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# CELESTIAL MARDUK IN AND BEYOND *ENŪMA ELIŠ*

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This article presents an analysis of celestial Marduk in *Enūma Eliš* and in sources that are pastiches of the poem or include quotations from it, including references to its recitation. These hymns, prayers, and exegetic compositions, attested by tablets from the early first millennium B.C.E. to the Hellenistic period, are often related to the calendar and ritual. The paper gives an integrated view of celestial Marduk and his associations and relates developments to scholars' varying priorities. This includes insights into the so-called Babylonian man in the moon, schematized Late Babylonian astralizations, and the antithesis of light and darkness.

## *Introduction*

In this study celestial Marduk is understood as Marduk in relation to his celestial ancestors, the sky gods Anšar and Anu, his associations with ancient planets and fixed stars, and his creation and organization of the heavens and heavenly bodies. Rochberg (2007; 2009: 58–62; 2024) published a paper on astral Marduk and, subsequently, a broader study of the relationship between celestial bodies and gods, as well as a recent overview of knowledge of the heavens in *Enūma Eliš* in relation to world order. The publication of Neo- and Late Babylonian tablets from northern Babylonia has added new evidence for celestial Marduk in *Enūma Eliš* and in works attesting to the poem's reception (Fadhil and Jiménez 2022; Frahm and Jiménez 2015; Heinrich 2021; Jiménez 2016a; Jiménez 2016b; Reynolds 2019). Late Babylonian scholarly and cultic contexts are also now better understood (Debourse 2022; Debourse and Jursa 2025; Krul 2018; Reynolds 2019). This paper presents the first integrated study of celestial Marduk in the poem and a corpus of texts with pastiche or quotation.[1] Analysis of the poem demonstrates that Marduk's portrayal as a celestial deity is more cohesive than previously appreciated. The works attesting to its reception are introduced and assessed thematically: Marduk's celestial ancestry and his creation and organization of heaven; Marduk and the Sun without the Moon; Marduk and the paired Sun and Moon; and Marduk, planets and specific fixed stars. Aspects of celestial Marduk in the poem show a remarkable longevity and were combined with other material in a variety of perspectives.

## *1. Celestial Marduk: Enūma Eliš*

Intertextual and syncretic, *Enūma Eliš* draws on earlier ideas about heaven and heavenly bodies, including heaven's creation and organization, astral Marduk, Šulpae, the Bow, and the Arrow (Gabriel 2025: 27–35, 58–60; Horowitz 2014: 1–7, 20–24; Lambert 2013: 169-92; Reynolds 2019: 299, 378 n. 659; Rochberg 2024: 237–50). The poem selectively portrays heaven and heavenly bodies to glorify Marduk's supremacy. Marduk's celestial ancestors Anšar and Anu are woven into the narrative before the list of Marduk's fifty names. Four passages specifically concern his celestial nature: his name Māriutu and, through wordplay, the Sun (*Enūma Eliš* I 89–108); his destruction and recreation of an unspecified *lumāšu*-constellation (*Enūma Eliš* IV 19–28); his creation and organization of heaven, including unspecified *lumāšu*-constellations as the gods' stations and calendrical markers, his star Nēberu, the Sun, and the Moon (*Enūma Eliš* IV 135 – V 46); and Anu's astralization of his bow as the Bow constellation (*Enūma Eliš* VI 90–91).

The list of Marduk's fifty names draws on the preceding narrative and adds rich theological exegesis to demonstrate Marduk's supremacy and syncretic absorption of other gods (*Enūma Eliš* VI 121 – VII 144; Gabriel 2014: 170–76; Van De Mieroop 2024).[2] These name entries are most relevant: Marduk; Asalluḫi with Namru and Asaralimnuna; Tutu as Ziukkena; Aranuna; Lugal-Šuana; Nēberu; and Lord of the Lands. Using wordplay, these entries associate Marduk with Anu, Anšar,

[1] Meteorological phenomena and cosmic bonds are beyond this article's scope.

[2] This list is related to god lists but the nature of the relationship is unclear (Seri 2006; Wisnom 2020: 92–93).



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the Sun, Nēberu, light, and purity/luminosity, and they expound on his creation and regulation of heaven and the gods' astral stations and motion. The only named heavenly bodies in the poem are Nēberu, the Sun, the Moon, and the Bow. Only the Moon is linked to Marduk solely in the creation episode. In this paper the quotations from the poem in composite transliteration and translations are based on Heinrich (2021) and Lambert (2013: 45–134), with minor adjustments of my own. This analysis enables a fuller understanding of celestial Marduk in the poem.

### *1.1 Anšar and Anu*

In *Enūma Eliš* Anšar and Anu are prominent celestial ancestors and promoters of Marduk, including as name-givers, but their own names are not ceded to him. Anu in particular has appropriate celestial associations, including the Sun, winds, upper heaven, Bow constellation, light, and, in one variant, the Moon.[3]

In the poem's introductory theogony, Anšar (*an-šár*), "All Heaven", is paired with Kišar ($^{d}$*ki-šár*), "All Earth", the latter mentioned only once (*Enūma Eliš* I 12). Their son, Marduk's grandfather, Anu ($^{d}$*a-num*), "Heaven", stands out as Marduk's only unpaired ancestor (*Enūma Eliš* I 1–20).[4] It was Anu who elevated the young Marduk to the acme of divine power, calling him Māriutu with solar interpretation and arming him with the winds (*Enūma Eliš* I 89–108, IV 44, VI 123). The hermeneutics of the name Māriutu are discussed below. From Tablet II onwards Anšar recurs as the junior gods' first king who yielded his kingship to Marduk (*Enūma Eliš* II–III *passim,* IV 83, 125, V 79). Anu and Anšar held these key roles independently of Marduk's creation of heaven. However, in Marduk's first phase of populating heaven, he installed Anu in the upper zone (*Enūma Eliš* IV 145–46, VI 41–42, see below section 1.4).

As specified name-givers, Anu and Anšar predominate in Tablets VI–VII. Anu celebrated and named Marduk's bow, including astralizing it as the Bow constellation (*Enūma Eliš* VI 86–94, see below section 1.5). Anšar called Marduk Asalluḫi to express Marduk's supremacy as a prelude to the list of fifty names, so this act of naming and the name Asalluḫi had a special status in the poem (*Enūma Eliš* VI 101). Anu gave Marduk two key names associated with light: his earliest and first name, Marduk, and his seventh name, Asalluḫi (*Enūma Eliš* VI 123, 127–28, 147–50).[5] Anšar, Laḫmu, and Laḫamu are each said to have awarded three of Marduk's first nine names, implying that Anšar awarded the name Marduk, and Laḫamu awarded the name Asalluḫi, each with two sub-names (*Enūma Eliš* VI 157–60). Lambert (2013: 480–81) attributed multiple name-givers to the poem's composite nature but this could have been a strategy for enhancing a name's prestige.

Marduk's Sumerian name Lugal-Šuana ($^{d}$*lugal-*$^{r}$*šu*$^{\urcorner}$*-an-na*, "King of Šuana") is rendered as both "lord, strength of Anu" (*be-lu*$_4$ *e-muq* $^{d}$*a-nim*) and "naming by Anšar" (*ni-bu-ut an-šár*) (*Enūma Eliš* VII 101–02). The sign "an" in Lugal-Šuana was interpreted as Sumerian an, "heaven", the base element of the names of the celestial gods Anu and Anšar (George 1992: 38–39, 239–45, I 4–7; Lambert 2013: 490).

### *1.2 Māriutu and the Sun*

In the poem the first name awarded to Marduk is written with the traditional Sumerian logogram $^{d}$amar.utu (e.g. *Enūma Eliš* I 81–82, VI 123). This writing can be understood as $^{d}$amar.utu.ak, "Bull-calf of Utu (Sun)", and corresponded to *marūtuk* (later *marūduk*), Marduk's name in Akkadian (Lambert 2013: 161–163). Interpretation of $^{d}$*marūtuk*(amar.utu) associates Marduk with the Sun and light very early in the poem and in the first entry in the list of fifty names. Perfected by Anu in his youth, Marduk was saluted with homophonic wordplay on his name:

[3] The standard Anu–Enlil–Ea triad is linked with the moon in an inserted variant (Heinrich 2021: V 16 NinNA3; Hätinen 2021: 137); on Anu's path and Nēberu see below section 1.4.

[4] Ea is paired with Damkina before Marduk's birth (*Enūma Eliš* I 78, 84).

[5] On the Marduk name entry see below section 1.2; on the Asalluḫi entry see below section 1.4. Listing Asalluḫi seventh may indicate the name's high status (on seven see Konstantopoulos 2023: 25–26).

101 ˹*ma*˺-*ri-iu-ú-tu ma-ri-iu-ú-tu*
102 *ma-ri* $^{d}$*šamšu*(utu)$^{šú}$ $^{d}$*šamšu*(utu)$^{šú}$ *šá ilī*(dingir)$^{meš}$

*Enūma Eliš* I 101–02

101 "Māriutu, Māriutu,
102 *my* son, the Sun, the Sun of the gods"[6]

As an introduced variant in three Babylonian sources, the Sun's name in the final title has the exegetical spelling $^{d}$*šà-máš*.[7] The Sun does not recur in the poem until Marduk creates heavenly bodies (*Enūma Eliš* V 19). In the first entry in the name list, Anu is said to have awarded the name written $^{d}$amar.utu from the time of Marduk's birth and more elaborate interpretation includes the same wordplay:

125 *šá ina* $^{giš}$*kakki*(tukul)-*šú a-bu-bi ik-mu-ú šá-pu-ti*
126 *ilī*(dingir.dingir) *abbī*(ad)$^{meš}$-*šú i-ṭi-ru ina šap-šá-qí*
127 *lu-u ma-ru* $^{d}$*šamši*(utu)$^{ši}$ *šá ilī*(dingir.dingir) *né-bu-ú šu-ma*
128 *ina nu-ri-šú nam-ri lit-tal-la-ku šú-nu ka-a-a-na*

*Enūma Eliš* VI 125–28

125 "who with his weapon the flood subdued the loud
126 (and) saved the gods, his fathers, in a time of suffering.
127 May he be the son, the Sun of the gods, the radiant one,
128 in his bright light may they constantly move with regularity"

Marduk saved the gods from the suffering of war by defeating Tiāmtu and VI 127–28 are best understood as referring to the gods' astral motion regulated by Marduk's star Nēberu after he had created heaven and the constellations as their astral stations.[8] The name entries on Asalluḫi, where he is described as "light of the gods" (*nu-ru šá ilī*(dingir.dingir)), Asaralimnuna, Tutu, and Nēberu contain related material (see below section 1.4). The description of Marduk as "Sun of the gods" (I 102, VI 127) and the role of Nēberu, probably signifying Jupiter, as Marduk's star elsewhere in the poem suggest a correspondence between these two bright heavenly bodies: "Sun of the gods", deriving from wordplay, may well be an epithet of Nēberu.[9] In any case, "Sun of the gods" and "radiant one" are appropriate epithets of Marduk as the gods' saviour, who oversaw their astral motion bathed in his light.

### *1.3 First* lumāšu-*constellation*

In the poem two episodes attest to the prestige of unspecified heavenly bodies termed *lumāšū* and these episodes frame Marduk's battle with Tiāmtu and her army. In line with Fincke (2023: 201–09), the term *lumāšū* in *Enūma Eliš* is understood as signifying constellations that represent gods and function as their homes. The ability to destroy and create (*a-ba-tu*$_4$ *ù ba-nu-ú*) was intrinsic to Marduk's newly acquired supremacy and, to demonstrate his elevation, he destroyed and recreated one such constellation (*lu-ma-šu*) specially created by the gods for this purpose (*Enūma Eliš* IV

[6] In *Enūma Eliš* I 102 the final vowel on *ma-ri* might not represent a 1$^{st}$ singular possessive suffix, which would remove the need for direct speech. The first two words of this line were translated by Lambert (2013: 57, 164) as "The Son, the Sun-god"; by Foster as "The son, the sun" (Heinrich 2021); and by Helle as "son of the Sun", with a genitive relationship instead of apposition (Heinrich and Helle 2024: 33).

[7] Heinrich 2021: I 102 BabaNB9 rev. 8′ [$^{d}$*š*]*à-máš* (Babylon Collection), SipNB2 rev. 11b $^{r}$d$^{?}$[*šà*]-*máš* (Sippar Library), BabaNBSch14 11′b $^{d}$*šà-máš* (Sippar Collection); on this writing see Fadhil and Jiménez 2021: 217–18 and below section 2.3. On the Sippar and Babylon Collections see Reynolds 2024: 135–36.

[8] On *namru* see Thavapalan 2020: 96–107. Translating *atalluku* Gtn with forms of "walk" obscures the astral meaning (Heinrich 2021: VI 128; Heinrich and Helle 2024: 81; Lambert 2013: 117), cf. Livingstone 1989: no. 2, 14: *mu-tal-lik qé-reb šá-ma-me*, "the one who constantly moves inside heaven" (translation mine).

[9] In a hymn praising Babylon and the Babylonians that probably dates from earlier in the second half of the second millennium B.C.E., "Marduk's star" (112: mul $^{d}$amar.utu) has the epithet "delightful Sun" (112: *ṣa-a-a-ḫu šam-šá*), also deriving from wordplay on Marduk's name, and the editors identify Marduk's star as Nēberu (Fadhil and Jiménez 2024: 22, 42–43, 55–56). The Sun was equated with Jupiter in commentaries on *Šurpu* and *Enūma Anu Enlil* (Reynolds 2019: 271).

19–28; Gabriel 2025: 43–51; Rochberg 2024: 241). Gabriel (2025: 43–51) highlights the significance of this *lumāšu* as the representation of a deity but the proposed identification as the planet Venus in an allusion to Ištar's death and resurrection can only be speculative.[10] Marduk's small-scale demonstration with one pre-created *lumāšu*-constellation affirmed his kingship. This prefigured his large-scale, original creation and population of heaven with *lumāšu*-constellations (*ˀluˀ-ma-ši*) as the first type of heavenly body (*Enūma Eliš* V 1–36).

### *1.4 Creation and organization of heaven*

Marduk's creation of heaven and heavenly bodies in *Enūma Eliš* IV–V has been extensively studied (e.g. Horowitz 2014: 1–8; Lambert 2013: 169–92; Rochberg 2024). This topic features in the narrative before the name list and in the name list itself.[11] The poem's opening couplet specifies the primeval setting when heaven (*šá-ma-mu*) and solid ground (*am-ma-tu*$_4$) were unnamed, signifying their non-existence (*Enūma Eliš* I 1–2). Choosing the non-existence of heaven as the subject of the opening line shows its crucial importance for the poem and this couplet works with *Enūma Eliš* VII 135–36 as a framing device (see below in this section).

Heaven does not recur after I 1 until Marduk creates it from half of Tiāmtu's corpse, the poet using apt imagery about butterflying a fish to aid drying:

137 *iḫ-pi-ši-ma ki-ma nu-un maš-ṭe-e a-na ši-ni-šu*
138 *mi-iš-lu-uš-ša iš-ku-nam-ma šá-ma-mi uṣ-ṣal-lil*

*Enūma Eliš* IV 137–38

137 He split her into two like a dried fish,
138 half of her he positioned and made into a roof as heaven.

Marduk contained this half of Tiāmtu's watery corpse with her taut skin (*maš-ka*) (*Enūma Eliš* IV 139–40). The final couplet before the population of heaven reads:

141 *šamê*(an)$^{e}$ *i-bi-ir aš-ra-tu*$_4$ *i-ḫi-ṭam-ma*
142 *uš-tam-ḫi-ir mé-eḫ-rat apsî*(abzu) *šu-bat* $^{d}$*nu-dím-mud*

*Enūma Eliš* IV 141–42

141 He crossed heaven and inspected the firmament,
142 he made it match the Apsû, the dwelling of Nudimmud (Ea)[12]

Marduk installed Anu in his unnamed shrine in upper heaven, Enlil in his shrine Ešarra in lower heaven, and Ea in his shrine Ešgalla, corresponding to Ešarra, in the Apsû (*Enūma Eliš* IV 143–46). These allocations are later linked with the building of Marduk's temple Esagil in Babylon and the division of the gods between heaven and netherworld, which was also called the Apsû (*Enūma Eliš* V 119–30, VI 39–46, 61–69). Thus, Marduk assigned the traditional triad of great gods to their appropriate cosmic domains, using the Apsû as a pattern, and split the other gods between heaven and netherworld (Lambert 2013: 193–99; Rochberg 2024: 248–49). Elsewhere in the poem, heaven created by Marduk as the gods' residence has a prominent role but the netherworld as their other residence occurs only briefly in the stock pair heaven and netherworld.[13]

Tablet V opens with Marduk's astral population and regulation of heaven:

1 *ú-ba-áš-šim ma-an-za-za an ilī*(dingir.dingir) *rabûti*(gal)$^{meš}$
2 *kakkabī*(mul)$^{meš}$ *tam-šil-šu-ˀnu luˀ-ma-ši uš-zi-iz*
3 *ú-ad-di šatta*(mu.an.na) *ˀmiˀ-iṣ-ra-ta ú-aṣ-ṣir*

[10] Fincke (2023: 205, 207) argued that the sense of *lumāšu* as an anthropomorphic representation of a god connected to or embodied in a planet is a Neo-Assyrian development.

[11] *Enūma Eliš* I 1–2, IV 135 – V 46, VI 143–46, VII 5–6, 15–18, 82–83, 86–87, 97–98, 124–36.

[12] Ea had earlier killed Tiāmtu's first spouse, Apsû, deified freshwater, and occupied the subterranean domain made from his corpse (*Enūma Eliš* I 69–72).

[13] See below in this section with n. 20.

4 12 *arḫī*(iti)$^{meš}$ *kakkabī*(mul)$^{meš}$ ˹*šulušā*(3.ta.àm)˺ *uš-zi-iz*
5 *iš-tu* $u_4$*-mi ša šatti*(mu.an.na) *uṣ-ṣ*[*i-r*]*u ú-ṣu-ra-ti*
6 *ú-šar-šid man-za-az* $^{d}$*né-bé-ri ana ud-du-u rik-si-šú-un*
7 *a-na la e-peš an-ni la e-gu-ú ma-na-ma*
8 *man-za-az* $^{d}$+*en-líl u* $^{d}$*é-a ú-kin it-ti-šú*

*Enūma Eliš* V 1–8

1 He fashioned the stations for the great gods,
2 he set up the *lumāšu*-constellations, the stars, corresponding to them (the gods).[14]
3 He defined the year, he drew the boundaries,
4 he set up three stars each for the twelve months.
5 After he had drawn the plans of the year,
6 he founded the station of Nēberu to define their linkages.
7 So that nobody did wrong or acted negligently,
8 he established the stations of Enlil and Ea with it.

The tablet's opening line makes the fundamental but under-appreciated point that Marduk created stations (*manzāzū*) for the astralized gods in the aftermath of the war with Tiāmtu. In this celestial sense, the term *manzāzu*, "station, standing place", signifies the correct position in the sky occupied by a heavenly body as the dwelling of an astral deity. Fixed stars, including the *lumāšu*-constellations, were perceived by the ancient observer as maintaining their relative positions ("stations") in a pattern that moved overall in the course of each year. The positions ("stations") of ancient planets were perceived as moving more freely in relation to this pattern. The *lumāšu*-constellations were the first type of heavenly body created by Marduk and their heliacal risings marked the ideal calendar through the so-called astrolabe system that allocated three stars to each of the twelve months.[15] As part of this system, Marduk founded the station (*manzāzu*) of his star Nēberu, "Crossing", to define the correct positions of these constellations and also established Enlil and Ea's stations to prevent any deviation. This alludes to the three heavenly paths along which the stars were believed to move: Enlil's in the north; Anu's, including Nēberu, in the centre; and Ea's in the south (Horowitz 2014: 1, 6–7, 11–15, 196). As most recently argued by Rochberg (2024: 239–40), Marduk's star Nēberu in *Enūma Eliš* is probably Jupiter, later Marduk's principal planet in the first millennium B.C.E.[16] Nēberu in the list of Marduk's names (*Enūma Eliš* VII 124–34) is discussed below. Marduk enabled and controlled the heavenly bodies' motion by opening lockable gates (*abullātu*(abul)$^{meš}$) in both sides of Tiāmtu's ribcage (*ṣe-li* [*k*]*i-lal-la-an*) and positioning heights (*e-la-a-ti*) in her innards (*ka-bat-ti-šá-ma*) (*Enūma Eliš* V 9–11; Hätinen 2021: 83–84).

Marduk created the Moon ($^{d}$*nanna-ru*, "Luminary") and instructed him in his monthly cycle.[17] After rising glowing in the heights (*na-pa-ḫi e-*˹*la-a*˺*-ti*) at the start of the month, a waxing crescent radiant with horns (*qar-ni na-ba-a-ta*) was to become a half-crown (*a-ga-a* [*maš*]*-la*) on day seven before opposition with Šamaš on day fifteen and corresponding waning (*Enūma Eliš* V 12–20).[18] Conjunction at the month's end was particularly important:

21 [*bu-ub-bu-l*]$u_4$ (var. $u_4$.n[á.àm]) *a-na ḫar-ra-an* $^{d}$*šamaš*(utu) *šu-taq-rib-ma*
22 ˹*i*˺-[*na* $u_4$ 3]0.˹kám˺ *lu šu-tam-ḫu-rat* $^{d}$*šamaš*(utu) *lu šá-na-*˹*at*˺
23 ˹*ú*˺-[x x x (x)] x *itta*(giskim) *ba-*˺*i-i ú-ru-uḫ-*˹*šá*˺
24 *ṣa*-x [x x x x *š*]*u-*˹*taq-ri-ba*˺*-ma di-na di-n*[*a*]

*Enūma Eliš* V 21–24

21 "On the day [of (lunar) disappearance] draw near to the path of Šamaš,
22 on [day] thirty may you be matched (in conjunction), may you rival Šamaš.
23 *I* [ … ] … the sign, go along its way,

[14] On this couplet see Fincke 2023: 202 n. 69.

[15] On this system and the term *kakkabu*(mul), "star", encompassing fixed stars, constellations, and planets, see Horowitz 2014: 1–11; Rochberg 2024: 238.

[16] In discussions of Nēberu, Horowitz (2014: 1–4, 20–25) argued for Mercury in *Enūma Eliš*; Freedman (2015: §1.1, §3.2) proposed "any visible astronomical object that marks an equinox"; Wee (2016: 156) favoured "a specific location on the fixed star map"; and Hunger and Steele (2019: 115, 165-69, 177) did not rule out a constellation.

[17] Hätinen 2021: 31, 62, 93–94.

[18] On the root *n p ḫ* see Hätinen 2021: 83; on the variant V 16 NinNA3 see above section 1.1.

24 … [ … ] draw near to each other and decide judgement."

The invisible Moon and the Sun jointly issued judgements and V 23 may describe conjunction as an ominous sign (*ittu*) created by Marduk.[19] Fragmentary lines relate Šamaš to human wrongdoing, conjunction, day and night, and New Year (*zag-ʾmukʾ-ku*) (*Enūma Eliš* V 25–46).

In the list of Marduk's names in *Enūma Eliš* VI–VII, the following entries contain closely related material about his celestial aspects and could encapsulate the preceding narrative.[20] Through Marduk's seventh name Asalluḫi and its sub-names Namtila and Namru, Marduk was linked with light, the gods' salvation, and purity/luminosity (*Enūma Eliš* VI 147–56).[21] The main entry reads:

147 $^{d}$*asar-lú-ḫi šùm-šú šá im-bu-ú a-bu-šú* $^{d}$*a-num*
148 *šu-ú lu-ú nu-ru šá ilī*(dingir.dingir) *geš-ṭu-ú dan-nu*
149 *šá ki-ma šu-mi-šu-ma la-mas-si ili*(dingir) *u ma-a-ti*
150 *ina šá-áš-mì dan-ni i-ṭe-ru šu-bat-ni ina pu-uš-qí*

*Enūma Eliš* VI 147–50

147 "Asalluḫi, his name that his father Anu called,
148 may he be the light of the gods, outstanding one, mighty one,
149 who, in accord with his name, is the protective spirit of god and land,
150 and who through mighty combat saved our dwellings from distress."

The name is rendered as "light of the gods", understanding the element "asal/asar" as "light" (see below in this section). With increasing specification, the entry links Marduk's light with his rescue of the gods' dwellings through his victory over Tiāmtu. This alludes to the gods' new astral homes, created by Marduk and controlled by his star Nēberu (see above and below in this section).

Marduk's related tenth name Asare prominently opens Tablet VII and in the entry on its second sub-name Asaralimnuna, a by-name of Asalluḫi that probably means "Asar, Bison of the Prince", Marduk is linked with light and regulation:

5 $^{d}$*asar-alim-nun-na ka-ru-bu nu-úr a-bi a-li-di-ʾšuʾ*
6 *muš-te-šir te-ret* $^{d}$*a-nim* $^{d}$+*en-líl u* $^{d}$*é-a* $^{d}$*nin-ši-kù*

*Enūma Eliš* VII 5–6

5 "Asaralimnuna, honoured one, light of the father, his begetter,
6 who keeps in order the decrees of Anu, Enlil, and Ea, (called) Ninšiku."

In the interpretation in VII 5 "asal/asar" corresponds to "light" and "nun" to Ea as Asalluḫi–Marduk's father (Fadhil and Jiménez 2022: 25). Keeping the decrees in order probably refers to Nēberu's regulation of the astral deities' motion in the sky on the paths of Anu, Enlil, and Ea (Rochberg 2024: 242). In Ea's title Ninšiku the sign kù alludes to purity/luminosity.

The fourteenth name entry concerns Tutu's sub-name Ziukkena, "Life of the Host":

15 $^{d}$*tu-tu* $^{d}$*zi-ukken-na na-piš-ti um-ma-ni ša-niš iz-zak-ru*
16 *šá ú-kin-nu ana ilī*(dingir.dingir) *šamê*(an)$^{e}$ *el-lu-ti*
17 *al-kát-su-un iṣ-ba-tu-ma ú-ad-du-ú man-za-as-su-un*
18 *a-a im-ma-ši i-na a-pa-a-ti ep-še-ta-šu li-ik-til-la*

*Enūma Eliš* VII 15–18

[19] Hätinen 2021: 122–27.

[20] On the related Marduk name entry see above section 1.2. In the entries on NaRi-lugaldimmerankia, Agilimma, and Mummu, Marduk's actions concerning both heaven and netherworld include: establishing the gods' dwellings (*šu-bat-ni*, "our dwellings") or stations (*man-za-zu*) in a time of distress (*pu-uš-qí*) (*Enūma Eliš* VI 143–46); and creating and making pure/luminous netherworld and heaven with its heights (*e-la-a-ti*) and organizing the lost one(s) (*pàr-ʾsiʾ*), a reference to the gods displaced by his and Tiāmtu's war (*Enūma Eliš* VII 82–83, 86–87). These themes are discussed below.

[21] See above section 1.1. On Marduk–Asalluḫi syncretism see Johandi 2018. As Namru, "Bright One", Marduk is responsible for the gods' pure/luminous astral motion (*Enūma Eliš* VI 156: *mul-li-lu a-lak-ti-ni*, "the one who makes our motion pure/luminous". On the purity/luminosity root *ʾ l l* see Hätinen 2021: 88–89; Thavapalan 2020: 96–107.

15 Tutu as Ziukkena, life of the host, they secondly pronounced,
16 who established pure heaven for the gods;
17 who governed their motion and defined their stations,
18 may his deed not be not forgotten by teeming mortals, may it be kept in mind.

Building on this sub-name's meaning, Marduk's saving of the gods' lives is linked to his creation of pure/luminous heaven for them and his organization of their astral motion and stations.

The thirty-ninth name entry on Aranuna, "Advisor of the Prince", reads:

97 $^{d}$*a-rá-nun-na ma-lik* $^{d}$*é-a ba-an ilī*(dingir)$^{meš}$ *abbī*(ad)$^{meš}$*-šú*
98 *šá a-na a-lak-ti ru-bu-ti-šú la ú-maš-šá-lu ilu*(dingir) *a-a-um-ma*

*Enūma Eliš* VII 97–98

97 Aranuna, advisor of Ea, creator of the gods, his fathers,
98 whom no other god equals for the motion of his nobility.

In my view VII 98 alludes to Marduk's motion (*alaktu*) as his star Nēberu that regulated the positions of the other astral gods.[22]

The list culminates with Marduk's names Nēberu, "Crossing", the longest entry in Tablet VII, and Lord of the Lands:

124 $^{d}$*né-bé-ru né-bé-re-et šamê*(an)$^{e}$ *u erṣeti*(ki)$^{ti}$ *lu-ú ta-mi-iḫ-ma*
125 *e-liš ù šap-liš la ib-bé-ru li-qé-ʾu-šú ša-a-šu*
126 $^{d}$*né-bé-ru kakkab*(mul)*-šú šá ina šamê*(an)$^{e}$ *ú-šá-pu-u*
127 *lu-ú ṣa-bit kun-sag-ge-šu-nu šá-a-šú lu-ú pal-su-šú*
128 *ma-a šá qer-biš ti-amti i-te-eb-bi-ru la na-ḫi-iš*
129 *šum-šu lu-ú* $^{d}$*né-bé-ru a-ḫi-zu qer-bi-šu*
130 *šá kakkabī*(mul)$^{meš}$ *šá-ma-mì al-kàt-su-nu li-kin-ma*
131 *ki-ma ṣe-e-ni li-ir-ta-a ilī*(dingir.dingir) *gim-ra-šu-un*
132 *li-ik-mi ti-amta na-piš-ta-šu li-si-iq u lik-ri*
133 *aḫ-ra-taš nišī*(ùg)$^{meš}$ *la-ba-ri-iš* $u_4$*-mì*
134 *li-is-se-ma la uk-ta-li* [*l*]*i-re-eq ana ṣa-a-ti*
135 *áš-šum aš-ru ib-na-a ip-ti-qu dan-ni-na*
136 $^{d}$*bēl*(en) *mātāti*(kur.kur) *šum-šu it-ta-bi a-bu* $^{d+}$*en-líl*

*Enūma Eliš* VII 124–36

124 "May Nēberu control the crossing place(s) of heaven and netherworld,
125 above and below they must not cross, may they wait for him.
126 May Nēberu, his star, which he made visible in heaven,
127 govern their turning point, may they look to him,
128 saying: 'He who constantly crossed inside Tiāmtu without resting
129 may his name be Nēberu, the one who seizes her insides'.
130 May he establish the motion of the stars of heaven,
131 like flocks may he constantly shepherd all the gods.
132 May he subdue Tiāmtu, may her life become limited and short.
133 For posterity, for the duration of days,
134 may he become far away, he may not be held back; may he become distant for the remote future.[23]
135 Because he created the firmament and fashioned the underworld,
136 father Enlil called his name Lord of the Lands."

The position and length of the Nēberu entry indicate this name's prestige. In an eternal cycle, Nēberu not only looks after the gods by controlling the motion of their stars but also enacts Marduk's conquest of Tiāmtu in the night sky. The astral content has attracted particular attention (Horowitz 2014: 6–7,

[22] The astral meaning is obscured by translations of *alaktu* as "walk" (Lambert 2013: 129) or "ways" (Heinrich 2021: VII 98; Heinrich and Helle 2024: 91). Lambert (2013: 141, 489–90) discusses the name entry and its interpretation in the commentary on *Enūma Eliš* VII, where Sumerian a.ˀráˀ corresponds to Akkadian *a-lak-tu*, and Sumerian n[un] to Akkadian ˀ*ru*ˀ*-bu-u*. On astral interpretation in the commentary on *Enūma Eliš* I–VII see below section 2.4.

[23] On the variant *liš-ši-ma* for *li-is-se-ma*, see Lambert 2013: 131, 492. I take VII 132 as an emphatic monostich (otherwise Heinrich 2021: VII 132; Lambert 2013: 130–31).

22–23; Rochberg 2024: 244–45). Nēberu, from the root *ʾ b r*, is translated by the more general term "Crossing" but meanings of the common noun *nēberu* also include "ferry, ford" in relation to crossing a body of water (e.g. CAD N/2: 145–47). Building on this root, Nēberu holds the "crossing place(s) of heaven and netherworld" (*nēberet šamê u erṣeti*) and the astral gods "must not cross" (*lā ibberū*) above and below but should wait for him. Nēberu should control their turning point (*kunsaggêšunu*) and they should call him Nēberu because "he constantly crossed" (*ītebbiru*) inside Tiāmtu.[24] Although the significance of the terms *nēberet* and *kunsaggêšunu* in relation to the sky is unclear, Nēberu should govern the stars' motion (*alkassunu*), herding all the gods like sheep (Rochberg 2024: 244–45). By herding the fixed stars as the astral gods' dwellings, Marduk ensures that they are always in the correct positions in the sky. The image of a shepherd and his flocks conveys Marduk's control of and care for the gods. He gives them eternal security and stability in stark contrast to the preceding turmoil of his war with Tiāmtu when the gods were split into the two opposing factions (e.g. *Enūma Eliš* I 127–32, II 11–18, III 15–22, 73–80, VII 25–32). Marduk had fashioned heaven from half of Tiāmtu's corpse, using her skin, ribcage, and innards (*Enūma Eliš* IV 137–40, V 9–11, see above in this section). As well as continually crossing inside Tiāmtu, Nēberu should seize Tiāmtu's insides and subdue her.[25] By its eternal motion in and regulation of heaven, Nēberu not only gave the displaced gods security in a post-war world but also viscerally reenacted Marduk's victory over Tiāmtu.

Marduk's creation of firmament (*ašru*) and underworld (*dannina*) introduce his fiftieth name, Enlil's title Lord of the Lands (*Enūma Eliš* VII 135–36; Rochberg 2024: 241).[26] This narrative culmination constitutes ring composition with *Enūma Eliš* I 1–2, when heaven and solid ground were unnamed and did not exist.

Thus, in the narrative before the name list, Marduk's creation of heaven from Tiāmtu's corpse has a high degree of materiality. His astral population of heaven begins with the gods' stations but focuses on heavenly bodies as calendrical markers, especially the Moon and Sun.[27] Marduk, astralized as Nēberu, controls heaven and the motion of the other heavenly bodies. In the name list, Marduk is a god of light and purity/luminosity, and the gods' saviour who created their astral stations as havens and controlled their motion (*atalluku* Gtn; *alaktu*) for eternity. Heaven's initial non-existence and Tiāmtu's disruptive agency endangering the gods form a counterpoint to Marduk's butchery of her passive corpse to create heaven and the gods' astral stations. Pure/luminous heaven created by Marduk from Tiāmtu's corpse, regulated by Nēberu, and populated with stars, including his astralized bow, represented Marduk's victory and gave the gods permanent security. Marduk as a deity of light saved the gods from their wartime suffering, with Tiāmtu as his principal antagonist.[28] At nighttime the bright stars, overseen by Nēberu, would have contrasted with the dark sky formed from Tiāmtu's body. The poem does not specify a light–dark antithesis but, by implication, Tiāmtu can be seen as a deity of darkness.

### *1.5 Astralized bow*

Marduk's bow launched the arrow fatal to Tiāmtu (*Enūma Eliš* IV 101–02). Prefiguring the list of Marduk's fifty names, Anu glorified the bow as "my daughter" and awarded it three names, culminating in its astralization:[29]

90 *šal-šú šum-šá* $^{mul}$*qaštu*(pan) *ina šamê*(an)$^{e}$ *ú-šá-pi*
91 *ú-kin-ma gi-is-gal-la-šá it-ti ilī*(dingir)$^{meš}$ *at-ḫe-e-šá*

*Enūma Eliš* VI 90–91

[24] The Sirsir entry includes "who constantly crossed wide Tiāmtu in his wrath" (*Enūma Eliš* VII 74: *šá ti-amta rapašta*(dagal)$^{ta}$ *i-te$_9$-eb-bi-ru* ˹*uz-zu*˺*-uš-šú*). Marduk crossed heaven after creating it from Tiāmtu's corpse (*Enūma Eliš* IV 141, see above in this section).

[25] Helle (2024: 284–85) proposes that Jupiter violently prevents Tiāmtu from reproducing and from reverting to water.

[26] For comment apparently relating VII 135 to Nēberu see Bennett 2021: 93.

[27] The only numerically quantified passage of time occurs after his creation of this natural calendar (*Enūma Eliš* VI 60–61).

[28] Marduk is also associated with light outside celestial contexts (e.g. *Enūma Eliš* I 87, 96, 103, V 82, 94, 101, 146, 156, VI 56). On Tiāmtu's role see e.g. *Enūma Eliš* IV 75–86.

[29] *Enūma Eliš* VI 87: *mar-ti* (var. dumu.munus). On the Bow as the back part of Canis Major see Beaulieu *et al.* 2017: 75.

90 He made its third name, Bow constellation, appear in heaven,
91 he established its position with the gods, its brothers.

In the poem *gisgallu* as an astral position occurs only once but *manzāzu*, "station", is intermittent (*Enūma Eliš* V 1, 6, 8, VI 79, 145, VII 17). The Bow's brothers are the gods whom Marduk had rehomed in heaven by creating stations for them (see above section 1.4). In *Enūma Eliš* the Bow constellation is the only fixed-star name and Anu's only astral creation (see above section 1.1). Thus, Anu's astralization of Marduk's pre-existing weapon is distinct from Marduk's earlier creation and organization of heaven. However, both episodes project Marduk's slaughter of Tiāmtu onto the night sky (Gabriel 2014: 303–06). In the context of Ištar's disempowerment, Gabriel (2025: 27–35) convincingly argues that the bow created and used by Marduk represents Ištar of Elam and that Anu adopted this bow before he astralized it to serve as an omen of Marduk's martial supremacy. The repurposing of Ištar theology to glorify Marduk would, therefore, be fundamental to this passage.

## 2. *Celestial Marduk: Reception in other works*

During the first millennium B.C.E. the emphasis shifted from heaven and heavenly bodies as the gods' stable, post-victory world, created and controlled by Marduk, within the overarching narrative of *Enūma Eliš*. However, the poem's astral motifs retained their potency and scholars gave them new relevance. The poem links Marduk with the Sun, Nēberu (probably Jupiter), the Bow, and light, and these associations were elaborated throughout the poem's cuneiform reception. By the Late Babylonian period, less attention was paid to Marduk's celestial ancestry, his links with purity (which could entail luminosity), and his creation and regulation of heaven and unspecified *lumāšu*-constellations for unspecified gods. Instead, specific astralizations of specific deities gained new importance. In relation to Late Babylonian Esagil ritual, planetary and fixed-star astralizations were syncretically extended and schematized for Marduk and his female counterparts. The monthly lunar cycle and particularly the annual fixed-star and solar cycles remained key elements throughout the poem's reception. Both the ideal solstice and equinox system and the scheme of (*ašar*) *niṣirtu*, "(place of) secrecy/protection", achieved new prominence in the Late Babylonian period when Marduk and Tiāmtu antithetically represented light and darkness in elaborate schematizations.[30] The Moon, Sun, propitious Jupiter, and the Bow were all ominous, and complex Late Babylonian interpretations incorporated unpropitious Mars and other ominous fixed stars. The integration of celestial Marduk into omen and ritual contexts indicates a focus on human–divine communication. In the earlier first millennium B.C.E. scholars quoted the poem in contexts where its narrative could be less relevant and it was used to promote other gods. However, Late Babylonian scholars with an Esagil perspective foregrounded Marduk's victory over Tiāmtu as a myth of Babylon's invincibility, and combined it with innovative ritual and astrological interpretation. These later interpretations can be understood as self-justification for Esagil's cult in a period of reduced importance under imperial rulers.[31]

### 2.1 *Source overview*

This analysis examines compositions relevant to celestial Marduk that are hymnic pastiches of *Enūma Eliš* or contain literal quotations from the poem, including recitation references.[32] The sources range from Neo-Assyrian tablets from Nineveh and Aššur to Neo- and Late Babylonian

[30] As a forerunner of Greek astrological hypsoma, "exaltation", each ancient planet had an *ašar niṣirtu*, a particularly significant location in the sky defined by constellations and later also by zodiac signs, and this scheme was related to the ideal solstices and equinoxes (Hunger and Steele 2019: 178; Pilloni 2024: 1–6, 18–20; Reynolds 2019: 32–3, 268–301).

[31] See e.g. Debourse and Jursa 2025; Reynolds 2024: 139–41.

[32] On *Eriš šummi* as pastiche and on quotation see Fadhil and Jiménez 2022: 256–57; 2023. In accordance with their study, I classify an Assurbanipal hymn as pastiche (Livingstone 1989: no. 2). Excluded are quotations in a lexical commentary with a non-celestial focus (Heinrich 2021: VI 148 BabaLBQuo, rev. 15') and three fragmentary texts (Heinrich 2021: V 20 BabaLBQuo3, 2', VII 132 BabaLBQuo4, rev. 2', VII 143–44 BabaLBQuo5, rev. 3'–4'). On the cuneiform reception of *Enūma Eliš* see Reynolds 2024.

tablets from northern Babylonia that can usually be attributed to Sippar and Babylon.[33] Pastiche and quotation added authority to hymns, prayers, and exegesis. Scholars incorporated elements of the poem's portrayal of celestial (and non-celestial) Marduk into different celestial contexts, expressing their own contexts and priorities.

As part of a Marduk-focused syllabus that helped form trainee scholars in northern Babylonia, Neo- or Late Babylonian school tablets include dictated *Enūma Eliš* extracts and the Moon and its conjunction with the Sun were popular topics.[34] An *Enūma Eliš* VII commentary on tablets from Nineveh was perhaps composed in Babylon (Lambert 2013: 139–42). A commentary on *Enūma Eliš* I–VII occurs on tablets from Nineveh and Aššur, as well as Sippar Collection tablets from northern Babylonia, and may have been composed by a Nippur scholar in Assyria (Frahm and Jiménez 2015: 293–333). Only particularly relevant material in these commentaries is discussed here.

Assurbanipal's acrostic hymn to Marduk and Zarpānītu can be considered a pastiche of the poem (Livingstone 1989: no. 2; see above in this section with n. 32). Three Assyrian exegetic works quote, or allegedly quote, the poem: *Marduk's Ordeal*, an anti-Marduk polemic that reinterprets Babylon's New Year festival and is linked with Sennacherib (Livingstone 1989: no. 34, 35); a compendium with cosmogonic and ritual material, some of which is Assyrianizing (Livingstone 1989: no. 39, copied by Kiṣir-Aššur under Assurbanipal); and a compendium focused on calendars and Nabû (Rawlinson and Pinches 1909: no. 43, with an 'Assurbanipal Library' colophon). These four Assyrian works occur solely on tablets from Nineveh and Aššur, so their Assyrian-oriented content may have been of interest only in the Assyrian heartland.

Three compositions are attested on tablets both from the Assyrian heartland and from later Babylonia. *Eriš šummi*, a Babylonian hymn to Marduk, occurs on Aššur, Nineveh, Sippar Library, and Babylon Collection tablets (Fadhil and Jiménez 2022).[35] Two treatises quote *Enūma Eliš*. One on Elamite month names is likely to be an Assyrian composition and is found on a Babylonian tablet from Nineveh copied from an Assyrian source and on a Babylon Collection tablet probably copied in Achaemenid Borsippa, although the colophon has a note referring to Babylon (Frahm and Jiménez 2015: 334–43).[36] The other treatise, called *I.NAM.GIŠ.ḪUR.AN.KI.A*, was probably composed in Babylonia and occurs on three Nineveh tablets written by Nabû-zuqup-kēna, one dated to Sennacherib's twenty-second year (683 B.C.E.), and on a Babylon Collection tablet written by Bēl-nādin-apli, linked with an Esagil butcher's prebend, in the thirty-third year of Darius I (488 B.C.E.) (Livingstone 1986: 17–52).[37] These three works do not have a comparable Assyrian focus and remained of interest to later scholars in northern Babylonia.

A commentary on Tablet IV of the diagnostic series *Sagig* quotes *Enūma Eliš* and is attested on a Sippar Collection tablet, which dates from the Neo- or Late Babylonian period and may come from Babylon.[38] Two other exegetic works quoting the poem occur on Babylon Collection tablets that are probably Achaemenid from library holdings associated with Esagil. A copy of a compilation commentary (cento) was written in Babylon by a member of the Atkuppu family; and two duplicate tablets with interpretation of Simānu ritual were probably written by Iprāʾya of the Ēṭiru family, one copy specifying oral transmission (Jiménez 2015; 2016b).[39] Late Babylonian compositions that can be identified as Hellenistic works harking back to Babylonian past sovereignty and Esagil's centrality are attested on Hellenistic or Parthian tablets attributable to library collections associated with Esagil. Texts describing Babylon's New Year festival include prayers astralizing Marduk and

[33] Most of these tablets from northern Babylonia are in the British Museum's Sippar Collection and Babylon Collection (on these Collections see Reynolds 2024: 135–36).

[34] Jiménez 2022: 6–7, 29; for school tablets see Heinrich 2021: I–VII sigla BabaNBSch, SipLBSch, SipNBSch; for the Moon and Sun see V 12 BabaNBSch1, V 12–17 BabaNBSch2, V 19–22 BabaNBSch3, V 31–35 BabaNBSch4, V 33–37 BabaNBSch5.

[35] The three fragmentary Babylon Collection tablets are probably from Babylon and may all have been in library holdings associated with Esagil (Clancier 2009: 190–93; Fadhil and Jiménez 2022: 3).

[36] On manuscript dating and provenance see Frahm and Jiménez 2015: 335–36; on BM 47554 (81-11-3, 259) as a Borsippa tablet see also Leichty *et al.* 2019: 656, 664.

[37] On dating and provenance see Livingstone 1986: 17–18; on BM 47860 (81-11-3, 567) see also Clancier 2009: 190–93; Leichty *et al.* 2019: 656, 674; on other sources for the notary Bēl-nādin-apli of the Ṭābiḫu/Ēṭiru family see Wunsch 2014: 760, 764, 770–71.

[38] On dating and provenance see Jiménez 2016a; Reade in Leichty 1986: xxxiii–xxxiv.

[39] On the provenance of BM 32574 (76-11-17, 2317) and BM 47458 (81-11-3, 163) // BM 47661 (81-11-3, 366) see also Clancier 2009: 190–93; Leichty *et al.* 2019: 52, 149, 656, 661, 667.

Zarpānītu in association with the recitation of *Enūma Eliš* (Debourse 2022: 116–21, 124–31, 138–40, 144–49 (lines 222–333)).[40] A Babylon calendar treatise attested on three Babylon Collection tablets interprets Esagil rituals as apotropaic against Babylon's invasion and includes astral exegesis linked to the poem's battle narrative (Reynolds 2019: 50–54, 190–195, 206–11 (§§ 2–4, 13)).[41]

### *2.2 Celestial ancestry and heaven*

The *Marduk Ordeal* associated Anšar with Aššur and subverted Marduk's role as the creator and organizer of heaven. *Eriš šummi* syncretized the triad Anšar (Anu) – Dagan (Enlil) – Ninšiku (Ea) with Marduk.[42] The Anu–Enlil–Ea triad was also identified with Marduk in the cento and, with astralization, in a New Year festival prayer. With varying degrees of closeness to the poem, Marduk as heaven's creator and organizer featured in other Assyrian works and was astralized in the New Year festival prayers. Compositions on Neo-Assyrian tablets linked unspecified *lumāšu*-constellations with unspecified gods but did not portray them as the gods' havens after Marduk and Tiāmtu's war.

The Assyrian-dialect *Marduk's Ordeal* can be associated with Sennacherib's religious reset and links singing *Enūma Eliš* before Marduk's statue to his imprisonment in an Assyrianizing reinterpretation of Babylon's New Year festival.[43] Marduk's denigration in favour of the god Aššur includes an alleged, marked quotation from *Enūma Eliš*:

54 *šu-ú ina libbi*(šà) *e-nu-ma e-liš iq-ʾṭi-biʾ ki-i šamê*(an)$^{e}$ *erṣeti*(ki)$^{tì}$ *la ib-ba-nu-ni an-šár it-*[*tab-ši*]
55 *ki-i ālu*(uru) *u bētu*(é) *ib-šu-u-ni šu-ú it-tab-ši* …

Livingstone 1989: no. 34 (Aššur version), 54–55[44]

54 It said in *Enūma Eliš* – When heaven and netherworld were not created, Anšar [came into existence].
55 When city and house existed, he (Marduk) came into existence. …

This rescheduling of Marduk's birth subverts *Enūma Eliš*. It ousts Marduk from his prestigious roles as saviour of his royal predecessor Anšar, conqueror of primeval Tiāmtu (directly relevant in this ritual context), and creator of heaven and netherworld (Reynolds 2024: 143–44).

In the Assyrian compendium with cosmogonic material, a ruled-off section on Marduk's creation of a tri-partite heaven and a tri-partite netherworld begins:

30 *šamû*(an)$^{ú}$ *elûti*(an.ta)$^{ti}$ $^{na_4}$*l*[*u*]*-lu-da-ni-tú ša* $^{d}$*a-nim* 300 $^{d}$*í-gì-gì ina lìb-bi ú-š*[*e-šib*]
31 *šamû*(an)$^{ú}$ *qablûti*(murub$_4$)$^{ti}$ $^{na_4}$*sag-gil-mud ša* $^{d}$*í-gì-gì be-lu$_4$ ina libbi*(šà) *paramaḫḫi*(bára.maḫ) *ina libbi*(šà) x
32 *i-na parak*(bára) $^{na_4}$*uqnî*(za.gìn) *ú-šib* $^{giš}$*bu-ṣi<-in>* $^{na_4}$*el-me-ši ina libbi*(šà) *ú-nam-mir*
33 *šamû*(an)$^{ú}$ *šaplûti*(ki.ta)$^{meš}$ $^{na_4}$*aš-pu-u ša kakkabī*(mul) *lu-ma-ši ša ilī*(dingir)$^{meš}$ *ina muḫḫi*(ugu) *e-ṣir*

Livingstone 1989: no. 39, 30–33

30 Upper heaven of *banded agate* of Anu – he (Marduk) made 300 Igigī dwell in it.
31 Middle heaven of *amethyst* of the Igigī – the Lord … on a pre-eminent dais in it;
32 he sat down on a dais of lapis lazuli; he lit up a lamp of *amber* in it.
33 Lower heaven of *chalcedony* of the stars – he drew the gods' *lumāšu*-constellations on it.

[40] The Hellenistic or Parthian sources are two Babylon Collection tablets (BM 92686 (DT 114); BM 32485 (76-11-17, 2222) + 92708 (DT 109)) and a Louvre tablet (MNB 1848). On provenance and dating see Debourse 2022: 91–2, 179–81, 200, 216–17; on the Babylon Collection tablets see also Clancier 2009: 190–93; Leichty *et al.* 2019: 48–9, 52, 146.

[41] On provenance and the proposed dating of the copies BM 45657 (81-7-6, 51) and BM 35188 (Sp. II 741)+ to c. 170 B.C.E. and of BM 35407 (Sp. II 992)+ to earlier in the Hellenistic period see Reynolds 2019: 13–17, 102–03, 111–20; see also Leichty *et al.* 2019: 250, 281, 289, 292, 298, 598, 600.

[42] On the Marduk–Anšar relationship see Gabbay 2022: 148–49.

[43] Livingstone 1989: no. 34, 34, no. 35, 28; Frahm 2011: 352–54.

[44] For the Nineveh version see Livingstone 1989: no. 35, 44–45; Luukko and Van Buylaere 2024: no. 240, 6'–7'.

In the Marduk interpretation of the three stone heavens, he placed the Igigī highest and had his own heaven.[45] Marduk enthroned in splendour with a bright lamp, presumably the source of astral light, is distinctive to this text. Contrastingly, in *Enūma Eliš* IV–V Marduk created heaven from Tiāmtu's corpse, installed Anu above Enlil, and created heavenly bodies, including *lumāšu*-constellations as the gods' stations controlled by his star Nēberu. In both works Marduk populates heaven, including *lumāšu*-constellations for the gods, and is associated with light. The compendium continues with Marduk's defeat of Tiāmtu as the source of material for world creation and quotes *Enūma Eliš* IV 137 (Livingstone 1989: no. 39, r. 2: *iḫ-pi-ši-ma kīma*($gin_7$) *nūnī*($ku_6$)$^{meš}$ *maš-ṭe-e a-na šini*(2)-ˈ*šú*ˈ; see above section 1.4). Thus, it combines traditions that diverge from and accord with the poem. Assurbanipal's acrostic hymn includes a damaged entry on Marduk as Engišgalana ($^{d}$en-gišgal-an-na, "Lord of the Positions of Heaven") that mentions "stations of the gods" (43: *man-za-zi ilī*(dingir)$^{me}$[$^{š}$]),[46] followed by ritual content (Livingstone 1989: no. 2, 43–44). In a later entry Marduk ($^{d}$amar.utu) created and regulated the *lumāšu*-constellations:

9 *ina ṣītān*(giš.nim) *u šīlān*(giš.šú) *lú-maš-ši uš-ziz-ma ḫar-ra-nu ma-la-*[*ku*] *iš-ruk-šú-nu-ma*
*ú-*[x x x x x x]

Livingstone 1989: no. 2, rev. 9

9 In east and west he set up *lumāšu*-constellations and bestowed paths, courses, upon them
… [ … ]

The ideas and phraseology accord with *Enūma Eliš* V 1–8, including V 2: ˈ*lu*ˈ*-ma-ši uš-zi-iz* (see above section 1.4).

The hymn *Eriš šummi* syncretically awards the names and identities of other gods to Marduk. Anšar (Anu), Dagan (Enlil), and Ninšiku (Ea) form an initial triad and Marduk as Anšar (*an-šár*) is linked with celestial supremacy (Fadhil and Jiménez 2022: 2, 5–6, 18–21). The cento on an Achaemenid tablet interprets Marduk's name Asaralimnuna and includes supporting quotation of *Enūma Eliš* VII 5 (see above section 1.4):

2 [$^{d}$*asar-al*]*im-nun-na* : *nu-úr šá* $^{d}$*anu*(60) $^{d}$*enlil*(50) *u* $^{dr}$*ea*(40) : asarˈ : ˈ$^{d}$ˈ[*a-num* : alim : $^{d}$*en-líl* :
nun : $^{d}$*é-a* … ]
3 [$^{d}$*asar*]-ˈ*alim*ˈ*-nun-na ka-ru-ba nu-úr a-bi a-li-di-šú* [ … ]

Jiménez 2015: 2–3[47]

2 [Asaral]imnuna : light of Anu, Enlil, and Ea : asar = [Anu; alim = Enlil; nun = Ea … ]
3 "[Asar]alimnuna, honoured one, light of the father, his begetter" [ … ]

*Enūma Eliš* VII 6 (see above section 1.4) links Asaralimnuna with this triad and probably their astral paths. In the New Year festival prayers, Marduk created heaven from Tiāmtu's corpse, and this astralized triad was syncretized with him (see below section 2.5.2 with Table 2).

### *2.3 Sun without Moon*

As in *Enūma Eliš*, Marduk was linked with the paired Sun and Moon or the Sun alone, but never with the Moon alone. Neo-Assyrian works associating Marduk with the Sun accord closely with the poem, albeit once probably to promote Nabû. Marduk's non-astral name Šazu was reinterpreted as Šamaš. This instance of increased astralization is attested in the earlier first millennium B.C.E. and

[45] The Great Star List has shorter entries on the stone heavens without any Marduk interpretation (Livingstone 1986: 86–87). The stones probably had qualities of brightness (Schuster-Brandis 2008: 401–02, 409–10, 429, 440–41, 453–54; Thavapalan 2020: 270, 272, 310–25).

[46] Collation excludes Livingstone's reading $^{d}$600; on Jupiter as Engišgalana see Kurtik 2007: 128.

[47] My restoration of the final trace in line 2 builds on Jiménez 2015: note 1; on further interpretation in lines 6–8 see below sections 2.3 and 2.5.1.

was elaborated in Achaemenid ritual exegesis. The cento on an Achaemenid tablet includes Marduk's representation in the Sun.

A Neo-Assyrian compendium aligns month names in six calendars with Standard Babylonian month names, possibly in relation to ritual practice, and interprets names of Nabû before a final ruled-off section:

54 [$^{d}$amar].utu | *ma-ri ma-ri-ú-tu*!(LA)
55 [*ma-ri ša*]*m-šu* | *ma-ri šam-šú šá ilī*(dingir)$^{meš}$
56 [$^{d}$*ma-r*]*u-duk* | *ma-ri šam-šú šá ilī*(dingir)$^{meš}$

Rawlinson and Pinches 1909: no. 43, rev. 54–56; Lambert 2013: 164[48]

These lines incorporate quotation of *Enūma Eliš* I 101–2 and are related to VI 127 (see above section 1.2). In the compendium the wordplay on Marduk's name has been reconfigured to suit the list format. In my opinion this final celebration of Marduk probably added lustre to his son Nabû, and the Sun's calendrical role may have been relevant.[49]

Assurbanipal's acrostic hymn links Marduk with the Sun, light, and cleansing:[50]

34 [*ul*]-*lu-ú gat-tu*$_4$ $^{d}$*marūduk*(amar.utu) $^{d}$*šamšu*(utu)$^{šú}$ *né-bu-u di-pa-ru nam-ru šá ina šu-pi-šú* ˹*ú*˺-[x x x x x]
35 [*šá*] *ub-ba-bu ar-šu-ti ú-šaḫ-lu-u* x [x x x x x]

Livingstone 1989: no. 2, 34–35

34 Exalted in stature, Marduk, radiant Sun, bright torch, who on his appearance … [ … ],
35 [who] cleanses the dirty, makes gleam … [ … ]

The terms, *nebû*, *namru*, and related *ellu* are linked with Marduk in *Enūma Eliš* (see above sections 1.2 and 1.4).

The commentary on *Enūma Eliš* I–VII and exegesis of a Simānu ritual quote *Enūma Eliš* VII 35 introducing Marduk's name Šazu ($^{d}$*šà-zu*), "One who Knows the Heart", and link it with Šamaš written $^{d}$*šà-máš* and interpreted as "heart" (*libbu*) plus "diviner/divination" (*bārû*/*bīru*), alluding to Šamaš as an extispicy god.[51] The ritual exegesis links $^{d}$*šà-máš* with rare *Am*garud ([$^{d}$]˹am?˺.gar.ud) and Amgara ([$^{d}$am].gar.a), and I understand this as implicitly exploiting the partial homophony with $^{d}$amar.utu, the relationship between "am", "wild bull", and "amar", "bull calf", and that between "ud", "day", and "utu(UD)", "sun".[52]

The cento's interpretation of Marduk's name Asaralimnuna generates further light-related exposition:[53]

6 *aš-šum*! $^{d}$*šamaš*(utu) : $^{d}$*šamaš*(utu) *šá inappaḫa*(kur)$^{ḫa}$ *ṣalmu*(nu) *šá* $^{d}$*marūduk*(amar.utu) *ina lìb-bi-šú šu-*˹*ú*?˺ [ … ]

Jiménez 2015: 6

6 because of Šamaš : Šamaš who rises glowing, the image of Marduk *is* inside it [ … ].

The related Māriutu material in *Enūma Eliš* may have contributed to these associations and, as discussed below, Marduk in the Sun usually had lunar counterparts.[54]

[48] Lambert reads the end of rev. 54 as *ma-ri šam-šu*; in Lambert Folio 10108 the final LA sign is emended to *-šu* (https://www.ebl.lmu.de/fragmentarium/K.104).

[49] On repurposed Marduk and Šamaš theology promoting Nabû see Agnethler *et al.* 2022: 212, 215–16; Lambert 2013: 346–49; Rubin 2021: 184–86.

[50] On *ebbu*, *namru*, and *ḫelû* see Thavapalan 2020: 96–107, 118–22.

[51] *Enūma Eliš* VII 35: $^{d}$*šà-zu mu-de-e lìb-bi ilī*(dingir)$^{meš}$ *šá i-bar-ru-u kar-šú*, "Šazu, the one who knows the heart of the gods, who divines the innermost"; Frahm and Jiménez 2015: 309, 323–24, line 44'; Jiménez 2016b: 30–31 with notes; on *Enūma Eliš* I 102: $^{d}$*šà-máš* see above section 1.2.

[52] Jiménez 2016b: 28–31; see e.g. *CAD* B: 340–42 *būru* A, R: 359–63 *rīmu* A.

[53] On lines 2-3 see above section 2.2; on lines 7-8 see below section 2.5.1.

[54] See also Gabbay 2022: 138, 140, 153–54, lines 14, 16.

*2.4 Paired Sun and Moon*

Calendrical exegesis in *I.NAM.GIŠ.ḪUR.AN.KI.A* and the Elamite month-name treatise quotes Marduk's regulation of the Moon and Sun in *Enūma Eliš*. In *Eriš šummi* and a Hellenistic New Year festival prayer, both Sun and Moon are syncretized with Marduk. His enduring representation in the Sun generated counterparts in the Moon: Nabû in the Neo-Assyrian compendium with cosmogonic material and, as new evidence, the commentary on *Enūma Eliš* I–VII; and Tiāmtu in the Late Babylonian calendar treatise. The Assyrianizing compendium also subverts summer-solstice theology to Marduk's detriment.

*I.NAM.GIŠ.ḪUR.AN.KI.A* focuses on numerical explanations with extensive interpretation of the lunar cycle. In a Nineveh source, after a ruled-off lunar phase summary, quotation of *Enūma Eliš* V 17 introduces the first interpretative section on the waxing Moon (Livingstone 1986: 22–23, 11: $u_4$ ˹7˺.[kam *agâ*(aga) *ma-á*]*š-˹la˺*, "Day seven a half [crown]"). In a subsequent section, Sîn and Šamaš in conjunction on day twenty-seven make decisions for the land and give it an ominous signal ([*ṣ*]*a-ad-du*) before supporting quotation of *Enūma Eliš* V 21 as a ruled-off section:

24 [*bubbulu*($u_4$.ná.àm) *an*]*a ḫarrān*(kaskal) $^{d}$*šamaš*(utu) *šu-taq-rim-ma gabrû*(gaba.ri)

Livingstone 1986: 24–25, 24

24 "[On the day of (lunar) disappearance] draw near to the path of Šamaš". Equivalent.[55]

Both quotes are from Marduk's direct-speech instructions to the Moon (Livingstone 1986: 40–42; see above section 1.4).[56] In the later copy of the Elamite month-name treatise, a ruled-off section ends with quotation from the same speech, this time *Enūma Eliš* V 24 (see above section 1.4) addressed to the Moon and Sun:

12 [$^{iti}$*pi-ti-bābi*(ká) $^{iti}$*du'ūzu*(šu) *áš*]*-šú ina* $^{iti}$*du'ūzi*(šu) $u_4$ 13.kam
13 [ … ]*-ú ù* $^{d}$*šamaš*(utu)
14 [ … $^{d}$]*šamaš*(utu) *ippuḫa*(kur)$^{ḫa}$
15 [ … *šu-ta*]*q-ri-ba-ma di-na di-i-na*

Frahm and Jiménez 2015: 338, 342, A 12–15

12 [The month Pīti-bābi is Du'ūzu]. Because on Du'ūzu day thirteen
13 [ … ] … and Šamaš
14 [ … ] Šamaš rose glowing
15 "[ … ] draw near to each other and judge judgement".

As discussed by Frahm and Jiménez (2015: 342–43), Pīti-bābi, "Opening of the Gate", may have been interpreted in terms of sun-rise through the eastern celestial gate and the quotation, occurring in the poem after Marduk's creation of this gate, concerns conjunction at the month's end. Du'ūzu day thirteen, the only specific day in this treatise, and the focus on the Sun and its rising may indicate the ideal summer solstice, Du'ūzu day fifteen in *MUL.APIN*.[57]

In *Eriš šummi* the fifth god syncretized with Marduk is the Moon called Nannāru ($^{d}$*nanna-ri*, "Luminary") and the entry focuses on calendrical regulation and the provision of decisions and omens, epithets including "one who lights up gloom" (*mu-nam-mir e-ṭu-ti*) (Fadhil and Jiménez 2022: 8, 34–37; 2023: 34–37). The sixth god is Šamaš ($^{d}$*šamaš*(utu)) and epithets concern judgement but predominantly light, terms including "light" (*nu-úr*), "bright one" (*na-mar*), "one who lights up the people's darkness" (*mu-nam-mer ek-let nišī*(ùg)$^{meš}$), and "his brilliance" (*na*[*m*]*-˹ri˺-ir-ru-šú*)

[55] Livingstone (1986: 25) translated gaba.ri as "quoted"; I suggest a reference to lunar and solar parity as expressed in *Enūma Eliš* V 22 (see above section 1.4).

[56] An entry on another Nineveh tablet may allude to *Enūma Eliš* through the homophonic interpretation "heaven (is) of water" (Livingstone 1986: 32–33, rev. 6': *šamê*(an)$^{e}$ *ša mê*(a)$^{meš}$). Marduk is unnamed in this exegesis of the lunar cycle and heaven.

[57] Hunger and Steele 2019: I ii 42–43, II i 9–13, ii 25–30. As noted by Gabbay (2022: 138, 140, 149, line 8b), a commentary on *Marduk's Address to the Demons* may link Du'ūzu day thirteen and Marduk.

(Fadhil and Jiménez 2022: 8, 38–40; 2023: 38–40). In a Hellenistic New Year festival prayer to Marduk, his astralizations conclude with Šamaš ($^{d}$*šamaš*(utu)) "light of the world regions" and Sîn ($^{d}$*sîn*(30)) "the one who lights up darkness" (Debourse 2022: 139, 148–49, 311, lines 314–15; see below section 2.5.2 with Table 2). The *Eriš šummi* pastiche follows the Moon–Sun order in *Enūma Eliš* V but the prayer prioritizes Šamaš as Marduk's primary association.[58]

The Neo-Assyrian compendium with cosmogonic material moves from the *Enūma Eliš* quotation about splitting Tiāmtu and the related creation of rivers to solar and lunar disk (ĦAB-*rat*) dimensions (Fincke 2023: 190–93; Livingstone 1989: no. 39, rev. 3–4; see above section 2.2). Entities inside the Sun and Moon, and the summer solstice follow:

5 *šá libbi*(šà) $^{d}$*ša*[*maš*](u[tu]) ˹$^{d}$˺*marūduk*(˹amar˺.utu) *šá libbi*(šà) $^{d}$*sîn*(30) $^{d}$*nabû*(nà) *ina libbi*(šà) $^{d}$*šamaš*(utu) *ba-aš-mu ittanablakkat*(bal.bal)$^{a}$[$^{t}$]
6 *ina libbi*(šà) $^{d}$*sî*[*n*](3[0]) [*l*]*u-ma-šú patru*(gír) *ina muḫḫi*(ugu) *nēši*(ur.maḫ) *šá qāti*(šu)-[*šú*]
7 $^{d}$*mes-lam-ta-è-a* $^{d}$*marūduk*(amar.utu) *šá a-na erṣeti*(ki)$^{ti}$ *ūridu*($e_{11}$)$^{ú}$ *ūrid*($e_{11}$)
8 *áš-šu aššur*(an.šár) *a-na ḫurri*(ḫabrud) *ir-du-du-šú-ma* ˹*bāb*(ká)˺*-šú iptehû*(úš)$^{ú}$
Livingstone 1989: no. 39, rev. 5–8 (edition revised); Fincke 2023: 190–91 (rev. 5–6 collated)

5 The one inside Šamaš is Marduk. The one inside Sîn is Nabû. Inside Šamaš a *bašmu*-serpent is constantly coiling.
6 Inside Sîn is a *lumāšu.* The blade above the lion is of [his] hand.
7 Meslamtaea: Marduk, who went down to the netherworld, went down
8 because Aššur chased him into a hole and blocked up its gate.

The solar and lunar disks depict Marduk and his son Nabû respectively: Marduk is with a *bašmu*-serpent, probably his conquest, while Nabû, as a *lumāšu*, is the conqueror of a lion.[59] Marduk's portrayal can be seen as developing *Enūma Eliš* elements: the solar interpretation of Marduk's name (see above section 1.2) and the *bašmu*-serpent in Tiāmtu's army (*Enūma Eliš* I 141, II 27, III 31, 89). The poem does not mention Nabû but his depiction as Marduk's counterpart and fellow victor accords with Nabû's promotion in the first millennium B.C.E. (Agnethler *et al.* 2022: 216–19; Rubin 2021: 2–4, passim). As with the preceding disks, the order is Sun–Moon and Marduk remains the focus. In my revised reading of rev. 7–8 (see above in this section; cf. Livingstone 1986: 234–35), an Assyrianizing reinterpretation explains Meslamtaea's descent to the netherworld at the ideal summer solstice as Marduk's entrapment there by Aššur/Anšar. Meslamtaea/Nergal was usually linked with Mars and an ascent at the ideal winter solstice, the longest night; a summer-solstice descent was less prominent (Horowitz 2014: 85–88). Antithetically, Marduk was usually linked with Jupiter, the Sun, and the ideal summer solstice, the longest day (see below sections 2.5.1, 2.5.2, and 2.5.3).

The commentary on *Enūma Eliš* I–VII probably includes related comment on *Enūma Eliš* VII 98 on Marduk's name Aranuna (see above section 1.4).[60] One version on a Nineveh tablet and probably also a tablet from Sippar has this entry:

4' [*šá a-na*] *a-lak-ti* ˹*ru-bu*˺-[*ti-šú la ú-maš-šá-lu ilu*(dingir) *a*]-*a-ú-m*[*a*? (:) $^{d}$]*nabû*(nà) *šá ṣilli*(gissu) *amēli*(lú) : ˹KA˺ x [*šá itti*(ki) $^{d}$*bēl*(en) x x x *ina t*]*a-lu-ki-šú la un-da-an-ṭù-*[*ú*]
Frahm and Jiménez 2015: 311–12, Z rev. 4' with z rev. 23'–24'

4' "[Whom no] other [god equals for] the motion of [his] nobility": Nabû is the one of the shadow of a man : …, [who together with Bēl … *and*] is not reduced [in] his course.

[58] See below in this section for Sun–Moon (Neo-Assyrian compendium) and section 2.5.3 for Moon–Sun (Babylon calendar treatise).

[59] For analysis with parallels see Fincke 2023: 193–209; Fincke (2023: 205) interprets Neo-Assyrian *lumāšu* here not as a heavenly body but an "anthropomorphic representation of a deity imagined in the sky".

[60] Noting these comments as enigmatic, Frahm and Jiménez (2015: 311, 325–26) read 4': *šá ṣilli*(giš.mi) *annî*(šeš) *qabû*(˹du$_{11}$.ga?˺), "*who is called the* "shadow" *of this one* (i.e., Marduk?)", rejecting LÚ : instead of ŠEŠ because a shadow (i.e. protection) of human beings lacked relevance, and suggested a shadow expressing Nabû's inferiority; they also favoured *tāluku* as a cultic procession, *un-da-an*-DU-˹*u*˺ from *wadû* Dt not *maṭû* Dt, and *ḫab-ra-tú*, "*the clamorous* (*people*)".

A variant entry occurs on an Aššur tablet:

8’ ˹*šá a-na a*˺-[*lak-ti ru-bu-ti-šú la ú-maš-šá-l*]*u ilu*(dingir) *a-a-um-ma*
9’ *ša itti*(ki) ˹$^{d}$*bēl*(en)˺ [x x x x *ina ta-lu-k*]*i-šú la un-da-an-ṭù-*˹*u*˺
10’ *šal-šiš šumma*(diš) *sîn*(30) *ultu*(t[a]) x [x x x x x x]-*ru ḫap-ra-tú ina šur-ru*

Frahm and Jiménez 2015: 311–12, V rev. 8’–10’

8’ “Whom [no] other god equals] for [the motion of his nobility]”:
9’ Who together with Bēl [ … *and*] is not reduced [in] his [course].
10’ Thirdly, if Sîn *from* … [ … ] … the lunar disk in the beginning.

In my opinion this probably concerns Nabû’s visibility as a “man’s shadow” on the Moon’s surface, with Marduk in the Sun as an implicit counterpart, and the second version adds alternative comment about an eclipse shadow entering the lunar disk.[61] A shadow-like anthropomorphic figure in the Moon, identified as Nabû, would be linked with a lunar-eclipse shadow. On the Uruk micro-zodiac tablet VAT 7851 obv., an anthropomorphic figure fighting a lion inside the Moon has been linked with Nabû and, in various ways, with lunar eclipses (Fincke 2023: 184–90, 206). The commentary recontextualizes a line of the poem in relation to a god and astral concepts unattested there.

The Late Babylonian calendar treatise closely related to *Enūma Eliš* includes Tiāmtu’s complex and unparalleled astralization in response to the poem (Reynolds 2019: 42–45, 50–51). Tiāmtu and Marduk are probably depicted in the Moon and Sun respectively in a Simānu omen:

11’ [*šumma*(diš)? *t*]*i-amtu ina lìb-bi* $^{d}$*sîn*(30) *in-n*[a?-*mir*? x x x x]
12’ [*šumma*(diš)?] $^{d}$*marūduk*(amar.utu) *ina lìb-bi* $^{d}$˹*šamaš*(utu)˺ *in*-[*na*?-*mir*? x x x x]
…
16’ *ina u*$_4$*-mu šu-ú agê*(aga) *taš-ri-iḫ-tu*$_4$ *šá nu-uk-ku*{*-ri*}*-ru palê*(bala) *ú-kal-la*[*m-ma*]
17’ *ana muḫ-ḫi paraṣ*(garza) *e-nu-tu*$_4$ *šá la si-ma-a-tu*$_4$ *i-šak-kan pa-ni*-[*šú*]

Reynolds 2019: 192–93 § 3 i 11’-12’, 16’-17’

11’ [*If*] Tiāmtu *is seen* inside Sîn […]
12’ [*if*] Marduk *is seen* inside Šamaš […],
…
16’ It is in the day. He (Marduk) reveals a crown of splendour portending reign change [and]
17’ she (Tiāmtu) aspires to the divine power of Anu’s rank, which is improper.

This omen revealed by Marduk and portending the Babylonian king’s downfall, attributed to Elamite invasion, is probably morning opposition, with a secondary interpretation that the Moon and Sun’s surfaces depict Tiāmtu and Marduk as analogues to the Elamite and Babylonian kings (Reynolds 2019: 245–50). In the Ṭebētu section Tiāmtu probably “stood in a crown of splendour” (*ina agê*(aga) *taš-ri-iḫ-tu*$_4$ *iz-ziz*-[*ma*?]), referring to her depiction on the Moon’s surface in the same Simānu omen (Reynolds 2019: 208–09, 372–73 § 13 iv 16). The exclusive focus is on one battle between two protagonists, Marduk and Tiāmtu, one per heavenly body, probably in appropriate opposition. Marduk’s traditional presence in the Sun is related to *Enūma Eliš* but Tiāmtu’s secondary presence in the Moon is unparalleled. This interpretation scales up their astral battle, prioritizes the Moon and Tiāmtu, and gives her and Marduk corresponding astral roles. In *Enūma Eliš*, celestial Tiāmtu is passive: Marduk created heaven from her corpse and she is not astralized. In the treatise against enemy attack, Tiāmtu’s dangerous agency is prominent.

### *2.5 Planets and specific fixed stars*

Nēberu, understood as Jupiter, and the Bow are the only specific planet and constellation in *Enūma Eliš* and they continued to represent Marduk and his bow into the Hellenistic period. However, astralizations often combined material found in the poem with syncretic reinterpretations and Late

[61] Marduk is *ṣu-lum šá lìb-bi* $^{d}$*šamaš*(utu), “blackness inside Šamaš” in a commentary on *Marduk’s Address to the Demons* (Gabbay 2022: 138, 140, 153, line 14b). On *ḫaprātu*, *šurrû*, and lunar eclipses see Rochberg-Halton 1988: 24, 45, 50–52.

Babylonian sources expressed complex networks of association. A range of planets and fixed stars represented Marduk, while fixed stars represented his weapons and his temple Esagil. As counterparts to astral Marduk, planetary and fixed-star astralizations centred on two female figures: Zarpānītu as Marduk's wife through parallelism and Tiāmtu as his principal opponent through antithesis, with her spouse Qingu in a secondary role. A broken passage of *Enūma Eliš* mentions New Year in connection with Marduk's organization of heaven (*Enūma Eliš* V 41, see above section 1.4). However, the full scheme of ideal solstices and equinoxes and the related concept of (*ašar*) *niṣirtu*, "(place of) secrecy/protection", became recurrent features in Neo-Assyrian and, more prominently, Late Babylonian sources.[62] The Babylon calendar treatise linked Tiāmtu with the ideal winter solstice and the corresponding Goat-Fish zodiac sign and her related astralizations included Mars, the Goat-Fish, and the She-Goat. Her powerful astral agency contrasts starkly with her passive celestial roles in *Enūma Eliš* and the New Year festival prayers. These schematic astralizations and the prominence of the winter solstice in relation to Esagil ritual were Late Babylonian innovations.[63]

### *2.5.1 Hymn, commentaries, and month-name treatise*

In Assurbanipal's acrostic hymn a section on Marduk as Jupiter resembles the one on the Sun (see above section 2.3):

41 [*né*]-*bu-u šum*(mu)-*ka* $^{d}$sag.me.gar *ilu*(dingir) *reš-tu-u a-šá-re*[*d*! *a-š*]*a!-red-di šá-qu-u*
*ilī*(dingir)$^{meš}$ *šá l*[*u*?-x x x x x x]
42 [*š*]*á ina ni-ip-ḫi-šú ú-kal-la-mu ṣa-ad-du* x [x] x x [(x) *u*]*b-ba-ab* x [x x x x x x x x][64]
Livingstone 1989: no. 2, 41–42

41 Your radiant name is Sag.me.gar, pre-eminent god, foremost of the foremost, lofty one of the gods, who … [ … ],
42 who in his glowing rising shows a signal … [ … ] … [ (…) ] he cleanses … [ … ]

In accordance with *Enūma Eliš*, Jupiter's pre-eminence probably concerns Nēberu as the regulator of other heavenly bodies (*Enūma Eliš* V 6, VII 124–31, see above section 1.4). The hymn also specifies Jupiter's propitious rising.[65] In an earlier section witnesses to promulgate Marduk's deeds, signifying Tiāmtu's defeat, include Anu, Enlil, and Ea; three cosmic domains with heaven termed "*lumāšu*-constellations" ([*l*]*ú-maš-ši*), showing their importance; and the Crab and Anunītu ($^{mul}$*alluttu*(al.lul) $^{d}$*a-nu-ni-tu*$_4$) (Livingstone 1989: no. 2, 36–38). I understand the latter pair as the *ašar niṣirtu* of Jupiter as Marduk (associated with the ideal summer solstice) and, secondarily, of Venus as Zarpānītu, as befits a hymn to both deities.[66]

In the *Sagig* commentary, quotation of *Sagig* IV 10 is followed by interpretation quoting *Enūma Eliš* IV 101 about Marduk's shooting of Tiāmtu with the fatal arrow:

13 *libbī*(šà) *libbī*(šà) *ištanassi*(gù.gù)-*s*[*i qāt*(šu) *eṭemmi*(gidim)]
14 [*š*]*á-né-e* $^{d}$*ištar*(15) *imât*(gam) *libbu*(šà) : $^{d}$15 : *is-suk mul-mul ʿiḫ*ʾ*-te-pi ka-r*[*as-sa*]
Jiménez 2016a: 13–14

13 "He keeps crying 'My belly, my belly!' – [hand of a ghost],
14 emissary of Ištar. He will die". Belly is Ištar : "He shot an arrow (and) broke open her belly".

As discussed by Jiménez (2023: 11–13), the distinctive writing *mul-mul* signifies that Marduk's arrow (*mulmullu*) in *Enūma Eliš* is understood here as the Pleiades (mul.mul, "Stars", in Sumerian; *zappu*,

[62] On *ašar niṣirtu* see above section 2 with n. 30.
[63] For similar cultic developments in Late Babylonian Uruk see Debourse 2022: 236; Krul 2018: 130–34, 185–90, 249–51; 2019.
[64] The traces do not support Livingstone's reading 42: [$^{d}$] *sebettu*(7.b[i]).
[65] On Jupiter and *ṣaddu*, "signal" see below in this section (cento) and section 2.5.2 with Table 1 (New Year festival prayer); Wee 2016: 162, 165, line 39.
[66] On *ašar niṣirtu* see above section 2 with n. 30; on Zarpānītu as Venus see below section 2.5.2.

"Bristle", in Akkadian).[67] I would suggest that the Bow constellation is the implicit link between Ištar in *Sagig* and this tailored quotation. The Bow constellation represented Ištar and was also Marduk's astralized bow in *Enūma Eliš* and other works (Gabriel 2025: 29–32; Reynolds 2019: 378).[68] Thus, Ištar would be the source of the affliction affecting the belly in *Sagig* and, implicitly, the source of the arrow striking the belly in the poem. In the later copy of the Elamite month-name treatise, the month Ayāru has the comment "because of Tiāmtu whom he (Marduk) subdued" (Frahm and Jiménez 2015: 334–35, 338, A 7: *áš-šú tam-tì šá ik-mu-ú*). The probable link here is also the Pleiades' name mul.mul. On related material in the Babylon calendar treatise see below section 2.5.3.

The cento's light-related interpretation of Marduk's name Asaralimnuna comments on Marduk as Jupiter:

7 $^{d}$sag.me.gar *ina šumi*(mu)-*šú na-din it-ti ana mātāti*(kur.kur) *šá-niš na*-[*áš ṣa-ad-du ana* …]
8 *šá-niš ṣa-ad-du nu-úr* : sag : *ma-ta-a-ti* : *ina* AN x [ … ]

Jiménez 2015: 7–8[69]

7 Sag.me.gar in his name (is) giver of a sign to the lands; secondly, bearer [of a signal for … ];
8 secondly, signal (*is*) light : "sag" is lands : in … [ … ]

Jupiter as Marduk gives a light-related propitious omen. Later in this commentary Qingu and the Hired Man ($^{mul.lú}$*agru*(ḫun.gá), Aries) are equated to justify linking Qingu and Nisannu in association with Anu and Enlil: the Hired Man as Dumūzi rose heliacally on Nisannu day one in *MUL.APIN* and Dumūzi could correspond to Qingu (Jiménez 2015: rev. 8'–9').[70] This concerns Babylon's New Year festival associated with the ideal spring equinox when the Sun rose in the Hired Man, its *ašar niṣirtu* (Debourse 2022: 233–37; Reynolds 2019: 288–89).

### *2.5.2 New Year festival prayers*

In Hellenistic texts describing Babylon's New Year festival, the Esagil priest "Elder Brother" (*aḫu rabû*) recites two pairs of nocturnal prayers, one to Marduk and one to his wife Zarpānītu in each pair, chiefly to secure their blessings for Babylon's citizens (Debourse 2022: 116, 118–21, 124–26, 128–131, 138–40, 144–49, 302–28; see Table 1).

The prayer to Zarpānītu is secondary within each pair and AF 4–5 implicitly astralize Marduk as Jupiter and, in my view, Zarpānītu as Venus, whereas AF 6–7 have explicit, multiple astralizations (Krul 2019: 230–31). This accords with the description of Marduk in the earlier prayer AF 1 as "light of mankind" (14: *nūr*(zálag) *amēlūtu*(lú)$^{tú}$) and "light of the Igigī" (26: *nūr*(zálag) $^{d}$*í-gì-gì*) (Debourse 2022: 95, 100-01).[71] These prayers align with the New Year festival context: Marduk is supreme and Tiāmtu has a minor, passive role. Comparable to the prospective syncretism of *Eriš šummi*, they express the localized focus of Late Babylonian temple cult.[72]

AF 4 includes two balanced poetic lines:

240 *e-bir šamê*(an)$^{e}$ *ḫā'iṭi*(lal)$^{ti}$ *erṣeti*(ki)$^{ti}$
241 *ma-di-di mê*(a)$^{meš}$ *tam-tì mu-ur-riš mēreštu*(uru$_4$)$^{tú}$

Debourse 2022: 124, 128–29, 240–41

240 the one who crosses heaven, the one who inspects the netherworld,
241 the one who measures Tiāmtu's water, the one who cultivates arable land

[67] Gabriel (2025: 32) suggests that *mulmullu* in *Enūma Eliš* may also have included this astral allusion.

[68] The astral arrow usually associated with the Bow constellation is the Arrow Star (Sirius), which represented both Ninurta and Marduk (Reynolds 2019: 376–79). However, associating the Pleiades as Marduk's arrow with the Bow as Ištar is very plausible.

[69] On lines 2–3 see above section 2.2; on line 6 see above section 2.3.

[70] The cento quotes *MUL.APIN* I i 43, ii 36; on Anu and Enlil see Horowitz 2014: 54–57.

[71] On Marduk as "light of the gods" in *Enūma Eliš* VI 148, see above section 1.4.

[72] Debourse 2022: 320–21; Krul 2018: 82; Marduk might also be astralized as Mercury at the end of day five (Debourse 2022: 136, 289; Steele 2024: 19–20).

TABLE 1: Prayers AF 4 – AF 7 in Hellenistic texts describing Babylon's New Year festival[73]

| *Lines* | *Prayer siglum* | *Recipient statue* | *Night* |
|---|---|---|---|
| 222–49 | AF 4 | Marduk | starting Nisannu day four |
| 250–72 | AF 5 | Zarpānītu | |
| 289–316 | AF 6 | Marduk | starting Nisannu day five |
| 318–33 | AF 7 | Zarpānītu | |

Line 240 and *Enūma Eliš* IV 141 about Marduk's creation of the world from Tiāmtu's corpse share the same terminology, except the prayer uses contrasting *erṣetu*, "netherworld", not complementary *ašratu*, "firmament" (see above section 1.4). In my opinion, the creation context applies in line 240, which generated parallel but less relevant epithets for Zarpānītu in AF 5.[74] AF 6 awards the first epithet in line 241 to the Arrow and an epithet related to the second one to Asare (see below in this section with Table 2). Measuring Tiāmtu's water refers to Marduk's conversion of Tiāmtu's corpse into heaven (Debourse 2022: 308). I would argue that line 241 develops the heaven/netherworld contrast in line 240.[75] In AF 4 Marduk is also "bright light" (Akkadian: [*nu-u-r*]*i nam-ri*) and can provide light (*namirtu*(zálag)$^{tú}$) for Babylon's citizens (Debourse 2022: 116–19, 124, 128–29, lines 230–31, 249). AF 5 includes Zarpānītu's epithet "radiant one of the stars" (*na-bat kakkabānī*(mul)), also awarded to Venus in AF 7 (see below in this section), and mentions her light (*nūru*(izi.gar)), station (*man-za-zu*), and brightness (*nam-rat*) (Debourse 2022: 125, 128–29, lines 252–56).[76]

Immediately after AF 5, the Elder Brother recites a prayer three times to the Field ($^{múl}$*ikû*(aš.iku), Pegasus), representing Esagil, outside in Esagil's Great Court and, later that morning, he recites *Enūma Eliš* before Marduk's statue (Debourse 2022: 117, 120-21, 125, 130–31, 138, 144–47, lines 273–75, 279–84).[77] In my understanding the two pairs of prayers, with intensified astralization in AF 6–7, frame these pivotal events.

AF 6–7 astralized Marduk and Zarpānītu as specific planets and fixed stars (Debourse 2022: 125–26, 130–31, 139–40, 146–49, 302–21, lines 301–15, 324–32). After the initial pair Dimmerankia and Damkiana, both referencing heaven and netherworld, six of the seven ancient planets are allocated to Marduk and only "Venus, radiant one of the stars" to Zarpānītu, as her second name and first astralization (Debourse 2022: 140, 148–49, line 325: $^{múl}$*dele-bat na-bat kakkabānī*(mul); see above section 2.5.1(Assurbanipal hymn)). Each deity has seven fixed-star names, giving three groups of seven in total, and Marduk is also called Asare. Table 2 clarifies the structure in AF 6 for the first time.

The most important member opens each group: Dimmerankia (Enlil) leads a triad in Anu's stead; Asare stands alone; Jupiter is the first planet; the Arrow heads a fixed-star group; and the Sun precedes the Moon.[78] They all have *Enūma Eliš* associations: Enlil, the pantheon's previous head, gave Marduk his own name (VII 136);[79] "Asare grantor of arable land" is the incipit of Tablet VII and a major Marduk name in a light-related group (VII 1: $^{d}$*asar-re šá-rik mé-reš-ti*); Marduk's star Nēberu was a name for Jupiter (V 5–6, VII 124–34); Marduk's bow that shot the fatal arrow was astralized as the Bow (IV 101–02, VI 90–91);[80] and Marduk's name has solar interpretation (I 101–02, VI 127–28). Two bright stars, the Arrow (Sirius) and Scorpion's Chest (Antares), frame the fixed-

[73] On the composite line count and prayer sigla (AF = *Akītu*-Festival) see Debourse 2022: 91, 291–92.

[74] AF 5 254: *e-bi-rat šamê*(an)$^{e}$ *ḫā'iṭat*(lal)$^{át}$ *erṣeti*(ki)$^{tì}$ (Debourse 2022: 125, 128–29); Debourse (2022: 316–18) relates both lines to omen divination.

[75] *Enūma Eliš* includes the phrase "her (Tiāmtu's) waters" in this creation context (*Enūma Eliš* IV 140: *me-e-ša*).

[76] Marduk's brightness does not derive from Zarpānītu (cf. Debourse 2022: 318).

[77] The Field's heliacal rising was linked to New Year and the ideal spring equinox (Debourse 2022: 244–45).

[78] On Anu–Enlil–Ea see above section 1.1 with n. 3; see also sections 1.4 and 2.2. On pro-Marduk suppression of Anu see Debourse 2022: 333–34; on Anu as the Hitched Yoke see Krul 2018: 180.

[79] Marduk's related name Lugaldimmerankia occurs in the poem (Debourse 2022: 305).

[80] In AF 7 the female Bow constellation is Zarpānītu's third name and first fixed-star name (Debourse 2022: 140, 148–49, 312, line 326: $^{múl}$pan *mušamqitat*(šub)$^{át}$ *dan-nu-tú*, "Bow, feller of strong ones").

Table 2: Prayer AF 6 in Hellenistic texts describing Babylon's New Year festival

| *Line* | *Name* | *Epithet* | *Structure* |
|---|---|---|---|
| 301 | $^{d}$dìm.me.er.an.ki.a<br>God of Heaven and Netherworld | *mu-šim šīmāti*(nam)$^{meš}$<br>decreer of destinies | Triad Enlil–Anu–Ea:<br>Divine name, two fixed-star names |
| 302 | $^{múl}$mu.bu.kéš.da<br>Hitched Yoke | *šá* $^{giš}$*ḫaṭṭu*(gidri) *u* $^{giš}$*kippatu*(gúr) *na-šu*<br>who carries sceptre and ring | |
| 303 | $^{múl}$nun$^{ki}$<br>Eridu | *šá er-šu!-tú aḫ-zu*<br>who possesses wisdom | |
| 304 | $^{d}$*asar-re*<br>Asare | *šá-ri-ik mēreštu*(uru$_4$)$^{tú}$<br>grantor of arable land | Solo:<br>Divine name |
| 305 | múl.babbar<br>Jupiter | *na-áš ṣa-ad-du ana kalāma*(dù.dù.a)<br>carrier of a signal for all | Quartet:<br>Planets |
| 306 | $^{múl}$gu$_4$.ud<br>Mercury | *mu-šá-az-nin zunni*(šèg)<br>the one who makes it rain | |
| 307 | $^{múl}$genna<br>Saturn | *kakkab*(mul) *kit-tú u mi-šar*<br>star of truth and justice | |
| 308 | $^{múl}$AN<br>Mars | $^{d}$gibil$_6$ *ez-zu*<br>fierce Fire | |
| 309 | $^{múl}$kak.s[i.sá]<br>Arrow | *˹ma˺-di-di mê*(a)$^{meš}$ *tam-tì*<br>measurer of Tiāmtu's water | Quintet:<br>Fixed-star names |
| 310 | $^{múl}$šu.pa<br>ŠU.PA | *bēl*(en) $^{d}$en.líl$^{meš}$<br>lord of Enlils | |
| 311 | $^{múl}$ne.ne.gar<br>NE.NE.GAR | *šá ina ramāni*(ní)-*šú banû*(dù)$^{u}$<br>who was created from himself | |
| 312 | $^{múl}$nu.˹muš˺.da<br>Numušda | *˹muš-tab˺-ru-u zunni*(šèg)<br>who makes the rain last | |
| 313 | $^{múl}$gaba gír.tab<br>Scorpion's Chest | *ka-bi-is irat*(gaba) *tam-tì*<br>trampler of Tiāmtu's chest | |
| 314 | $^{d}$utu<br>Šamaš | *nūr*(zálag) *kib-rat*<br>light of the world regions | Pair:<br>Sun and Moon |
| 315 | $^{d}$30<br>Sîn | *mu-nam*{*-mir*}*-mir ek-let*<br>the one who lights up darkness | |

star quintet with epithets about Marduk's victory. He either butchers Tiāmtu's corpse to create heaven or tramples her in an interpretation of the Scorpion and its brightest star, both with her subjugation built in.[81] Šamaš and Sîn's epithets concern light and Jupiter's name múl.babbar is intrinsically luminous (Thavapalan 2020: 137). As noted by Debourse (2022: 312–18) and Krul (2019: 231), the astralization of Zarpānītu, in a secondary role as Marduk's partner, is a striking development and gendered associations in AF 7 include Venus ($^{múl}$*dele-bat*), the Bow ($^{múl}$pan), She-Goat ($^{múl}$ùz), Eru ($^{múl}$*e$_4$-ru$_6$*), and Ninmaḫ ($^{múl}$nin.maḫ).

### *2.5.3 Babylon calendar treatise*

As a response to *Enūma Eliš*, the Late Babylonian calendar treatise interpreting Esagil rituals as preventing invasion developed the astral portrayal of Marduk and, in particular, Tiāmtu accompanied by Qingu as analogues to the kings of Babylonia, Elam, and Subartu respectively

[81] Other sources link the Arrow with Marduk's fatal arrow, and the Scorpion with Tiāmtu (Reynolds 2019: 42–45, 358–60, 376–79).

(Reynolds 2019). The treatise and the New Year festival texts include third-person narrative about Esagil ritual performance. However, the treatise is set in the past with an unnamed ritual performer responding to omens before a final "prophecy" of Babylonian victory. It emphasized Marduk's enemies to express Babylon's vulnerability and the continued need for ritual protection. The treatise reflects the poem's linkage of Marduk with the Sun, Nēberu as Jupiter, the Bow, and light but also links him with the Arrow and probably the Stars and King. As secondary developments, Tiāmtu is prominently linked with the Moon, Mars, the Goat-Fish in her twin form, the She-Goat in her Tiāmtu aspect, and, in her Qingu aspect, the Scorpion, Corpse and Hyena. Marduk is schematically associated with the Sun, Jupiter, the ideal summer solstice in Du'ūzu, and light; and antithetically Tiāmtu with the Moon, Mars, the ideal winter solstice in Ṭebētu, the Goat-Fish zodiac sign, and darkness. This accords with the positive and negative associations of brightness and darkness respectively that occur in other Akkadian sources, especially from the first millennium B.C.E. (Thavapalan 2020: 37, 96–122, 154–62). The innovative developments in the calendar treatise can be seen as Esagil scholars deploying Late Babylonian astral science to support their self-justifying agenda.[82]

In a section probably on Ayāru, concise poetic narrative about Marduk's victory over Tiāmtu and Qingu is closely related to *Enūma Eliš* and quotes *Enūma Eliš* IV 101: "He shot an arrow and [broke open her belly]" (Reynolds 2019: 190–91, 236–39 § 2 i 1': *mul-mul is-suk*!(tablet SI)-ʾ*ma*ʾ *i*[*ḫ-te-pi ka-ras-su*]). The atypical writing *mul-mul* probably links Marduk's arrow (*mulmullu*) with the Pleiades' Sumerian name Stars (mul.mul), a constellation associated with Ayāru. This is related to Marduk's astralized bow in *Enūma Eliš* and is discussed in relation to the *Sagig* commentary's quotation of the same line and the Elamite month-name treatise's linkage of Ayāru with Tiāmtu's defeat (see above section 2.5.1).

In a section on Du'ūzu the Babylonian king's downfall was portended by an omen pairing Mars with the Moon, and then Jupiter with the Sun, in relation to "height" (*šūqu*) and "depth" (*šuplu*), probably an impossible ecliptic latitude omen (Ossendrijver 2022: 568–69; Reynolds 2019: 194–95, 267–301 § 4 i 24'–32'). Mars and Sîn, "lords of *niṣirtu* of the land of Elam", contrast with Jupiter and Šamaš, "lords of *niṣirtu* of the land of Akkad" (§ 4 i 25': $^{d}$*ṣal-bat-a-nu u* $^{d}$*sîn*(30) *bēlū*(en)$^{meš}$ *ni-ṣir-tu*$_4$ *šá māt*(kur) *elamti*(elam.ma)$^{ki}$; 26': $^{d}$sag.me.gar *u* $^{d}$*šamaš*(utu) *bēlū*(en)$^{meš}$ *ni-ṣir-tu*$_4$ *šá māt*(kur) *akkadî*(uri)$^{ki}$). This is probably an elaborated lunar-opposition omen in Du'ūzu that involved Mars' first stationary point before retrograding in the west in its *ašar niṣirtu* the Goat-Fish and, contrastingly, Jupiter in direct motion in the east in its *ašar niṣirtu* the Crab where the sun rose in Du'ūzu as the ideal summer-solstice month (Reynolds 2019: 32–33, 37–42).[83] Correspondingly, in a section on Ṭebētu Mars was in direct motion in the east in its *ašar niṣirtu* the Goat-Fish constellation in the Goat-Fish zodiac sign (*qaq-qa-ri* $^{múl}$*suḫurmašî*(máš)) where the sun rose in Ṭebētu as the ideal winter-solstice month and, in contrast, Jupiter ($^{mul}$sag.me.gar) reached its first stationary point, probably west of the King star, before retrograding in the west into its *ašar niṣirtu* the Crab (Reynolds 2019: 206–11, 346–48, 374–80, 391 § 13 iv 2–4, 19–20, 34). In this schematization Mars and Jupiter on opposite sides of the sky with perceived contrasting motion would portray the two combatants. Mars' stationary point and retrogradation would represent Tiāmtu's readiness to attack as the nights began to lengthen after the summer solstice, and Jupiter's stationary point and retrogradation Marduk's readiness to counter-attack as the days began to lengthen after the winter solstice. A balanced annual scheme of darkness and light would give equal agency to both deities. Mythologizing the solstices in response to the battle in *Enūma Eliš* is unattested elsewhere. Marduk's associations with Jupiter, the Sun, and light accord with the poem but Tiāmtu's antithetical associations with Mars, the Moon, and darkness are later developments (see above section 2.4). Through Tiāmtu–Nergal syncretism as epitomes of war and destruction, Mars represented Tiāmtu from at least the Neo-Assyrian period and in the treatise this syncretism extended to the winter-solstice ascent of

[82] Debourse and Jursa 2025; Reynolds 2019: 30–50.

[83] The Ṭebētu section probably mentions the stationary point of Mars (called $^{múl}$ud.ka.duḫ.a) in its *ašar niṣirtu* the Goat-Fish at the start of this retrogradation (Reynolds 2019: 208–09, 372–74 § 13 iv 16–18). On *ašar niṣirtu* see above section 2 with n. 30.

Mars/Nergal from the dark netherworld as part of increased astral schematization and winter-solstice ritual in Late Babylonian Babylon and Uruk.[84]

In the section on Ṭebētu the astralization of Tiāmtu and Qingu as fixed stars visible in that month is the most elaborate known (Reynolds 2019: 206–09, 343–72 § 13 iv 1–16). Through wordplay, Ṭebētu spelled $^{iti}$*tap-pat-tu*$_4$ alludes to Tiāmtu as "female twin, female paramour" (*tappattu*) and Ṭebētu spelled $^{iti}$ab is equated not only with Tiāmtu and Qingu as "fathers" (*ab-bi*) but also with "sea, Tiāmtu" (ab.ba *ti-amtu*) (Reynolds 2019: 57–58, 60). As ominous events triggering ritual, astral Tiāmtu and her army assembled and advanced against Marduk (Reynolds 2019: 206–07 § 13 iv 1–4). In accord with Mars' *ašar niṣirtu* and Tiāmtu's caprine and marine nature, she is astralized as the Goat-Fish constellation ($^{múl}$*suḫurmašû*(máš), Capricorn), encompassing twin Tiāmtu and Qingu aspects in a female–male composite (Reynolds 2019: 206–07 § 13 iv 2–12). Her Tiāmtu aspect is also the She-Goat ($^{mul/múl}$*enzu*(ùz), Lyra), called star of witchcraft (*kakkab*(mul) *kišpī*(uš$_{11}$.zu)) (Reynolds 2019: 206–09 § 13 iv 6–16). Her Qingu aspect is both the Scorpion (($^{múl}$)*zuqaqīpu*(gír.tab), Scorpius) through Tiāmtu–Išḫara syncretism and the Corpse ($^{múl}$*pagru*(adda), Delphinus) through Qingu–Asakku syncretism, and the Corpse is equated with the Hyena ($^{múl}$*būṣu*(kir$_4$)) (Reynolds 2019: 206–09 § 13 iv 6–16).

This section on Ṭebētu probably later links Jupiter's stationary point before retrogradation, representing Marduk's counter-attack, with the acronychal rising of the Arrow star and Bow constellation ($^{múl}$*šukūdu*(kak.si.sá) *u* $^{múl}$*qaštu*(pan)) as Marduk's weapons and with a position west of the King star ($^{mul}$*ša*[*rri*](lu[gal])?) (Reynolds 2019: 208–09 § 13 iv 19). The Arrow represented Marduk's arrow through Marduk–Ninurta syncretism; the Bow constellation occurred in *Enūma Eliš* (see above section 1.5); and the King star (Regulus) represented Marduk elsewhere (Reynolds 2019: 374–80). Subsequently in this Ṭebētu section the Arrow's acronychal rising represented Ninurta and marked the ideal winter solstice linked with a musical festival (Reynolds 2019: 208–09, 384–90 § 13 iv 25–29). Further syncretic material relates the Arrow star to Ninurta and Marduk, and the Corpse to Asakku and Qingu (Reynolds 2019: 208–11, 380–94 § 13 iv 22–40). The treatise redeployed lines of *Enūma Eliš* about warrior Marduk in non-astral form as exegesis of his astralized battle. *Enūma Eliš* IV 49/75 about Marduk's raising of his flood-weapon supports homophonic wordplay between his name ($^{d}$*marūduk*(amar.utu)) and Sumerian a.ma.ru or mar.ru$_{10}$, "flood", plus $^{giš}$tukul, "weapon" (Reynolds 2019: 208–09, 382–84 § 13 iv 24–25). *Enūma Eliš* IV 120 about Marduk's post-battle counting of Qingu with the Dead Gods supports the Corpse as astralized Qingu (Reynolds 2019: 208–11, 391–93 § 13 iv 32–33). The setting Bull of Heaven ([$^{múl}$]ʿgu$_4$ʾ.an.na, Taurus) as the Moon's *ašar niṣirtu* probably also represented a conquest of Marduk (Reynolds 2019: 208–09, 390–91 § 13 iv 30).

*Concluding remarks*

This article enables a fuller appreciation of Marduk as a celestial deity in and beyond *Enūma Eliš*. A more cohesive overview of celestial Marduk in the poem integrates the narrative before the list of Marduk's names with the list itself. This highlights the importance of Anšar and Anu as Marduk's ancestors and gives due prominence to his roles as an astral god and a god of light, including his links with the Sun and the use of the root *ʾ l k* to signify astral motion. As his star Nēberu, Marduk controlled and protected the other astral deities. The key role of unspecified *lumāšu*-constellations can now be better understood, especially as the gods' permanent new homes after the war with Tiāmtu. The references to the non-existence of heaven and earth in the opening couplet and their creation by Marduk in his fiftieth name are identified as ring composition. It is suggested that Tiāmtu can be seen as a deity of darkness in the poem, although this is not explicit.

Works with pastiche or quotation of *Enūma Eliš* contextualize the development of these ideas in the first millennium B.C.E. This study offers new insights into passages that include the following topics: astral stations, Jupiter, and *ašar niṣirtu* in Assurbanipal's acrostic hymn (Livingstone 1989:

[84] Krul 2018: 130–34, 249–51; 2019: 228–32; Reynolds 2019: 283–84, 289–92, 333–34; on Mars/Nergal and the solstices and on a Neo-Assyrian compendium subverting Meslamtaea's summer-solstice descent see above section 2.4.

no. 2); the summer solstice in one Neo-Assyrian compendium (Livingstone 1989: no. 39); Marduk and the Sun in another (Rawlinson and Pinches 1909: no. 43) and in exegesis of Simānu ritual (Jiménez 2016b); solar and lunar conjunction in *I.NAM.GIŠ.ḪUR.AN.KI.A*; Nabû as the man in the Moon in the commentary on *Enūma Eliš* I–VII (Frahm and Jiménez 2015: 293–333); Marduk's astralized arrow (Jiménez 2016a); and astralizations of Marduk and Zarpānītu in New Year festival prayers (Debourse 2022: lines 222–333).

My analysis results in a better understanding of the enduring and evolving impact of *Enūma Eliš* through into the Hellenistic period. Earlier in the first millennium B.C.E. Assyrian and Babylonian works were more broadly related to celestial Marduk in the poem and show greater diversity, including Assyrianizing perspectives and the promotion of Nabû. In the Late Babylonian period sources are limited to northern Babylonia and have a strong local focus on promoting Babylon and Marduk's Esagil cult. In Late Babylonian ritual contexts specific astralizations are expanded and schematized to portray both Marduk with his wife Zarpānītu, and Marduk versus his enemy Tiāmtu. Incorporating *ašar niširtu* and the ideal solstices, the latter conflict was innovatively mapped onto the night sky as a battle between light and darkness. This textual corpus is relatively small with an extensive chronological range but it demonstrates how mythologems and astral science could be combined to express changing theological and cultic priorities.

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**مردوخ السماوي في وما وراءه إينوما إليش**

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تقدم هذه المقالة تحليلاً لمردوخ السماوي في قصيدة "إنوما إليش" وفي المصادر التي تعد نسخًا مكررة من القصيدة أو تتضمن اقتباسات منها، بما في ذلك الإشارات إلى تلاوتها. غالبًا ما تكون هذه الترانيم والصلوات والتأليفات التفسيرية، التي تشهد عليها الألواح من أوائل الألفية الأولى قبل الميلاد إلى العصر الهلنستي، مرتبطة بالتقويم والطقوس. تقدم المقالة رؤية متكاملة لمردوخ السماوي وارتباطاته وتربط التطورات بأولويات العلماء المتنوعة. يتضمن هذا رؤى حول ما يسمى بالرجل البابلي في القمر، ومخططات التجليات الفلكية البابلية المتأخرة، ونقيض النور والظلام.