus op het standpunt gestaan hebben, dat de naam eerst na de gebeurtenissen bij de Schelfzee gegeven is, dus wel bij de hier beschreven herontmoeting'.

The use of lqh in Hebrew narrative in Exodus to describe preparations for a move can be exemplified rather well from a previous passage involving the same family group, but this time on their way to Egypt: wayyiqqah Mōšeh 'et-išto wē'et-bānāw wayyarkibēm 'al haḥāmōr wayyāšob arēšāh Mišrāyim (Exod 4:20). The syntax and meaning is identical to that of Exod 18:2 .

Very likely, then, Moses gave Zipporah instructions about meeting him before he sent her to her father for his protection, and so it happened that as soon as news reached Jethro of the successful escape from Pharaoh he set out: 'when Jethro heard...he took Zipporah...and her two sons' (18:1f). This reading of the Waw Consecutive Imperfect clauses is perfectly good narrative Hebrew.

The parenthetic explanation of Zipporah's whereabouts, namely her presence in her father's home, is not altogether excised by this translation but is reduced to an explanatory gloss of two words - 'aḥar šillūhēhā (18:2b). Since there is no textual evidence for the omission of this phrase, it would be unwarranted to regard it as a late harmonistic gloss, though it is easy to imagine two words jumping from the margin to the body of the text in subsequent copies. If understood as a two word gloss, the need for brevity might help explain the unusual usage for the Old Testament of šillūhīm? The main point is, then, that we very likely have a brief parenthetic explanation in 'aḥar šillūhēhā whether it was used by the original compiler of Exodus or derives from

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1. Cf. Albright's interesting generalisation: 'Systematic comparison of MT, LXX and new Qumrān texts in such books as Exodus, Deuteronomy and Samuel, shows that there had been much shortening of originally longer text by haplographies of all kinds...There is less evidence than might have been expected for conflate readings and virtually none for late glosses' (CBQ 25,4).
 2. As pointed out by Fensham: 'šillūhīm in een betekenis gebruikt word, die elders in het Oude Testament niet wordt aangetroffen. Doorgans is de betekenis '(afscheids)geschenk' in de zin van de huwelijksgift, die de vader aan zijn in het huwelijk tredende dochter meegeeft (vgl. 1 Kon 9:16)', E/POT, 106.

its early textual history. In either case, an explanation of Zipporah's whereabouts is given without interruption of the narrative movement from Jethro's camp to the mountain of God, and the root lqh is used in a consistent way, its meaning in verse 2 being the same as that in v. 12. This leaves us uncertain as to Jethro's exact rôle in the sacrificial ceremonies, for we have accepted Cody's objection to 'to offer' and accepted Buber's understanding of it supported by the Ugaritic parallel we adduced, to indicate that Jethro gathered the sacrificial material. The possibilities of elliptical syntax or haplography allow of picturing Jethro as carrying through the sacrifice.

If anything Cody's allusion to the Gibeonite treaty works against him for they were suing for a treaty and accordingly were the party to proffer victuals, while Israel as the stronger party partook of them. Accordingly, Jethro as the one suing for a covenant gathered and proffered the victuals, while Israel represented by Aaron, the elders and presumably Moses partook of them to indicate their agreement to a treaty with the priest of Midian.¹ Were there a real parallel in custom, we should expect lqh to be the action of Moses, Aaron and the elders not of Jethro.²

Amidst the difficulties of interpretation of Exod 18, such as those discussed above, we should not lose sight of the fact that we have here a covenant, sacrifices and a communal meal, and to this fundamental fact we shall return presently. In the meantime, a point not made by the writers mentioned may be raised which would if granted supplement the arguments for a covenantal interpretation of Exod 18.

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1. 'Aaron came with all the elders of Israel to eat bread with Moses' father-in-law before God' (Exod 18:12b); cf. 'the chief men of the community (hā'ānāšīm) accepted some of their provisions ...and the chiefs (nēšī'ē hā'ēdāh) pledged their faith to them on oath' (Josh 9:14f NEB).
 2. Jethro's central acknowledgement militates against Israel being the weaker party, and it is the weaker party which sues for a treaty with the stronger, and hence Jethro who requests and Israel who accepts the covenant. But Cody's title envisages the reverse - "Jethro accepts a covenant..."), and shows that he is really using his argument about ritual procedure to make Jethro the stronger party to the covenant. He is misled perhaps by the deference to age exhibited by Moses 'the meekest of men' .

It concerns the use of the root yd^c - 'to know' in Exod 18:11 - 'attāh yāda^ctî kî gādōl Yhwh mikkol hā'ēlōhîm.¹ This is what we may call the central acknowledgement, and as such may be compared to statements of similar function in covenant contexts elsewhere. Thus, a foreigner seeking alliance says to Abraham: 'God is with you in all that you do; now therefore swear to me ...' (Gen 21:22f): or again, to Isaac - 'We see plainly that Yhwh is with you; so we say, let there be an oath between you and us, and let us make a covenant with you...' (Gen 26:28); or again, more periphrastically - 'From a very far country your servants have come, because of the name of Yhwh your God; for we have heard a report of him...come now, make a covenant with us' (Josh 9:8ff). Jethro's statement parallels these central acknowledgements, but may possibly also preserve a recognisable treaty terminology.

Two studies have drawn attention to the technical use of the Semitic root yd^c in treaty contexts from Mari, Hittite sources, the Amarna archive, Ugarit, Assyria and the Old Testament.² In these, the vassal acknowledges or recognises the legal claims of the suzerain. In the Old Testament, Yhwh is acknowledged as the rightful and sovereign lord over Israel his vassal-servant.

It may be that Jethro is here expressing his desire to enter into alliance with Israel by an acknowledgement of Israel's suzerain Yhwh. Alliance among vassal-kings was allowed, and simply involved the recognition by both of them of the overlord to whom the first vassal was bound.³ To understand Jethro's remark in this manner avoids the difficulties which might be felt, perhaps, in reading this incident as a conversion story in terms of occidentally defined monotheism.⁴

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1. The textual difficulties of the second half of the verse need not concern us here, but see for example, Fensham: E/POT, 108 .
 2. H.B.Huffman: BASOR 181(1966),31-37 "The Treaty Background of Hebrew Yāda^c", and Huffman & S.B.Parker: BASOR 184(1966),36-38 "A Further Note on the Treaty Background of Hebrew Yāda^c" .
 3. See J.M.Munn-Rankin's discussion of the political relationships in Zimri-Lim's coalition in the section 'Independent and Dependant States', pages 74-84 of her fundamental study "Diplomacy in W.Asia in the Early Second Millenium BC", Iraq 18(1956),68-110.
 4. On Moses, monotheism and the ANE, see Albright's works, such as FSAC, 271ff .

Having noted the attractions of this interpretation of Jethro's central acknowledgement, it must in all fairness be added that conclusive proof of the technical usage of yd^c here is lacking, for non-covenantal examples of yd^c can be cited from the Old Testament with an appropriate meaning such as 'recognise, admit, confess, acknowledge'.¹ The occurrence of yd^c cannot be used to prove that Exod 18 is a covenant ceremony, but when the treaty interpretation is already established on other grounds, the use of yd^c by Jethro at this point in the narrative is congruent.²

To conclude, then, we would understand that Exod 18 presents us with a clear example of a covenant meal eaten 'before God', that is with Yhwh as witness to the oath and treaty stipulations entered into by Jethro and the Israelites who were represented by their elders, which treaty involved Jethro in the recognition of Yhwh, not necessarily but possibly as his only divine suzerain, and with whom he was in a relationship of šālōm through the sacrifices of holocaust with the probable understanding of its being consumed by Yhwh and of zēbāhīm possibly dismembered after the manner of treaty-oath victims and then with portions consumed in a fellowship meal which both sealed and symbolised the friendly relations brought into being. That no mention of taking oath occurs is probably insignificant and due to the abbreviated nature of the record, but the emphasis which the communal meal positively receives is surely of some weight, especially when viewed against the background of the biblical material previously studied.

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1. For example, the two references from Brekelmans' discussion (art. cit, 216): 'Now I know that you are a man of God, and that the word of Yhwh in your mouth is true' (1 Kgs 12:24 widow of Zarephath to Elija): 'Behold I know that there is no god in all the earth but in Israel; so accept now a present from your servant' (2Kgs 5:15 Naaman to Elisha).
 2. Compare too the use of the phrase ṭōbāh cšh lē in the language used to describe Yhwh's salvation and protection of Israel as their Suzerain: 'And Jethro rejoiced for all *the good* which Yhwh *had done* to Israel, in that he had delivered them out of the hand of the Egyptians', Exod 18:9. This follows Moses' recital of the historical relationships between Israel and her Suzerain up to that time, and forms an apt prologue to Jethro's joining the covenant. See the studies cited on ṭōb, ṭūbtu, ṭabūtu, etc on pages 390 note 2 & 403 note 1 above.

Deuteronomy.

The Mount Ebal Ceremony - Deut 27

Again, as in the case of Exodus 24, there is no direct parallel to treaties between two human parties, and so no detailed analysis of this passage will be attempted. In this case, we are confronted with a projected renewal ceremony to be enacted by Israel when they had occupied the promised land. Specifications are made about inscribing the plastered stones with the stipulations of the divine covenant law, and the building of an altar of unhewn stone. Then they are told to offer burnt offerings (ʿōlōt), and *zābaḥtā šēlāmîm wě'ākaltā šām wēsāmaḥtā lipñē Yhwh 'ēlōhekā:* 'and you shall slaughter shared-offerings (peace-offerings) and eat them there, and rejoice before Yhwh your God' (Deut 27:7 NEB). In the reflex of this passage in Josh 8, attention is drawn to the inscription, the altar regulations and the type of offerings. The šēlāmîm are therefore linked specifically with the covenant renewal ritual; while they are mentioned in the Josh 8 passage, it is the wording of Deuteronomy *wě'ākaltā šām:* 'and eat them there' which underlines the function of the communal meal and of the animals which are involved. The rejoicing clearly springs from the relationship of peace and friendship with Yhwh, the covenant bond. This rite is again tied in with the covenant by the repeated reference to the verbalised as well as the enacted covenant when verse 8 goes on to say - 'And you shall write upon the stones all the words of this law very plainly'. In Deuteronomy, then, besides the covenant stipulations and the blessings and curses being heavily emphasised, there is also emphasis on the non-verbal aspect of the covenant, namely the sacrificing and the eating of the covenant meal. This is in keeping with both the patriarchal tradition and with the Sinai covenant procedure.

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1. On the importance of Deut 27 for determining the purpose and date of the book, see G.J.Wenham: TB 22(1971),103-118 "Deuteronomy & the Central Sanctuary", a revised form of the author's unpublished doctoral dissertation The Structure & Date of Deuteronomy, London University, 1970. For recent work taking into account ANE studies on the treaty, see Weinfeld:DDS and J.A.Thompson: D/TOTC with 66 pages of introductory material, and the literature cited there.

Joshua

The Gibeonite Treaty - Joshua 9.

Besides the reference in the previous chapter to the Mt. Ebal covenant renewal ceremony in which the sacrificing and partaking in a communal meal is seen as a fulfilment of Mosaic injunctions about the covenant with Yhwh, we find a covenant meal attested in this book on the level of two human parties.

This has been competently discussed by F.C. Fensham in a study which remains valid,¹ and so we shall only underline one or two points in connection with our theme. We have already compared the central acknowledgement of verse 9f with similar utterances indicating the motivation for forming a treaty on the lips of Jethro, and of the kings of Gerar in Genesis. As the Gibeonites relate what they have heard of Israel they provide something analogous to the historical prologue which sets the Hittite treaties by covering the ground as to the relations which have obtained in the past between the contracting parties, though in this case it is the history of Israel's relation with her divine Suzerain in the Exodus-Conquest which is recited. Fear for Israel's Suzerain motivates the plea for a treaty. Analogies are found in Ashurbanipal's records to this spontaneous seeking of a treaty relationship as opposed to the oath forced upon a subdued group following war - for instance, Gyges responds to a dream-revelation of Ashurbanipal's greatness, or as we should understand it responds to Ashurbanipal's reputation, his 'name', as the news of his campaign successes reached Lydia. We labelled this a diplomatic vassal-dom. Such is the Gibeonites' motivation; they were responding to the 'name' of Yhwh - 'From a very far country your servants have come, because of the name of Yhwh your God' (9:9).²

1. BA 27(1964), 96-100 "The Treaty between Israel & the Gibeonites" .

2. See page 74 above; cf. the 'name of Yhwh' and nibīt šumija ina šutti ušabrišu...ina zikir šumišu kušud nakrūtikā (Rassam, 2:97ff)

The self-description of the Gibeonites ḥabēdēkem 'ānaḥnū (v. 8,11) 'your vassal-servants are we' is appropriate to the weaker party to a treaty. We see from the ensuing events that the treaty stipulations must have extended from non-aggression to the positive obligation of military aid and vassal protection.¹ This forms a connecting link with Ullusunū's treaty with his suzerain Sargon who campaigned for his vassal's protection.

The focal point of the narrative is whether the Israelites could be tricked into eating the provisions supplied by the Gibeonites, the legal subterfuge not invalidating the rite according to the thinking then in operation. The covenant meal appeared to be inviolable, or more accurately the oath sworn in the name of Yhwh bringing into being the fellowship expressed in the meal, even though it committed Israel to a course of action directly contrary to the holy war of Yhwh, and roused popular disapproval.² The compiler notably censors them only for failure to consult Yhwh before swearing the oath and accepting their provisions:

wayyiqēḥu hā'ānāšīm miṣṣēdām wē'et-pî Yhwh lō' šā'ālū:
wayya^cās lāhem Yēhōšū^cā šālôm wayyikrōt lāhem bērit
lēhayyōtām wayyiššābē^cū lāhem nēšī'e hā^cēdāh

The chief men of the community accepted some of their provisions, and did not at first seek guidance from the LORD. So Joshua received them peaceably and granted them a treaty, promising to spare their lives, and the chiefs pledged their faith to them on oath .

(Josh 9:14f NEB)

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1. As pointed out by Fensham: art. cit., 99.
 2. Compare v. 15b and 18ff: 'But we swore an oath to them by Yhwh God of Israel; we cannot touch them now...we will spare their lives so that the oath which we swore to them may bring no harm upon us' (NEB). The motive for refraining from slaughtering the Gibeonites was clearly fear of divine wrath for breach of oath which Yhwh as the divine Witness to the treaty-oath could be expected to pour out upon them. Popular reaction was strong despite this, for Joshua had to rescue them from being lynched (v. 26).

As pertinent for comparison with the Sargon + Ullusunu treaty occasion, we should not only observe the rôle of the covenant meal, but also the rôle of the elders. This group was the contracting party, acting as representatives of Israel as a whole and are referred to as něšî'ê hā'cēdāh/něšî'îm or hā'ānāšîm - 'the chiefs of the cultic congregation/the chiefs' or 'the men'.

2 Samuel

The Abner Covenant - 2 Sam 3 .

We may have a further example of a covenant meal in the negotiations which led up to David being made king over all Israel after the death of Saul. A long war between the two houses saw David gaining the ascendancy despite the counter action of Ishbosheth's able commander-in-chief Abner, a man of war and diplomacy. When the weakling son of Saul accused his right hand man of treason Abner took steps to unite the land under David, being well aware of the prophetic oracles which promised victory over Israel's enemies through David.

His first step was to send messengers to David at Hebron with a view to establishing a personal truce ensuring his safety in return for his diplomatic skill to be turned to persuading the elders of Israel to accept David's rule (kārētāh bēritēkā 'ittî ..., 2 Sam 3: 12). When David's stipulation of the return of his wife Michal had been met , and Abner had conferred with the elders of Israel, he arrived at Hebron with an escort of twenty men to formalise the negotiations to lead to David's coronation. It was on this occasion that the covenant meal took place, for we read that

wayya^{caš} Dāwīd lě 'Abnēr wěla'ānāšîm 'āšer 'ittō
mišteh (2 Sam 3:20)

And David prepared a banquet for Abner and his men
who were with him

Abner promised formally to gather all Israel to David so that they might make a covenant with him and he be their king, and then Abner leaves, significantly wayyēlek bēšālôm .

Though Abner had the king's guarantee of safe conduct, it did not protect him from David's commander-in-chief Joab, a powerful man whom

one might suspect of blackmail by retention of Uriah's murder order. Avenging his brother's blood, Joab cut down Abner when he had him off his guard. David totally dissociated himself from this cold-blooded deed and invoked curses on Joab and his house. These curses are drawn from the common stock of maledictions which were also frequently used in treaty documents.¹ Those invoked by David included disease, effeminacy, the sword and famine:

wě'al yikkārēt mibbêt Yô'āb zāb ūmēšōrā^c ūmahāzīq
bappelek wēnōpēl baḥereb waḥāsar-lāḥem

May the house of Joab never be free from running
sore or foul disease, nor lack a son fit only to
ply the distaff or doomed to die by the sword or
beg his bread ! (2 Sam 3:29)

The implication seems to be that Joab had violated the šālôm newly established between David and his supporters and Abner, and David accordingly invoked the covenant curses upon the violator.

When the reciprocal intention to make a covenant (v. 12f), the fact that Abner took leave from David běšālôm, and the maledictions so characteristic of treaty-curses are laid side by side with the mišteh David laid on for Abner, it seems more than likely that David and Abner concluded some form of preliminary covenant designed to lead to a wider covenant with all Israel (v. 21). We note that Abimelech, Ahuzzath and Phicol sat down to a mišteh with Isaac, took oath with him and they departed from him 'in peace' (wayyēlēkū mē'ittô bēšālôm). The mišteh for Abner and his departure běšālôm fit into the same framework well. If so, the mišteh constitutes yet another witness, this time from the early 10th Century, to the use of a meal in covenant ceremonies formalising treaty relationships.

1. See Hillers: TC/OTP; Fensham: ZAW 75 and discussion at many points in this thesis, such as under Part I, Asb. section H: The Fate of the Adē Violator .

IV:5. The Phrases lipēnēy Yhwh and ina IGI DN in Treaty Contexts.

We have drawn attention to the prepositional phrase used in Sg 8:63b referring to the deities of both Ullusunu and Assyria as witnesses to the act of homage (karābu šarrūti) paid to Sargon, and we have argued from the occurrence of the same phrase in the Esarhaddon treaties and elsewhere that it marks the feast on the 8th Campaign as a treaty renewal ceremony. To the Akkadian references listed in support of this use of the prepositional phrase in a treaty context we may now add parallel examples from the Old Testament.

(i) Four Divinely Witnessed Covenants between Human Parties

The first passage which is from Exod 18, already discussed at length, offers a surprisingly good parallel for the prepositional phrase, the leading rôle of the elders and the covenant meal all run parallel to the Sargon + Ullusunu treaty occasion.

wayyiqqaḥ Yitrō ḥōtēn Mōšeh cōlāh ūzēbāḥīm lē'lōhīm
wayyābō' 'Ahārōn wēkol ziqnē Yiśrā'ēl le'ēkol-leḥem
'im-ḥōtēn Mōšeh lipēnēy hā'ēlōhīm

The placing of the expression lipēnēy hā'ēlōhīm at the end of the sentence describing the ceremonies gives it a place of prominence. What is meant? Is it a location or is it a theological designation? Very often these two shades of meaning coalesce, for the reference is to a gathering at the sanctuary where God's presence was enshrined. But here we should remember that the Ark and the Tabernacle were not in existence, though some form of altar presumably was, on which the

1. At Exod 16:33f there is a command to lay up a sample of manna lipēnēy Yhwh, and the fulfilment that Aaron placed it 'before the Testimony' (lipēnēy hā'ēdūt). The ēdūt are the covenant stipulations inscribed on the two stone tablet, the lūhōt hā'ēdūt deposited in the Ark which is then known as the 'Ark of the Testimony' ('ārōn hā'ēdūt), which resided in the Holy of Holies in the Tabernacle. This illustrates the strong association with a shrine which the phrase lipēnēy Yhwh can bear. Exod 16:31ff is dischronologised, of course, since neither Ark, Tablets nor Tabernacle were in existence when the manna first appeared. On ēdūt, see Kitchen:AO/OT, 106-109 noting its early occurrence as a Canaanite loan-word in Egyptian in the Turin Judicial Papyrus 4:5 - see original publications cited.

accompanying sacrifices were offered. The main nuance of lipñēy Yhwh will be the idea of Yhwh being there in person as witness to the oaths and recipient of the ᶜōlāh. We agree with Fensham when he says

Het feit, dat in ons vers gesproken wordt van een maaltijd 'voor het aangezicht van God', wijst wellicht op de eed, die beide partijen voor God moesten zweren waardoor zij zich tot het houden van het verbond verplichtten 1

There is no direct mention of the treaty oaths, but since these were never omitted from treaty ceremonies since they gave the treaty its binding force we must suppose that Jethro and representatives of Israel took oaths mutually, and it is natural to place them here. In the Isaac + Abimelech treaty the oaths follow the covenant meal. The author of the biblical passage apparently considered it sufficient to place the covenant meal lipñēy hā'ēlōhīm for it to be understood that Yhwh became witness to the treaty oaths. By the same token, the scribe of the 8th Campaign made no explicit mention of Ullusunu's vassal-oaths.

The second biblical example derives from the period of the Judges and concerns Jephthah's pact with the elders of Gilead when they requested him to lead the men of war against the Ammonites who were threatening Israel at that time. He accepted their invitation but only on condition that when the fighting was over he was to be their acknowledged head. The elders agreed and promised that Yhwh would be witness to the pact:

And the elders of Gilead said to Jephthah, 'Yhwh will be witness between us (DN yihyeh šōmē^ca bēnōtēnū); we will surely do as you say' (Jdg 11:8)

The fact that the root šm^c is used indicates that the elders were to make a verbal declaration. The Hebrew use of 'im-lō': 'if not...' in fact calls down an imprecation if they should break their oath, so that the way of expressing the strong affirmative is in the form of a self-curse, which is particularly apt in the context.

Jephthah also takes oath when the elders and people acting in concert made him 'head and leader over them' (v. 11):

1. Fensham: E/POT, 109 .

So Jephthah went with the elders of Gilead, and the people made him head and leader over them; and Jephthah spoke all his words before Yhwh (wayēdabbēr PN 'et-kol-dēbārāyw lipēnēy DN) at Mizpah. (Jdg 11:11)

It would be interesting to know if there was a sanctuary at Mizpah, for this would indicate whether there is primarily a local significance to lipēnēy Yhwh or solely the judicial-theological concept of Yhwh as witness to the oaths of the pact. Since identification of the site is not certain, excavation has not yet solved this question.¹ Discovery of an Israelite shrine at Arad shows that we need to be cautious about dismissing the possibility of a shrine at Mizpah on the grounds that no such shrine is mentioned directly in the Old Testament. Nevertheless the expression lipēnēy Yhwh in the context of a pact with oaths need not imply a gathering at a shrine, as is clear from the next example.

In this instance, the oaths are sworn mutually by David and Jonathan in the Wilderness of Ziph at Horesh, which is not identified, but not at all likely to have been the centre for a shrine since the nature of David and Jonathan's meeting was clandestine. For the background to this pact we should refer back to 1 Sam 18, where we read of the first covenant made between these two men:

wayyikrōt Yēhōnātān wēDāwid bērit bē'ahābātō 'ōtō
kēnapšō (1 Sam 18:3)

Then Jonathan made a covenant with David because he loved him as his own soul

The signs of the covenant were the garments and armaments bestowed on David by Saul's son in something like an investment ceremony which probably symbolised adoption as a brother with equal rank.

This pact was renewed after Saul's first attempts on David's life and as Jonathan realised more and more clearly that David was destined for his father's throne. In a poignant passage, Jonathan takes oath

1. In The Land of the Bible, p. 243 Aharoni says: 'The Israelite forces assembled at Mizpah (Jdg 10:17), also called Mizpeh of Gilead (Jdg 11:29), which was the site of a cultic centre (v. 11), perhaps an ancient amphyctionic rallying point in Gilead'. There is in fact no support for this statement except a particular interpretation of lipēnēy Yhwh. Aharoni, following F.M. Abel and M. du Buit, suggests a possible identification of Mizpah with Ramath-mizpeh between Heshbon, Betonim and Mahanaim (Josh 13:26) in the area south of the Jabbok, perhaps near Jebel Jel'cad and Khirbet Jel'cad.

that he will disclose any threat or plot against David's life which his father might make. This reminds one immediately of the clauses of vassal-oaths enjoining an immediate report to the suzerain of any rumour of treason. Similarly, echoes of the dictum that the enemies of the one party are the enemies of the other are to be found in Jonathan's wishes that Yhwh would cut off David's enemies. The stipulation that Jonathan made was that David would guarantee his offspring's survival and his own, demonstrating towards them 'the hesed of Yhwh', that is the covenant loyalty, the loyal love exemplified by Yhwh and required by Yhwh as witness to David's covenant oath. This David swore to do.

And Jonathan made David swear again (lēhašbī^ca) by his love for him (bē'ahābātō); for he loved him as he loved his own soul. (1 Sam 20:17)

1

The idea that Yhwh was the witness of this pact is made specific throughout. In the preliminary conversation, David had reminded Jonathan of his obligation to report his father's evil intentions by referring back to their previously sealed pact as 'the bērīt of Yhwh' - wē^cāšītā ḥesed ^cal-abdekā kī bibērīt Yhwh hēbē'tā 'et-abdēkā ^cimmāk: 'My lord, keep faith with me; for you and I have entered into a solemn compact before Yhwh' (1 Sam 20:8 NEB). They take oath in the name of Yhwh and part in the consciousness that Yhwh is the arbitrator of the covenant stipulations:

wēhaddābār 'āšer dibbarnū 'ānī wā'āttāh hinnēh Yhwh
bēnī ūbēnekā ^cad-^cōlām (1 Sam 20:23)

wayyō'mer Jēhōnātān lēDāwīd lēk lēšālōm 'āšer nišba^cnū
šēnēnū 'ānaḥnū bēšēm Yhwh lē'mōr Yhwh yihyeh bēnī
ūbēnekā ūbēn zarē^ce ūbēn zar^cākā ^cad-^cōlām (1 Sam 20:42)

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1. There are some textual difficulties in 1 Sam 20:14ff. In verse 17, the NEB reverses the subjects and has Jonathan pledging himself again to David, instead of taking the Hiphil of šb^c as causative as we prefer with RSV. Nothing of central concern is effected by these textual emendations and interpretations, on which see the standard commentaries.

And as for the matter of which you and I have spoken
 behold Yhwh is between you and me for ever

Then Jonathan said to David, ' Go in peace, forasmuch as
 we have sworn both of us in the name of Yhwh, saying,
 "Yhwh shall be between me and you, and between my
 descendants and your descendants, for ever" '

The next time they met was at Horesh in the Wilderness of Ziph
 when they renewed the covenant yet again, this time with Jonathan
 promising to take a faithful second rank in David's kingdom when the
 LORD had given David Saul's throne. It is here that the covenant is
 said to have been made 'before Yhwh' (1 Sam 23:18 lipěņēy Yhwh) .

Against the background of the previous passages, it is clear that
 mutual oaths made in the presence of Yhwh constituted the heart of the
 covenant ceremony, though symbolic rites such as the exchange of gar-
 ments and weapons might accompany the verbal process. It seems certain
 that none of the covenants was made at a shrine. This is conclusive
 evidence that the expression lipěņēy Yhwh was used in a treaty con-
 text to convey the idea of the Deity as witness to the covenant oaths
 and stipulations, and could be used to indicate the presence of such
 oaths and stipulations even when these are not mentioned overtly.
 This we believe to be the case too in the use of the phrase maḡar DN
u ilāni mātišunu in the 8th Campaign report.

The final instance of lipěņēy Yhwh in a human covenant concerns
 David at Hebron for his coronation:

So all the elders of Israel came to the king at Hebron
 and King David made a covenant with them (wayyikrōt
lāhem bērit) at Hebron before Yhwh (lipěņēy DN), and
 they anointed (wayyimšēhū) David king over Israel.
 (2 Sam 5:3)

It seems likely that there was a shrine at Hebron. This was a
 locality associated with the patriarchs and their worship (Gen 13:18
 & 35:27) and Absalom went there to 'pay his vow' and 'offer worship
 to Yhwh' (2 Sam 15:7f).¹ On this occasion, which marked the active

1. G.Fohrer: ZAW 71(1959),1-22 "Der Vertrag zwischen König und Volk
 in Israel" and G.Widengren: JSS 2(1957),1-32 "King & Covenant"
 both discuss passages bearing the phrase lipěņēy Yhwh in covenant-
 making contexts without making anything of it.

rebellion against David, Absalom is described as offering sacrifices in Hebron as he waited for Ahithophel to arrive. We must picture the covenant ceremony as taking place at this shrine, though we cannot have any exact idea of the oaths and stipulations covertly referred to by the phrase lipěņēy Yhwh. Presumably the elders took some form of oath of loyalty, paying homage, as Ullusunu paid homage to Sargon.

(ii) Four Passages referring to Covenant with Yhwh.

As with the covenant meal at Sinai, so too the use of lipěņēy Yhwh can be found in the transposed covenant context which takes it from the human to the human + deity plane at one remove from a direct parallel with the Assyrian material.

We refer first to the covenant renewal on the plains of Moab before the death of Moses. For a structural analysis of this section of Deuteronomy and its relation to the book as a whole the relevant works should be consulted, for we are concerned with only a single detail, the prepositional phrase. This occurs twice, both times in the speech of Moses rather than the circumstantial setting. This indicates its integral part in the covenant context. Moses summons all Israel and exhorts them 'be careful to do the words of this covenant', which is enforced by the following reminder:

You stand this day all of you before Yhwh (lipěņēy DN)
your God, the heads of your tribes, your elders and
your officers, all the men of Israel, your little ones,
your wives and the sojourner...that you may enter into
the sworn covenant of Yhwh (lē^cobrěkā biběřît DN ...
ûbě'ālātô) your God, which Yhwh your God makes with
you (kōrēt^cimměkā) this day (Deut 29:9f MT)

It is given wider reference by drawing in even those 'not here with us this day', meaning the subsequent generations of Israelites on whom the curses would fall if they did not obey and fear the oaths

1. For example, see Baltzer: CF, 31ff and Thompson: D/TOTC, 14ff and the literature cited there.

with its curses:

Nor is it with you only that I make this sworn covenant (kōrēt 'et-habbērīt hazzō't wē'et-hā'ālāh hazzō't) but with him who is not here with us this day before Yhwh (lipñēy DN) our God. (Deut 29:13f MT)

The prepositional phrase conveys not only a general sense of religious awe, but relates specifically to the bērīt and 'ālāh, for Yhwh is thereby designated as Witness to the oaths and Implementer of the curses. The active implementation of the curses is spelt out in verses 19f MT in terms of Yhwh's smoking wrath ('oz ye^cšan 'ap-DN wēqinē'ātō). The heavenly Witness could discern heart-obedience and transgression, and hence the special description of the fate of one who inwardly congratulates himself on his security while intending disobedience (MT 18f).

The second reference comes from the projected covenant ceremony at Mt. Ebal already mentioned for its witness to the covenant meal. This meal was to be eaten after slaughter of the burnt offering and the peace offerings and the people were 'to rejoice before Yhwh' (lipñēy DN) there. The phrases 'before Yhwh', 'rejoicing before Yhwh' or 'eating before Yhwh' are characteristic of Deuteronomy and have a strong association with 'the place which Yhwh shall choose to make his name dwell there'. Thus Israelites are forbidden to offer sacrifices at home, or tithes or votive gifts but must go to the place chosen and there 'eat before Yhwh and rejoice' (Deut 12:7, 12 & 18 ; 14:26). This applied to the major commemorative feasts as well, for example, the Feast of Weeks when they were 'to rejoice before Yhwh' at the chosen site (Deut 16:11). The so-called Cultic Credo of chapter 26 associates the altar with the expression 'before Yhwh', for the basket of first-fruits is set down 'before the altar of Yhwh' (26:4), while verse 10 speaks of setting it down 'before Yhwh your God, and you shall worship before Yhwh your God, and you shall rejoice in all the good which Yhwh your God has given you'.

Clearly the phrase lipñēy Yhwh cannot denote a covenant ceremony in its own. Its general connotation is 'in the presence of Yhwh' - and this is often, but not exclusively, associated with a shrine. A strong thread in the composite meaning of lipñēy Yhwh is the judicial idea of Yhwh as Witness. In the Credo just cited, this shade

of meaning for lipēnēy Yhwh is to be detected in a later verse, verse 13, where a declaration is made that the Israelite has met his obligations to the Levite, the sojourner, the fatherless and the widow with respect to the tithe on his produce:

then you shall say lipēnēy Yhwh your God, 'I have removed the sacred portion out of my house ...
(Deut 26:13)

The sense of Yhwh as Witness and Judge is also conveyed at 18:13 where Israel is exhorted to be clear from indictment: 'You shall be blameless before Yhwh your God'. Similarly, Yhwh was to be Arbitrator in the case of malicious accusation, because he was Witness to the actual deed done:

both parties shall appear before Yhwh, before the priests and the judges who are in office in those days. (Deut 19:17)

A comparison with Mesopotamian legal material reveals how old is this concept of the deity as witness and arbitrator where human witnesses were lacking, or where they made contradictory statements. From the Code of Hammurabi, the following examples may be drawn:

- \$9 - witnesses to property ownership and witnesses to its sale make sworn statements after a theft
(maḥar ilim + qabû)
- \$23 - a robbed citizen declares his losses for compensation (maḥar ilim + D-theme bâru III/buârum)
- \$106 - merchant convicts a recalcitrant agent of receipt of a loan (ina maḥar ilim u šibi + kanû D-theme)
- \$107 - agent convicts merchant of receipt (ibid.)
- \$120 - corn depositor makes declaration for compensation (maḥar ilim + bâru III/buârum, D-theme)
- \$126 - district clears itself of false claim for loss (ibid)
- \$266 - herdsman clears himself of stock loss (maḥar ilim + ebēbu D-theme)
- \$281 - unwitting purchaser of another's slave states price (ina maḥar ilim + qabû)

Closely related are clauses demanding that an oath be taken in the name of the deity, that is the deity guaranteed the truth by knowing if the man swore correctly and by exacting a fearful penalty for

perjury. Three examples from the Code of Hammurabi may be compared with two from the still earlier Laws of Eshnunna:¹

- \$22 - owner of destrained slave-girl swears destrainer has no claim against him (nīš ilim izzakar)
- \$37 - keeper of another's property disclaims responsibility and compensation (ibid)
- \$20 - capturer of subsequently escaped slave disavows guilt (ibid)
- \$103 - agent blames enemy for loss on trade mission (ibid)
- \$131 - wife accused of adultery by husband (ibid)

The last case cited bears a strong affinity with the Hebrew law for a wife suspected of adultery, recorded in Numbers 5. There a complicated rite accompanies the oath, involving an ordeal by draught,² but this does not concern us. The point of the comparison is the reiteration of the prepositional phrase lipñēy Yhwh with a strong judicial sense some four times between verses 16-30 describing the priestly procedure.

There is a parallel between the oath, rites and curses performed 'before Yhwh' in this judicial procedure and the oath, rites and curses which form part of a covenant-making ceremony - the common factor is

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1. \$22 & 37 from the early laws - see A.Goetze: The Laws of Eshnunna, AASOR 31, 1956 in convenient form in ANET, 161ff. For Hammurabi's Code, see conveniently, ANET, 163ff in Meek's translation, and Driver: BabLaws.
 2. The river ordeal similarly invokes the arbitration of the deity, and applied in the case of a wife accused by someone other than her husband (\$132 - ana mutiša DINGIR.ĪD išalli); cf. \$2 for one accused of sorcery. This ordeal should be clearly distinguished from the penalty of drowning, when the victim was first bound, see \$129. \$17 of the Middle Assyrian Laws brings out the difference, for after another citizen has said, 'People have lain repeatedly with your wife', it is specifically stated that the river ordeal obtains because there are no witnesses - 'since there were *no witnesses*, they shall make agreement (and) go to the river (for the water ordeal)' - Meek's translation, ANET, 181 .

Yhwh as Witness and Judge.¹

The third example to be added from an Old Testament covenant occasion comes from Josh 24. In verse 25 of the chapter, we read that Joshua 'made a covenant with the people that day, and made statutes and ordinances for them at Shechem' (RSV). We prefer to translate krt bërît lācām in this context with the NEB footnote - 'Joshua made a covenant ... *for* the people', since this is in keeping with his rôle as successor to Moses as mediator and leader of the people. The covenant drawn was clearly not an innovation, but rather a renewal of the Sinai bond, as emerges from the terms - to put away foreign gods and to serve Yhwh alone (v. 15-24). This covenant renewal ceremony is introduced in the words of 24:1 -

Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel to Shechem and summoned the elders, the heads, the judges, and the officers of Israel; and they presented themselves before God (wayyityaššëbû lipëney hā'ëlōhîm).

Yhwh was regarded as having taken an active part on this occasion as well as being a passive witness to all that went on. This comes out in verse 27, where a stone is set up under the terebinth in the sanctuary as a witness against the people, not because it had heard their words, curiously enough, but because 'it has heard all the words of Yhwh which he spoke to us'. Which words? Certainly the speech v. 2-13 which is set in the 1st person with Yhwh as subject, and may be con-

1. Other laws and incidents involving Yhwh as Witness and Judge include Exod 22:8f (cf. CH §120 & 126: ina maḥar ilim + bâru D-theme) niqrab ... 'el-hā'ëlōhîm cad hā'ëlōhîm yābō' - loss on deposited goods; Exod 21:5f - the slave who swears life-long fidelity before God higgîšû 'ādōnāyw 'el-hā'ëlōhîm. On these passages compared with others from the Laws of Eshnunna, see F.C.Fensham: JBL 78(1959), 160f "New Light on Exod 21:6 & 22:7 from the Laws of Eshnunna". LE §37 speaks of an oath sworn in the gate of Tishpak, the city god, to clear the storer of another's property lost after accident (bēl bītim ina bāb bīt DN nīš ilim izzakaršum). Note further that Korah's rebellion was settled by appearing lipëney Yhwh (Num 16:7,16f); the challenge to Aaron's priesthood was settled by placing rods 'before Yhwh' (Num 17:7,9 lipëney NN; cf. 4,10 lipëney hācēdūt). Divine arbitration was invoked by use of the lot, eg for tribal division of the land (Josh 18:8,10 & 19:51 - bëgōral bëšilōh lipëney DN petah 'ōhel mo^cēd; cf. Prov 16:33) : both shrine and spot are named which suggests that 'before Yhwh' here bears a judicial connotation.

sidered as the Historical Prologue to the covenant.¹ Perhaps too the words referred to in v. 26, which Joshua presumably read aloud: 'and Joshua wrote these words in the book of the law of God (běsēper tōrat 'ēlōhîm). These consisted of the hōq ūmišpāt (v. 25), which are presumably the covenant stipulations.

The stone ('eben gědōlāh) is invoked as a witness by reason of its permanence and immutability, in the same way as heaven and earth or the mountains are invoked elsewhere in the Old Testament.² The passage, then, is replete with the concept of witnesses to the treaty - first of all they gather 'before Yhwh', then the people solemnly accept the covenant, becoming witnesses against themselves (v. 22), and finally the stone is erected as an impersonal, disinterested witness. Thus we have Yhwh in heaven, the people in earth and the stone in-between - on earth obviously, but also in the presence of Yhwh by virtue of being in the sanctuary (v. 26b).

The reason for the great stress on the witnesses to the covenant

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1. So, for example, G.E.Mendenhall: BA 17(1954), 67 and D.J.McCarthy: T&C, 145ff .
 2. This is the simplest understanding of Israelite usage of natural phenomena in covenant contexts, and as such differs from the numinous usage common in Hittite, Ugaritic, Aramean and Assyrian texts. What properly belonged to the mythology of surrounding cultures could often be taken over into Hebrew culture simply as poetic colouring without compromise to Yahwism. On the OT against its ANE background in this area, see Huffmon: JBL 78(1959), 285-295 "The Covenant Lawsuit in the Prophets", who suggested that mountains, rivers, heaven, earth, sea, winds, and clouds were invoked in ANE treaty texts 'presumably because the curses and blessings ...involved these natural phenomena', p. 292 . Moran disagreed, saying that Huffmon's explanation 'does not sufficiently take into account the numinous character which these so-called natural phenomena possessed in Hittite religion' (Biblica 43, 1962, 317-327 "Some Remarks on the Song of Moses", p. 319), and after drawing attention to non-treaty texts - a Ugaritic one invoking heaven and earth, and an Assyrian tākultu ritual invoking desert wastes and abandoned tells as well - he concludes that natural phenomena were invoked in ANE texts 'simply as pertaining to the numinous world and therefore being in some way subjects of power', p. 320. See too Harvey: Plaidoyer, 33 note 4, 88f who suggests the need for two witnesses, their immutability in this changing world, and that 'ces réalités cosmiques, divinisées dans les panthéons hurrien, hittite et assyrien, sont communes aux deux parties dans un accord international, alors que les autres dieux ne sont en général honorés que par l'une des parties en présence', p. 89 .

oaths is clear, namely, Israel's unceasing apostacy. This explains the mention of their idolatrous ancestry, both in the prologue and the exhortation (v. 14f), and the disqualification alleged by Joshua with its threat that only judgement would be incurred by taking the oath lightly, as in the past.¹ Joshua as the covenant mediator declared his intention of serving Yhwh alone, and was, in fact, the fourth witness to Israel's covenant to total obedience to Yhwh.² For our purposes, it must suffice to conclude that the primary witness is Yhwh himself, since 24:1 sets the entire scene 'before God'.

The fourth and fifth examples are really one and the same for they are drawn from parallel passages in the books of Kings and Chronicles, and concern a covenant made by Josiah and the people at the Temple in Jerusalem after the discovery and reading of the sēper

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1. The characterisation of Israel's history as one of continual apostacy is taken up again in later passages of the OT, eg Psa 106, Ezek 16 & 21 ; cf. the Song of Moses, Deut 32 .
 2. M.Noeth:Josua², HAT 7, 1953, p. 136 rejects verses 19-24 as a later addition, but this is countered by arguments by McCarthy:T&C, 150; Blatzer: CF ; J.Muilenburg: VT 9(1959), 347-365 "The Form and Structure of the Covenantal Formulations", p. 357ff; Huffmon: CBQ 27, 104 note 16; Moran:Biblica 43, 103 . Other studies of Josh 24 as a covenant ceremony include J.L'Hour: RB 69(1962), 5-36, 161-184, 350-368 "L'Alliance de Sichem", and Ch.H.Giblin: CBQ 26(1964), 50-69 "Structural Patterns in Josh 24:1-25" . Muilenburg rightly stresses the importance of the mediator in Israel's covenants - eg, Moses, Joshua and Samuel, while Baltzer notes the association of confirmation of the covenant with the transfer of authority. Both points are relevant to Josh 24 .

habbērît .¹ In 2 Kgs 23 we read :

And the king stood by the pillar and made a covenant before Yhwh (wayyikrōt 'et-habbērît lipēnēy DN), to walk after Yhwh and to keep his commandments, his testimonies and his statutes with all his heart and all his soul, to perform the words of this covenant that were written in this book; and all the people joined in the covenant (wayya^cāmōd kol-hā^cām habbērît) (2 Kgs 23:3)

Covenant terminology abounds; one notes the 'covenant stipulations' (ċādōtāyw), the need to give them heart-obedience (bēkol-lēb ūbekol-nepeš), and the verbs krt and ċmd conveying the carrying through of the pledging procedures.

The parallel passage, 2 Chron 34:31, similarly records the location of the king and the fact of the covenant's being made lipēnēy Yhwh. Given the three indications of locality - Jerusalem, the house of Yhwh, and the dais or pillar (ċal-hā^cammūd/ċal-ċāmēdō), the phrase lipēnēy Yhwh must be doing theological-judicial duty, indicating that Yhwh was witness to the covenant-oaths of king and people.²

We conclude that this brief comparative study of lipēnēy Yhwh and ina maḥar ilim, best understood as 'in the presence of' the deity, shows that it may not necessarily be associated with a shrine, and that the occurrence of these phrases in the context both of Law Codes and Covenants is not accidental but indicative of the common strand of the deity being witness to oaths and judge of perjurers and oath-breakers.

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1. See N.Lohfink: Biblica 44(1963),261-288 & 461-498 "Die Bundesurkunde des Königs Josias - eine Frage an die Deuteronomiumsforschung" and the literature cited there for analysis of this.
 2. Comparison might be made with Ezra 10, where Shecaniah and Ezra make the 'leading priests and Levites and all Israel take oath' in a covenant with God to put away foreign wives and children. Ezra is described as prostrate before the Temple (mitnappēl lipēnēy bêt hā'ēlōhîm) before the ceremony, and departing thence afterwards (millipēnēy bêt hā'ēlōhîm). The addition of bêt into the prepositional phrase is surely not a periphrasis substituting 'the house of God' for direct reference to the deity (cf. 'kingdom of heaven' for 'kingdom of God'), since the direct phrase is used at 8:21 in describing a fast lipēnēy 'ēlōhēnû. Locality must therefore be the first nuance of lipēnēy bêt hā'ēlōhîm.

IV:6. The Rôle of the Elders in Covenant Making.

When Sargon describes his first meeting with Ullusunu on the 8th Campaign he gives a list of officials accompanying the Mannean king, no doubt to convey to the reader that his royal dignity required an elaborate reception, and also to show the dependence of the Mannans on his good offices were they to have any chance of retaining their social structure and government in the face of Urartian aggression. So Sargon speaks of his unwavering intention to avenge the Mannans on their enemies, and then reveals their gratitude properly expressed in his royal reception.

šū adi rabânišu šibi mâlikî zēr bīt abišu šakkanakkî
u rîdê muma"irū mâtîšu ina ulluṣ libbi u ḥidût pâni
ultu qereb mâtîšu balu liṭî ḡitmuṭiṣ uṣamma (Sg 8:33f)

He with his officials, elders, counsellors, the royal progeny, prefects and officers, the representatives of his country came from the heart of his land with hearts rejoicing and glad countenances without hostages.

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This meeting took place at the Mannean border town of Sinihinu. The treaty renewal ceremony was held at the fortress of Sirdakku, when the nobles and governors are again specially mentioned:

šū adi rabannî šakin tēm mâtîšu uṣallûni-ma ina
pânija eli irbi rittēšunu iptāššilū kîma kalbî

He together with (his) dignitaries, the guiding spirits of his land, were crawling about on all fours just like dogs (Sg 8:58)

When we turn to the Old Testament, we find that elders and other state officials are frequently specified as having taken a leading part in covenant ceremonies.

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1. Muma"irū is the D-theme Participle of root (w)âru -'to go, go off'; D-theme 'to send, commission, charge' (GAG, \$106, f); D-Part. 'commander, commanding officer, envoy'. The similar mu'errum which was once derived from (w)âru (GAG, \$56, e) with the meaning 'Kommandant', is now derived from the root êrum -'to be awake, guard' (GAG, \$106, f & AHw, 667 mu'erru -'Versammlungsleiter').

To take the secular examples first, we find that the elders of Israel are specifically mentioned in Exod 18:12 as taking part in the covenant meal with Jethro, while in Josh 9 they are responsible for the over-hasty conclusion of the pact with the Gibeonites. Josh 9:14 speaks of the men' (hā'ānāšīm: 'the chief men of the community', NEB) partaking of the Gibeonites' provisions. The same group, this time called 'the leaders of the congregation' (něsī'ē hā'cēdāh, v. 15b), swore the treaty oath to them, and were severely criticised by the mass of the people for their actions in the covenant meal and oaths in which they participated as the representatives of the whole congregation. Nevertheless, their oath remained valid for the whole of Israel despite general disapproval. In the Jephthah story, it is the elders of Gilead who approach him and negotiate the pact by which he became war-leader and judge (Jdg 11:4-11). It was the elders of Israel who made negotiations through Abner with David, resulting in the covenant he concluded with them at Hebron (2 Sam 5:3).

The 'religious' covenants of the Old Testament likewise bear witness to the key rôle of the elders, and among them we may note the following. At the Sinai covenant in Exod 24, the elders are specially mentioned (verses 1,9-11 & 14) as approaching Yhwh as the representatives of the people who were not allowed near the mountain. They witnessed the theophany and partook of the covenant meal ('āšîlê bēnē Yîsrā'ēl, v. 11). At the covenant in the plains of Moab, Moses specially mentions Israel's leaders in his address (rā'šêkem šibtêkem ziqnêkem wěšōṭērêkem, Deut 29:9 MT). In Deut 27:1, the elders are associated with Moses in giving instructions about the Mt. Ebal covenant ceremony, while Josh 8, the reflex of the passage from Deuteronomy mentions the leaders of Israel (zēqēnāyw wěšōṭērîm wěšōpētāyw, Josh 8:33) in a similarly comprehensive list of participants in the covenant ceremonies. The leaders are similarly specified as summoned to the covenant renewal ceremony at Shechem (ziqnê Yîsrā'ēl, rā'šāyw, šōpētāyw, šōṭērāyw - Josh 24:1), and as having remained faithful to the oaths they took there after Joshua himself had died (v. 31). Finally, the elders were summoned in particular by Josiah to hear the book of the covenant read and to enter into a covenant renewal conducted at the cleansed temple (2 Kgs 23:1).

The references just cited support the view that normally speaking the elders must be present as the representatives of the people as a whole to ratify a treaty or covenant. When the association of the

elders with the covenant, covenant oaths and covenant meals is noted, and when the phrase lipñēy Yhwh is also present, this may be considered to lend weight to the view that the mention of elders, a meal and the phrase ina maḥar ilāni betokens a covenant renewal ceremony, though the word treaty is not used in the narrative of Sargon's meeting with Ullusunu.¹

1. On the rôle of the elders in Israel with some comparisons with the elders among the Hittites and at Mari, see J.L.McKenzie: Biblica 40(1959),522-540 "The Elders in the OT" . He summarises the rôle of the elders under five headings:

1. Representatives in political or religious activity
2. Associates in authority with the leader
3. Governing body
4. Royal council members
5. Judicial body

The majority of the passages we have discussed fall into McKenzie's first category, namely, that the elders act as the people's representatives in concluding treaties and covenants. See too A.Malamat's essay "Organs of Statecraft" (BAR 3, 163ff)

IV:7. Sg 8:146f and the Phenomena of Electrical Storms.

The frightening phenomena of electrical storms - thunder, lightning and hail - lent themselves to mankind's earliest mythologies and commanded his numinous respect. Linked as they were to the blessing of rain and the disaster of floods, they contributed to religious development that ambivalence of attitude towards the gods - praise and fear. No attempt can be made here to trace the origins and development in literary form of mankind's reaction to the storm. It must suffice to indicate links between the earliest literary statements which come from the Sumerians and pass on to the Semites, though there will be no attempt to argue for linear development rather than a mixture of parallel and cross-fertilised development.

From the Sumerian corpus, we may take two convenient examples, both recently made available in English translation by the doyen of Sumerologists, S.N.Kramer. The first belongs to the irshemma genre,¹ is dedicated to the storm-god Ishkur, and, to quote Kramer, 'seems to have been composed by a temple poet eager to assure the people of Sumer that Ishkur is on their side and will come to their aid against their enemies'.² 'Father Ishkur, lord who rides the storm'(line 7) is exhorted by his father Enlil to equip himself and set upon 'the rebellious land'.

Let the howling wind howl for you, harness the winds before you,
 Let your vizier 'Lightning' go before you, (harness) the winds
 (before you),
 My young one, go, go joyfully, who is like you when approaching
 it !
 To the rebellious land, hated by the father who begot you,
 who is like you when approaching it !
 Take small stones, who is like you when approaching it !
 Take large stones, who is like you when approaching it !
 Rain down on it your small stones, your large stones,

1. See Falkenstein & von Soden: SAHG, 22f on this genre.

2. ANETS, 141/577f "Ishkur & the Destruction of the Rebellious Land" with brief introduction; text 29631, CT 15, pls. 15f; see HKL 1,226 for bibliography.

Destroy the rebellious land to your right, subdue it to
your left (lines 18-25) 1.

One can imagine the efficacy of this hymn when recited in the temple before the army set off to quell an uprising in some vassal area. The exhortation to the Storm god for his intervention, by the poet's genius, was not the lot of the priest but the express wish of his father Enlil, the *de facto* head of the Sumerian pantheon in lieu of Anu who had become a shadowy figure in the background.²

If this irshemma embodies standard Sumerian beliefs of ancient origin, the next example reveals something of the process of dissemination of these expressions for in a long poem written by Enheduanna, daughter of Sargon the Great, we find the syncretistic process unfolding before our eyes as the Semite becomes a leading proponent in the Sumerian cultus.

As a final step in this politico-religious reformation, Sargon equated the Sumerian Inanna with the Akkadian Ishtar to lay the theological foundations for a united empire of Sumer and Akkad, and thus ushered in what the chronographic tradition regarded as the 'dynasty of Ishtar'. 3

1. For Yhwh as the 'rider on the wind', see Psa 104:3b-4 -

haššām-^cābīm rēkūbō hamēhallēk ^cal-kanēpê-rûaḥ
^cōseh mal'ākāyw rūḥôt mēšārētāyw 'ēš lōhēt

2. See S.N.Kramer: History Begins, 144 .

3. Hallo & van Dijk: Exaltation, 9f .

Leaving on one side the political and cultural implications of the Nin-me-sár-ra poem, we may focus attention on the transfer of attributes from Ishkur the Sumerian Storm god to Inanna-Ishtar, goddess of love and war. This occurs in section two to four of the poem which portray Inanna in her terrifying aspect. When she roars at the earth like Thunder no vegetation can stand up to her (line 10). She rains down flaming fire over the land (line 13).

Destroyer of the foreign lands, you have given wings
to the storm,
Beloved of Enlil you made it (the storm) blow over
the land

1

In the following lines the storm imagery is blended with the sound of battle as the Semitic characteristics of the goddess of love and war intrude:

In the van of battle, everything was struck down
before you,
My queen, you are all devouring in your power,
You kept on attacking like an attacking storm,
Kept on blowing (louder) than the howling storm,
Kept on thundering (louder) than Ishkur,
Kept on moaning (louder) than the evil winds,
Your feet grew not weary,
You caused wailing to be uttered on the 'lyre of
lament'.

2

1. Kramer's translation - ANETS, 144/580 lines 17f; cf. Exaltation, 17

Devastatrix of the lands, you are lent wings by the storm.
Beloved of Enlil, you fly about in the nation.

kur-gul-gul u₄-dè á ba-e-sī
ki-ága^d en-líl-lá kalam-ma im-mi-ni-dal

2. Compare the translation given in Exaltation, 16ff :

In the van of battle	everything is struck down by you
Oh my lady (propelled)	you peck away (at the land)
on your own wings,	
In the guise of a	you charge
charging storm	
With a roaring storm	you roar
With Thunder	you continually thunder
With all the evil winds	you snort
Your feet are filled	with restlessness
To (the accompaniment of)	you give vent to a dirge
the harp of sighs	

Despite the variations in translation, the fundamental point stands that from the earliest times both storm and the sway of battle were given a numinous explanation in terms of direct divine intervention. History and nature can not be divided in Mesopotamian theology. When, centuries later, Sargon described the intervention of Adad in his campaign, he simply affords us further evidence for the continuity of a tradition.

Skipping over other material, we take one example of standard East Semitic tradition relating to the Storm god of Mesopotamia. This comes from the Atrahasis Epic, which is the Babylonian Flood story ancestral to the widely distributed Gilgamesh Epic Tablet XI.

ūmu išnû pānušu ištagna DN ina erpetī
 ila išmû rigimšu kupru babil ipeḫḫi bābšu
 ištuma idilu bābšu DN išaggum ina erpetī

The appearance of the weather changed
 Adad roared in the clouds.
 As soon as he heard Adad's voice
 Pitch was brought for him to close his door.
 After he had bolted his door
 Adad was roaring in the clouds 1

igi-mè-ta	nì ma-ra-ta-si-ig
nin-mu á-ní-za	KA.KA ì-durud _x (KÚ)-e
u ₄ -du ₇ -du ₇ -gim	ì-du ₇ -du ₇ -dè
u ₄ gù-ra-ra-ta	⁴ gù im-da-ab-ra-ra
dīškur-da	sig _x (KA LI) mu-da-an-gi ₄ -gi ₄ -in
im-ḫul im-ḫul-da	im-da-kúš-ù-dè
gìri-za nu-kúš-ù	i-in-si
balag-a-nir-ra-da	i-lu mu-un-da-ab-bé
(lines 26-33)	

See the commentary on sections 2-4 in Exaltation, chap. 5, pages 50ff, where some of the translation difficulties are discussed and parallels cited.

1. Atrahasis, 92f ; Tablet III, Col. 2:48-53 ; see the notes on lines 49 & 50 on page 160 .

With this one should compare the rather fuller and more poetic version of the storm preserved on a fragment of the Assyrian recension.

DN imšār erbetti irtakab parê[šū]
 šūtu iltānu šadû amur[ru]
 sīqūšu siqsiqqu meḡû rādu

Adad rode on the four winds, [his] asses,
 The south wind, the north wind, the east wind,
 the west wind,
 The storm, the gale, the tempest blew for him

1

The next lines are damaged but 'the chariot of the gods' which 'sweeps forward', 'kills' and 'threshes' may still be referring to the elements of the storm which generated the Flood.²

Adad in fact has a prominent rôle in the Epic, for in previous attempts to wipe out mankind, he was instructed to withhold his rain and so cause drought and famine, but was diverted from this course by having a temple built in his honour and an offering of meal set out. A Babylonian incantation priest was later to recommend this procedure for overcoming drought to a late Assyrian king using a quotation from the Atrahasis Epic - another witness to the continuity of the theological tradition in Mesopotamia and one which demonstrates that a late cultic event could make use of archaic material, a fact significant for studies of the cult in Israel. In the Atrahasis Epic, Adad finally co-operates with the divine assembly, and intervenes decisively in human history as an agent of judgement working destruction.

1. Atrahasis, 122ff; BM.98977+99231 = U:rev. 5-7. See p. 167 for note on line 7.

2: The Evil Wind (imḡullu) the winds arose 8
 The south wind [break] ... arose at his side, 9
 The west wind blew at his side, 10
 [..][..]... reached ... 11
 the chariot of the gods (rukub ilāni).... [...] 12
 [It] sweeps forward, it kills, it threshes [.....] 13

Compare Gilgamesh XI:91-131 for a later poetic and theophorus account of the storm - Speiser: ANET, 94; Kinnier Wilson: DOTT, 21f; Heidel: Gilgamesh Epic, 84f for a range of English translations.

From the Sumerian 'rider on the storm' and the Babylonian 'rider on the winds', we move on to the Ugaritic 'rider of clouds'. Necessarily we must skim over the surface of this material which remains the subject of intense debate both in basic matters such as translation and in the wider areas of the coherence, function and comparative significance of the mythology. To condense discussion, we shall draw on the work of van Zijl and Cross, the former who demonstrates a painstaking methodology in handling the Ugaritic texts about Baal, and the latter who endeavours to take a broad sweep and relate the Baal material to Hebrew material.¹ Both scholars benefit from the stream of scholarly work preceding their recent publications.

Both draw attention to 'the two-sidedness of Baal's rôle as storm-god: on the one hand, the dread warrior before whom all nature blanches and dies, on the other hand, the god whose sway brings the fructifying rain which makes the desert bloom'.² Van Zijl's linguistic study reveals that 'military terminology is of decisive importance', for as subject of 30 out of 38 verbs included in the category, 'he is the one who works the destruction of other beings'.³ The storm phenomena belong to Baal's self-disclosure:

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1. P.J.van Zijl: Baal - a study of Texts in connection with Baal in the Ugaritic Epics, AO/AT 10, 1972 in which the methodology is described as that of logotactical, linguistic analysis; F.M.Cross: Canaanite Myth & Hebrew Epic - essays in the religion of Israel, 1973 which contains a critique of both the 'Myth-and-Ritual' and the *Heilsgeschichte* schools, and chapters of specific relevance - chap. 7 "Yahweh & Baal" and chap. 5 "The Divine Warrior" .
 2. Cross: CM/HE, 151 .
 3. Van Zijl: Baal, chap. 8 "Conclusions about the Grammatical Situation", 'The Categories of Verbs: Summarized Conclusions', page 317; cf. 287ff.

A word of a tree
 a whisper of stone
 converse of heaven with earth
 the deeps with the stars.
 Thunder-stones (abn.brq) which heaven does not know
 thunder (rgm) which people do not know
 and the multitude of the earth do not understand,
 Come and I shall show it,
 in the midst of my towering mount Şaphon
 in the sanctuary, on the mountain of my portion,
 in the pleasance, on the hill of victory. 1

The thunder is thought of as Baal's voice as the following text makes clear, which presents the Storm god in connection with the fertility theme:

Behold, the season of his rain,
 Baal appoints the season of the service
 in overflowing (of water)
 Lo ! he gives (forth) his thunder(voice) in the clouds,
 his song(voice) to the earth with lightning. 2

Another text portrays Baal as a king sitting victoriously enthroned on his mountain, Mount Şaphon:

Baal sits indeed enthroned on the mountain
 Hadad humbles (humiliates) indeed as accuser
 on his mountain
 the god of Şapānu on the mountain of glory
 Seven lightnings (Şb^{Ct}.brgm) (he had)
 eight as a storehouse of thunder (işr r^{Ct})
 a shaft of lightning (Cş brqy[h]) is the hand
 His head is beautiful; dew between his eyes. 3

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1. ibid, 59; text Cnt:III:19-28 (=CTCA 3:C); cf. Ginsberg: ANET, 136. On the parallelism of abn.brq & rgm and their meaning, see especially F.C.Fensham: JNES 18(1959) "Thunderstones in Ugaritic" on which van Zijl draws, p. 60f .
 2. ibid, 107; text 51:V:68-71 (=CTCA 4:V); ANET, 133 and Cross: CM/HE, 148f. Lines 70f in parallelism read wtn.qlh.b^{Crpt}// Şrh.larş.brqm; cf. text 51:VII:27-30 (=CTCA 4:VII) quoted & translated by van Zijl (p. 141) and by Cross (p. 149) in which the lightning is Baal's holy voice (qlh.qdş.b^{[Cl.y]tn}). Hebrew verbal and theological parallels are found in 1 Sam 12:17 & Psa 18:14 .
 3. Baal, 358; text RS 24.245. Van Zijl takes the verb yṯb with Baal as subject as 'descriptive of a royal council (meeting)' and compares 1 Kgs 22:19 'I saw Yhwh sit on his throne, and all the host of heaven standing beside him on his right hand and on his left'. From our

Other scholars restore and translate this passage somewhat differently - Cross, for instance, takes kmbd in the second line above as a comparison of Baal's throne with the back of the Flood Dragon,¹ and sees as the cultic background of the scene 'the return of the god from victory over Yamm or the flood-dragon, and his subsequent sitting in state on his throne, manifesting himself as lord of the storm'. Whether it is as a victorious warrior or whether as presiding over the divine assembly that Baal sits enthroned, it seems fair to conclude that the concept of Baal's kingship offered here includes some idea of his suzerainty, that is of his supremacy over rivals or enemies.

We may conclude, then, that Baal's duality does not mean that his association with electrical storm phenomena is confined to a fertility motif which is quite unrelated to his martial activity. In principle, there would be no surprise occasioned by the discovery of a Ugaritic text in which Baal intervened in a historical battle, just as Hadad did for Sargon or Yhwh for Joshua.

The Old Testament abounds with descriptions of Yhwh in terms of storm phenomena, and some passages are extremely close in phraseology to those already cited from Ancient Near Eastern sources. The context may be that of Creation, Theophany² or Judgement, and the literary type historical narrative, poetry, wisdom, prophetic oracle or eschat-

point of view, it is interesting that this heavenly council meeting was determining divine strategy for intervention in battle ! If van Zijl's suggestion (hd.r[kk] kmbd.btk.ġrh - rkk 'to humble, subdue'; kmbd - cf. Akk. dabābu, bēl dabābi = 'to litigate; adversary in court') is accepted, there may be something of a parallel here with divine judgement following rīb in the OT and its Neo-Assyrian counterpart, discussed in Part I, Asb. section E: Prayer to the Gods, section F: The Divine Pronouncement and section G: Divine Intervention.

1. CM/HE, 147f where he compares Psa 29:10 Yhwh lammabbūl yāšab - 'Yhwh sits enthroned on the Flood-dragon' (cf. Job 36:30); Ugar. mdb - 'flood, stream' .
2. In the context of (i) Creation, see for example, Psa 104:1-13, 148:8, Job 36:24 - 37:24, 38:25-30 & 34-38, Jer 10:12f = 51:15f and (ii) Theophany, see for example Exod 19:16-19, 20:18, cf. Deut 4:33 & 36, 5:22-27, Psa 29, Psa 97:3, 11:6 and Hab 3 .

ology. We concern ourselves here with Yhwh *vis-à-vis* his enemies only,¹ and the two best parallels to the Sg 8:146 passage primarily. On several historical occasions Yhwh is said to make use of lightning, thunder and hail in judgement. For example, Yhwh was said to have rained down fire and brimstone on Sodom and Gomorrah,² thunder hail and fire on the Egyptians,³ thunder and rain on Israel's wheat crop in Samuel's day.⁴ Though in each of these instances the retributive action of Yhwh is directed against his enemies, none parallels the incident of the 8th Campaign exactly, as do two further passages now to be considered.

In the first of these it is during the holy war with the Canaanites that Yhwh intervenes on Israel's behalf. Gibeon had been attacked by an alliance of five kings under Adonizedek of Jerusalem. Joshua was called upon to honour the treaty Israel had recently made with the Gibeonites despite its conclusion by deception on their part. A decision to honour the treaty had in fact been made in principle immediately after the Gibeonites' true identity became known, but this attack put the decision to the test. On receipt of their message which was couched in the technical terminology of a vassal's appeal to his suzerain (Cebed = 'vassal', Josh 10:6), Joshua received a war oracle

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1. We must by-pass here the Canaanite-type poetry so rich in storm imagery, eg. 2 Sam 22:8(=Psa 18), 1 Sam 2:10; cf. Jdg 5:4f, Deut 33:2, as well as prophetic-eschatological passages from the Prophets, eg. Isa 29:5-8, 30:29-33,; cf. Rev 8:7, 11:9, Ezek 38:22, 13:13, cf. Jer 25:30f - a rîb against foreign nations.
 2. Gen 19:24 - 'Then Yhwh rained(himtîr) on Sodom and Gomorrah brimstone and fire(goprît wā'eš) from Yhwh out of heaven'.
 3. Exod 9:23f - 'Then Moses stretched forth his rod toward heaven; and Yhwh sent thunder and hail(nātan qōlōt ūbārād), and fire ran down to the earth (wattihālak-'eš 'arēšāh). And Yhwh rained hail(wayyamṭēr DN bārād) upon the land of Egypt; there was hail(bārād) and fire flashing continually in the midst of the hail(wē'eš mitlaqqahat bētōk habbārād), very heavy hail such as had never been in all the land of Egypt since it became a nation'.
 4. 1 Sam 12:18 - 'So Samuel called upon Yhwh, and Yhwh sent thunder and rain(wayyittēn DN qōlōt ūmātār) that day'.

from Yhwh promising victory and he marshalled his troops.¹ Yhwh threw the enemy into a panic before Israel and then augmented the victory by means of an electrical storm:

And as they fled before Israel, while they were going down the ascent of Beth-horon, Yhwh threw down great stones from heaven upon them (DN hišlîk 'ālêhem 'ābānîm gēdōlōt min-haššāmayim) as far as Azekah, and they died; there were more who died because of the hailstones (be'abnê habbārād) than the men of Israel killed with the sword. (Josh 10:11)

The parallels between this incident and that of the 8th Campaign are remarkably close. The context of both is historical narrative about national campaigns. A vassal treaty precedes and demands the battle, which is then settled by divine intervention. This extends not only to a rout of the enemy but to multiple deaths among the fugitives from the battle whom the suzerain troops were unable to overtake, but who were struck down by the same means - electrical storm phenomena.

The second incident is interesting too though not quite so close a parallel to the 8th Campaign incident. Again, the context is historical narrative about the Holy War, this time against the Philistines who had previously captured the Ark and routed Israel. At a somewhat later date, there appears to have been a national dedication to Yhwh which one might reasonably suppose to have involved a covenant renewal ceremony - so it would seem from the terms which Samuel put to Israel (1 Sam 7:3) with the promise that if they acknowledged no other Baals their Suzerain would come to their aid in battle. This was put

1: On war oracles, see J-G.Heintz: VTSupp 17(1969),112-138 "Oracles prophétique et 'Guerre Sainte' selon les Archives royales de Mari et l'Ancient Testament" with the literature cited there and the Sargonid oracles discussed or referred to in Part I, Asb. section F: The Divine Pronouncement, page 131ff above. For a literary discussion of Josh 10 reference should be made to the standard commentaries and the many articles, such as recently J.F.A. Sawyer: PEQ 1972, 139-146 "Josh 10:12-14 & the Solar Eclipse of 30th September, 1131 BC". Important for the theological framework is F.C.Fensham: BA 27(1964),96-100 "The Treaty between Israel & the Gibeonites".

to the test immediately when the Philistines advanced on the assembled Israelites at Mizpah. Samuel interceded on behalf of the people and Yhwh answered him. Whether this was by unrecorded victory oracle or by the outcome of the subsequent events is not quite clear. At any rate, we read:

As Samuel was offering up the burnt offering, the Philistines drew near to attack Israel; but Yhwh thundered with a mighty voice (wayyar^cēm DN bēqôl-gādôl) that day against the Philistines and threw them into confusion (wayyēhummēm) and they were routed (wayyināgēpû) before Israel. (1 Sam 7:10)

Historical narrative, a treaty - in this instance Israel as the vassal of Yhwh, a military threat to the vassal, a battle, and the outcome decided by the intervention of the deity who fills the rôles both of Sargon and Adad - these constitute marked parallels in Israel's and Assyria's theological historiography. The significant difference is Assyria's pantheon as opposed to Israel's single deity, Yhwh.

To conclude we may review some Assyrian material pertinent to the theology of Sg 8:146f and illustrative of points already made. Much Assyrian material is available to illustrate the ambivalence of blessing and disaster associated with the Storm deity, and the following address to Adad from a royal inscription of Shalmaneser III admirably evokes the spirit of worship engendered by the deity, the god of the lightning bolt - bēl birqi:

ana DN gugal šamê eršetim šaqî bēl gimri
kaškaššu ilāni rašubbu ša lā iššannanu dannussu
nāši qinnāzi elli musanbi' tāmātē
šābit kippat šārē mukîl mē nuḫši
mušaznin zunni mušabriq birqi mušabšu urqēti
ša ina pišu ḫuršāni innušu isab'u tāmātē
ilu rēmēnû ša naḫuršu balātu

To Adad, canal-inspector of heaven and earth exalted lord of all,
Mightiest of the gods, the terrible, whose power has no equal,
Bearer of the Holy Whip, lashing the seas,
Controller of the Circle of the Winds, keeper of the waters of
abundance,
Who makes rain fall, lightning strike and vegetation to grow,
At whose word the mountains tremble, the seas swell,
The merciful god whose favour (lit. his turning from wrath)
is life

Despite the steady flow of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers, and the canal irrigation system, Assyrian monarchs prayed for rain and recorded Adad's answers. Thus we find Tiglath-pileser I concluding an inscription with a prayer to Anu and Adad as follows:

zunnē ṭahdūte šanāt nuḥše u mašrē ana palēja lišrukū
ina qabli u tāhāzi šalmiṣ litarrūni napḥar mātāti
nakirēja šapšūtē u malkē zā'erēja ana šepēja lūšiknišū

Copious rains, years of plenty and richness may they bestow upon my reign. From strife and battle may they bring me safely back. All of the lands hostile to me with their princes and kings, my enemies, may they cause to bow down at my feet. I

It is interesting that fertility and conquest are bracketed together in petition to the Storm god, but not unusual since Mesopotamian theology was not systematic - Adad, for example has a third function as an oracle giver along with Shamash,² and furthermore the division into spheres of action such as history or nature was not contemplated.

Ashurbanipal associates the luxuriant growth of wild vegetation and cultivated crops with Adad and claims this as a blessing characteristic of his entire reign.³ Nabonidus too makes capital out of good

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1. King AKA, 27ff; K.1621a + 13871, Col 8:23-33 - Cylinder of Tiglath-pileser I (1115-1077 bc); ARAB 1, \$216-267 .
 2. In the Babylonian tāmītu texts, Adad is addressed with Shamash - see W.G.Lambert "The Tāmītu Texts" in Divination, 119-123. Compare too Esarhaddon's building enquiry - Asar, 82 lines 20b-21; ARAB 2, 260 \$671 .
 3. 'Adad sent his rains, Ea opened his springs; five cubits tall grew the grain in the furrow, the length of its ear was five-sixths of a cubit; the thriving of the harvest and the expanse of grain continually the fields produced; the fruit trees were laden with fruit, the cattle excelled in bearing. In my reign abundance abounded, during my years plenty accumulated' (Rassam, 1:45-51; ARAB 2, 292). Cf. Bauer: IASb, 87 rev. 2f the Hunting Inscription.

rains which fell during summer at the time of his withdrawal from Babylon to indicate the gods' pleasure in him.¹

Naturally the negative side of the coin, drought and famine, was understood as Adad's curse and was wished upon enemies,² while other texts celebrating the prowess of the gods refer to the terrifying phenomena of the electrical storm as manifestations of divine power, especially of divine wrath directed against the enemy. For example, take the following lines from bilingual poems to Enlil and Adad respectively.

bēlim nāši dipāri muḥammeṭ ajjābi
 nāsiḥ māt lā māgiri libbaka [...]
 muballi napišti raggi libbaka [...]
 mušaznin abnī u išāti eli ajjābi libbaka [...]

O Lord, bearer of the torch who sets alight the enemy,
 Who uproots the land of the rebellious, thy heart [...]
 Who annihilates the life of the wicked, thy heart [...]
 Who rains down stones and fire upon the enemy, thy heart[₃

1. Gadd: AnSt 8(1958), 58 lines 36f ^dAdda mē zunni išaqqišunūti .

2. From such curse material note for example:

- \$ CH 27b:64-80 destruction by Adad via drought, famine & floods
- \$ AMT, rev. iv:8-13 curse of drought & famine by Adad (AfO 8,20; read ikkil DN with Erica Reiner, ANETS, 97/533 in line 12)
- \$ Lev 26:3-5 & 18-20 blessings of rain and fertility contrasted with the curses of drought and sterility
- \$ Deut 28:12 & 22-24 ditto

Cf. the discussion and references supplied by Fensham: ZAW 75, 168ff.

3. K.5001:3,5,7,9 published by S.Langdon: OECT 6, 19f .

bēlum ina agāgišu šamû itanarrarūšu
 DN ina ezīzišu eršetim inassu
 šadû rabûtu suhhupūšu
 ana agāgišu ana ezīzišu
 ana šagīmišu ana ramīmišu
 ilāni ša šamê ana šamê itellû
 ilāni ša eršetim ana eršetim iterbû

O Lord, at whose anger the heavens quiver,
 O Adad, at whose raging the earth quakes,
 The mighty mountains are overwhelmed by him
 When he is angry, when he rages,
 When he roars, when he thunders,
 The gods of heaven fly up to heaven,
 The gods of earth plunge into the earth,

With these poems we should compare the descriptions of other deities
 in similar terms:

ina aqqulli ša ina šamê nap̄u...(ina) išāti napiḫti
 ša el māt nukurti izannunu anāku

in the red sheen blazing in the heavens, (in) the
 blazing fire which rains down upon the enemy land
 am I (Ishtar)

ša nablūša muttaprišūtu ana māt nukurti izannunu anāku
 I (Ishtar) am (the fire) whose flames rain down on the
 enemy land

akukūtu ša ana ajjābi nap̄at

Firebrand which blazes against the enemy (Ishtar)

(Nabû) tabnīt CN akukāti ki[...] qāmû nākirīka

Nabu born in Kish, firebrand [...] burning your enemies 2

But of more interest in this note on Sg 8:146f are the curses
 involving blitzing with lightning and hailstones, for they may well
 lie behind the account providing its theological framework.

1. Langdon: OECT 6, 31f; text - 4R,28 No. 2 lines 9ff .

2. G.Reisner: SBH, 104 lines 27ff (bilingual text) cf. CAD I/J, 229
isatu, 1, 2^(b),1⁷; P.Haupt: ASKT, 129 lines 15f (bilingual text);
 L.W.King: STC 2, pl. 78 line 37 ; RT 19,61 No. 2 line 3 .

The EVT provides a good example of this, though Adad is not specifically named as agent. The Adad curse speaks of 'a severe destructive downpour': ina riḥṣi danni (EVT,442) coupled with locusts, drought, famine and cannibalism, but in the kī ša section there is no doubt that Adad again is the divine agent in the copper sky metaphor which runs as follows:

kī ša ina libbi šamê ša siparri zunnu lā izannunani
 kī ḥannê zunnu nalšu ina eqlātikunu tameratkunu lū
 lā illak kūm nalšu piḥnāti ina mātikunu liznun 1

Just as rain does not fall from a copper sky, so may there come neither rain nor dew upon your fields and meadows, but let it rain burning coals in your land instead of dew. (EVT,530-533; ANETS, 103/539)

The well known parallels in Deut 28:23 and Lev 26:19 do not carry the rain-of-fire clause, but that it had some international popularity is evident from Sefire I :

wysk ḥl 'rpd ḥ'by bḥd

And may he(Hadad) shower upon Arpad [ḥalil-[stones]2

This type of curse found its way into the Assyrian war records in three forms, and we would see this as characteristic of Assyrian historiography. The first mode of appearance is in the extensive list of curses set to protect the inscription from concealment of destruction. In the example chosen here, Anu and Adad are asked to put such curses into effect as the overthrow of kingdom, uprooting of throne, eradication of seed, breaking of weapons, defeat in battle and captivity in

1: The Akkadian piḥnāti or pi'nāti has variants in the singular form of pēmtum, pēntu, pēndu & pe'ettu and is cognate with Heb. peḥām; see AHw., 854 .

2. Fitzmyer: Sefîre, 14f ; Sefire I, A:26f . See too Fensham: ZAW 75, 169 and note 93 .

chains before foes. Then Adad is petitioned separately as follows:

DN ina birqi lemutti māssu libriq sunqa bubūta
 ḥušāḥḥa dāmē ara mātišu liddi ištēn ūma lā balassu
 liqbi šumšu zēršu ina māti luḥalliq

May Adad blitz his land with lightning; may he cast
 hunger, want and bloodshed upon his land; not for one
 day may he decree life for him; may he destroy his
 name and seed from the land. 1

Two centuries previous to Tiglath-pileser I, Adad-nirari I had
 invoked his namesake god in a similar manner with a very thorough
 explication of what he hoped the Storm god would do to the offender:

DN ina riḥiṣ lemutti lirḥiṣ abūbu šāru lemnu saḥmaštu
 tēšū ašamšūtu sunqu bubūtu arurtu ḥušāḥḥu ina mātišu
 lū kajjān māssu abūbiš ušbi' ana tīlī u karmē lūtēr
 DN ina beriq lemutti māssu libriq

May Adad overwhelm him with an evil downpour; may flood,
 destructive wind, tumult, confusion, tempest, hunger,
 famine, hunger-pangs and want be ever in his land; flood-
 like may he (Adad) sweep over his land turning it into
 ruins and wasteland. May Adad blitz his land with deadly
 lightning. 2

Unlike these explicit curses appended to royal inscriptions, the
 next examples are what one might call realised curses, and are drawn
 from the narrative body of the texts. They constitute the second and
 third modes of appearance, being divided between the action of the
 gods against the enemy and that of the king as the viceroy of the
 gods.

The Rassam cylinder records the Arabian campaign in vivid detail
 with the specific application of adê theology, setting the rain-of-fire
 curse in the context of the realisation of 'every curse written down
 in the adê':

DN ašibat CN ištātu litbušat melammē našât eli GN
 izannun nablī

Ishtar who dwells in CN, who is clothed with fire and
 bears (the halo of) numinous glory, rained down flames
 on the land of the Arabs. (Rassam, 9:79-81)

1. AKA, 108 Tig I Col 8:83-88 .

2. AKA, 11f No 90978; Adanirari I (1307-1275 bc) .

What is stated as a curse in the EVT is presented here through narrative action after a theological exposition - an exegetical historiography.

A second example of storm-theophany in historical narrative is provided by a variant account of Ashurbanipal's second campaign which was directed against Ummanaldash and Ummanigash, the Elmaite kings. The text is fragmentary but describes the king and the army of Ashur in action against the enemy aided by the Assyrian gods, among whom Ishtar and Adad are described in terms of the curse material pertinent to Sg 8:146f. The goddess is clad for battle. The noun išpatu-'quiver' is preserved, followed later by the root hamātu -'to flicker, burn' used with nablu -'flame'. Adad fares better in the preservation:

DN gugallu šamê u eršetim erpitu riḥši elišu [...]

ina tukulti ilāni bēlēja abūt ummānat PN

Adad, canal-inspector of heaven and earth, [thundered/hurled ?] upon him (the Elamite king) a cloud-burst; with the help of the gods, my lords, the destruction of PN's army [I achieved/completed ?] 1

In another text, the Babylonian king Nabopolassar credits the plague god Erra with blitzing his enemies.² This indicates the lack of a rigid division of divine attributes and activities in Mesopotamian theology. Adad the Storm god was in general allocated the attributes of the electrical storm, but the goddess of love and war, and the destructive plague god sometimes share his means of intervention in historical battles. Perhaps this is because all the gods were involved in treaty oaths and were jointly responsible for the implementation of the treaty curses, some of which as we have argued lie behind these descriptions of battle in the Assyrian war records.

1. Streck, 184; ARAB 2, 358 \$925; K.2631+2653+2855: 52f .

2. VAB 4, 60 Col 1:28 ^dErra rašubbu muštabriqu zā'irīja. Compare passages such as ^dGIŠ.BAR(=girru) ultu šamê imqut-ma .u[gal]li-šunūti:'(upon divine intervention) fire fell from heaven and consumed them'(Thompson: AAA 20,1933,p.88 IT:150); cf. the fragments BM.123410:7 (Millard: Iraq 30,1968,p.109f) and Th.1929-10-12,23 (Thompson: Iraq 7,1940,p.109 No.35 .

The third form of witness to the electrical storm curses which appears in the Assyrian inscriptions is more open to debate since it has to do with the king's reaction to his enemies. In one sense the curses are demythologised by this process for their efficacy depends on their being put into effect by human agency. A few examples will illustrate this:

Šalummat DN bēlija ušaship-ma ana zikir Šumeja libbušun
itruku irma idāšun

I made the blaze of Ashur my lord overwhelm them; at the
mention of my name their hearts palpitated, their arms
collapsed

The Šalummat DN - better translated as 'the glory of Ashur' - is probably not to be connected with any literal 'blaze', as Gadd's translation might suggest, but does duty for melammē, namrirru or the like. The Š-theme of saḥāpu reveals the human agency involved, for the scribe could have written 'the glory of Ashur overwhelmed...', but instead he demythologised the process giving prominence to the king. That he writes within the adê theological framework is evident from his phrasing a few lines previously - [ina] adê ilāni rabûti iḥṭi: 'he sinned against the treaty-oath of the great gods' (line 14), which introduces the Carchemish report.

With this example of 'demythologising' in mind, we may go on to other passages where the king fills the central rôle even more directly.

ūmu neperdû ša melammušu kibrāti usaḥḥapu nablu
surruḥu ša kīma tiq riḥṣi ana māti nukurte
šuznunu-ma ina siqir DN māḥira lā išû ušamqitu
gīr DN2

kāšid ajjābēšu muḥalliḳu gārēšu šarru ša tallaktašu
abūbumma epšētašu [lab]bu nadru pānuššu zummu arkešu
tīb qitrub tāḥāzišu dannu nablu muštaḥmeṭu DN lā āniḳu

1. Nimrud Prism, Fragment D published by C.J.Gadd: Iraq 16(1954),179f
Col. 4:42-45 ; cf. H.Tadmor: JCS 12(1958),34f Sargon II .

(The king who is) the dazzling storm whose splendour overwhelms the four quarters; the blazing flame which like the onrush of a tempest rains down on the land of the enemy; and the one who at Enlil's decree has no equal, who fells the opponent of the god Ashur

Conqueror of his enemies, annihilator of his opponents, the king whose advance is like a flood, whose deeds are like a fierce lion's, before him is a Zû-bird, after him the onrush of his mighty battle clash; a blazing flame (is he), an unquenchable fire 1

These two passages are typical of Royal Titularies with their long strings of bombastic epithets which are primarily designed to present the king as the elect of the gods, their viceroy clothed with divine attributes. This can be demonstrated by reference to melammu and Oppenheim's penetrative study in which he writes:

The king as representative and likeness (muššulu, cf. H.652:rev.13) of the gods, also has such an aura which constitutes the divine legitimation of his royalty. This melammu is bestowed upon him when he becomes king; KAR 307, rev. 24 (=Ebeling: TuL I,36) describes this with the words 'they (the gods) give him sceptre, throne and the palû-symbol and they adorn him with the royal melammu (û-za-a'-nu-šu-ma me-lam šarru-u-ti)'. This halo legitimates the king by endowing him with godlike appearance and power. 2

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1. AKA, 33; ARAB 1,73 \$218; Tigpl I, text K.1621a+13871, Col. 1:40-45; cf. nablu hamtu šuzuzu abub tamhari (AKA,73): Asar,97 rev. 11-14 the Esarhaddon Zinjerli stele. The translation of line 13b is a little difficult as Borger indicates - zu(?) -um-ma & ti-ib(?) -

Oder ist statt zu-um-ma er₄-um-ma (erû - 'Adler') zu lesen (so A.Schott: MVAG 30/2, 195) ? Und statt ti-ib (so Schott, a.a.O.) ti-qû 'Regenguss' (so u.a. Luckenbill) ??

Luckenbill translates the debated phrases - 'before him is a storm (lit. storm-demon), behind him a cloudburst(downpour); the onset of his battle is powerful ...' .

2. A.L.Oppenheim: JAOS 63(1943),31-34 "Akkadian puhu & melammu",p. 31.

If the king partakes of the divine melammu it is not surprising that he also exhibits the numinous attributes of the electrical storm which properly belong to Adad and other deities. Thus we find nouns like nablu and riḥṣu, adjectives like šurruḫu and dannu and verbs such as zanānu, ḥamātu and barāqu shared by deities and kings in connection with the onslaughts on the enemy. Sometimes the parallel of attributes is overtly described, sometimes not:

kīma DN ša riḥṣi eliṣunu ašgum ušaznin

kīma DN eliṣunu riḥilta ušaznin

Like Adad (god) of devastation, I roared down on them,
I rained down flame upon them

Like Adad, I rained down on them a devastating flood 1

Among the Assyrian material so far adduced as commentary on Sg 8:146f, we have encountered poetry which crystallizes the Mesopotamian's numinous awe conjured by violent electrical storms, his gratitude for good rains with their blessing of fertility, and his fervent desire that his enemies should experience none of the weather's blessings but all of its terrors and curses. He managed to link his meteorology with his judicial and foreign policy bureau and turn this to good effect by means of his official publications department in which court historiographer and theologian worked side by side. We found that the key link which held weather, law, chronicle and theology together was the concept of the curse, expressed either formally, exegetically or in demythologised terms.

To round off the commentary on Sg 8:146f, two further literary sources from Assyria may be tapped - epic and oracle. Both reflect an identical theology to that already described. The theological framework of the Tukulti-Ninurta Epic has already been discussed in some detail in an Excursus of its own, so we simply quote the apposite

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1. AKA, 335 Ashurnasirpal Col 2:106; cf. AKA, 233 rev. 4: 3R,7 Shal. III Col. 1:46 ; cf. Col. 2:50 & 98. For other references, see CAD Z, 43 zanānu, 2'. Note how Sennacherib entitles himself 'he who blitzes the enemies': mušabriqu zamāni (Senn., 23 Col. 1:9, etc) and compare ^dErra rašubbu muštabriqu zā'irija

passage:

išir ina maḥra DN ippuḥ eli nakri išāt našpanti
isarrum DN2 qablāt ajjābi ušaqtar nabla

Ashur went straight in front and devastating fire
flared up over the enemy,
Enlil leapt forward and burnt the host of the enemy
with flame 1

Adad in this instance is credited with sending 'wind and flood'
(šāru abūba) over the enemy's battle line. With this we should compare
the demythologised parallel describing Tukulti-Ninurta in action:

šarraḡat mamlussu tuša[qtar? lā] ādirī pana u arki
qādat erḡussu tuḡammaḡ lā šēmī šumēla u imna
galtu melammušu usaḡḡapu nagab zā'irī

Glorious is his might, it sco[rches] the [ir]reverent
fore and aft;
Blazing is his impetuosity, it burns the unsubmitive
left and right;
Fearful is his splendour, it overwhelms all his enemies.2

Qatāru, ḡamātu and saḡāpu describe royal action where elsewhere in
parallel contexts they have the gods as subject. This parallelism is
underlined by the Epic itself in lines such as the one comparing
Tukulti-Ninurta to Adad - 'As when Adad bellows, the mountains
tremble': kīma^d dAddi ana šaḡimmešu ittarrarū šadū³. The Assyrian
Epic is therefore comparable in all respects in its adē theology and
implicit and explicit comparisons of royal and divine action and in
its use of the electrical storm imagery.

1. Ebeling: MAOG 12/2, 7 (A2) Col 5:25f ; see also page 392 above .

2. Rm 142 = F, Col. Y:2-4 given by Lambert:AfO 18(1957/8), 48f .

3. *ibid.*, line 6 .

From the corpus of Sargonid oracles comes one which may be cited as a commentary on Sg 8:146f . The large but broken tablet K.2401 collects several oracles whose relationship to one another is not clear. One from column two is completely preserved between ruled lines, and is given here in Langdon's translation minus the concluding ritual directions:

Now these idle fellows plotted, have come up against thee, have arisen against thee. And thou hast opened thy mouth saying, 'I appeal to Ashur'. I have heard of thy shame. From within the gate of heaven I shall come quickly. I shall hasten and cause fire to consume them. Thou in their midst shalt stand. From before thee I shall send them up, unto the mountains cause them to ascend. Meteors upon them I shall rain. Thy foes I will cut down, and fill the river with their blood. Let them see, let them glorify me, even as I am Ashur lord of the gods. This is the greeting which in the presence of the statue (was rendered). 1

The similarity of this war oracle and the royal inscriptions is apparent with the sketch of the enemies in full flight taking to the mountains, but being overtaken and cut down, their blood flowing freely. Likewise standard is the envisaged divine intervention, but takes on interest when its means - fire and meteor - are compared with the 8th Campaign. Both stand in a long tradition.

A second oracle on the K.2401 tablet also refers to divinely scattered fire:

The Cimmerians into his hand will I give
Fire in the land of Ellipi will I hurl₂

The subject of the D-theme of root emēdu is the god since the verb is to be read as 1st Person, not 2nd Sing, as Langdon has it.

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1. S.Langdon: TI, 135; K.2401:10-26. Lines 17 & 21 read: išātu lušakil-šunu & abnē aqqullū ina muḫhišunu azzunnun; cf. CAD A.1,60 abnu 'I have rained on them glowing stones' & AHw,54 anqullu,aqqullu -'Noon; midsummer heat' & aban anqullu -'Meteor?'.
2. K.2401:Col 2:2 išātu ina GN ummad ; cf. CAD I,231 išātu 2' 'I (Ishtar) shall send Ellipi up in flames'. Another possible reference from Langdon is BM.82-5-22,527:line 25 which apparently reads in transliteration - šar-bu-bu ar-ḫi-iš MIN(šina ?) GIBĪL.MEŠ, but the translation is obscure - see AHw,933 on rababu and Labat:Manuel, sign 548 GIBĪL : qilūtu, qalū, šarāpu .

Again returning to the oracle first quoted from K.2401, there is another significant detail to relate to the 8th Campaign report. The oracle continues in Langdon's translation:

The tablet of the decrees of Ashur concerning the revelation into the presence of the king one shall bring. Good oil let them pour out and make sacrifices of lambs. Incense they shall burn. Before the king they shall read it.

Again, the gist is clear while uncertainties plague the would-be translator.¹ A tablet described as the tuppi adê ...ša Aššur is read aloud to the king. Is this the tablet which records the loyalty oath of the rebels, and the curses to be enacted upon them? Or does it more plausibly refer to the copy of the oracle just given? In either case it must be an assurance to the king that divine intervention was imminent, and that his enemies would be eradicated. Oracular promises in contexts of war are inseparable from treaty curses made when peace was concluded. Both seal the fate of those who would dare to oppose the king and reveal the gods' support for him.²

Sg 8:146f is therefore part of a long tradition of imagery employed for conveying the revelation of the gods to men, and more than this is linked to the judicial-theological system of thought brought to bear on battles with enemies and empire and the gods in general.

1. K.2401, Col 2:26-28 tuppi adê anniu ša DN ina UGU ha-'-u-ti ina pān šarri emab: 'this tablet containing the oath formula of the god Ashur will be brought to the king upon a ... (CAD H, 162 ha'ūtu - 'meaning uncertain. Refers perhaps to cloth used as protection and support for a precious document'; cf. AHW, 318 hammūtu (1)).

2. On war oracles and the adê, see the discussion in Part I, Asb. section F: The Divine Pronouncement, page 131ff where oracles in the body of Ashurbanipal's war records and others collected separately are referred to.

IV:8. An Additional Note on rēmu, re'āmu/ rēmu, rēmūtu/ rēm .

We noted that in the Rassam account of Abijate's capitulation¹ the phrase rēmu rašū - 'to show mercy to' was immediately followed and qualified by the explicit mention of the vassal oath imposed upon him (adê niš ilāni rabūti + Š-theme zakāru). Other passages in the records suggest that the association of rēmu rašū with treaty-making is frequent and somewhat analagous to phrases like ṭūbtu epēšu - 'to do good to', ḥadīš naplusu - 'to regard favourably' and those with damqu, damqāti, damāqu - that is, the phrase rēmu rašū belongs to the orbit of suzerain-vassal vocabulary, though not exclusively so.² For example, it can refer to divine-human grace as displayed by the goddess Ishtar when she receives Ashurbanipal's prayer for vengeance on Teumman.³ This is paralleled on the human plane by Sargon's reception of Ullusunu's vassal plea for vengeance on his attackers, where - as we have argued - his vassal oath was renewed.⁴

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1. See Part I, Asb. section A: Vassal Oath & Vassal Status, p. 79 note 4 and 81 note 1; Rassam, 8:44-46 .
 2. See M.Weinfeld's article "Covenant Terminology in the ANE & its Influence on the West" (JAOS 93,1973,190-199, esp. 191 & note 29), which summarises a number of previous semantic studies.
 3. 'Because of the uplifting of your hands and because your eyes have filled with tears, I have granted you mercy': ana niš qātēka ša tašša ēnāka imla dīmtū artaši rēmu (Prism B, 5:48f ; Piep, 66) .
 4. 'I extended mercy to them and received their prayer, their speech of supplication I heeded and pronounced the aḥulap upon them': rēma aršišunūti-ma utninnišunu alqi atmūšunu ša tēninti ašmi-ma aqbišunu aḥulap (Sg 8:59).

Sparing of the life or forgiveness are prominent aspects of royal grace, and this is often the preliminary to imposing the vassal oath. The vassals are under obligation to the suzerain for their very lives, and secondarily by their oaths. For instance, the Babylonians who survived the siege, famine and carnage during the quelling of Shamash-shum-ukin's rebellion deserved only death, but Ashurbanipal 'granted them mercy, commanded that their lives be spared and settled them in Babylon'.¹ There is no explicit mention of an oath of allegiance but its omission is historically unthinkable. Pharaoh Necho experienced Ashurbanipal's royal grace, being spared execution and immediately bound with a vassal oath.² Tammartu fleeing from revolution in Elam was harboured in Ashurbanipal's palace, later to be installed as vassal king of Elam. The emphasis here is on the king's pardon of previous sin, and Tammartu's utter and unconditional surrender to vassal status.³ Elsewhere Ashurbanipal recounts the royal grace in returning captured gods or hostage sons against the background of vassal treaty renewals, and further examples can be culled from earlier Assyrian records.⁴

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1. Rassam, 4:92ff ; Streck, 40 ; ARAB 2, 305 \$797 .
 2. 'To Necho from among their number I extended mercy, and spared his life, I augmented (the terms of) the vassal-oath and concluded it with him': ana PN ultu bīrišunu rēmu aršišu-ma uballiṭ napšassu adē eli ša maḥri ušātir-ma ittišu aškun (Rassam, 2:8f) .
 3. 'I, Ashurbanipal the wide-hearted, who does not harbour a grudge, who pardons sin, extended mercy to Tammartu': anāku RN libbu rapšu lā kāšir ikki mupassisu ḫitāte ana PN rēmu aršišu (Rassam, 4:37-39; Streck, 36; ARAB 2, 303 \$793); cf. line 26ff 'he reckoned himself as my vassal': ana epēš ardūtiya ramānšu imnu(line 31) .
 4. In the return of Hazael's tribal gods (K.3087:9ff; Streck, 218; ARAB 2, 365 \$940; cf. Th. 1929-10-12, 1 Col. 4:9ff); in Ashurbanipal's return of Jahi-milki son of Baal of Tyre who was sent 'to perform vassal service to me' (ana epēš ardūtiya Rassam, 2:59; Streck, 18; ARAB 2, 296 \$779); in his reception of Ersinni son of Ualli 'I granted him mercy and despatched my peace envoy to him': rēmu aršišu-ma mār-šiprija ša šulme uma'ir šērussu (Rassam, 3:20f; Streck, 24; ARAB 2, 299 \$786); Esarhaddon's installation of Jadi 'I granted him mercy and made the district of Bazi subject to him': rēmu aršišu-ma nagē CN šuātum ušadgil pānūššu (Th. 1929-10-12, 1 Col. 4:76f); Tukulti-Ninurta II's swearing in of Ammi-Baali 'I granted him mercy ...the oath of Ashur my lord...I made him swear': rēmūtu aškunaššu ...māmīt DN bēlija[] utammišu (ARAB 1, 127 \$405); the capitulation of Sugi to Tiglath-pileser I 'they seized my feet, and I granted them mercy and fixed their tax and tribute, and reckoned them as

The appearance of the root in actual treaty texts is not unexpected, and again divine and human grace run parallel. In one of the 2nd Millenium Hittite treaties, Mattiwaza speaks of his overlord's generosity towards him which included adopting him as a 'son' and restoring him to his throne, and treating him with dignity and graciousness. Referring to Suppiluliumas' lordly gifts of horses, chariot and gold, he says - 'the Great King showed mercy to me': Šarru rabû irtēmanni¹. As the negative of this royal graciousness the curse of mercilessness from the gods is invoked on Mati'ilu if he breaks his treaty with Ashurnirari:

DN bēlu rabû āšib CN ana PN mā[rēšu] rabūtišu
nišē mātišu...ai iršišunu rēmu

May the god Sin, the great lord who dwells in Harran show no mercy to Mati'ilu, his sons, his elders or the people of his land.²

The identical curse is found in Ashurbanipal's inscriptions as a malediction upon those desecrating his memorial to his work on the Nabû and Ea temples with those gods as its executors.³

subjects of Ashur my lord': šēpēja iṣbatū arimšunūti bilta u mandatta elišunu ukīn itti dāgil pān DN bēlija amnušunūti (AKA, 62; ARAB 1, 80 \$233) .

1. Weidner: PDK, 42 No. 2:32 . Compare the use of rh in the Aramaic treaty Sefire III:8 to indicate an ally of the suzerain (Sefire, 96f & 111 note 8) .
2. Weidner: AfO 8(1932/33), 20 Col. 4:3ff ; ANETS, 96/536f .
3. Stele S₂ & S₃ = Streck, 244 line 80 and 248 line 99f ; ARAB 2, 376 \$977 and 978ff .

Turning to the Old Testament, we find that the root rhm is associated with family relationships, with Yhwh in other covenantal terminology, and with respect to the relation between the human suzerain and his vassals. The three uses are of course intimately related, with the familial giving rise to the figurative, legal and covenantal uses,¹ though chronological conclusions cannot legitimately be drawn from this extension of ideas.

Passing over the narrowly familial usages without further comment, we may go straight to the heart of Old Testament thought in its predication of rhm to Yhwh as one of his central covenantal attributes. It is, for example, prominent in the Sinai covenant narrative in the most intimate revelation of Yhwh's character:

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1. Compare Weinfeld's remarks to the effect that 'the whole diplomatic vocabulary of the second millenium is rooted in the familial sphere' (JAOS 90,1970,p.194). He notes the Akkadian abbutu - 'fatherhood', marutu - 'sonship', abutu - 'brotherhood' and the phenomenon of adoption in treaty contexts, and elsewhere comments on the parallels of conjugal-diplomatic terminology (JAOS 93,1973, p.196). In the OT, rhm in the mother-child or father-child relationship is used in simile applying to Yhwh, eg. Isa 49:15 & Psa 103:13. The conjugal metaphor employs rhm, and cannot be segregated from the technical covenantal terminology - see, for example, Isa 54 esp. verse 6f & 10. Compare too Adad-shum-ušur's praise of Ashurbanipal for promotion of his family in the royal oath-bound service:

aki ša abu ana mārēšu ēpušūni šarru bēli ana ardānišu
ētapaš

Just as a father would act on behalf of his children,
so has the king my lord done for his servants
(H 358:22ff = LAS,92f No. 122)

I will make all my goodness (kol-tûbî) pass before you and will proclaim before you my name, 'Yhwh'; and I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy (wërihamtî 'et-'āšer 'arahēm). (Exod 33:19)

Yhwh, Yhwh, a God merciful ('ēl raḥûm) and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love (hesed) and faithfulness ('emet). (Exod 34:6)

Though 'goodness' could be interpreted as 'comeliness, beauty', it seems just as likely if not more so that this is a designation of character (šēm) rather than appearance, and that it may be linked up with the covenantal usage of tôb.¹ The root hnn and rhm in parallelism expound the term tûbî further, and subsequently are further qualified by the covenantal terms hesed and 'emet.² This designation of the covenant God appears elsewhere as a standard formula, eg. Psa 86:15 - tôb in verse 5 . .

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1. So, for example, Fensham: E/POT, 226f against BDB, K-BL and D.M.G. Stalker: Peake, 238. On Exod 34:6 in relation to covenant renewal see Fensham: E/POT, 229 and other passages to be cited below .
 2. See Glueck: Hesed, 83ff for discussion of hesed in the passages Hos 2, Isa 54, Jer 16 & Isa 63 to be referred to below. His definition of the relationship between the various terms in covenantal vocabulary, such as hesed, 'emet and raḥāmîm retains its value - see for example his comment:

It is but a short step from hesed to raḥāmîm. Hesed is covenant loyalty; raḥāmîm is forgiving love. Yahweh's people had to reciprocate hesed and raḥāmîm with hesed. The people, however, could not show raḥāmîm toward Yahweh. (Hesed, 84 on Hos 2)

His study is dated with respect to the lack of the now abundant ANE texts and comparative studies available.

In the historical prologue to the great intercessory prayer of Isa 63:7ff, which looks back to the Mosaic period and the Exodus-Sinai events when Israel became the covenant people of Yhwh, such concepts as vassal adoption and protection occur in association with a cluster of covenantal terminology in which rahāmāyw is grouped with hāsādāyw and the rab-ṭūb lēbēyt Yiśrā'ēl. In a contrasting passage from Jeremiah whose theme is the rupture of the covenantal bond amidst the implementation of the covenant curses which parallel those of the Ancient Near Eastern treaties, Yhwh speaks of the removal of rahāmīm in conjunction with his šālôm and hesed (Jer 16:5). All three words are obviously being used in their technical covenantal sense.

In Hosea, the usage of the root rhm illustrates the intermingling of adoption, conjugal and treaty formulas.¹ Yhwh denies paternity, implying illegitimacy which represents the breach of the covenantal relationship. The title lō' rūhāmāh (Hos 1:6,8 ; cf. 'et-bāneyhā lō' 'ārahēm, 2:6) is made more specific in its parallel title lō' Cammî (1:8 & 2:28). Continued covenantal relations for Judah and supernatural vassal protection are promised by use of 'ārahēm (1:7), and restored covenant bonds for lō' rūhāmāh by the phrase wērihamtî 'et-lō' rūhāmāh (2:25). Conjugal and treaty metaphors are married in the description of the restored bērît as the betrothal between Yhwh and his bride when the people will acknowledge Yhwh as Suzerain. The technical use of yd^c (w:22) is supported by a cluster of covenantal terminology including rhm, and the overall concept of peace (2:20).

wē'eraštîk lî lē^cōlām wē'eraštîk lî bēšedeq ūbēmišpāt
 ūbēhesed ūbērahāmīm (Hos 2:21)

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1. It is a mistake to think that an author is bound to either a conjugal metaphor or else to treaty metaphor in an exclusive manner. Mixed metaphor abounds in any literature, and is to be expected in OT literature as the heir to ANE treaty terminology which is recognised (eg. by Weinfeld) as an outgrowth of kinship terminology. On this point as applied to Father-Son in Hosea, see F.C. Fensham "Father & Son as Terminology for Treaty & Covenant" (Festschrift Albright, 121-135 and esp. p. 132f & note 64) .

If the rahm of Yhwh was to lead to the renewal of the broken covenant after the Exile, a necessary step was the mercy of Israel's captors. The parallel is brought out in Jer 42:12 which seems to give evidence for rahm in a secular treaty context as well as of its use in Israel's theological vocabulary:

I (Yhwh) will grant you mercy (nātan raḥāmîm lē), that he (Nebuchadnezzar) may have mercy on you (wēriḥam 'etēkem) and let you remain in your own land.

In the context, Nebuchadnezzar's 'mercy' can only mean that he will refrain from reprisals for the murder of his vassal, and will renew the vassal oath with the remaining population under a new governor. His mercy is the suspension of the treaty curses, the negative aspect, and the renewal of his suzerain protection over the populace, the positive aspect. The prophet sees the prevenient mercy of Yhwh, Israel's real Suzerain, in this, and probably regards it as a step in the direction of a fully renewed covenant relationship with the nation or its remnant, remaining in the land and restored from captivity.

He is no doubt informed here by the theology of Deuteronomy - specifically that promising covenant renewal after the curse of exile found in Deut 4:27 and chapter 30. The first passage reiterates that Israel's covenant God is an 'ēl raḥûm, responsive to repentance in the exiled people:

For Yhwh your God is a merciful God ('ēl raḥûm) he will not fail you or destroy you or forget the covenant with your fathers (bērît 'ābōtēkā) which he swore to them. (Deut 4:31)

We see that rahûm is a covenantal attribute of Yhwh, expounded in negative terms in this verse with positive connotation resulting. The positive is stated in the second chapter mentioned which follows on from the list of curses in Deut 28:15ff and their hortatory exposition in chapter 29. Restoration upon repentance in exile after retribution is attributed to the mercy of Yhwh.

Then Yhwh your God will restore your fortunes, and have compassion upon you (wěriḥāmekā), and he will gather you again from all the peoples where Yhwh your God has scattered you. (Deut 30:3)

The compassion of Yhwh, understood as his willingness to enter covenantal relationship, is regarded as the motivating factor in the captor's humane treatment of exiled Israel. Solomon's prayer and Hezekiah's letter are both steeped in this Deuteronomic theology of the covenant, which relates repentance to return from exile and a renewed covenant with Yhwh:

grant them compassion (ūnētattām lěraḥāmīm) in the sight of those who carried them captive, that they may have compassion on them (wěriḥāmūm). (1 Kgs 8:50)

For if you return to Yhwh, your brethren and your children will find compassion (lěraḥāmīm) with their captors and return to this land. For Yhwh your God is gracious and merciful (ḥannūn wěraḥūm), and will not turn his face away from you, if you return to him. (2 Chron 30:9)

The envisaged compassion of the captors clearly means humane treatment, the allowing of a return to Palestine, and thus illustrates the non-technical use of rḥm in the Old Testament, while the divine rḥm goes beyond releasing the people from captivity and sparing them from further retribution. It led to a renewed covenant bond just as the release from Egypt led to the Sinai covenant.

The exclusive nature of the covenant, implying as it did in Hezekiah's time the religious and political independence of the nation under its one Suzerain, required that Yhwh should motivate the captors to act leniently since Israel's new covenant with Yhwh would be to their material disadvantage. Hezekiah's letter exhibits the paradox of faith in this respect.

Belief in the covenantal attribute of Yhwh's rḥm led to the strengthening not weakening of this paradoxical faith as time passed, and witness to this is the cluster of prophetic passages which promise Yhwh's compassion expressed in terms of the re-gathering of the nation and the renewal of the covenant. Thus, Isa 54, elaborating the bridal metaphor, relates compassion to covenant and re-gathering in the following phraseology:

For a brief moment I forsook you,
 but with great compassion
 (ûbërahâmîm gëdôlîm)
 I will gather you.
 In overflowing wrath for a moment
 I hid my face from you,
 but with everlasting love I will have compassion
 on you (ûbëhesed cōlām rihamtîk)
 says Yhwh your Redeemer.

For the mountains may depart
 and the hills be removed,
 but my steadfast love (wëhasdî) shall not
 depart from you,
 and my covenant of peace (ûbërit šëlômî)
 shall not be removed,
 says Yhwh, who has compassion on you (mërahâmëk)
 (Isa 54:7f & 10)₁

Verse 10 is explicit in its use of hesed, bërit šālôm and rahm in parallel to describe covenant relations. The mention of mountains and hills is reminiscent of their invocation in certain Ancient Near

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1. Compare Mic 7:19 referring to 'the remnant of his inheritance' (liš'ërit nahälâtô) in verse 18 and the patriarchal covenant in verse 20 might be included - 'He will again have compassion upon us': yāšûb yërahâmënu . The dating of this and other passages to be quoted, eg. Zech 10:6, is disputed; for example, Eissfeldt and Harrison are disposed towards an 8th Century authentic prescription, but Winton Thomas to the late post-exilic period (OTI,411f; IOT,924; Peake,634). The dating issue need not detain us here.

Eastern treaties and Old Testament rîb contexts,¹ and may be compared with the imagery of Jer 33 which speaks of the permanence of the Davidic covenant in promising a restoration for the exiled Northern and Southern kingdoms in the Deuteronomic terms of Yhwh's compassion:

If you can break my covenant with the day and my covenant with the night, so that day and night will not come at their appointed time, then also my covenant with David my servant may be broken

If I have not established my covenant with day and night and the ordinances of heaven and earth ('im-lō' bēritî yômām wālāylāh ḥuqqôt šamayim wā'āreṣ lō-šāmtî) then I will reject the descendants of Jacob and David my servant and will not choose one of his descendants to rule over the seed of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. For I will restore their fortunes, and will have mercy on them (kî-'āšûb 'et-šēbûtām wēriḥamtîm) .
(Jer 33:20-21a & 25f)

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1. See Huffmon: JBL 78(1959),285-295 "The Covenant Lawsuit in the Prophets"; Moran: Biblica 43(1962),317-327 "Some Remarks on the Song of Moses" ; Harvey: Plaidoyer, 33 note 4 and 89 . Jeremiah's covenant *with* astronomical bodies is rather different to these acting as witnesses to the covenant with Israel in the direct sense, though Noah's rainbow (Gen 9:8ff) and the regularity of the seasons as well as day and night (Gen 8:22) are adduced in covenant promises. An Assyrian letter expressing a wish for dynastic durability comes close to Jer 33 in imagery by drawing a comparison with the permanence of heaven and earth:

May the great gods of heaven (and) earth in the very same way do a benefit (and) favour (ṭābtu dēqtu lēpušū) to the descendants of the king my lord, as long as heaven and earth exist may they (the royal progeny) be leaders of the whole world (adu šamê eršitim darūni šunu lū muma'irūte ša kal mātāte)
(H.358:rev. 1f & 20-22; LAS,92ff No 122)

- Cf. As firmly as the Moon [and the Su]n are established in the sky, as firmly may the kingship of the king, my lord, and his descendants, be established in the whole world !

kī ša ^d[3]O [u ^dUTU ina šamê kunnūni šarrū[ttu] ša šarri
bēlija ša zērēšu ina kal mātāte lū kunn[at]
(H.7:rev. 5-7; LAS,95f No. 123)

The same promise is given in Zech 10:6 wěhōšěbôtîm kî rihamtîm, where the emphasis falls on the geographical return, without doubt symbolic of the spiritual renewal although covenant *per se* is not mentioned.

To conclude, we find that the Akkadian and Hebrew phrases for 'mercy' and 'showing mercy to' become part of the technical vocabulary of treaty and covenant, especially when it is a case of the renewing of a treaty or covenant which had existed but which had been breached by rebellion against the human or divine suzerain. In this case, the full extent of the retributive sentence was set aside and the possibility of entering into an obedient relationship was held out. 'Mercy' is therefore associated with the 'goodness', 'benificence', 'generosity', 'wide-heartedness' and 'love', summed up in the English word 'grace' which marks the relationship of the suzerain to the vassal.

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