"IF A STAR CHANGES INTO ASHES..." A SEQUENCE OF UNUSUAL CELESTIAL OMENS [1]

By J. C. FINCKE

A sequence of omens has puzzled Assyriologists since 1866, when Henry C. Rawlinson published the first copy of these peculiar divinatory texts. The omens have the structure DIŠ MUL *ana* ... GUR, "If a star turns into ...", where the object into which the star changes can be an animal, metal, stone or some other item. Such a change has been held to belong to the field of dreams or, more generally, to terrestrial events rather than to astronomy. In fact, however, these omens refer to a specific celestial phenomenon, the transformation of a "star" into a meteorite that can be picked up from the ground, as can also be seen in the phrasing of the corresponding *namburbi*-ritual, which some scribes appended to their recension of this omen sequence.

Introduction

In the second volume of *A Selection from the Miscellaneous Inscriptions of Assyria* (IIR; 1866), Henry C. Rawlinson published a fragment of a cuneiform tablet from Nineveh written in Neo-Assyrian ductus as no. 4 on plate 49 (K. 4363) that had omens of the structure DIŠ MUL *ana* ... GUR, "If a star turns into ..." In 1910 and 1911, Charles Virolleaud published two more fragments of tablets from Nineveh with omens of the same structure (K. 4546 [*Bab.* 3, 268, 275] and K. 3911 [*Bab.* 4, 114, 123]).

According to these three fragments, the stars are said to change into various animals like canidae (lion, wolf, fox and dog), farm animals (e.g. pig, mouse), marine animals (e.g. fish, crab), birds and insects (e.g. swallow, locust, moths), but also into minerals (e.g. gold, silver, carnelian) and various other objects (e.g. an arrow, river, garment). Such a change of appearance can be seen with oily liquids applied on a plain surface, like oil on glass or on water. One of the Old Babylonian oil omen texts that describe the shape of oil dropped on water uses the same phrase as do the three fragments under consideration here with reference to a star: DIŠ Ì *a-na ši-ši-tim i-tu-ur*, "if the (drop of) oil turns into a membrane" (YOS X 58:12, see CAD T 260a). Still, such a shift in shape is difficult to imagine in connection with a star. Franz Xaver Kugler, therefore, assumed that the trails of meteors[2], which usually remain visible for a time, or the smoke meteors produce when they hit the earth inspired these omens.[3] Nevertheless, it seemed more obvious to understand these omen texts as referring to processes observed in a dream.[4] In his edition of the dream omens,[5] A. Leo Oppenheim excluded the star omens of K. 4363 (IIR 49 no. 4) from the regular dream omens, because their apodoses refer to public events, while the dream omens only have predictions for individuals. Because the traces of the apodoses of the two fragments Virolleaud had published pointed to predictions that were in line with the dream omen apodoses, Oppenheim transliterated and translated the better-preserved parts of their omens in footnote 114.[6] In their second volume of *The Sultantepe*

[1] I would like to thank the Trustees of The British Museum for allowing me to study and publish cuneiform texts in the Museum's collection. In addition, I would like to thank the staff of the Middle East department, especially Dr. Jon Taylor, for providing the best possible conditions for my research in the study room. I am especially grateful for the Visiting Research Fellowship of the Nederlands Instituut voor het Nabije Oosten (NINO) that enabled me to complete the manuscript in the excellent library of this institute.

[2] For textual evidence for meteors see J. K. Bjorkman, "Meteors and Meteorites in the Ancient Near East", *Meteoritics* 8 (1973) 91–132, with corrections by R. Chadwick, "Identifying Comets and Meteors in Celestial Observation Literature", *Die Rolle der Astronomie* (1993) 161–84.

[3] F. X. Kugler, *Sternenkunde und Sterndienst in Babel II.1* (Münster: Aschendorffsche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1909/10) 91–92. See also J. K. Bjorkman, *Meteoritics* 8 (1973) 108–09.

[4] For this interpretation see also CAD P 358a–b.

[5] A. L. Oppenheim, *The Interpretation of Dreams in the Ancient Near East with a Translation of an Assyrian Dream-Book* (Transactions of the American Philosophical Society New Series–Volume 46, Part 3; Philadelphia: The American Philosophical Society, 1956) 284 note 114.

[6] Oppenheim, *Dreams* (1956) 284 note 114. It is, however, not true that fragments K. 3911 and K. 4546 join (see also CAD T 260a), because K. 4546 is written in Assyrian ductus, while K. 3911 displays the Babylonian one. Virolleaud had rendered the text of both fragments in Assyrian signs.

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Tablets in 1964,[7] Oliver R. Gurney and Paul Hulin identified a Neo-Assyrian tablet from Ḫuzirīna as being related to K. 4363 (IIR 49 no. 4) and K. 4546 (*Bab.* 3, 268, 275): STT 330. It was then clear that all four texts belonged to the same sequence of omens.

Are "If a star turns into ..." omens related to the terrestrial series, šumma ālu*?*

Virolleaud (1911) 114 proposed that "If a star turns into ..." omens might derive from dream omens or, more generally, belong to the series *šumma ālu*, which refers to events observed during daily life on earth, and not to "astrological"—or better, "celestial"—omens. All later scholars dealing with these omens have followed his proposal.[8] Caplice (1970) presented a ritual to avert evil should a star fall on a man's house.[9] One copy of the text[10] was preceded by a very badly preserved section of omens with the structure *šumma kakkabu ana ... itūr*, "If a star turns into ..." In another copy (K. 8489+ [*OrNS* 39 pl. VIII]), the *namburbi* was followed by a sequence of omens that Caplice thought to be related to tablet 20 of *šumma ālu* (but see Appendix A). The Sumerian incipit of the *namburbi* incantation—mul é-nun-ta ⌜è⌝-[a (...)] an-úr-ta ⌜è⌝-[a], "star which has come forth from the é.nun, star which has come forth from the horizon of the sky"—led Caplice to interpret the "If a star turns into ..." omens as referring to falling meteorites (p. 115). He wondered, however, why this *namburbi* was written at the end of the 123rd tablet of the *namburbi* series (K. 2553+ [*OrNS* 39 pl. I]), a tablet that opened with a ritual concerning the construction of a grave (p. 116). In his re-edition of this *namburbi*, Maul (1994) pondered the same problem.[11] The juxtaposition makes sense, however. Graves were lowered into the *kummu* (é.nun; see Caplice [1973] 299–305), which is where the stars remained during the day, before rising via the horizon (an.úr) at night.

Omen series comprising multiple tablets (such as *šumma ālu* or *enūma anu enlil*) group omens that refer to the same object in its various settings on the same tablet or sequence of tablets.[12] No tablet with unprovoked omens combines omens from two different series.[13] Therefore, the interpretation of the sequences of omens following the description of the *namburbi*-ritual in two of the omen tablets (K. 8489+ [*OrNS* 39 pl. VIII] and K. 10048 [*OrNS* 39 pl. II]) is crucial for understanding the nature of the omens of the type "If a star turns into...". Maul, *Namburbi* (1994), 456 drew on the interpretation of the omens as *šumma ālu* to provide a new reading of the two surviving lines following the *namburbi* on K. 10048, yielding what seemed to be a catchline and subscript belonging to that series. Parallels now reveal the reading of those lines to be otherwise. A full analysis of these sequences is given in Appendix A. In both cases, the omens can be seen to be celestial. The "If a star turns into..." omens should thus also be celestial, not terrestrial.

The nature of the omens "If a star turns into ..."

The subscript of the tablet from Ḫuzirīna (STT 330 rev. 17) summarizes the omens of this type as

ŠÀ KUD DIŠ AN.PA KÚR x[ ]x IGI[14]
"From the section 'If the heights of heaven change and .[.]. becomes visible'."

[7] O. R. Gurney and P. Hulin, *The Sultantepe Tablets II* (Occasional Publications of the British Institute of Archaeology at Ankara no. 7; London: The British Institute of Archaeology at Ankara; 1964).

[8] See J. K. Bjorkman, *Meteoritics* 8 (1973) 108, as well as CAD Š/II 451a (*šiltaḫu*), CAD Š/III 55b (*šinūnūtu-*) and CAD T 24a (*tabarru*), where these omens are classified as "(Alu)".

[9] R. I. Caplice, "Namburbi Texts in the British Museum IV", *OrNS* 39 (1970) 113–16 no. 35 with plates I, II and VIII.

[10] K. 3909+ (*OrNS* 39 pl. I); see p. 115. The new join of Sm. 1170 to the top right part of this piece (see Fig. 1) confirms Caplice's interpretation of the omens.

[11] S. M. Maul, *Zukunftsbewältigung. Eine Untersuchung altorientalischen Denkens anhand der babylonisch-assyrischen Löserituale (Namburbi)* (Baghdader Forschungen 18; Mainz: Von Zabern, 1994) 453–57. Note that the subscript of K. 2553+ proves that it is not a *Sammeltafel* but a regular tablet of the series *namburbi*.

[12] See S. M. Freedman, *If a City is Set on a Height. The Akkadian Omen Series* šumma alu ina mēlê šakin *Volume 1: Tablets 1–21* (Occasional Publications of the Samuel Noah Kramer Fund, 17; Philadelphia: Samuel Noah Kramer Fund, 1998) 2 and 19–23; Maul, *Namburbi* (1994), 163; J. C. Fincke, "Der Assur-Katalog der Serie *enūma anu enlil* (EAE)", *OrNS* 70 (2001) 131–47.

[13] The omen series *iqqur īpuš* that combines terrestrial with celestial and meteorological omens is an individual omen series, and not an *ad hoc* combination of events from different omen series.

[14] The sign before the damage begins with a vertical wedge, and the one after ends with a horizontal wedge. The space between these wedges is not very large, so only two short cuneiform signs are to be expected. The last sign could, of course, also be read ŠI, if it marks the end of a syllabically written word.

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elât samê (AN.PA), "Heights of heaven" or "zenith"[15], refers to the vast majority of the visible sky; it is the part of the sky above the horizon—Akkadian *išid samê* (AN.ÚR).[16] This reference is in line with the incipit of the related *namburbi*, which begins "star which has come forth from the é-nun, star which has come forth from the horizon of the sky (an-úr)" (see above p. 2). Since the stars stay in the *kummu* (É.NUN) during the day, and rise via the horizon (AN.ÚR) into the "heights of heaven" (AN.PA) at night,[17] a change of the "heights of heaven" evidently has direct impact on the stars. They must change as well, and the observer on earth witnesses a rare event. Both the *namburbi* and the classification in STT 330 are obviously based on the same conception of events.

The subscript of the Ḫuzirīna tablet (see above) identifies the sequence of omens as part of a commonly accepted tradition. This can also be seen in the subscript of K. 3909+ (*OrNS* 39 pl. I), which I was able to re-join with Sm. 1170 in January 2013 (see Fig. 1). Here the number of omens of the type "If a star turns into . . ." that are recorded before the description of the *namburbi* begins are summarized as

K. 3909+ rev. 6' 1 UŠ 18.ÀM M[U.ŠID].BI.[IM]
"78 (are) its ent[ries]."

But what does "if a star changes into" something else actually mean? A few of the items the star could change into are known as constellations or aliases for planets or constellations. This applies to

AL.LUL, *alluttu*, "crab" (omen no. 22); for MUL.AL.LUL see Gössmann no. 14,
GÍR.TAB, *zuqāqīpu*, "scorpion" (omen no. 54" and 71*); for MUL.GÍR.TAB see Gössmann no. 94,
KU_6, *nūnu*, "fish" (omen no. 21); for MUL.KU_6 see Gössmann 218,
UR.MAḪ, *nēšu*, "lion" (omen no. 15); for MUL.UR.MAḪ see Gössmann 168,
tūltu, "worm" (omen no. 53" and 70*); MUL.*tūltu* is known as an alias for ^{d}Anunītu, see Gössmann 402 and CAD T 467a,
šiltaḫu, "arrow" (omen no. 23), is known as an alias for Mercury and for Sirius (MUL.GAG.SI.SÁ and MUL.GAG.BAN), see Gössmann 211 and 212 and CAD Š/II 451.

Because MUL, "star", refers to individual stars as well as to constellations, it is conceivable that the concept underlying the apodoses of these omens is the same as that which leads to the naming of the constellations. This, however, would mean that the astronomers believed that fixed stars could move about freely and suddenly form distinct figures of their own choice. Although all stars and constellations were considered gods, i.e. supernatural beings that can be on the move and act freely with far reaching impact on the world in general and on individuals in particular, the observation of the sky over centuries must have resulted in a better understanding of celestial objects. This is certainly true for the first millennium BC, because the astronomers of this period began to reinterpret descriptions that seemed to refer to such phenomena.[18] Since all tablets from Ḫuzirīna and Nineveh that display omens of the type "If a star changes into . . ." are records from the first millennium BC, an indication of "moving" fixed stars is extremely unlikely. Therefore, only the general content of the tablets that contain these omens can give indications of their nature.

Omens of this type are attested not only in Ḫuzirīna and Nineveh, but also among the celestial omen texts from Assur. VAT 9794[19] begins in col. ii a new section of omens, of which only the first

[15] So according to Jeremy Black, Andrew R. George and Nicholas Postgate, *A Concise Dictionary of Akkadian* (SANTAG 5; Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2000) 70a.

[16] See Wayne Horowitz, *Mesopotamian Cosmic Geography* (Mesopotamian Civilizations 8; Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1998) 236–37 and the diagram on p. 261.

[17] See Caplice, *OrNS* 42 (1973) 299, 305.

[18] Some protases say that constellations "come near" (TE) or "reach" (KUR) other constellations. In the first millennium BC, the constellations that are said to be moving were equated with planets, which made the description plausible for the astronomers. It is, however, likely that TE and KUR originally had special technical meanings that were no longer understood; see E. Reiner and D. Pingree, *Babylonian Planetary Omens Part Two: enūma anu enlil Tablets 50–51* (Babylonian Planetary Omens Part Two; Bibliotheca Mesopotamia 2.2. Malibu, CA: Undena Publications, 1981) 20–21. According to the Assur catalogue of the omens series *enūma anu enlil* such omens have specifically been collected in the penultimate tablet of this series, see Fincke, *OrNS* 70 (2001) 37, and see E. Reiner, "If Mars comes close to Pegasus. . .", in *If a Man Builds a Joyful House: Assyriological Studies in Honor of Erle Verdun Leichty* (Cuneiform Monographs 31; edited by A. K. Guinen *et al.*; Leiden • Boston: Brill, 2006) 313–14.

[19] This fragment of a tablet with two columns on each side, of which only part of col. ii and col. iii are preserved, is written in late Middle Assyrian ductus. It will be published in the volume on astrological omens and astronomical texts in the series *Keilschrifttexte aus Assur literarischen Inhalts*, which is edited by Stefan M. Maul.

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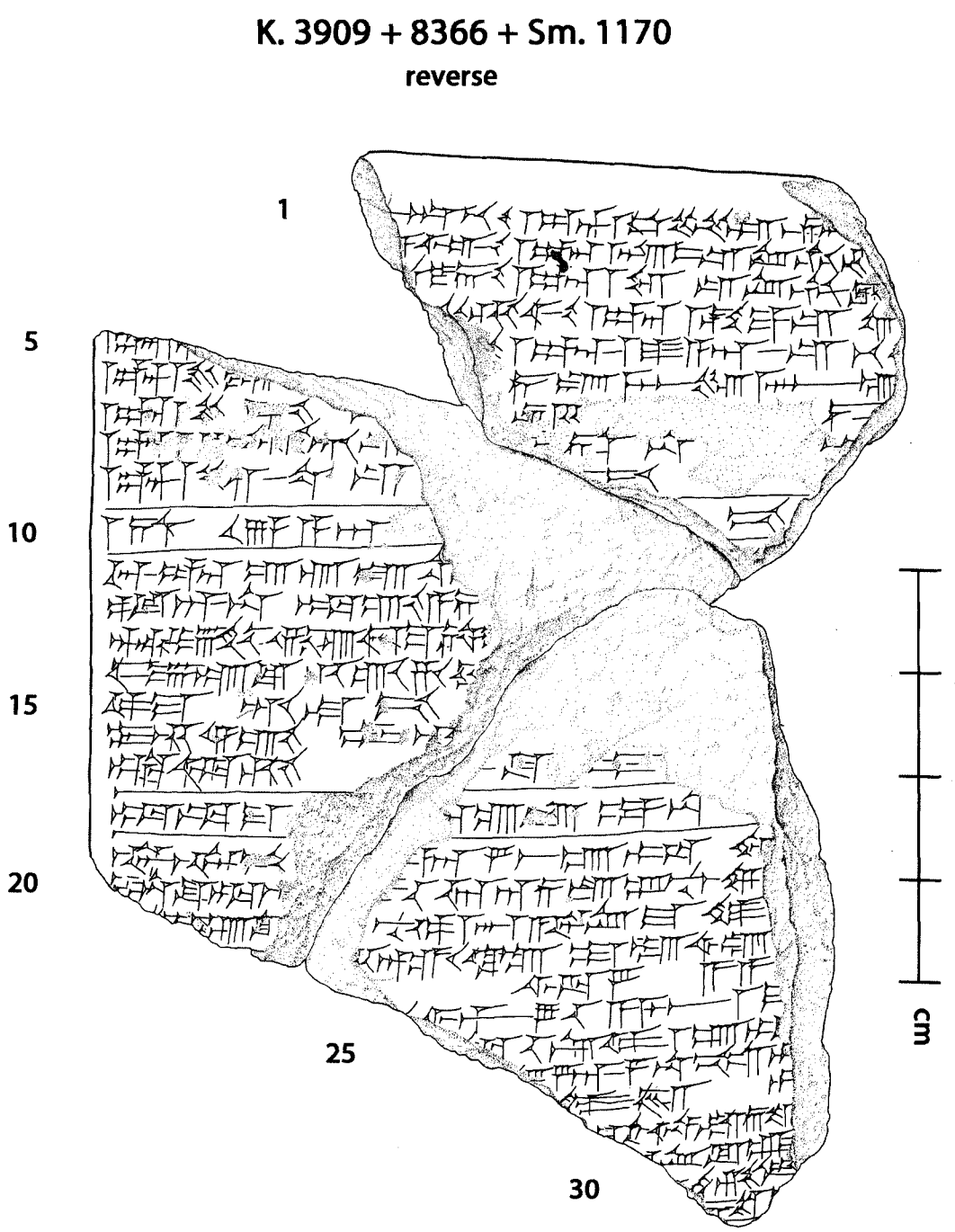


Fig. 1 K. 3909+8366+Sm. 1170 (measurements: 74⁺ × 105⁺ × 15⁺ mm).

line is preserved, the omen concerning the change of a star into a lion (see below omen no. 15). This line follows a passage about the movement of shooting stars (*mišḫu*), which runs parallel to K. 3119 (ACh 2 Suppl. 63) iv 32–34[20] and iv 16–17. A long passage of ten lines on the reverse of VAT 10718[21] includes the omens concerning the change of a star into a lion, a wolf, a dog, a fox, a pig, a

[20] These lines can be restored according to other unpublished texts as well as from the related omens in SAA 8, 335 ll. 5–9 and SAA 8, 303 rev. 2–5.

[21] This fragment of a tablet with the right edge is also written in late Middle Assyrian ductus; it will be published in the volume on astrological omens and astronomical texts in the series *Keilschrifttexte aus Assur literarischen Inhalts*, which is edited by Stefan M. Maul.

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piazu-mouse, a mule[?], an area of the liver and the penis of a lion in the given sequence (see below omens 15–17, 19–20, 25 and 37; the omen referring to a mule, if the signs were read correctly, have no parallel among the other texts identified so far); the last line before the break cannot be identified yet. The obverse of VAT 10718 has omens concerning the moon and the weather that appear at an unexpected time (*ina lā simānī-šu*).

The focus of the other tablets associated with omens of the type "If a star turns into . . ." or with the related *namburbi* is on shooting stars (K. 139+; K. 8489+; K. 10048; VAT 9794) or on the moon and the weather (VAT 10718). This indicates that these omens are neither dream omens nor terrestrial omens. Instead, they were considered celestial omens, as was to be expected on account of the initial DIŠ MUL, "if a star".

If it is true that *namburbi*–rituals in principal follow directly the ominous interpretation of the phenomenon to which they were meant to refer whenever they are added to omen tablets,[22] two conclusions could be drawn. First, the stars that change into something else cannot refer to the description of shooting stars, because omens referring to these luminous phenomena follow the ritual on the omen tablet K. 8489+. Secondly, the description of the phenomenon described in the *namburbi*-ritual should give further indication of the nature of omens, such as "If a star turns into . . .". The instruction for the *namburbi* describes the relevant star as a meteorite "that had fallen into your house" (15': MUL *šá ina* É-*ka im-qu-tu*$_4$). During the ritual, the exorcist has first to "seal it in clay" (16': *ina* IM ÚŠ-*ḫi-šú-ma*), and then to bring the star "out of the house into the gate" (14': mul é-ta ká-na è-da-ke$_4$).[23] This means that the omens of the type "If a star turns into . . ." refer to meteorites[24] that were picked up from the ground and thus combine a celestial event (i.e. the change of a star) with a terrestrial one (i.e. the fall on the ground of an individual's property). Since the basic material of meteorites is stone and/or iron, what was found after falling to the ground could have a wide range of diverse structures and shapes caused by the heat that developed from friction when those bodies entered the earth's atmosphere.[25] This explains the huge variety of objects to which meteorites were compared in the omens (see below pp. 6–8). For pictures of real meteorites see http://www.aerolite.org/meteorite-photography.htm (last visited September 2012). Images of meteorites that seem to resemble what is described in two of the omens in question are reproduced with the kind permission of the photographer as Figs. 6 and 7.

Although it is a given fact that each year several hundreds of meteorites of considerable size reach the earth,[26] the chances that such a meteorite hit a house or an estate in the ancient Near East is rather small. Still, since "meteorites can fall everywhere at any time"[27] each observed meteorite impact must have been a major event; compare, e.g., the meteoroid that exploded over Russia in February 2013, injuring many people.[28] Since news of exceptional occurrences could be expected to

[22] See, e.g., Oppenheim, *Dreams* (1956) 295, and implicitly also Maul, *Zukunftsbewältigung* (1994) 163–64.

[23] Caplice, *OrNS* 39 (1970) 114, translated "Incantation formula for a star which fell from the 'house' at a man's gate", while Maul renders the formula as "Wortlaut der Beschwörung (wenn man (?)) den Stern aus dem Hause in den Torbereich herausbringt."

[24] As already suggested by Caplice, *OrNS* 39 (1970) 115.

[25] The bodies of the solar system that entered the atmosphere are called meteoroids. Because these bodies enter the atmosphere at a very high speed (about 42 km per second), an extremely rapid compression of air is generated in front of these extra-terrestrial bodies, which in turn heats the meteoroids that start glowing. The brightness of the visible path (i.e. the meteor, falling star or shooting star) of these bodies depends on the size of the meteoroids. Smaller meteoroids might burn up, larger ones reach the ground, and very large ones might burst in the air because of the difference in temperature between the surface and the core. Any meteoroid that reaches the ground and survives the impact is called meteorite.

[26] The number of recorded meteorite falls is much smaller than the actual number of observable meteors, many of which would most probably result in meteorite falls, see Ian G. Halliday et al., "The Frequency of Meteorite Falls on the Earth", *Science* 223 (30 March 1984) 1405–07 no. 4643. For all recorded falls and finds see the *Catalogue of Meteorites* presented online by the Natural History Museum, http://www.nhm.ac.uk/research-curation/research/projects/metcat/, in which all meteorites (falls and finds) are recorded for individual years in the option advanced search (last visited September 2012).

[27] M. E. Lipschutz and L. Schulz, "Meteorites" in *Encyclopedia of the Solar System* 2nd Edition (edited by L. A. McFadden, P. R. Weissman and T. V. Johnson; Amsterdam • London • San Diego: Academic Press [Elsvier], 2007) 255b.

[28] This event made headline news all over the world on 15 February 2013. Many amateur videos of this bright meteor (i.e. the illumination produced by the meteoroid in the sky) showing its path before the explosion were uploaded to the internet. One can imagine the impact such an event might have on people of ancient civilizations for whom these were unusual and inexplicable phenomena.

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have spread quickly among the population, the incidences of meteorite falls would have soon become common knowledge in ancient Near Eastern civilizations.[29] They even appeared in the dreams of ordinary people, so that the subject of meteorite falls entered the official collection of dream omens of the first millennium B.C.[30] Diviners, who evaluated any unusual event that was reported, interpreted the real falls. Since meteorites were considered "stars" fallen from the sky, their ominous interpretation was integrated into the collections of celestial omens. Thus the evaluation of the phenomenon was not from a perspective of the effect it had on a person's property, which would have made them terrestrial omens, but from that of the stars as the instigators of these events. Still, the dualism of the event has been taken into account by giving predictions for either public affairs or for individuals.

Subjects of change for stars

These omens describe in each case a star that had been observed in the sky appearing to fall and, during this process, to change from a twinkling heavenly body into something else. If the shape of the meteorite reminded the observer of something he knew, he associated the meteorite with that object. Several options were specified for a description of this "shape shifting", including groups of animals, minerals and other objects. The sequence of omens, however, does not necessarily follow these categories, although items of the same sort are usually grouped in clusters. This mismatch between modern and ancient Near Eastern typologies is unsurprising. In order to give a better overview of the items compared, they will be presented according to a modern classification. For a better understanding of the sequence used in the omen texts, reference is given to the omens as they are numbered in the edition on pp. 9–22.

The following items might have been selected primarily because of their structure:

Ashes	omen no. 1
Fire	omen no. 2
Felt	omen no. 3
Droppings	omen no. 8

Several others that certainly have been chosen because of their distinctive colour belong to the groups of fabrics, precious stones and minerals:

Wool (sc. natural white ?)	omen no. 5
Red (brown) wool	omen no. 6
Blue wool	omen no. 7
Rock-crystal	omen no. 33
Carnelian	omen no. 34
Lapis lazuli	omen no. 35
Silver	omen no. 38
Gold	omen no. 39
Copper	omen no. 40

All the other items are likely to have been selected because of their shape. For some of them a combination of shape and texture of the meteorite might have been the notable feature. 26 different options make the group of animals the largest one among the objects stars can change into. The following animals are mentioned:

[29] See preceding footnote. The artefacts made of meteorite-iron might have been made from accidental finds as well as from observed falls. Compare the Old Babylonian literary hymn to Papulegarra referring to the "fall of (meteoritic) iron, which crushes the soil" (*mi-qì-it pa-ar-zi-il-li-im ša qá-aq-qá-ra i-ra-sú*; see T. G. Pinches, JRAS Cent. Suppl. [1925] pl. VIII rev. v 21–22). Furthermore, one of the logograms used for "iron", KÙ.AN or KÙ.AN.NA, "precious metal from the sky" (attested in Old Assyrian texts as well as in cuneiform texts from El Amarna), seems to point at a clear understanding of the origin of meteorite-iron. For a list of items from Ancient Near Eastern sites produced from meteorite-iron see J. K. Bjorkman, *Meteoritics* 8 (1973) 124–26. For a study on both the archaeological and textual evidence for iron in Mesopotamia see R. Pleiner and J. K. Bjorkman, "The Assyrian Iron Age: The History of Iron in the Assyrian Civilization", *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 118 (1974) 283–313. For the three words used in Old-Assyrian texts for "iron", *parzillu*, *amūtu* (KÙ.AN or KÙ.AN.NA) and *ašium*, and their possible reference to meteorite-iron see J. G. Dercksen, "Metals according to documents from Kültepe-Kanish dating to the Old-Assyrian Colony Period", *Anatolian Metal III* (Der Anschnitt, Beiheft 18; edited by Ü. Yalcun; Bochum: Deutsches Bergbau-Museum, 2005) 27–29.

[30] See Oppenheim, *Dreams* (1956) 283, 328 ll. 81–85 and edge 1–2; for the textual history of the series *ziqīpu*, the so-called Dream-Book, see *ibid* 296.

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Canidae	Lion	omen no. 15
	Wolf	omen no. 16
	Fox	omen no. 17
	Dog	omen no. 18
Livestock	Pig	omen no. 19
	Ewes	omen no. 46
Mice	*Piazu*-mouse	omen no. 20
	ḫumṣiru-mouse	omen no. 24
Lizards	Lizard	omen no. 13
	Gecko	omen no. 57"
Arachnida	Scorpion	omen no. 54", 71*
Birds	*šinūnūtu*-swallow	omen no. 28
Insects	Locust	omen no. 29
	'Dog of Šamaš'	omen no. 42
	Wood-wasp	omen no. 27
	sand-wasp	omen no. 69*, 82*
	lamṣatu-fly	omen no. 68*
	šassūru-insect	omen no. 55"
	Fly	omen no. 59"
Vermin	Louse	omen no. 41
	Moth	omen no. 43
	kalmatu-parasites	omen no. 44, 58" (?)
	uttettamaru	omen no. 45
	Worm	omen no. 53", 70* (?)
Marine animals	Fish	omen no. 21
	Crab	omen no. 22

Four of these animals seem to be mentioned twice within the sequence of omens. In two cases (*kalmatu*-parasites and the worm) the reading in the respective second omens is doubtful. Further parallels need to be identified before the correct interpretation of these particular omens can be established. In the third case, one recension has transposed the sand-wasp from mention in omen no. 82* to no. 69*. Not only is the wording of the protases different in no. 69* from that in no. 82* but the apodoses also seem to vary.

In addition to these animals, the penis of mammals is mentioned twice, i.e. the "penis of a dog" and the "penis of a lion". Since both entries are midway through a section of stones and minerals, they could well be aliases for an item of such material.[31] One might think of fossil belemnoids that could have been associated with the penis of a lion or of a dog depending on their size. This interpretation, however, must remain conjectural, especially since the scholars who wrote this text did not follow our modern categorization.

'Penis of a dog'	omen no. 36
'Penis of a lion'	omen no. 37

Another entry seems to refer to hepatoscopy, since it refers to "one" special "area on the liver". This area, however, is never mentioned in the extispicy texts. It could be an alias for one specific liver part or simply have a wider meaning by referring to any part of the liver.

One area of the liver	omen no. 25

One section of five consecutive lines refers to agricultural products. This equation might have been induced by the shape as well as by the structure of the meteorite.

Chickpea	omen no. 75*
Lentil	omen no. 76*
Emmer	omen no. 77*
šeguššu-apple	omen no. 78*
arsuppu-apple	omen no. 79*

[31] Compare the *abnu šikin-šu* sequence in STT 109 line 65: [NA_4] ˹GAR˺-*šú* GIM *ú-šá-r*[*i* . . .], "[Mineral] whose appearance is like the peni[s of . . .]"; see CAD U 299b; A. Schuster-Brandis, *Steine als Schutz- und Heilmittel. Untersuchungen zu ihrer Verwendung in der Beschwörungskunst Mesopotamiens im 1. Jt. v. Chr.* (AOAT 46; Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 2008) 31 (line 100r = text B 65') transliterates: [NA_4] ˹GAR˺-˹*šú*˺ GIM Ú GAR x [ ] UD? [ ].

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Four separate entries refer to parts of a property, such as

Access way (or road / path)	omen no. 49'
Roof	omen no. 50'
Entrance (or mountain pass)	omen no. 64*
Garden	omen no. 67*

Eight omens associate the look of the meteorite with unrelated materials that were used in daily life at various times.

Split reed mate	omen no. 9
Clay tablet	omen no. 10
Palm fibre	omen no. 11
Stone	omen no. 12
Chip of wood	omen no. 14
Fat	omen no. 30
Clay	omen no. 73*
Gypsum[32]	omen no. 81*

Two entries compare the meteorite with the two heavenly bodies that the ancient astronomers did not consider stars in the widest sense, the moon and the sun. Its typical feature, the crescent of the moon and the sun-disc of the sun, characterizes each of them.

Crescent	omen no. 31
Sun-disc	omen no. 32

The remaining items do not form a coherent group, but can also not be assigned to any of the other groups.

Arrow	omen no. 23
Garment	omen no. 26
Vessel stand (*kannu*)[33]	omen no. 48'
Body (or animal skin)	omen no. 65*
River	omen no. 66*
Seat (or flour)	omen no. 72*
Steppe (var. locust)	omen no. 74*
Defeat? (*abiktu*)	omen no. 80*

It is very unlikely that specialist observers in the ancient Near East had compiled all these potential options for describing the appearance of an actual meteorite before they established a list of these omens. As is the case with the other omens, additions based entirely on intellectual considerations must have been added to produce a list of options as complete as possible. Omens are the written rules for divination, i.e. the interpretation of ominous signs with respect to a future event, similar to individual sections of the law.[34] Since traditional and well-established omens were considered more reliable than recent additions produced by analogies,[35] each imaginable eventuality needed to be incorporated into the master sequence of omens. Such an omen sequence, which was meant to be part of a larger series, was then regarded as ideally being passed down from the god of wisdom, Ea,[36] to give these omens ultimate legitimacy.

[32] Gypsum (IM.BABBAR, Akkadian *gaṣṣu*) could also have been chosen because of the white color. This entry would then have to be grouped together with the fabrics, precious stones and metals (see p. 6).

[33] The word *kannu* refers to a round vessel stand, a special pot, or to a fetter or band. Here, the translation as vessel stand is preferred.

[34] See J. C. Fincke, "Omina, die göttlichen "Gesetze" der Divination", *JEOL* 40 (2006–07) 131–47.

[35] Additional omens were accepted only when they result from the scholarly discourse of a group of well-recognised experts. Such omens were then said to be "from the mouth of the masters" (*ša pî ummâni*). When the astronomer Balasî had to invent an omen because there was none for the given situation, he made his new creation clearly recognizable by using a deviant way of writing, see Fincke, *JEOL* 40 (2006–07) 136 example 9.

[36] Some of the omen series are said to be "of the mouth of Ea" (K. 2248+ obv. 4: [*an-nu-tu*$_4$] *šá pí-i* ^{d}*é-a*), see W. G. Lambert, *JCS* 16 (1962) 64–5, 70, 72–3. The celestial and meteorological omen series *enūma anu enlil*, to which the sequence of omens under concern might belong, is one of them.

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Edition of the type "If a star turns into . . ." omens

There are altogether nine tablets and fragments attested for this type of omen so far. All of them come from Assyria proper. Sequences with omens of this type have been found in Aššur (two tablets), Ḫuzirīna (one tablet) and Nineveh (six tablets). Most of them are written in Assyrian ductus; two of the fragments from Nineveh are written in Neo-Babylonian ductus.

Sources

Origin	Siglum	Museumnumber	Publication
Ḫuzirīna	Ḫuz 1 (eNA)	51/74	STT 330
Nineveh	Nin 1 (NA)	K. 139	Virolleaud, *Bab.* 4 (1911) 125 (only rev. last paragraph of K. 139; see for this also Heeßel, *AfO* 48/49 [2001/02] 25, 45)
		+ K. 4363	IIR 49 no. 4 (K. 4363); see new copy Figs. 4–5 (measurements: 158⁺ × 79 × 25 mm)
	Nin 2 (NA)	K. 4546	Virolleaud, *Bab.* 3 (1910) 268, 275
	Nin 3 (NB)	K. 3911	Virolleaud, *Bab.* 4 (1911) 114, 123
	Nin 4 (NB)	K. 13378	see Caplice, *OrNS* 42 (1973) 299 note 1; see the copy Figs. 2–3 (measurements: 40⁺ × 35⁺ × 20 mm)
	Nin 5 (NA)	K. 3909+8366	Caplice, *OrNS* 39 (1970) tav. I (photograph), pp. 113–16 text 35 exemplar A; Maul, *Zukunftsbewältigung* (1994) 453–57 exemplar A
		+ Sm. 1170	see new copy Fig. 1 (measurements: 74⁺ × 105⁺ × 15⁺ mm)
	Nin 6 (NA)	K. 8489+8609	Caplice, *OrNS* 39 (1970) tav. VIII, pp. 113–16 text 35 exemplar C; Maul, *Zukunftsbewältigung* (1994) 453–57 exemplar C
Assur		VAT 9794 ii? 13'	
		VAT 10718 rev. 5'–14'	Both fragments from Assur will be published in the series *Keilschrifttexte aus Assur literarischen Inhalts*, which is edited by Stefan M. Maul. For a transliteration of the omens see the publication referred to. For a general description of both pieces see above pp. 3–5.

Characteristics of the individual copies.

The scribe of the Ḫuzirīna tablet Ḫuz 1 [eNA] arranges the text on his tablet in such a way that the signs GUR and the beginning of the apodoses are always written exactly at the same position in

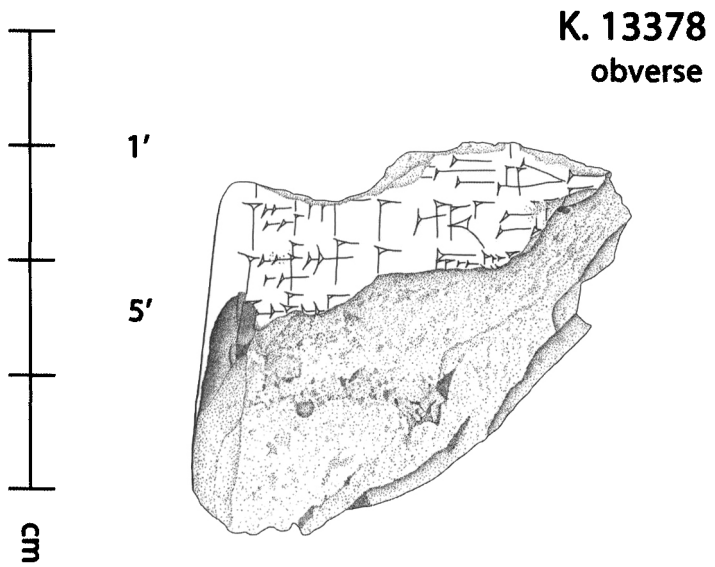


Fig. 2 K. 13378 obverse (measurements: 40⁺ × 35⁺ × 20 mm).

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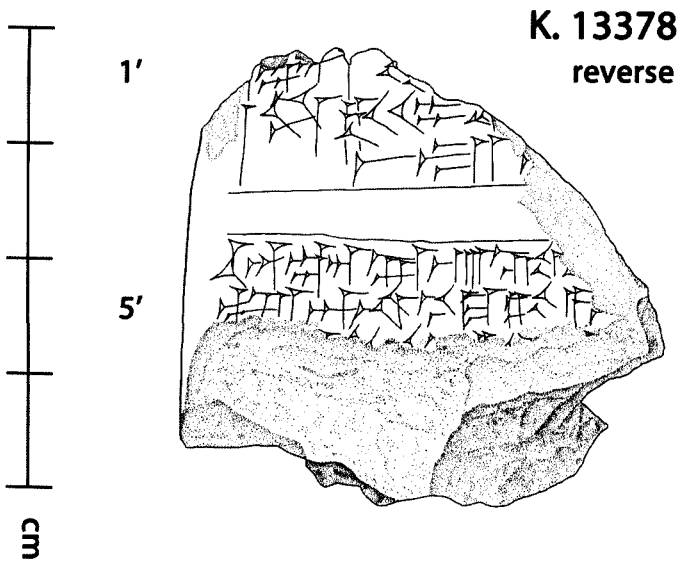


Fig. 3 K. 13378 reverse.

the line, one below the other. In order to maintain this feature he inserts gaps before the GUR. He also writes the last signs of the apodoses up to the right margin, in order to create fully justified lines. The scribe of Nin 1 [NA] uses the same layout rules.

The scribe of the Nineveh tablet Nin 2 [NA] also moves the sign GUR further to the right, whenever the word before the GUR is shorter than usual. Still, he does not follow this rule consistently, which results in a rather irregular final position for GUR, the last sign of the protases. Since the apodoses are broken off, nothing can be said about the right margin.

The scribe from Nineveh that wrote Nin 3 [NB] does not follow any layout rules other than writing the words directly after each other, which would result in an irregular right margin (the apodoses are not preserved). The scribe of the tablet represented by Nin 5 [NA] wrote two omens in each line whenever the omens were short enough to do so. The text of the sequence concerned on the tablets Nin 4 [NB] and Nin 6 [NA] is too fragmentary to identify any layout rules.

The scribe of Nin 1 [NA] became confused when he copied the sequence concerned. He omitted omen no. 5, and from omen no. 6 until omen no. 19 the scribe erroneously combined each protasis with the apodosis of the subsequent line. When he combined the protasis of omen no. 20 with the apodosis of omen no. 19, he noticed his mistake, and from omen no. 21 onwards he continued copying correctly.

Reconstruction of the master sequence

Ḫuz 1, written in an early Neo-Assyrian ductus,[37] is the only complete tablet identified so far that is entirely dedicated to omens of the type "If a star changes into . . .". The sequence of omens in this tablet offers an abridged version from those of the texts from Assur and Nineveh. In order to compare the individual recensions, a master sequence or prototype text needs to be established from which the scribes might have selected the omens. For this task it is of no importance whether this reconstructed master sequence has ever been written down or was rather a part of the oral tradition.

Omens 1–46 can be reconstructed with the help of the opening part of Ḫuz 1 [eNA] and the sequence given in Nin 1 [NA]. With just a few exceptions,[38] both recensions run parallel in this sequence. It should be noted, however, that the scribe of Nin 1 made a mistake concerning the omens

[37] The scribe still uses the Middle Assyrian sign form of RU.

[38] Ḫuz 1 [eNA] has omen no. 32 after omen no. 37; Nin 1 [NA] adds omens nos. 28–33 and omens nos. 41–46.

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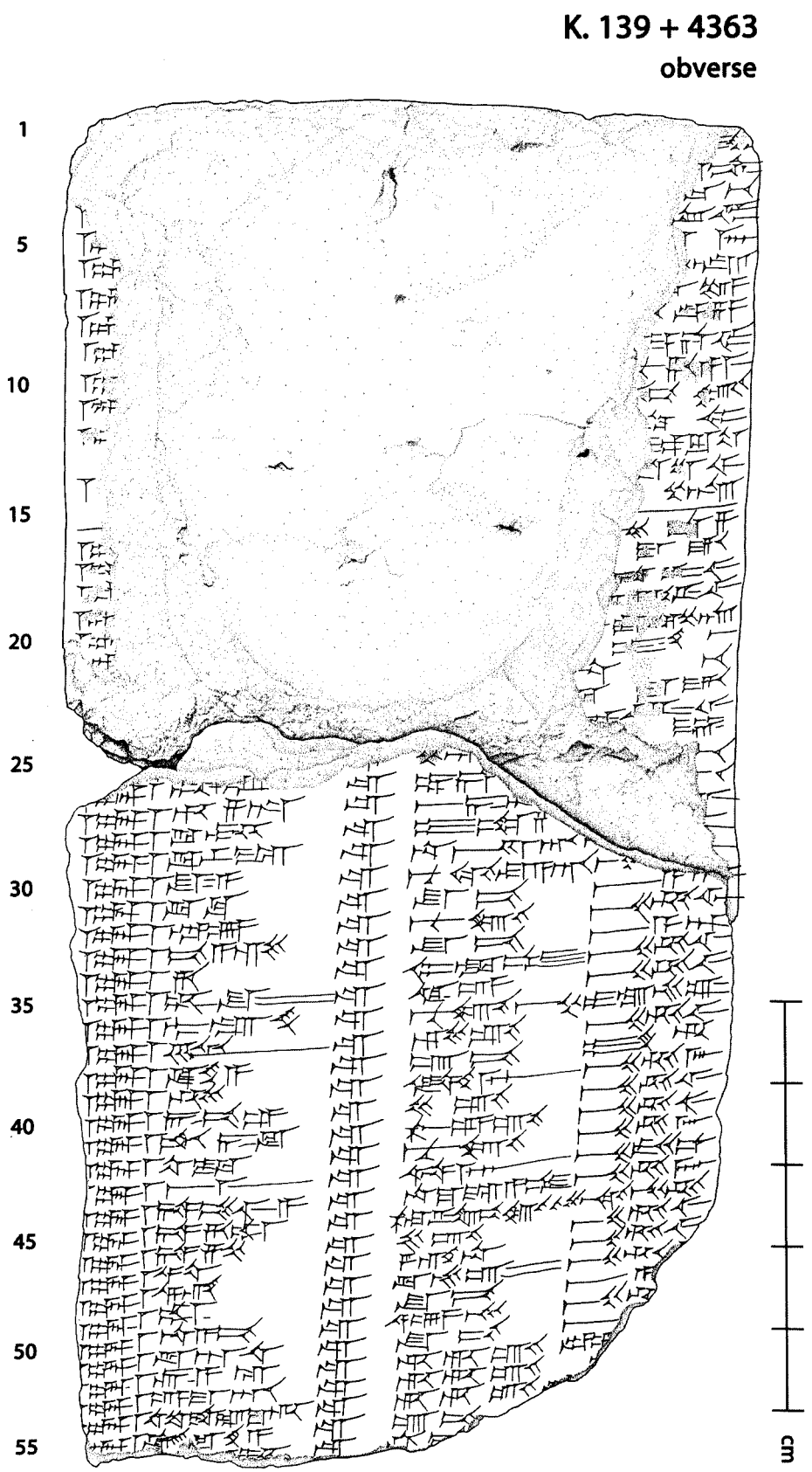


Fig. 4 K. 139+4363 obverse (measurements: 158+ × 79 × 25 mm).

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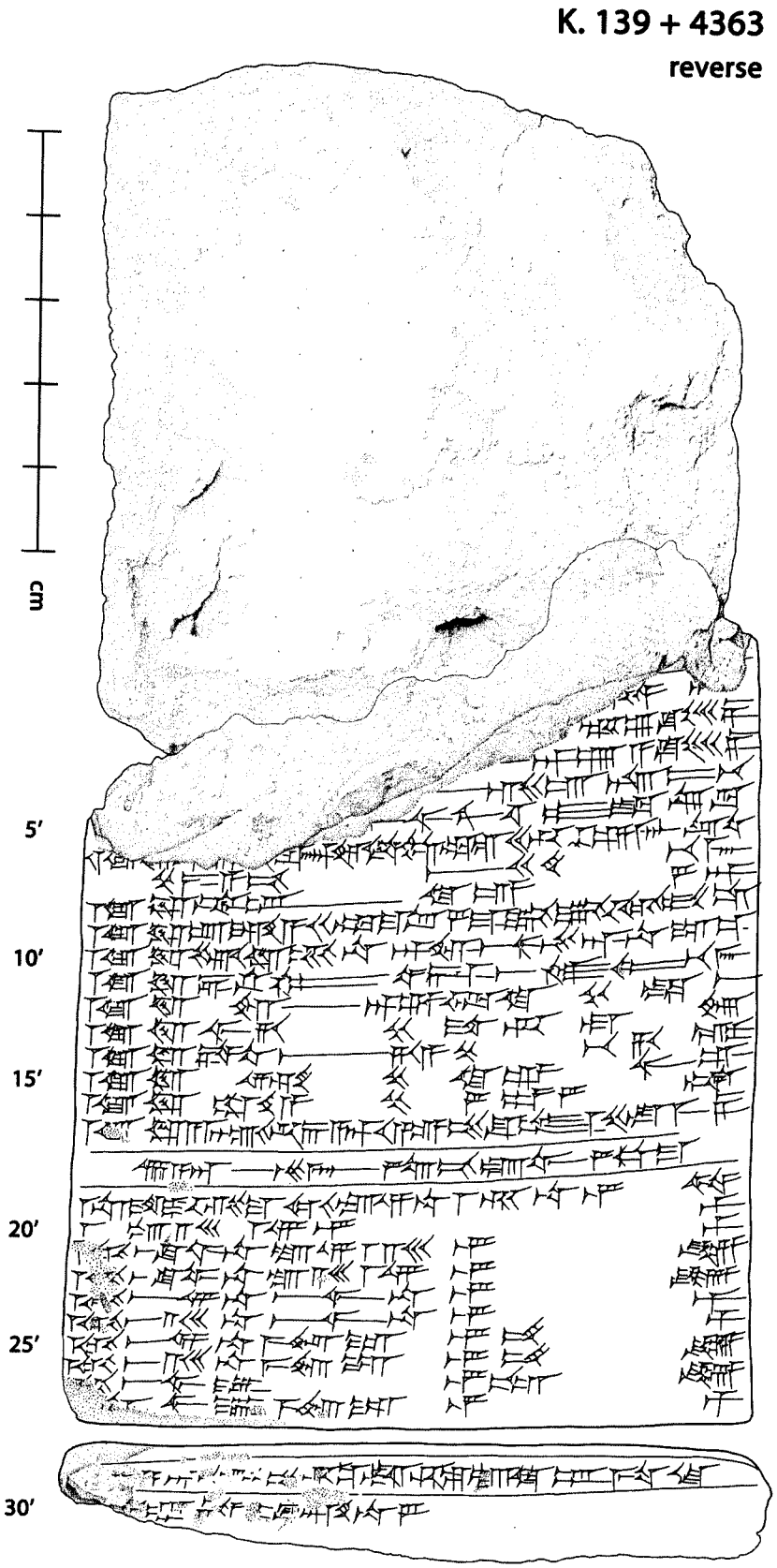


Fig. 5 K. 139+4363 reverse.

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nos. 5–20; he omitted omen no. 5 and from omen no. 6 onwards combined each protasis with the apodosis of the subsequent omens (see above). The copies from Ḫuzirīna and from Assur (VAT 10718) provide evidence of the fact that the mistake was made by the scribe from Nineveh.

The fragmentary recension from Assur differs from these texts from Ḫuzirīna and Nineveh. Still, beginning with omen 15, one of the Assur texts has a selection of omens from the sequence of nos. 1–46 (VAT 10718, see above p. 4–5).

Omens 60*–82* are represented by the remaining omens from Ḫuz 1 [eNA] as well as by the omens written on the reverse of Nin 3 [NB], Nin 4 [NB] and Nin 5 [NA].

The omens from the obverse of Nin 4 [NB] have no parallels in any of the other texts and are here numbered omens 47′–51′. The omens from the reverse of the tablet Nin 2 [NA] that also have no parallels in any other tablet are numbered omens nos. 52″–59″; they are arranged after the ones from Nin 4 [NB], because that fragment comes from near the upper edge of its tablet, and some of the omens from obverse of Nin 2 [NA] were selected from the sequence of nos. 1–46.[39] The omens could, however, just as well be arranged before the omens from Nin 4 [NB]. It is also possible that the fragmentary omens of both texts later turn out to be identical with omens of the other recensions, which would reduce the total of omens of the master sequence. The fact that Nin 5 [NA] sums up the number of recorded omens with "78 entries" does not contradict the reconstructed number of 82 omens, since the master sequence is likely to have more omens than any recension.

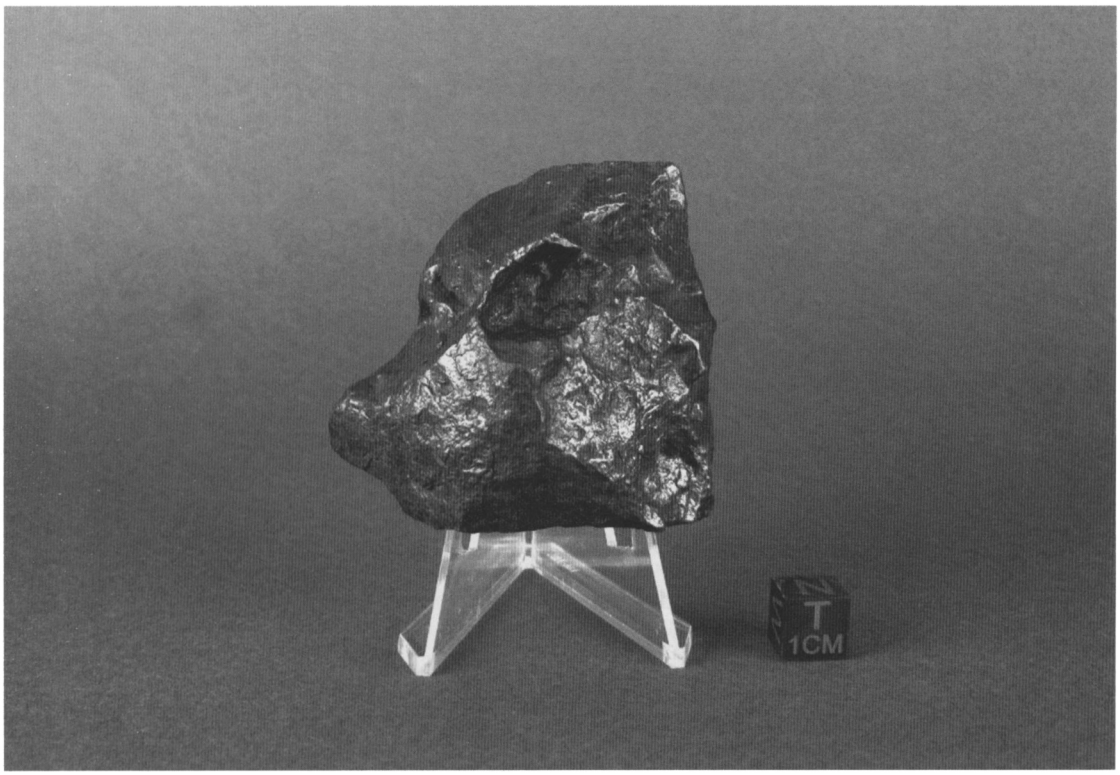


Fig. 6 Meteorite from the Canyon Diabolo (291.3 grams). Photograph by Suzanne Morrison © Aerolite Meteorites LLC.
The meteorite is reminiscent of a mammal's head; for omens referring to various canidae (omens nos. 15–18) and livestock (omens nos. 19 and 46) see above p. 7.

[39] This refers to omens nos. 15, 17, 19, 21, 23 and 27.

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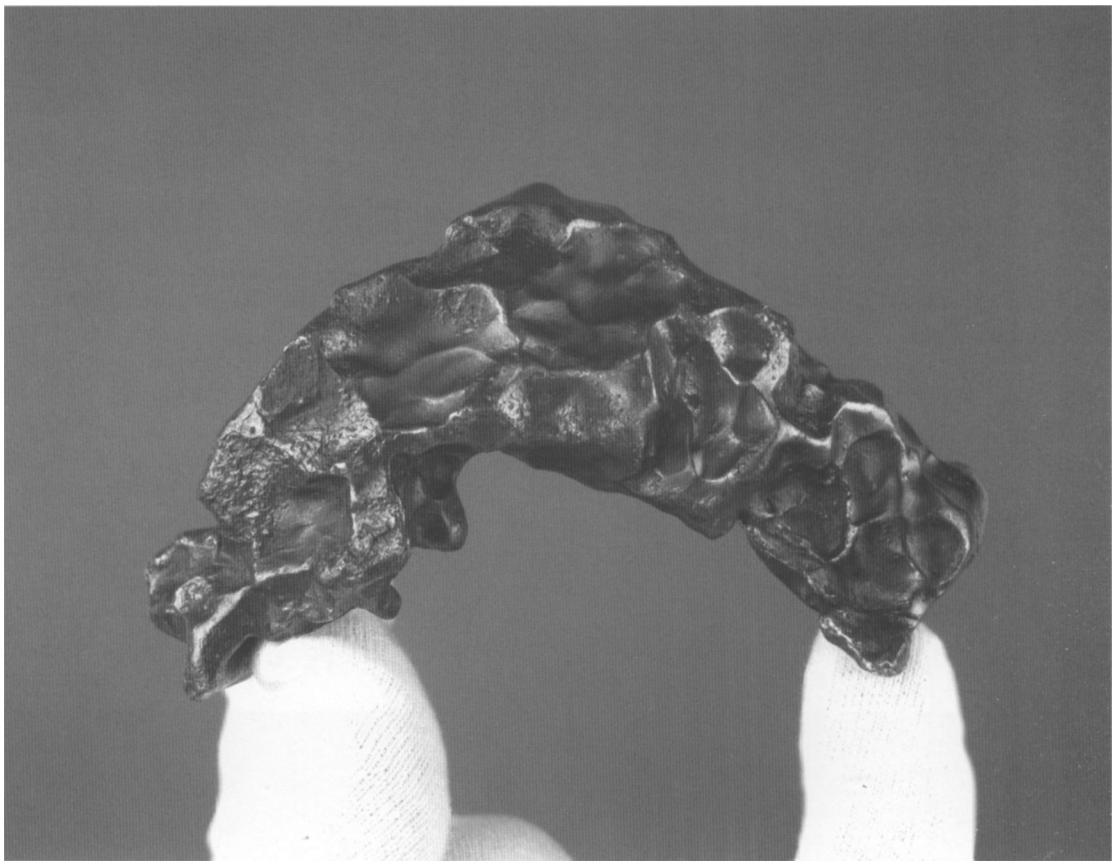


Fig. 7 Meteorite from Sikhote Alin (250 grams). Photograph by Suzanne Morrison © Aerolite Meteorites LLC.
The meteorite has the shape of an arrow, for which see omen no. 23.

Textual history

The recension from Assur, which according to the late Middle Assyrian ductus of its script is the earliest of the attested recensions for this type of omens, varies significantly from the later ones attested in Ḫuzirīna or Nineveh. This difference, however, refers only to the sequence of omens, and not to the omens themselves, which correspond exactly to the ones known from the other recensions. Because of the variations, the question arises whether or not the Assur recension was considered a kind of forerunner that was later expanded to create the typical Neo-Assyrian recension. The Assur recension could also have always been completely independent from the other Neo-Assyrian recensions, as has been assumed by Heeßel for other compositions.[40] This question needs to be left open, since no copy written in Neo-Assyrian ductus has yet been identified among the material from Assur.

The first 29 and the last 21 omens of the early Neo-Assyrian recension from Ḫuzirīna are, with only minor additions on the side of the Nineveh copies (omens nos. 24, 27–33), basically identical with the slightly later Neo-Assyrian recension from Nineveh. After entry no. 29 of the Ḫuzirīna recension (omen no. 40), the Nineveh recension added an unknown number of omens. The Nineveh

[40] See N. P. Heeßel, "Neues von Esagil-kīn-apli. Die ältere Version der physiognomischen Omenserie alamdimmû" in Assur-Forschungen. Arbeiten aus der Forschungsstelle »Edition literarischer Keilschrifttexte aus Assur« der Heidelberger Akademie der Wissenschaften (edited by S. M. Maul and N. P. Heeßel; Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2010) 167 (for *alamdimmû* and SA.GIG) and N. P. Heeßel, "Die divinatorischen Texte aus Assur" in Assur – Gott, Stadt und Land (Colloquien der Deutschen Orient-Gesellschaft Band 5; edited by Johannes Renger; Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz 2011) especially p. 381 (for *bārûtu*), 383–84 (for *alamdimmû* and SA.GIG).

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recension then continues with entry no. 32 of the Ḫuzirīna recension (omen no. 62*) and follows the sequence unchanged until the end. At the very end, however, both recensions vary again, since all but one of the Nineveh texts add one omen that is not attested in Ḫuzirīna (omen no. 82*). Only one of the Nineveh recensions transposed the omen referring to the sand-wasp mentioned in omen no. 82*, by writing it directly after omen no. 68* and by skipping omen no. 82* as the last omen. It is, therefore, likely that the Ḫuzirīna recension also transposed this omen; but this possibility remains open because of the fragmentary state of preservation of the Ḫuzirīna recension at this point. Although the sequences of the Ḫuzirīna and Nineveh texts are not identical, their recensions are closely related to each other, hence a direct link between the scholars of both places can be assumed.

The recensions from Assur and Nineveh introduce their protases with the initial DIŠ MUL *ana*, "If a star (turns) into . . .", while the text from Ḫuzirīna neglects the DIŠ MUL, and begins directly with *ana*, "(it turns) into". This abbreviation in the Ḫuzirīna texts would require an introductory phrase, but the scribe had skipped this introduction according to the published copy. The following transliteration does not reproduce the arrangement of the cuneiform signs on the individual copies, but focuses on a schematic rendering of the text.

Edition of the omens

1 Ḫuz 1 (eNA) obv. 1 [*ana*] *ṭi-ik-m*[*i-n*]*i* GUR EN É *ši-ri-šú ana* ˹UZU˺ G[UB]-*za*]

Nin 1 (NA) obv. 16 DIŠ MU[L *n*]*i-še* ˹GUB˺-*za*

If a sta[r] turns [into] ashes, the owner of the house's kin (lit.: flesh) will assist the kin.[41]

2 Ḫuz 1 (eNA) obv. 2 ˹*ana*˺ [I]ZI GUR *e-ma* DU-*ku ma*-[*gir*]

Nin 1 (NA) obv. 17 DIŠ MU[L] ˹*ma*˺-*gir*

If a sta[r] turns into fire, wherever he goes it will be pleasant.

3 Ḫuz 1 (eNA) obv. 3 [*ana s*]*i*[?]-*pe-e* GUR É BI *ka-liš* ˹SIG_5˺-*tim* TUK

Nin 1 (NA) obv. 18 DIŠ MU[L S]IG_5 ˹TUK˺-*ši*

If a sta[r] turns [into f]elt? (or: into a mourning garment), this house will gain totally good fortune.

4 Ḫuz 1 (eNA) obv. 4 [*ana* xx x]x GUR DAM[!] NA *muš-tar-ri-qa*[!](LIŠ) TUK-*š*[*i*]

Nin 1 (NA) obv. 19 DIŠ MU[L -*r*]*i-*˹*qá*˺ TUK-*ši*

If a sta[r] turns [into ..]., the man's wife will have a secret lover.[42]

5 Ḫuz 1 (eNA) obv. 5 *ana* SÍK GUR EN.NUN TIL -*u-*˹*ma*˺ *ina* É NA IDIM ÚŠ

Nin 1 (NA) obv. –[43]

(If a star) turns into wool, the watch (of the night) will end and an important person will die in the man's house.

6 Ḫuz 1 (eNA) obv. 6 *ana* SÍK.ḪÉ.M[E].DA GUR EN É NINDA *ina* É *šu-a-tú* KUR-*át* [20][ ]x ˹x-*im*˺

Nin 1 (NA) obv. –/20 – KUR-*át*

(If a star) turns into red wool, the owner of the house will obtain bread in this house.[44]

[41] For the protasis see CAD T 260a and CAD Ṭ 111a. The apodosis of this omen is unique; I have not been able to locate any duplicate. Since both recensions Ḫuz 1 and Nin 1 run parallel in all the other omens, it is most likely that they have the same apodosis also in the first omen. If this assumption is right, the scribe from Ḫuzirīna used the logogram UZU, *šīru*, "flesh; kin", while the scribe from Nineveh wrote *nīšu*, "people; relatives, kin", for the object of the sentence. This prediction is reminiscent of the well-attested apodosis with opposite meaning ŠEŠ ŠEŠ-*šú i-bar*, "the brother will rebel against his brother".

[42] For the apodosis see CAD M/II 287b.

[43] The scribe's mistake in copying the original tablet begins in this line. First he omitted one omen; next for a few lines he began to combine the protasis of one omen with the apodosis of the subsequent one.

[44] For the protasis see CAD T 24a.

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7 Ḫuz 1 (eNA) obv. 7 ⌜*ana*⌝ SÍK.ZA⌜(A).GÌN.NA GUR EN É *i-šàr-rù*
Nin 1 (NA) obv. 20/21 [20]⌜DIŠ⌝ MU[L [21]EN] ⌜É⌝ *i-šàr-rù*
If a sta[r] turns into blue wool, the owner of the house will get wealthy.

8 Ḫuz 1 (eNA) obv. 8 *ana* A.GAR.GAR GUR *i-na* É NA IDIM ÚŠ
Nin 1a (NA) obv. 21/22 [21][DIŠ M]U[L [22]IDIM *ina* É N]A ÚŠ
[If a st]a[r] turns into droppings, an important person will die in the man's house.

9 Ḫuz 1 (eNA) obv. 9 *ana* GI.KID-BA GUR *e-ma* DU-*ku ma-gir*
Nin 1 (NA) obv. 22/23 [22][[23] *-k]u* ⌜*ma*⌝*-gir*
[If a star] turns into a split reed mat, wherever he goes it will be pleasant.

10 Ḫuz 1 (eNA) obv. 10 *ana ṭup-pi* GUR *ka-ra-ab* DINGIR TUK-*ši*
Nin 1 (NA) obv. 23/24 [23][[24]]⌜DINGIR-*šú*⌝ TUK-*ši*
[If a star] turns into a clay tablet, he will experience a blessing of the deity (var. Nin 1: of his god).[45]

11 Ḫuz 1 (eNA) obv. 11 *ana* ŠU.ŠAR GUR KUR⌜(MAN)-*ti* DINGIR *ana* LUGAL
Nin 1 (NA) obv. 24/25 [24][DIŠ MUL *ana* ŠU.ŠAR GU]R [25]KUR-*t*[*i* DINGIR *ana*] LÚ
[If a star] turns into palm fibre, there will be divine seizure for the king (var. Nin 1: for the man).

12 Ḫuz 1 (eNA) obv. 12 *ana* NA_4 GUR DUMU LUGAL ÚŠ
Nin 1 (NA) obv. 25/26 [25][DIŠ MUL *ana* NA_4] GUR [26]DUMU.NÍTA [LUGAL] ÚŠ
[If a star] turns into a stone, the first son of the king will die.

13 Ḫuz 1 (eNA) obv. 13 *ana* EME.ŠID GUR *i-na ni-šu-ut* URU IDIM ÚŠ
Nin 1 (NA) obv. 26/27 [26]⌜DIŠ MUL⌝ *ana* ⌜EME.ŠID⌝ GUR [27]*ina ni-s*[*u-ut* Ú]Š
If a star turns into a lizard, an important person from among the city's relatives will die.

14 Ḫuz 1 (eNA) obv. 14 *ana ḫu-ṣa-bi* GUR I.BÍ.ZA IGI
Nin 1 (NA) obv. 27/28 [27]DIŠ MUL *ana ḫu-ṣa-ba* GUR [28]I.BÍ.ZA [IGI-*m*]*ar*
If a star turns into a chip of wood, he will experience (financial) losses.[46]

15 Ḫuz 1 (eNA) obv. 15 *ana* UR.MAḪ GUR *na-as-pan-tu*$_4$ *dan-na-tu*$_4$ TUK-*ši*
Nin 1 (NA) obv. 28/29 [28]DIŠ MUL *ana* UR.MAḪ GUR [29]*na-aš-pan-ti i*[*na* KUR GÁL-*š*]*i*
Nin 2 (NA) obv. 5 [DIŠ M]UL *ana* UR.MA[Ḫ
If a star turns into a lion, there will be severe (not in Nin 1) destruction (addition Nin 1: [in the country]).[47]

16 Ḫuz 1 (eNA) obv. 16 *ana* UR.BAR.RA GUR *nu-ul-la-tu*$_4$ *ina* É NA GÁL-*ši*
Nin 1 (NA) obv. 29/30 [29]DIŠ MUL *ana* UR.BAR.RA GUR [30]*nu-ul-la-ti ina* KU[R GÁL-*š*]*i*
If a star turns into a wolf, there will be empty talk in the country (Ḫuz 1: in the man's house).[48]

17 Ḫuz 1 (eNA) obv. 17 *ana* KA_5.A GUR ŠU.BI.DIL.ÀM (sc. *nu-ul-la-tu*$_4$ *ina* É NA GÁL-*ši*)
Nin 1 (NA) obv. 30/31 [30]DIŠ MUL *ana* KA_5.A GUR [31]ŠU.BI.DIL.⌜ÀM⌝ (sc. *nu-ul-la-ti ina* K[UR GÁL-*ši*])
Nin 2 (NA) obv. 6 [DIŠ M]UL *ana* KA_5.A [
If a star turns into a fox, ditto (sc. there will be empty talk in the country [Ḫuz 1: in the man's house]).[49]

18 Nin 1 (NA) obv. 31/32 [31]DIŠ MUL *ana* UR.GI_7 GUR [32]NU DÙG.GA *ina* KUR GÁL-*ši*
If a star turns into a dog, there will be unhappiness in the country.

[45] For the apodosis see CAD K 194a.
[46] For the protasis see CAD Ḫ 259a.
[47] For the apodosis of Ḫuz 1 [eNA] see CAD N II 29b. The restoration of *ina* KUR GÁL-*ši* in the apodosis of Nin 1 (NA) follows VAT 10718 of the Assur recension.
[48] For the apodosis see CAD N/II 334b.
[49] For the protasis see CAD Š/II 269a.

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19	Ḫuz 1 (eNA)	obv. 18		*ana* ŠAḪ	GUR	NU DÙG.GA *ina* KUR GÁL-*ši*
	Nin 1 (NA)	obv. 32/33	^{32}DIŠ MUL	*ana* ŠAḪ	GUR	^{33}ŠU.BI.DIL.ÀM (sc. NU DÙG.GA *ina* KUR GÁL-*ši*)
	Nin 2 (NA)	obv. 6	⌜DIŠ⌝ MUL	*ana* ŠAḪ [		

If a star turns into a pig, there will be unhappiness in the country // (var. Nin 1:) ditto (sc. there will be unhappiness in the country).

20	Nin 1 (NA)	obv. 33/–[50]	^{33}DIŠ MUL	*ana pí-a-zi*	GUR	

If a star turns into a *piazu*-mouse, <*empty talk will repeatedly be spoken*>.[51]

21	Ḫuz 1 (eNA)	obv. 19		*ana* KU_6	GUR	*mi-šìr-tú* GÁL-*ši*
	Nin 1 (NA)	obv. 34	DIŠ MUL	*ana* KU_6	GUR	*mi-šìr-tu*$_4$ *ina* KUR GÁL-*ši*
	Nin 2 (NA)	obv. 7	[DIŠ M]UL	*ana* KU_6 [		

If a star turns into a fish, there will be *mišertu* (Nin 1 adds: in the country).

22	Nin 1 (NA)	obv. 35	DIŠ MUL	*ana* AL.LUL	GUR	KI.KAL *ina* KUR GÁL-*ši*
	Nin 2 (NA)	obv. 8	[DIŠ MU]L	⌜*ana*⌝ A[L⌝.LUL		

If a star turns into a crab, there will be famine in the country.

23	Nin 1 (NA)	obv. 36	⌜DIŠ⌝ MUL	*ana šil-ta-ḫi*	GUR	NU DÙG.GA *ina* KUR *i-ta-mu-ú*
	Nin 2 (NA)	obv.	(rest is missing)			

If a star turns into an arrow, unhappiness, they will swear in the country.[52]

24	Nin 1 (NA)	obv. 37	[DI]Š MUL	*ana* PÉŠ	GUR	ZI.GA *ina* KUR GÁL-*ši*

[I]f a star turns into a *ḫumṣiru*-mouse, there will be a revolt in the country.

25	Ḫuz 1 (eNA)	obv. 20		*ana* KI AŠ KIN-*ti*	GUR	ZI.GA *ina* KUR GÁL-*ši*

(If a star) turns into one area of the liver, there will be a revolt in the country.

26	Ḫuz 1 (eNA)	obv. 21		*ana* TÚG.ḪI.A	GUR	É BI *i-šár-rù*
	Nin 1 (NA)	obv. 38	DIŠ MUL	*ana* TÚG.ḪI.A	GUR	É BI *i-šár-ri*

If a star turns into a garment, that very house will become rich.

27	Nin 2 (NA)	obv. 1	⌜DIŠ⌝ [M]UL	*ana ku-za-a-z*[*i*	GUR	

If [a s]tar [turns] into a wood-wasp, [. . .]

	Nin 2 (NA)	obv. 2	UR-^{d}UTU (see omen no. 42)

28	Nin 1 (NA)	obv. 39	DIŠ MUL	*ana* SIM	GUR	GIG.MEŠ *ina* KUR GÁL.MEŠ
	Nin 2 (NA)	obv. 3	[DIŠ M]UL	*ana ši-nu-nu-ú-t*[*i*	GUR	

If a star turns into a *šinūntū*-swallow, there will be diseases in the country.[53]

29	Nin 1 (NA)	obv. 40	DIŠ MUL	*ana er-be-e*	GUR	ŠE.GA *ina* KUR GÁL-*ši*
	Nin 2 (NA)	obv. 4	[DIŠ M]UL	*ana er-bi-*⌜*e*?⌝	[GUR	

If a star turns into locust, there will be consent in the country.

30	Nin 1 (NA)	obv. 41	[DI]Š MUL	*ana* UZU.Ì.UDU	GUR	MUNUS.KALAG.GA *ina* KUR GÁL-*ši*

[I]f a star turns into fat, there will be famine in the country.

31	Nin 1 (NA)	obv. 42	[DI]Š MUL	*ana* UD.SAKAR	GUR	NU DÙG.GA *ina* KUR GÁL.MEŠ

[I]f a star turns into crescent, there will be unhappiness in the country.

32	Ḫuz 1 (eNA)	obv. 26		[*ana* AŠ].ME	GUR	NU SIG_5.MEŠ *ina* KUR GÁL-*ši*
	Nin 1 (NA)	obv. 43	[DIŠ] MUL	*ana* AŠ.ME	GUR	SIG_5.MEŠ *ina* KUR *i-man-du*

[If] a star turns into a sun-disc, there will (Ḫuz 1: not) be welfare in the country.

[50] At this point the scribe must have noticed his mistake that made him combining the protasis of one line with the apodosis of the subsequent line (see footnote 43), because from the following line onwards the protases are combined with the correct apodoses, which can be seen from the parallels. Because of his mistake, the protasis of this line had no apodosis.

[51] For the protasis see CAD P 358. The apodosis is taken from the Assur recension as is represented in VAT 10718.

[52] For the protasis see CAD Š/II 451a.

[53] For the protasis see CAD T 260a.

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33 Nin 1 (NA) obv. 44 [DI]Š MUL *ana* NA_4.DUḪ.ŠI.AGUR *na-ma-ra-a-tu*$_4$ *ina* KUR GÁL.MEŠ
[I]f a star turns into a rock-crystal, there will be fattened animals in the country.

34 Ḫuz 1 (eNA) obv. 22 *ana* ˹NA_4˺.GUG GUR DAM TUK ŠÀ.BI DÙG.GA
Nin 1 (NA) obv. 45 [DI]Š MUL *ana* NA_4.GUG GUR DAM TUK ŠÀ.BI DÙG.GA : *bu-ul ina* KUR GÁL
[I]f a star turns into carnelian, the one who took a wife will be happy, (addition Nin 1: (var): there will be livestock in the country).

35 Ḫuz 1 (eNA) obv. 23 [*ana* N]A_4.ZA.GÌN GUR ŠE.GA *ina* KUR GÁL
Nin 1 (NA) obv. 46 [DI]Š MUL *ana* NA_4.ZA.GÌN GUR ŠE.GA *ina* KUR GÁL-*ši*
[I]f a star turns into lapis lazuli, there will be consent in the country.

36 Ḫuz 1 (eNA) obv. 24 [*ana*] ˹GÌŠ˺ UR.GI_7 GUR NÍGIN-*ma* ŠÀ LUGAL
(If a star) turns [into] the 'penis of a dog'[54], *turning around*'[55] of the king's heart / desire (will take place).

37 Ḫuz 1 (eNA) obv. 25 [*ana* GÌ]Š UR.MAḪ GUR ŠU.BI.DIL.ÀM (sc. NÍGIN-*ma* ŠÀ LUGAL)
Nin 1 (NA) obv. 56 [DIŠ MUL *ana* GÌŠ U]R.˹MAḪ˺ GUR NÍGIN-*m*[*a*] Š[À LUGAL]
[If a star] turns [into the 'pen]is of a lion', *turning around*'[56] of the [king's] hea[rt] / des[ire] (will take place) // (var. Ḫuz 1:) ditto (sc. *turning around*' of the king's heart / desire (will take place).

Ḫuz 7 (eNA) obv. 26 AŠ.ME (see omen no. 32)

38 Ḫuz 1 (eNA) obv. 27 [*ana* KÙ.BABBA]R? GUR NINDA GI.NA *ina* KUR GÁL-*ši*
Nin 1 (NA) obv. 47 [DI]Š MUL *ana* KÙ.BABBAR GUR NINDA GI.NA *ina* KUR GÁL-*ši*
[I]f a star turns into silver, there will be regular bread-offerings in the country.

39 Ḫuz 1 (eNA) obv. 28 [*ana* KÙ.GI] GUR *téš-mu-u ina* KUR GÁL
Nin 1 (NA) obv. 48 [DI]Š MUL *ana* KÙ.GI GUR *téš-mu-ú ina* KUR GÁL-*š*[*i*]
[I]f a star turns into gold, there will be compliance in the country.[57]

40 Ḫuz 1 (eNA) obv. 29 [*ana* URUDU] GUR ŠU.BI.DIL.ÀM (sc. *téš-mu-u ina* KUR GÁL)
Nin 1 (NA) obv. 49 [DI]Š MUL *ana* URUDU GUR ŠU.BI.DIL.ÀM (sc. *téš-mu-ú ina* KUR GÁL-*š*[*i*])
[I]f a star turns into copper, ditto (sc. there will be compliance in the country).

41 Nin 1 (NA) obv. 50 [DI]Š MUL *ana na-a-bi* GUR *šul-mu ina* KUR GÁ[L-*ši*]
[I]f a star turns into a louse, there will b[e] well-being in the country.[58]

42 Nin 1 (NA) obv. 51 [DI]Š MUL *ana* UR-^{d}UTU GUR ŠU.BI.DIL.[ÀM] (sc. *šul-mu ina* KUR GÁ[L-*ši*])
Nin 2 (NA) obv. 2 [DIŠ] MUL *ana* UR-^{d}UT[U GUR
[I]f a star turns into the 'dog of Šamaš', ditto (sc. there will b[e] well-being in the country).[59]

[54] For the possible interpretation of this and the next entry as fossil belemnoids see p. 7 and footnote 31.

[55] The logogram NÍGIN stands for *lamû*, "to surround, to besiege; to go round", which indicates that the sign MA is a phonetic complement. Only the a-vowel cannot be explained. It is unlikely that the writing conventions of the Neo-Assyrian period, where a final short vowel is frequently dropped from a word which could in turn lead to using any possible vowel if the final short vowel had to be written, would already have had an effect on an early Neo-Assyrian literary text such as this omen text. Since the Assur text VAT 10718 has a negative prediction, the phrase here should have a negative meaning as well. It could refer to an unreliable king with a bad-tempered mind whose orders are contradictory.

[56] See previous footnote.

[57] For the apodosis see CAD T 374a.

[58] For the protasis see CAD N/I 40a.

[59] For the protasis see CAD K 62a.

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43	Nin 1 (NA)	obv. 52	[DI]Š MUL *ana sa-a-si* GUR RI.RI.GA ŠA[Ḫ [I]f a star turns into a moth, there will be disease among the pi[gs . . .]
44	Nin 1 (NA)	obv. 53	[DI]Š MUL *ana kal-ma-ti* GUR RI.RI.GA x[[I]f a star turns into a *kalmatu*-parasites, there will be disease among the .[. . .]
45	Nin 1 (NA)	obv. 54	[DI]Š MUL *ana ut-te-et-ta-ma-ri* GUR RI.RI.GA Š[AḪ [I]f a star turns into a *uttettamaru*[60], there will be disease among the p[igs . . .]
46	Nin 1 (NA)	obv. 55	[DIŠ M]UL *ana* U_8.UDU.ḪI.A GUR É BI [[If a st]ar turns into ewes, that house [. . .]
	Nin 1 (NA)	obv. 56	[GÌŠ U]R.ᵀMAḪᵀ (see omen no. 37)
	Nin 1 (NA)		(rest is missing)
47'	Nin 4 (NB)	obv. 1'	[DIŠ MUL *ana*]x [GUR [If a star turns into a .].[. . .]
48'	Nin 4 (NB)	obv. 2'	ᵀDIŠᵀ [MUL *ana*] ᵀ*kan*ᵀ*-ni* G[UR If [a star] tu[rns] into a (round) vessel stand[61], [. . .]
49'	Nin 4 (NB)	obv. 3'	DIŠ ᵀMULᵀ *ana tal-*ᵀ*lak*ᵀ*-t*[*i* GUR If a star [turns] into a roa[d, . . .]
50'	Nin 4 (NB)	obv. 4'	DIŠ MUL *ana* ᵀÙRᵀ [GUR If a star [turns] into a roof, [. . .]
51'	Nin 4 (NB)	obv. 5'	ᵀDIŠ MULᵀ [If a star [turns into . . .]
	Nin 4 (NB)	obv.	(rest is missing)
52"	Nin 2 (NA)	rev. 1'	[DIŠ MUL *ana* x x]x [GUR [If a star turns into ..]. [. . .]
53"	Nin 2 (NA)	rev. 2'	[DIŠ MUL *ana t*]*u*ʾ*-ul-ti* [GUR [If a star turns into a w]orm[?], [. . .][62]
54"	Nin 2 (NA)	rev. 3'	[DIŠ M]UL *ana* GÍR.TAB GU[R [If a s]tar tur[ns] into a scorpion, [. . .][63]
55"	Nin 2 (NA)	rev. 4'	[DIŠ M]UL *ana sà-sú-ri* GU[R [If a s]tar tur[ns] into a *šassūru*-insect, [. . .][64]
56"	Nin 2 (NA)	rev. 5'	[DIŠ M]UL *ana sa-as-su-ri* G[UR [If a s]tar tu[rns] into a *šassūru*-insect, [. . .][65]
57"	Nin 2 (NA)	rev. 6'	[DIŠ MU]L *ana pi-za-al-lu*<*-ri*> G[UR [If a s]tar tu[rns] into a gecko, [. . .]
58"	Nin 2 (NA)	rev. 7'	[DIŠ MU]L *ana* UḪ[?](IM) GUR [[If a sta]r turns into *kalmatu*-parasites (sic!)[66], [. . .]

[60] Perhaps to be connected with *ettūtu*, *ettītu*, *uttūtu*, "spider".

[61] Here the translation of *kannu* as a round vessel stand is preferred to other possibilities, such as a special pot or fetter or band.

[62] For *tūltu*, "worm" see also omen no. 70*.

[63] For *zuqāqīpu*, "scorpion" see also omen no. 71*.

[64] For the protasis see CAD Š/II 147a.

[65] For the protasis see CAD Š/II 147a.

[66] IM also stands for *šāru*, "wind", or *ṭīdu*, "clay" (see below omen no. 73*). Since IM does not indicate an animal or insect it is more likely that the scribe meant to write UḪ, although the *kalmatu*-parasites are mentioned already in omen no. 44 according to another recension (exemplar Nin 1 [NA]).

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59" Nin 2 (NA) rev. 8' [DIŠ MU]L *ana per-šá-i* GUR [
[If a sta]r turns into a fly, [. . .]

Nin 2 (NA) rev. (end of tablet)

60* Ḫuz 1 (eNA) obv. 30 [*ana*] GUR ZI.GA *ina* É NA È
(If a star) turns [into . . .], a revolt will rise in the man's house.

61* Ḫuz 1 (eNA) obv. 31 [*ana* G]UR I.BÍ.ZA IGI
(If a star) [t]urns [into . . .], he will experience (financial) losses.

62* Ḫuz 1 (eNA) obv. 32 [*ana* GU]R *šá* EN É IGI^{II}-*šú* GUB-*za*
Nin 3 (NB) obv. 1' ˹DIŠ MUL *ana*˺ [
If a star [tu]rns into [. . .], the eyes of the owner of the house will be fixed (lit. stand).

63* Ḫuz 1 (eNA) obv. 33 [*ana* GUR ID]IM *i*[*na*] ˹É˺ NA ÚŠ
Nin 3 (NB) obv. 2' DIŠ ˹MUL˺ *ana* x[
If a star [turns] into .[.., an imp]ortant person will die i[n] the man's house.

64* Ḫuz 1 (eNA) obv. 34 [*ana* GUR x x *ina*] ˹É˺ NA TI-*uṭ*
Nin 3 (NB) obv. 3' DIŠ MUL *ana ne-˹re˺-*[*bi*
If a star [turns] into an entra[nce (or: mountain pass), . . .] will survive (or recover) [in] the man's house.

65* Ḫuz 1 (eNA) rev. 1 [
Nin 3 (NB) obv. 4' DIŠ MUL *ana* SU [GUR
If a star [turns] into a body (or: animal skin, leather), [. . .]

66* Ḫuz 1 (eNA) rev. 2 [
Nin 3 (NB) obv. 5' DIŠ MUL *ana* ÍD GUR *ina* É ˹NA˺ x[
If a star turns into a river, in the man's house .[. . .]

67* Ḫuz 1 (eNA) rev. 3 [
Nin 3 (NB) obv. 6' DIŠ MUL *ana* KIRI$_6$ GUR *šib-šat* DINGIR *ana* L[Ú GÁL. MEŠ][67]
If a star turns into a garden, divine wrath [will be] against the ma[n.]

68* Ḫuz 1 (eNA) rev. 4 [*ana* GUR x x x x]˹É˺ IDIM ÚŠ
Nin 3 (NB) obv. 7' DIŠ MUL *ana* NIM.SAḪAR.RA GUR DAM ˹NA˺ x[
Nin 5 (NA) rev. 1 [I]DIM BA.ÚŠ
If a star turns into *lamṣatu*-fly, the man's wife will .[. . .; in the] house an important person will die.[68]

69* Nin 5 (NA) rev. 1 DIŠ MUL *ana* NIM.BU.BU[69] GUR˺ *ina* Ì.D[UB?
If a star turns into a sand-wasp, in the grana[ry? . . .]

70* Ḫuz 1 (eNA) rev. 5 [*ana tu-ul-t*]*i*?[70] ˹GUR˺ ˹I˺.[BÍ.ZA] IGI
Nin 3 (NB) obv. 8'a DIŠ MUL *ana tul$_5$-ti*[71] GUR I.BÍ.ZA.A IGI-*mar*
Nin 5 (NA) rev. 2 [I.BÍ.Z]A IGI-*mar*
If a star turns into a worm, he will experience (financial) losses.[72]

71* Ḫuz 1 (eNA) rev. 6 [*ana* GÍR.TA]B GUR ŠUB-*tu*$_4$ EN *ar-˹dim˺*[73]
Nin 3 (NB) obv. 8'b [
Nin 5 (NA) rev. 2 : DIŠ MUL *ana* GÍR.TAB GUR ŠUB-*tim* E[N . . .]
If a star turns into a scorpion, defeat of (or: misfortune for) the owner of slaves (lit. singular).

[67] Restored after CT 31, 31 (83-1-18, 410) line 29, a text with liver omens.

[68] For the protasis see CAD L 68b.

[69] Compare ḪAR.RA = *ḫubullu* XIV 322: nim.(bu-bu) BUL+BUL = MIN (sc. *ḫa-me-tum*), see MSL 8.2 (1962) 34. For a star changing into a sand-wasp (*ḫāmītu*) see also omen 82*.

[70] The autograph shows traces of one vertical wedge followed by two small diagonal wedges. Because of the strong destruction of the surface, I assume the two diagonal wedges are in fact just one *Winkelhaken*, which would then represent the end of a TI.

[71] So according to collations (see also omen 53"); CAD K 476a reads *ana ki-ti* (*kītu*, "reed mat") from the copy of the text published by Virolleaud in *Bab.* 4 (1910) 123.

[72] For the apodosis see CAD I/J 3a.

[73] For *zuqāqīpu*, "scorpion" see also omen no. 54".

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72*	Ḫuz 1 (eNA)	rev. 7		[*ana* T]UŠ	GUR	É LÁL-*du*
	Nin 3 (NB)	rev. 1	DIŠ MUL	*ana* TUŠ	GUR-*ri*	É LÁL-*du* SÙḪ *i*[*na*?]
	Nin 5 (NA)	rev. 3	[			]x[74] LÚ

If a star turns into a seat[75], the house will be diminished; (addition Nin 3 and 5:) confusion [will be] i[n?] the man's [. . .].

73*	Ḫuz 1 (eNA)	rev. 8		[*ana* I]M	GUR	ŠUB[(TA)-*tim* US_5.UDU.ḪI.A
	Nin 5 (NA)	rev. 3	: DIŠ MUL	*ana* IM	GUR	ŠUB-*tim* U[S_5.

If a star turns into clay[?76], there will be death among the sheep and goats.

74*	Ḫuz 1 (eNA)	rev. 9		[*ana*] EDIN	GUR	MUNUS.KALAG.GA *ina* KUR GÁL
	Nin 3 (NB)	rev. 2	DIŠ MUL	*ana* $BURU_5$	GUR	MUNUS.KA[LAG.GA
	Nin 5 (NA)	rev. 4	[			]ᵀKURᵀ GÁL-*ši*

If a star turns into the steppe (Nin 3: into locust)[77], there will be famine in the country.

75*	Ḫuz 1 (eNA)	rev. 10		*ana* GÚ.GAL	GUR	ŠÀ DÙG.GA
	Nin 3 (NB)	rev. 3	DIŠ MUL	*ana* GÚ.GAL	GUR	ŠÀ [
	Nin 5 (NA)	rev. 4	: DIŠ MUL	*ana* GÚ.GAL	GUR	ŠÀ [

If a star turns into chickpea, a (sc. his ?) heart will be happy.

76*	Ḫuz 1 (eNA)	rev. 11		*ana* GÚ.TUR	GUR	ŠÀ.ḪÚL.LA
	Nin 3 (NB)	rev. 4	DIŠ MUL	*ana* GÚ.TUR	GUR	ᵀŠÀᵀ [
	Nin 5 (NA)	rev. 5	ᵀDIŠ MUL	*ana*ᵀ G[Ú.		

If a star turns into lentil, there will be happiness.

77*	Ḫuz 1 (eNA)	rev. 12		*ana* ZÍZ.[A]N.NA	GUR	TIL UD-*mi*
	Nin 3 (NB)	rev. 5	ᵀDIŠᵀ MUL	*ana* ZÍZ.AN.NA	ᵀGURᵀ	[
	Nin 5 (NA)	rev. 5	: DIŠ MUL	*ana* ZÍZ.A.AN	GUR	TIL U[D-*mi*]

If a star turns into emmer, the end of the days (is near).

78*	Ḫuz 1 (eNA)	rev. 13		*ana* ŠE.ᵀ$MUŠ_5$ᵀ	GUR	Ì.DUB.MEŠ SUD.MEŠ SA_5.MEŠ
	Nin 3 (NB)	rev. 6	ᵀDIŠ MULᵀ	*ana* ŠE.$MUŠ_5$	G[UR	
	Nin 5 (NA)	rev. 6	DIŠ MUL	*ana* ŠE.ᵀ$MUŠ_5$ᵀ	[GUR]	Ì.DUB.MEŠ SUD.MEŠ S[A_5.MEŠ]

If a star turns into a *šeguššu*-apple (or: *šeguššu*-cereal), the empty granaries will become full.[78]

79*	Ḫuz 1 (eNA)	rev. 14		*ana* ŠE.EŠTUB	GUR	$BURU_{14}$ DÙ-*uš*
	Nin 3 (NB)	rev. 7	ᵀDIŠᵀ [M]UL	*ana* ŠE.EŠTUB	[	
	Nin 5 (NA)	rev. 7	DIŠ MUL	*ana* ŠE.ᵀEŠTUBᵀ	GU[R]	$BURU_{14}$ DÙ-[*uš*]

If a star turns into an *arsuppu*-apple (or: *arsuppu*-cereal), he will harvest.

80*	Ḫuz 1 (eNA)	rev. 15		*ana a-bi-ik-*ᵀ*te*ᵀ	GUR	DUMU.NÍTA-*šu* ÚŠ
	Nin 3 (NB)	rev. 8	[DIŠ M]UL	*ana a-bi-i*[*k-*		
	Nin 5 (NA)	rev. 8	DIŠ MUL	*ana* ᵀ*a-bi-ik*ᵀ-*ti*	ᵀGURᵀ	[DUM]U.NÍTA NA B[A.ÚŠ]

If a star turns into a defeat[?] (*abiktu*)[79], his first-born son will die // (var. Nin 5:) the first-born [so]n of the man will d[ie].

81*	Ḫuz 1 (eNA)	rev. 16		*ana* IM.BABBAR	GUR	NA BI ᵀSILIM?ᵀ
	Nin 3 (NB)	rev. 9	[DIŠ M]UL	*ana* IM.[		
	Nin 4 (NB)	rev. 1'	ᵀDIŠ MUL	*ana*ᵀ I[M.		
	Nin 5 (NA)	rev. 9	DIŠ MUL	*ana* ᵀIMᵀ.BABBAR	GUR	[D]UMU *u* [

If a star turns into gypsum, that very man will be in good health // (var. Nin 5:) [the s]on and [. . .].

[74] This sign ends with a Winkelhaken or a diagonal wedge in the upper half of the sign, followed by a vertical wedge, as would be the case, e.g., with UD, NA, DU or UŠ.

[75] Or was the intention to read ZÍD, *qēmu*, „flour"?

[76] Reading IM as *šāru*, "wind", does not make sense in this context.

[77] One of the scribes might have made a mistake, since the sign EDIN is composed of GAB-ṢAB, while $BURU_5$ is a composition of ḪU-ṢAB; the sign $BURU_5$ has been verified by collation. Since both images, the agricultural land turned into steppe and the harvest being consumed by locusts, would result in famine in the country, it is not clear which of the terms was originally meant.

[78] For the protasis see CAD Š/II 262b.

[79] It is not very likely that an abstract term such as "defeat" is meant here, but the dictionaries give no other meaning for *abiktu*.

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82* Nin 3 (NB) rev. 10 [DIŠ NI]M.*ḫa-m*[*i-*
Nin 4 (NB) rev. 2'-3' DIŠ NIM.*ḫa-mi-t*[*e*] (3') *ina* URU x[
If a sand-wasp [. . .], in the city [. . .][80]

Nin 3 (NB) rev. (rest is missing)
Nin 4 (NB)
Nin 5 (NA)
Nin 6 (NA)

colophons
Ḫuz 1 (eNA) rev. 17 ŠÀ KUD DIŠ AN.PA KÚR x[ ]x IGI
From the section 'If the height of heaven changes and .[.]. becomes visible'.

Nin 5 (NA) rev. 10 1 UŠ 18.ÀM M[U.ŠID].BI.[IM]
78 (are) its ent[ries].

Nin 6 (NA) 1' [M]U$^{?}$.Š[ID.BI.IM][81]
[... (are) its e]nt[ries...].

Ritual
Nin 4 (NB) rev. 4' ÉN mul agrun-ta ˹È˺-[a mul an-úr-ta è-a]
Nin 5 (NA) rev. 11 ÉN mul agrun-ta ˹È˺-[ ] ˹è˺-[
Nin 6 (NA) 2' [a]n-úr-˹ta-è˺-[a]
Incantation: Star which has come forth from the é.nun, [star] which has come [forth] from the horizon of the [s]ky,

Nin 4 (NB) rev. 5' sipa an-na dug$_4$-ga(-)a(-)x[
Nin 5 (NA) rev. 12 sipa an-na dug$_4$-ga(-)a(-)NI [
Nin 6 (NA) 3' [ ]ka-ta [(x)]
Shepherd of heaven, at whose command [...]...[.]

Nin 4 (NB) rev. 6' (traces, rest is lost)
Nin 5 (NA) rev. 13 ^{d}asal-lú-ḫi áb kù áb nun alim$^{!}$-ma na$_4$[
Nin 6 (NA) 4'-5' [n]a$_4$bur sig$_7$-[sig$_7$] $^{5'}$[0 n]a$_4$bur
nam-en-n[a-ke$_4$]
Asalluḫi, the pure cow, the noble cow, the bison; the yellow (stone) *pūru*-bowl, the (stone) *pūru*-bowl of rulership

For the rest of the *namburbi*-ritual see the edition of Caplice (1970) 113–16 no. 35, and of Maul (1994) 453–57.

Appendix A

1) The omens following the namburbi*-ritual in K. 8489+ (OrNS 39 pl. VIII).*

Caplice (1970) 115, described the fragmentary sequence of omens that follow the *namburbi* in K. 8489+ as being related to tablet 20 of *šumma ālu*, but could not present clear parallels. Freedman correctly omitted this fragment in her new edition of *šumma ālu* 20.[82] It is obvious that the structure of omens on this omen tablet differs substantially from those of the series. An affiliation to the series of terrestrial omens is, therefore, unlikely. Instead, clear parallels can be found on tablets with celestial omens referring to falling stars. In K. 139 rev. 18',[83] these omens belong to a sequence that

[80] See also the second tablet of the diagnostic omen series SA.GIG as is represented in the fragment K. 4021 (TDP II plate III) rev. 5: DIŠ *ḫa-mi-tu šá* GIM MUL S[UR . . .], "If a sand-wasp that flashes like a star [. . .]". See R. Labat, *Traité akkadien de diagnostics et pronostics médicaux* [TDP], (Paris: Académie internationale d'histoire des sciences, 1951) 12 line 61. Or is the writing DIŠ NIM.*ḫāmīte* [..] a shortened form of DIŠ MUL *ana* NIM.*ḫāmīte* [. . .], as the Ḫuzirīna version used to write the protases? And should it, therefore, rather be understood as *ana* NIM.*ḫāmīte* [. . .],"(It turns) into a sand-wasp [. . .]"? For an omen referring to a star turning into a sand-wasp (*ḫāmītu*) see omen no. 69*.

[81] Maul, *Namburbi* (1994) 454, understands line 6' rightly as a kind of colophon and reads: [ ]˹KÁM*$^{?}$ x[. The traces, however, can be interpreted most clearly as the lower part of the ŠE group of wedges. Since Nin 6 [NA] runs parallel to Nin 5 [NA], this line rather refers to the number of omens recorded on the tablet.

[82] Freedman, *If a City is Set on a Height* (1998) 307–319.

[83] A fragment written in Neo-Assyrian ductus that I was recently able to re-join with K. 4363 (IIR 49 no. 4; for a new copy see Figs. 4–5). Virolleaud, *Bab.* 4 (1911) 116, 125, treated only the last paragraph of the reverse of this tablet which is a parallel to the omens following the *namburbi* on tablet K. 10048 (see below pp. 23–24).

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is summarized as "16 entries from a different tablet" (rev. 18': 16.ÀM MU.MEŠ *šá* ŠÀ-*bi ṭup-pi šá-nim-ma*).[84] In BM 47461 (unpublished), this sequence is the last one before the colophon identifies the text as "71 entries of the 68th tablet of *enūma anu enlil*" (rev. 24': . . . 1 UŠ 11.ÀM MU.DIDLI DUB 1 UŠ 8.KAM* UD AN ^{d}*en-líl*). Evidently, both the Assyrian and Babylonian scholars considered these omens celestial omens.

With the help of the duplicates, the four lines preserved in K. 8489+ can be restored as follows:

A

K. 8489+	rev. 24'	[DIŠ MUL AN-*e* ŠUB-*ma* GI]M $BURU_5$ $BURU_{14}$ KUR $BURU_5$ GU_7
K. 139+	rev. 1'	[B]URU_5 G[U_7]
BM 47461	rev. 10'	DIŠ MUL AN-*e* ŠUB-*ma* GIM $BURU_5$ $BURU_{14}$ KUR $BURU_5$.ḪI.A GU_7

If a star falls (down) from the sky[85] and (looks) like locust, locust will consume the harvest of the country.

B

K. 8489+	rev. 25'	[DIŠ MUL AN-*e* ŠUB-*ma* GIM *bi-r*]*i-iṣ* KÙ.GI *i-bar-ru-uṣ* ^{d}50 UMUŠ KUR MAN-*ni*[86]
K. 139+	rev. 2'	[ ] ^{d}EN.LÍL UMUŠ KUR MAN-*ni*
BM 47461	rev. 11'	DIŠ MUL AN-*e* ŠUB-*ma* GIM *bi-ri-iṣ* KÙ.GI *i-bar-ru-uṣ* ^{d}EN.LÍL UMUŠ KUR *ú-šá-an-ni*

If a star falls (down) from the sky and flashes like a light-flash of gold, Enlil will change the loyalty of the country.

C

K. 8489+	rev. 26'	[DIŠ MUL AN-*e* ŠUB-*ma* GIM *bi-ri-iṣ* ZAB]AR ^{d}é-a UMUŠ KUR MAN-*ni*
K. 139+	rev. 3'	[ZABA]R ^{d}*é-a* UMUŠ KUR MAN-*ni*
BM 47461	rev. 12'	DIŠ MUL AN-*e* ŠUB-*ma* GIM *bi-ri-iṣ* ZABAR ^{d}*é-a* UMUŠ KUR *ú-šá-an-ni*

If a star falls (down) from the sky and (flashes) like a light-flash of bronze, Ea will change the loyalty of the country.

D

K. 8489+	rev. 27'	[DIŠ MUL AN-*e* ŠUB-*ma* GIM GÍR.TAB NUN *ina zi-qi*]*t* ˹GÍR.TAB˺ [ÚŠ]
K. 139+	rev. 4'	[*i*]*na zi-qit* GÍR.TAB ÚŠ
BM 47461	rev. 13'	DIŠ MUL AN-*e* ŠUB-*ma* GIM GÍR.TAB NUN *ina zi-qit* GÍR.TAB ÚŠ

If a star falls (down) from the sky and (looks) like a scorpion, the prince will die of a scorpion's sting.

2) The omens following the namburbi-*ritual in K. 10048 (OrNS 39 pl. II).*

The *namburbi*-ritual in K. 10048 is followed by a single horizontal ruling and two further lines of text before the fragment breaks off. Maul (1994), 456 had read the second line as subscript referring to a tablet of the series *šumma ālu* and understood the first line as catch-line to a so far unidentified tablet of the terrestrial series. The first line, however, can be restored following two other Neo-Assyrian tablets referring to falling stars. In K. 139+ (see Figs. 4–5), this line introduces a sequence that follows the previously mentioned section of "16 entries from a different tablet" (see above). The other parallel is K. 3995 (*Bab.* 4 [1911] 116, 126). In both tablets[87], this line is the first of a sequence

[84] Another duplicate to this sequence can be found on the reverse of K. 18631 + Sm. 1108 (Geers Heft B p. 142 [Sm. 1108]), written in Babylonian script. Each of the 11 lines that are preserved on reverse is separated from the others by a horizontal line; the traces of five lines on obverse are almost completely washed out and unreadable.

[85] One would expect the phrase *šumma kakkabu ištu šamê imqut-ma*, "If a star falls (down) from heaven and . . .", as is said from fire (e.g. the tablet CT 40, 46 [K. 3699+7120] rev. 50: DIŠ ˹IZI TA˺ AN-*e* ŠUB-*ma mim-ma ú-*˹*qal-li*˺ . . ., "If fire falls from the sky and burns anything. . .", a text that would most probably belong to the series *šumma ālu*, or the Neo-Assyrian letter from Balasî K. 185 [ABL 74 = LAS 38 = SAA X 42] obv. 7–8: . . . [*i*]-˹*šá*˺-*tú* TA*˺ AN-*e* / *t*[*a*]-*a*]*t*-*tu*-*uq-ta*. . ., ". . . fire has fallen down from the sky. . .") or the *miqtu*-disease (*miqtu ištu šamê ina qaq-qa-ri in-táq-ta*, "*miqtu* has fallen from the sky to the ground"; see J. Nougayrol, *Ugaritica* 5 [1968] 32 no. 17 rev. 12'). Compare, however, the medical term AN.TA.ŠUB.BA that is rendered in Akkadian as *miqit šamê*, "(what has) fallen from heaven", see e.g. M. Stol, *Epilepsy in Babylonia* (Cuneiform Monographs 2; Groningen: Styx, 1993) 7 with further bibliography.

[86] Caplice, *OrNS* 39 (1970) 115, understood this omen correctly when he restored the line as: [*šumma kakkabu kīma bi-r*]*i-iṣ ḫurāṣi i-bar-ru-uṣ*. . .; see also CAD B 107b, where Caplice's restoration is quoted.

[87] Both sequences are edited by N. P. Heeßel, ""Wenn ein Mann zum Haus des Kranken geht . . ." Intertextuelle Bezüge zwischen der Serie *šumma ālu* und der zweiten Tafel der Serie SA.GIG", *AfO* 48/49 (2001/2002) 44–45. Contrary to Heeßel's description of K. 139 as a complete tablet of 10 lines (p. 44), the sequence Virolleaud copied in *Bab.* 4 (1911) 125 represents only the last section of the reverse of the tablet as he stated on p. 116 when introducing his edition of this omen sequence. C. Bezold described K. 139 in the first volume of his *Catalogue of the Cuneiform Tablets in the Kouyunjik Collection of the British Museum* (London: The British Museum, 1889) p. 36, correctly as having 30 lines on the obverse and 28 on the reverse.

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that has partial parallels in the second tablet of the diagnostic omen series SA.GIG, although here the protasis is phrased slightly differently[88].

A'	K. 10048	rev. 12'	[DIŠ NA *ana*] ˹Á˺.ÁŠ-*šú* ZI-*ma* MUL.[
	K. 139 +	rev. 19'	DIŠ NA *ana* Á.ÁŠ-*šú* ZI-*ma* UL TA 15 NA *ana* GÙB NA ŠUR SIG_5
	K. 3995	obv. 1	[DIŠ NA *ana* Á].ÁŠ-*šú* ZI-*ma* MUL TA 15 NA *ana* 150 N[A
			If a man comes out for a purpose and a star flares up from the right of the man to the left of the man, it is positive.
B'	K. 10048	rev. 13'	[DIŠ x x x x]x ˹URU˺ LU[GAL
			[If . . .], the city of the ki[ng . . .]
C'	K. 10048	rev.	(rest is missing)

No direct parallel for line B' can be cited, but compare the apodosis "the city of the king and its population is well", usually written URU LUGAL *u* UN.ME(Š)-*šú* SILIM.ME(Š) in first millennium B.C. omen texts.

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[88] The introductory phrase (*šumma*) *amēlu ana ṣibûtī-šu itbī-ma* is omitted in SA.GIG. This phrase has also been used in connection with bird divination where it is followed by the observation of a falcon's movement with respect to a man, see N. de Zorzi, "Bird Divination in Mesopotamia. New Evidence from BM 108874", *KASKAL* 6 (2009) 92 and 94 lines 1–6 as well as pp. 97–99. This proves that this phrase is not typical of either *šumma ālu* or SA.GIG, but has a much wider scope of application within divination for interpretations of "accidental occurrences on occasions when a divine answer was requested", see E. Reiner, "Fortune-Telling in Mesopotamia", *JNES* 19 (1960) 29.

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