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THE series Maqlū is the single most important, if also the most tendentious, member of that segment of cuneiform literature which records Mesopotamian magical and medical attempts to counteract witchcraft and its effects. The presentation of the results of an ongoing investigation in which Mesopotamian beliefs and practices relating to witchcraft are scrutinized and the relevant compositions reconstructed and analyzed can best begin, therefore, with a few general observations on the series.

In view of the immense contribution made by the late Professor Frederick W. Geers—through his copies and identifications—to this investigation, it is only fitting that this first offering be dedicated to his memory, especially since Professor Geers's interest in Maqlū is well known, and his contribution to the reconstruction of its text, as of so many other texts, remains of fundamental and enduring value.

THE PROBLEM

Since the appearance of the first edition of Maqlū in 1895, many of its incantations have been among the most widely quoted examples of Babylonian magical literature. The frequency with which these incantations, both individually and in groups, are encountered in the secondary literature should not obscure the fact that a comprehension

*The substance of this paper was read before the 181st meeting of the American Oriental Society, Cambridge, Mass., April 6, 1971. (The portion of that delivery dealing with the history of Maqlū will be presented in a later study.) Sincere thanks are due to Professors Th. Jacobsen, W. L. Moran, and S. J. Lieberman for reading and commenting upon this paper, and to Professor A. Sachs for providing references to the various days of Abu mentioned in Neo-Babylonian and later documents.

1 This investigation has been supported by grants from the American Council of Learned Societies, the American Philosophical Society, Harvard University, the Jewish Theological Seminary of America, the Lucius N. Littauer Foundation, and McMaster University. Thanks are due to these institutions and their officers. Some of the results of the investigation have already been communicated in preliminary form in papers read before the American Oriental Society since 1969 and in a Harvard dissertation entitled "Studies in the History and Interpretation of Some Akkadian Incantations and Prayers Against Witchcraft" (1972). I am deeply indebted to Professors Thorkild Jacobsen and William L. Moran, who served as advisors for this dissertation.

2 I am grateful to Professors A. L. Oppenheim and E. Reiner for the privilege of studying Professor Geers's copies in 1969 and again in 1972 and for their advice and interest in the investigation, and wish to thank the director and staff of the Oriental Institute for their hospitality on those occasions. Special thanks are due also to Dr. E. Sollberger and Mr. C. B. F. Walker of the Department of Western Asiatic Antiquities of the British Museum for their helpful counsel in matters relating to the tablets in their care. Mr. Walker has checked and commented upon suggested joins, provided collations, and answered many questions. Assistance has been received from a number of other scholars, and the debts incurred will be acknowledged in appropriate places. Here I would like to mention and thank those who have contributed to my work on a new edition of Maqlū by generously communicating their identifications of new Maqlū fragments; they are Professors B. D. Biggs, E. Reiner, R. Borger, H. Hunger, W. G. Lambert, and E. Leichty. It seems almost unnecessary to mention how much this investigation is indebted to the work of other students of Mesopotamian magical and medical literature, especially G. Meier and F. Köcher.
of the overall meaning of the series and an appreciation of the contextual matrix in which the incantations are found are preconditions (of varying degrees of necessity) for a full understanding of the meaning and history of the individual incantations contained in the series. It is regrettably true, therefore, that the meaning of Maqlū is not readily apparent. For the series, containing as it does about one hundred incantations dealing with the witch and witchcraft, is extremely long; and the difficulties caused by its length are only compounded by an impression of complexity evoked by the repetition of similar incantations not only in proximity to each other but also at different points in the work, and by the presence, often in contiguity, of a number of seemingly unrelated incantations. A logical progression of elements, and therewith a pattern and meaning, is not immediately evident; some may even doubt their very existence in Maqlū.

This being the case, an attempt to comprehend the meaning of Maqlū—or even a denial of the validity of such an attempt—must proceed from a prior specification of the nature of the composition. But even this specification would appear to be problematic, for there does not seem to be agreement on very much more than on the obvious, namely that the eight incantation tablets of Maqlū contain a large number of witchcraft-directed incantations and that the latter are cited by incipit together with their ritual instructions in the ritual tablet. Beyond this—if we may venture to interpret the few relevant and often extremely brief comments in the literature—opinions seem to be divided, and various, sometimes conflicting, characterizations have been applied to Maqlū. It seems, then, that the very nature of Maqlū must first be determined, and this can best be done by ascertaining its precise character, structure, and setting. It is toward the clarification of these issues that the following remarks are offered.

**Proposals**

Far from being a simple collection of incantations and rituals brought together merely because of common themes, Maqlū actually represents a consecutive and unified ceremony in which the incantations were recited and the rituals performed in the order given therein, and the ritual tablet, far from being a simple catalogue, is in fact the manual for the complete ceremony. It may reasonably be supposed that a consecutive and unified ceremony of the length of Maqlū should be a structured performance spanning a defined time period sufficient in length for its execution. Accordingly, if Maqlū really possesses the ceremonial character claimed above, it should contain formally identifiable divisions and these divisions should be set in time periods which stand in a sequentially meaningful temporal relationship to each other. It is decisive, therefore, that the series and the performance represented by it can be shown to be divided into three major divisions—tablets I–V, VI–VII 57, and VII 58–VIII—and these divisions can be shown to have been performed in sequence, the first two during the night and the third during the morning of the following day, beginning at dawn. Moreover, the full ceremony was performed almost certainly in the month of Abu, probably during the period of the disappearance of the moon at the end of that month.

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4 Detailed analyses of the history, pattern, and meaning of the series will be presented elsewhere.
These proposals concerning the ceremonial and literary unity of *Maqlû* depend upon various types of evidence drawn from the ritual tablet, the incantation tablets, and references and allusions to *Maqlû* in other documents. Ultimately, the most meaningful proof of the validity of these proposals lies in the demonstration that *Maqlû* does possess coherence of thought and that lapses in its internal logic are the result of changes introduced into it in the course of its historical development. Yet, were we to rely on this for the verification of the proposals, we should be laying ourselves open to the possibly justified charge of having imposed a forced meaning on a series whose coherence as a work might be open to question and has not yet been established as a legitimate presumption. For this reason, the arguments presented here in support of our proposals are essentially formal, depending for the most part upon structural and thematic features found in *Maqlû* and upon the testimony of outside sources.

**The Ritual Tablet**

The ritual tablet ranks among the most important sources of information on the nature of *Maqlû*. Especially instructive are several self-contained sections introduced by the formulaic *arkiššu* (*ēgir-šalu*) “thereafter.” These sections follow the ritual instructions for I–V, for VI–VII 57, and for VII 58–VIII, and are found respectively in IX 95–98, in 148–49, and in 191–92. The very existence of sections introduced by *arkiššu* within a body of ritual instructions points to the consecutive nature of the prescribed ritual. The significance of these sections as sources of information, however, is not limited to this, for there is much more to be learned from them and from the function of the rites prescribed therein:

Thereafter, you (the priest) recite the incantation “Evil demon, to your steppe” (udug. hul edin. na zu. šē)

all the way to the outer entrance;

then you encircle the entrances with parched flour.

You return to (var.: enter into) the house, and at the place where you performed the “Bur[n]ing,” you li[b]ate water and re[cite] the incantation “I cast an incantation upon the assemblage of all the gods” (anamdi šipta ana pu[hu]r [var.: puhrī] uānī kalāna).

IX 95–98

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5 References to *Maqlû*, except when otherwise indicated, are to G. Meier, *Die aegyrische Beschwerungsasammlung Maqlû*, *AfO* Beiheft 2 (Berlin, 1937), and idem, *AfO* 21 (1966): 70–81.

6 For the one other occurrence of *arkiššu* in the ritual tablet, see below n. 11.

7 IX 95–98 are now fully extant and may be composed as follows:

(95) *ēgir-šalu* ēn udug. hul edin. na zu (var.: gur [sic]); šē a-di kā bar-i (var. an. aš. ām) ši-dn. na ma
(96) zīd. ma-gā kā. meš-nī (var.s. kā. meš; kā. me) te-ē (var.: omits)-sir
(97) (var.s. a-na; ana) ē gur (var.: te)-ma a-bar ma-ag. [ī-la-a taq-šu-a (var.: -ū) a. meš šub š[u]-b-di (var.: [u]-šub.[śu]-b-di)]

(98) ēn a-nam-di ēn ana (var. a-na) pu-[hu]r (var. *ukin*!); pu-[uh-ri] dingir. meš dū-ma (var. dū. a. bi) ši-d-nu

(Where possible, preference has been given here to the manuscript family the two extant branches of which are represented by *STT* 1 83 and K.11603 (which I identified among Geers’s copies and joined to K.2385 + . . .) and within this family to its Kuyunjik representative. No two manuscripts agree in their distribution of these lines; I have followed that of K.11603. Thanks are due to Mr. C. B. F. Walker for checking and confirming the aforementioned join and for providing collations, and to Professor S. J. Lieberman for photographs as well as some collations —with the kind permission of R. Temizer, Director of the Ankara Archaeological Museum, and Professor O. R. Gurney—of *STT* 1 83.)
Thereafter, [you encircle the bed with] flour[-paste] and [recite] the incantation "Baîn, ban]" (sag.[ba
sag. ba]) [and the incantation "Adjured is the house"
(tummu bitu).

IX 148-498

[Thereafter (...)] you recite the [incantation "I lift] my
gamlus (anašši) gamliya);
then you sprinkle water ([?] with the gamlu) ...

IX 191-92

The rites prescribed in these sections are of a primarily apotropaic character. These
specific rites, in fact, must be regarded as an integral part of the standard apotropaic
repertory to which the magical-priest regularly resorted. This is evidenced by the frequent
reincurrence, singly and in combination with each other, of the incantations cited in these
sections of the ritual tablet in other complex rituals, and by their accompaniment there
by actions similar to, and even identical with, those which accompany them in Maqlù.
In these other rituals, the apotropaic rites known from Maqlù almost invariably occur
at the end either of the entire ritual or of individual segments; they are, therefore,
clearly recognizable as concluding rites, a characteristic bound up with their apotropaic
function.10 It is reasonable to infer that also in Maqlù the apotropaic rites prescribed in
the sections translated above differ in character and function from the main body of
the ritual and represent standard concluding rites. And, in point of fact, the special
nature of these rites actually manifests itself in the compositional form exhibited by the
aforementioned sections. For these sections—in addition to being set off by the introductory
arkišu from the respective portions of the ritual tablet which precede them—also
differ from, and contrast with, the rest of the (preserved) ritual tablet in other formal
pects; and the distinctive compositional features of these sections can be understood
in the context of Maqlù only if they are viewed as specific expressions of the distinctive
nature of the rites prescribed.11

8 The translation of IX 148 is based upon the reading and restoration: EGIR-kù Zl. [SUR. RA-\a GIS. NÁ
té-\a-gir]; see STT 1:83-67, and for the restoration, see AR 55 no. 1 rev. 18, and cf., e.g., F. Köcher,
AFO 21 18:39 f. For the corrected reading of IX 149, see G. Meier, AFO 21 81 and idem, AFO 12 (1937-39):
240 n. 27.
9 This translation is based upon the restoration of tā1. Mēš in IX 192 (not yet collated), a restoration
suggested by the context and supported by such analogous passages as Reiner Surpu p. 11:13 and F.
Köcher, AFO 21 18:37.
10 See, for example, O. R. Gurney, Iraq 22 (1950): 224; 25 ff.; R. Caplice, Or. n.s. 40 (1971): 168 f.; 3 ff.;
F. Köcher, AFO 21 21:37 ff.; Ki 1904-10 1, 48373 rev. (3'-5'); [21]. SUR. RA-a Zl. [... -... a-a-nÈ
È-n1-a-ma-ên1 a-na ukkn dingir. MEŠ Dil-[na šID-NU],
followed by a dividing line and colophon]; E. Ebeling, Tod und Leben nach den Vorstellungen der Babylonier
(Berlin and Leipzig, 1931 [hereafter TuL]), p. 119: 11 ff. (delete the third occurrence of kipta in l. 11;
cf. KAR 90 rev. 11); D. W. Myhrman, ZA 16 (1902): 192:18 f. (for the corrected reading of l. 18, see G.
Meier, AFO 12 240 n. 27, where additional examples of tummu bitu are to be found); K. 6855-8 f. (8 f.:
[... Zl. SUR. RA-a Zl. DA SE. MU[... -... ènim-ma-ên1 a-na [... šID-NU]... ] HUL à nim-ma-ên1 a-na [... šID-NU]
(= ID-nu), followed by a dividing line); Reiner Surpu p. 12, il 16; ibid., p. 59: Sm. 756 obv. 19 (followed by
a dividing line); G. Meier, AFO 12 43:13 ff.
11 In addition to being introduced by arkišu, the
sections under study are characterized by the follow-
ing distinctive formal features: (1) none of the
incantations cited by incipit in these sections is ever
quoted, or even referred to, in the incantation tablets
of Maqlù. By contrast, every single incantation cited
by incipit elsewhere in the ritual tablet is also quoted
in full in the incantation tablets; (2) the instructions
in these sections are always formulated in second
person form and, accordingly, prescribe the exclusive
participation of a second person referent. A contrasting
situation obtains in instructions found elsewhere in
the ritual tablet, where the general participation of
two actors is established by syllabically written second
and third person verbs and third person pronounal
suffices:
The various features that characterize the *arkšu* sections thus lend decisive support to our earlier inference about the nature of the rites prescribed therein and allow us to conclude with a fair degree of assurance that IX 95–98, 148–49, and, of course, 191–92, the last entry in the ritual tablet, prescribe a series of standard apotropaic rites which the magical-priest was to perform at the conclusion of major portions of the ceremony. Since these rites would occur at the major junctures of the ceremony or, to put it somewhat differently, at the points of separation between the main segments of the ritual, the distribution of the formally defined textual sections in which these rites are prescribed allows us to infer the scope of the major divisions of the ritual tablet and, thereby, of the series. Accordingly, IX 95–98, which follows IX *x–94* (// I–V), defines the first division as tablets I–V; IX 148–49, which follows IX 99–147 (// VI–VII 57), defines the second division as tablets VI–VII 57; and IX 191–92, which follows IX 150–90 (// VII 58–VIII), defines the third division as tablets VII 58–VIII.

a) second person verb forms: S(T) 1 83 (hereafter in this note: Su.) 4'; ta-[a]-ša-[dir]: 7'; tu-[a]-an-[a]-ka-[a]; Sm. 139 (Bab. (+) K.8879 +... (+) Sm. 1901 [probability confirmed]): 5'; tu-[a] 1X 25 f.; 41; 48; ta-[b]-bar-ram (cf. S(T) 1 82;103a [see already CAD B 102 and A/2 301]); 51; 61; 64; 71; 3 rīkit (krēša) tarakkas (krēša) ta-[il-paṭur] (so restore also 73); 81; K.11603 (see above n. 7); 5' f. // (= duplicate) Su.: 37 // VAT 4103 [AFO 21 [1966], pls. 11–12] obv. 24: en sa [mek tu-kar-s]-sa ra 4'-a up-ta-[var.: "-at]-šir ima giš ma nu ša-bi ngi tab. (t?) ur-ra tu-[a]-aš-ba-as (IX 85?); IX 86–88; 94' (see below n. 16); 136; 136; 153 (cf. person: 157); 162; 187.

b) third person 1. verb forms: Su.: 5'; [...šu. a]-jo (coll.) su-ši-ab ana ugu i-tar-ra-šiš-ša (correct and restore accordingly IX 24); K.11603/io' // Su.: 39'; en ak-šu-ša gaša la-aš nu ugu lag-ga šiš ma šiš-us ša-bis ša i-kab-ba-as (IX 89?); Su.: 43' (see below n. 16); IX 159; 181. 2. pronominal suffixes (only those referring to the third person human partipant are included): Su.: 5' and IX 24' (see above 61); Su.: 14'; ka-[šu] (doubtful; probably refers to the mouth of the representation); IX 89' (see above b1.); 154; 164; 172; 177 (translate: "... and with his mouth he blows (the chaff) into the wash basin.", and delete, accordingly, the entry "pi la sar 'Mündung des lAsar-Gefässes'" in Salonen Hausgeräte 2, p. 337); 180; 186 (translate: "he then raises (the two loaves) in his right and left hands and recites the incantation"). The aforementioned second and third person references generally participate jointly in the ritual and function alongside one another; see the following passages in which their joint participation is reflected in orthographically explicit second and third person forms: Su.: 4' ff.: IX 24' (... šu šiš-ba šaršarna (imamu)) 26; IX 85–89' (see above a) and b1.); IX 153 (cf. Su.: 69')–54; 156–59; 184–87.

The formal features that characterize the *arkšu* sections indicate by the very fact of their distinctiveness—i.e., the rites prescribed in these sections must participate, in some way, of a distinctive nature—and in turn these features must themselves be explicable in terms of that nature. The compositional features outlined above (as well as other features which are of a less formal nature [e.g., the lack of a specifically anti-witchcraft character or season] and not mentioned here for that reason) can be understood in the context of *Mašl* if they are regarded as indicative of standard rites of a distinctive apotropaic concluding nature, and we would explain them as follows: the exclusive use of second person forms in the *arkšu* sections under study indicates that the rites prescribed in these sections involve the participation solely of a second person referent. This referent is to be identified, of course, with the magical-priest; for the use of the second person as a form of address to the officiating magical-priest is a well-known characteristic of private-magical ritual documents (see W. von Soden, ZA 48 [1938]: 53 and R. Caplice, CBQ 29 [1967]: 40–44) and is indirectly established for the ritual tablet of *Mašl* by the explicit designation of the third person referent as "the patient" (maršu). Su.: 5'; [...šu. a]-jo (coll.) su-ši-bi ana ugu i-tar-ra-šiš-ša... (=) correct and restore accordingly IX 24); Su.: 10' f. [šu. a]-jo ka-[šu] ša-bi ša-bi ša šiš-[šu] ša-bi ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša ša šа
The Incantation Tablets

Besides being supported by the centrality of different themes in the incantations and rituals of each of the aforementioned three divisions (judgment, destruction by fire, and expulsion in I–V; fumigation, protection, and salving in VI–VII 57; washing and retributive reversion in VII 58–VIII), the tripartite division of the series inferred from the distribution of arkišu sections in the ritual tablet is also evident in several readily identifiable structural patterns found in the incantation tablets themselves. Both Enlil qaqqadi panni a ūnu, VI 1–18, and Enlil qaqqadi Mul.Kak.si.sá láni, VII 50–57, the first and last incantations in the proposed second and therefore middle division, center on the identification of parts of the speaker’s body with astral bodies and deities (in order thereby to keep witchcraft away; cf. VI 6 and VII 55–57) and even share a number of identical verbal formulations found nowhere else in Maqlû.12 It is clear—especially in light of the fact that Maqlû opens13 with an address to the “gods of the night,” that is, the stars and constellations of the night sky14—that the occurrence of a shared astral orientation, purpose, and formulation in VI 1–18 and VII 50–57 is of structural significance and that these two incantations constitute the beginning and end of the second division, set it off from the preceding and following divisions, and define the limits of these divisions.

Moreover, the separation of the second division from the first, on the one side, and from the third, on the other, at the respective trisecting points V 184/VI I and VII 57/ VII 58 is also implicit in structural and thematic features found in the first and third divisions themselves:

1. The separation at the end of V of the first from the second division is implicit, for example, in the function and character of the last incantation in V, the incantation isâ isâ (V 166–84):

   Incantation. Be off, be off, begone, begone,
   Depart, depart, flee, flee!
   Go off, go away, be off, and begone!
   May your wickedness like smoke rise ever heavenward!
   From my body be off!
   From my body begone!
   From my body depart!
   From my body flee!
   From my body go off!
   From my body go away!
   To my body turn back not!
   To my body approach not!
   To my body near not!
   On my body abut not!

12 Simply see VII 50b, 54, and VI 4, and compare VI 1 with VII 50 and VI 4 with VII 52. (My reading of these two incantations, which differs somewhat from that of the previous editors [for example (conjectural and tentative; manuscripts not yet collated): VI 2: ṣarrad ṣg(ù-l)-a 〈[jlu]〉 [i.e., ancient misreading of ṣarrad for ṣarṣ as ṣarr skład = ṣarr si, and resolution as jlu gil-ma-[t]i (t)amassat i’il-a-ä]15 (text: pām[iya] due to ancient misresolution of hasan, ṣna, as pani on basis of preceding line); VI 3: . . . 4(n)š[š.n.a]m; etc.], the reasons for the readings, and the identification of the astral references will be presented elsewhere. See also below n. 36.)

13 A detailed analysis of I 1–36 will be found on pp. 128–231 of the dissertation cited above n. 1.

MESOPOTAMIAN ANTI-WITCHCRAFT LITERATURE

By the life of Šamaš, the honorable, be adjured!
By the life of Ea, lord of the deep, be adjured!
By the life of Asalluhi, the magus of the gods, be adjured!
By the life of Girra, your executioner, be adjured!
From my body you shall indeed be separated! Tu₄, EN.

For the recital elsewhere of variant forms of this incantation at the conclusion of other rites of expulsion, rites—significantly—which sometimes share with Maqlû a common calendrical and ideational setting,¹⁵ the nature of the performance which accompanies the recital of this incantation in Maqlû,¹⁶ and, most important, the very wording of the incantation itself clearly reveal the concluding exorcistic function and character of this last incantation in V. Moreover, this delimitation of the first division and the delineation of the concluding character of V 166–84 are fully in agreement with the lists of Maqlû incantations prescribed for recital in BBR 2 26 v *71–76 and in PBS 1/1 13 rev. 41–50 // K.15234 (+) 16344 (possibility confirmed); for these lists cite only incantations found in tablets I, IV, and V in an order identical with that of the series and always end with the last incantation in V.¹⁷

2. The separation of VII 58–VIII¹⁸ from the preceding as well as the unity of this last division of Maqlû is clearly reflected in the repeated and consistent references in this division to the coming of the morning, the rising of the sun, and the beginning of the day’s activities;¹⁹ as, for example, in the incantation ittamra šēru (VII 153–60):

Incantation. Dawn has broken; doors are (now) opened;
The traveler has passed through the gate;
[The messenger²⁰] has taken to the road.

¹⁵ See Tu₁ 84 f.; 23–32 (= KAR 184 = BAM 323; 79–88; note that a duplicate is K.4508 + 6048 [not yet checked]; K.4508 was already identified by F. W. Goers]), especially ll. 31–32 (month of Abu; see below); Tu₁L 124–33 (a new edition utilizing Kuyunjik duplicates will appear together with a study of the relationship between witches and ghosts), especially p. 133: VAT 13656 = LK1 89 rev. 1. col. (note that Tu₁L 85:31–32 and 135:VAT 13656 were already connected by W. von Soden, ZA 43 [1936]: 267 and 275); KBo 9 50 obv. 1′–17′ // KUB 37 68, especially KBo 9 50 obv. 11′–17′ // KUB 37 68: 9′–11′.

¹⁶ See IX 93–94, which, because of disagreements between SLoT 1 83 and K.11603 (see above n. 7) and of the uncertainties involved in the decipherment and exact placing of Tāllqvist Maqlû, 2, p. 90: K.2961 li 3′: ki x [, may best be cited at this time as follows: a) 93. ēn i-sa-a i-sa-a šid-nu-ma zid.mad.gā šub. šub.Š[ušd]³

94. [x x x x (x x) hu-lu-up-paš-qi ana ka ūd. du-]

[ma ta-n(u-suk)]

(line distribution that of K.11603; 93a from VAT 4103 [AfO 21 (1966), pl. 12]; 93b from VAT 4103 and K.11603; 94 from K.11603; a collation of K.11603 by Mr. C. B. F. Walker indicates that there is insufficient space at the end of 93 and 94 for the restoration of -ma.)

b) ...[š]i-d-nu-ma zid.mad.gā šub-di-ma nāp-pa-[tu]

[ana kā ud]. du-ma i-na-as-suk-ma ... (SLoT 1 83:42′ f.; a collation from photographs indicates that there is sufficient space at the beginning of 43′ for the restoration.)

¹⁷ It should be noted here that the present reference to these lists for purposes of supporting this delimitation of division one retains its validity regardless of whether, as previously thought, these lists are an extract from the "canonical" Maqlû or whether, as I believe, they preserve the historical source from which the first and oldest division of Maqlû ultimately derives.

¹⁸ It may be noted in passing that the notation "zag.til.la.bi.še-p 'zu Ende'" (G. Meier, AfO 21 80 ad VIII 104) at the end of Maqlû VIII suggests the advisability of no longer using the occurrence of a like notation at the end of Šurpu IX as a point of departure for determining the position of the ritual tablet of Šurpu and for assessing the correctness of an identification of tablet I of that work; for the problem, see Reiner Šurpu pp. 3 f.

¹⁹ See, e.g., VII 67, 147, 151, 153–55, 158, 161–63, 170, 174, 178; VIII 1, 3, 7, 83, and 16+x–26+x. (I have identified and composed this last incantation on the basis of K.11762:8–15′ and K.10106 + 10276: 1′–8′; disregard the suggested identification of K.10358 by G. Meier, AfO 21 80 ad VIII 16, and note that the incantation referred to by Meier on the basis of Bezold’s citation is found in ll. 5′–10′ of the right column and is now duplicated by K.10559:25′ ff. Thanks are due to Mr. C. B. F. Walker for collations of all the aforementioned fragments and to Professor B. Caplice for an earlier collation of K.11762 and for a copy of K.10358.)

²⁰ Restoring: [mār šipri (1)].
Ha! w[icht]: you labored in vain to bewitch me!
Ha! [enchantress]: you tried for nought to enchant me!
For I am now cleansed by the light of the (rising) sun;
[And whatever] witchcraft [you did] or had done (against me during the night)
May they ([?] the traveler, messenger) turn back (against you) so that it seizes you, yes you!21

This daytime orientation is already evident in VII 58–83, the first incantation in the division.22 And, for purposes of delimitation, the significance of the daytime references is prominently highlighted by the contrast offered by the nighttime character of the preceding division, a character marked not only by the mention of denizens of the night sky but also by references to the sleeping community, the bedroom, and the bed.23

In addition to signifying the structured framework and essential unity of the work, the shared nighttime orientation of the first two divisions and the contrasting daytime character of the third reflect the setting and sequence in time of Maqlū and point quite clearly to the recital and performance of I–VII 57 // IX 1–149 during the night and of VII 58–VIII // IX 150–92 during the early morning hours of the following day. This conclusion is explicitly confirmed by the ritual tablet: IX 150 f., the ritual instructions which follow the concluding rites of the second division and introduce those of the third, begin with the words ina šēr[i... ] “in the morning,” and thus indicate that the rites of the preceding division were performed during the night and those of the following one during the morning. This conclusion is reconfirmed, at least as regards the first division, by K.6855:11’ f.: [...] x ma-šē LUGAL ma-ag-t[a-a 24 ...]N ana IG1 DINGIR. MEŠ gi-t[i...].

That part of Maqlū was performed at night and part in the morning explains, and is in turn reconfirmed by, one of the strangest features of the series. Outside of Maqlū there are a large number of incantations addressed to the sun-god Šamaš of the well-known type in which the bewitched man addresses Šamaš in the latter’s capacity as judge, states that he is presenting before Šamaš images of the witches who have performed witchcraft against him, and requests that Šamaš pronounce a verdict of death by fire and that the fire-god execute the verdict.25 Although incantations of this type are among the most common in the witchcraft corpus and constitute its most dominant type, not one Šamaš incantation of this type is to be found in tablets I–V of Maqlū, where instead we find a large number of incantations of this and derived types addressed to Nuska and Girra. What makes this situation appear all the more perplexing and highlights the problem is the contrast offered by the frequent occurrence of Šamaš

21 This translation of the incantation depends in part on my understanding of the nature of the witchcraft activities underlying this incantation as well as similar ones (e.g., VII 161–69, and cf. I 122–34); see the abstract of the author’s “Of omens, witches, and zikurratu” in Abstracts of Communications: AOS Meeting 1972, p. 14, no. 92. A full exposition, together with editions of the relevant texts, will be presented in a later study.

22 See VII 67: majar ʾšamaš... and compare the similar orientation in 4R 17 rev. 8 ff. R. Borer, JCS 21 [1967]: 2) and in Lauaeae Bit Rimki pp. 37 ff. (note that K.9601 joins K.2563 +... [ibid., pl. 1] rev. 1–8 [confirmed]) // STT I 76–77.

23 See, e.g., VI 124–26, 132 f., 140–43; VII 8–10, and contrast these with VII 153–77.

24 Cf. W.22307/48 rev. 1, a text known to me through the courtesy of Dr. H. Hunger, who graciously allowed me to examine his editions of unpublished Uruk tablets.

25 For incantations of this type, see, e.g., W. G. Lambert, AFO 18 (1957–58): 288–99 and KAR 80 // S. Langdon, RA 26 (1929): 40 f. // K.1853 + 6262 + 6789 + 13358 + 13813 (+) 7201 + 10819 (+) 3000 (+) 6996 (+) 9216 (+) 431 + 11260 (all confirmed) i–ii 17” // K.10245.
inchantations of a very different sort in VII 58–VIII. In light of our previous discussion, however, this situation is now completely understandable: while the morning performance of the third division fostered the dominance of Šamaš in VII 58–VIII, the nighttime performance of the first division precluded the possibility of his playing a dominant role in I–V and required his replacement there by Nuska and Girra.

External Testimony

There is much more in Maqlû that further supports, and is explicable in terms of, the sequential ritual nature, the divisions, and the times of performance here proposed. However, in view of the striking confirmation to be found elsewhere, we may now leave the series and turn to a testimony the value of which is perhaps all the greater because the source in which it is found does not belong to the corpus of traditional literature. In ABL 56,26 a letter to the Assyrian king, we find the following instructions, which, in view of the preceding discussion, require no comment:

At night the king will perform Maqlû;
in the morning the king will perform the balance of the ritual.

obv. 7–rev. 1

This letter is especially important; in addition to confirming what has been said thus far, it points the way to one further step toward an understanding of Maqlû. Immediately following the lines quoted above, the letter continues as follows:

Furthermore: a figurine of Gilgameş
will certainly be used in the (periodical) rites of the month
Abu [which] will be performed on [the 28/29]b day; . . .

rev. 2–6

The mention of both the performance of Maqlû and the use of an image of Gilgameş in the rites of the month of Abu suggests that Maqlû was to be performed in that month, a not unreasonable suggestion, given the association elsewhere of witchcraft and anti-witchcraft rituals with the month of Abu and involving the mention of Gilgameş.27 What makes this suggestion more than just a reasonable possibility and indicates the correctness of positing a meaningful link between the mention of Maqlû in obv. 7–rev. 1 and of Gilgameş and Abu in rev. 2–6 is the existence also outside of this letter of a clear association between Maqlû, Gilgameş, and Abu.

Points of direct contact between Maqlû and Gilgameş and between Maqlû and Abu are to be found respectively in the introductory and concluding portions of Maqlû I–V:

1. In I 37–60, the gods of the netherworld are involved, alongside and in conjunction with those of the night sky, in assisting the victim of witchcraft,28 and Gilgameş

26 This letter has been recently reedited by Parpola LAS no. 208 134 f. His translation is reproduced here with the exception of """Maqlû"" for ""the (ritual) 'burning'"" in obv. 7 and my tentative restoration of a date in rev. 3. This restoration is based upon the significance of this time period in texts 1, (2), 3, 4, and 9, cited below n. 34; cf. also notes 37 and 38.
27 See texts 3, 5, and 9 cited below n. 34 and STT 2 275 i 9', and note that BAM 370 iiib 5 (BAM 370 iib 18'–iiib 10 is a duplicate of STT 2 275 i 6'–13') cites a different day of the month.
28 An analysis of I 37–60 will be presented in a later study. Here it need only be noted that the three incantations in I 37–60 are interdependent (on a superficial level, compare 37 f. with 53, 47 with 52, and 50 with KAR 94: 19–23, the commentary to I 42 ff.) and form the second section of the introductory portion of Maqlû (I 1–72).
in his netherworld capacity is here invoked as the authority behind what we would conjecture to be a mānīt erṣetim\textsuperscript{29} placed upon the witches:

Netherworld, Netherworld, yea Netherworld!
Gilgameš is the executor of your (the witches') ban.
I 37 f.

2. In the last part of V, from about line 104 on, the witch is frequently addressed in exorcistic terms and treated as a noncorporeal being. In the last two incantations of the tablet, this being is then consigned to the domain of the dead and adjured to stay away from the patient. Immediately following the instructions for the recital of these last incantations and for the performance of their accompanying rituals, the ritual tablet prescribes a concluding rite which continues the line of thought of the preceding and heightens its effect:

Thereafter, you recite the incantation "Evil demon, to your steppe" all the way to the outer entrance; then you encircle the entrances with parched flour.
IX 95 f.\textsuperscript{30}

The point of contact between this portion of Maqlū and the month of Abu is to be found in UET 6/2 410.\textsuperscript{31} At the end of a ritual involving, among other things, the placing of representations of witches and their provisions in a boat and the overturning(?)\textsuperscript{32} of that boat, there occur instructions virtually identical with those of Maqlū just quoted and the explicit statement that the ritual is to be performed on the twenty-eighth day of Abu:

... Thereafter,
you recite the incantation "Evil demon, to your steppe"
all the way to the outer entrance; then you encircle the entrance with [flour-p]aste.

This rite is to be perforned\textsuperscript{33} on the 28th\textsuperscript{33} day of Abu,
and [he] will [then] recover.

\textit{UET} 6/2 410 obv. 25–27

It is especially significant that the points of contact between Maqlū, Gilgameš, and Abu are found precisely in the introductory and concluding sections of division one, that division of Maqlū which is historically the oldest in the series and the ultimate purpose of which is the transformation of the witch into a ghost and the expulsion of that ghost from the world of the living and its banishment to the world of the dead; for these are the very sections of Maqlū in which a netherworld orientation is most


\textsuperscript{30} See above n. 7.

\textsuperscript{31} For an edition of this text, see O. R. Gurney, \textit{Iqar} 22 221–27.

\textsuperscript{32} This is based on my reading of the traces immediately preceding koš-dū in \textit{UET} 6/2 410 obv.

\textsuperscript{25} as \textit{a}a\textsuperscript{a}a'[b-hap]\textsuperscript{4}ma\textsuperscript{1}; cf. ibid., rev. 7. For the ritual of the first part of the obverse and the rubric, 14: ... EME. MEŠ ra-du-[di] (so restored by Gurney, \textit{Iqar} 22 222), cf. the ritual in \textit{PBS} 1/2 120 ([\textit{Sm.} 275 + Rm. 329 [confirmed]: 8 ff.]), rev. 11 ff., which, while not involving boats, contains comparable ritual usages and is introduced by D[E]. D[E]. EME UŠ ... .

\textsuperscript{33} Gurney, \textit{Iqar} 22 224:27, gives the date as 27; however, his copy in \textit{UET} 6/2, which appeared later and is therefore followed here, has 28.
pronounced. This conjunction is hardly fortuitous, and the suggestion that Maqlā
to was performed in Abu receives further support from the netherworld character of that
month; for the cultic-calendrical association of Abu with Gilgameš in his netherworld
capacity and with the appearance of ghosts and their return to the netherworld 34
would certainly go a long way toward providing a partial explanation for the performance
of Maqlā in that month. This feature of Abu need not, however, be the only factor
responsible for its performance in Abu, since the existence of a known association between
the fire-god and Abu 35 and the centrality of the fire-god in the first division of Maqlā
would now seem to be too much of a coincidence and to suggest further lines of associa-
tion between Maqlā and Abu.

Here, however, the discussion of the calendrical setting of Maqlā 36 may be terminated
with one further observation prompted by previously cited magical documents refer-
ing to Abu. The mention in a number of these documents of the last days of Abu and the
special character of this period, 37 a character that is in harmony with the purpose of
Maqlā, suggest that Maqlā might well have been performed specifically at the end of
Abu. While the performance of Maqlā in this period of Abu is admittedly no more
than a conjecture, its likelihood is somewhat enhanced by the recurrent reference to
the period of the disappearance of the moon in rituals and incantations concerned
with combating witchcraft. 38

PROSPECTUS

The incantations and rituals contained in the series Maqlā may now be regarded as
representing the legomenon and dromenon of a single unified and structured ceremony.
While this observation renders the series intelligible and accounts for many of its details,
it also raises a number of questions which might otherwise have remained dormant.

34 Cf. A. Ungnad, Or. n.s. 12 (1943): 307, A. Falkenstein, RIA 3, p. 360, (and, with caution, S.
Langdon, Babylonian Menologies and the Semitic Calendars [London, 1935], pp. 20, 123 ff.). The most
important passages are (passages already cited in the text or previously given by others are included
here): (1) TuL 84 ff.: 23–32 (cf. Ungnad, Or. n.s. 12 307 and note that with the dupl. K.4308 + 6648 [see
above n. 15] the date in l. 23 should be emended to 27 and not to 26 [as suggested by Ebeling, TuL 80],
and that the emendation of l. 28 suggested by B. Landsberger in ZA 43 [1936]: 283 n. 1 would seem
unnecessary); (2) R. Labat, Hémérologies et ménologies d’Assur (Paris, 1939), pp. 100–103: 35–52 (cf. Ungnad,
Or. n.s. 12 307); (3) W. G. Lambert, AFO 18 292: 42–45 (cf. Ungnad, Or. n.s. 12 307 and note Ungnad’s
reading [p. 297] of l. 44 [could ḫīr = ḫīti?]; note that Sm. 1178, which was identified by me as belonging to
this composition, has now been joined by Mr. C. B. F. Walker to K.3379 [= AFO 18 (1857–58), pl.
11]); (4) F. Köcher, AFO 21 18: 61–63 (cf. p. 14 and n. 6); (5) BAM 231:15–17 // BAM 332 i 17; (6)
P. Garelli, CahTD 1 [Paris], p. 56 and Falkenstein, RIA 3, p. 360); (7) S. N. Kramer, BASOR 94 (1944):
7 and 9:31 ff. (cf. Falkenstein, RIA 3, p. 360); (8) ABL 56 rev. 2 K.; (9) UET 6/2 410 obv. 26–27.


36 A full discussion of the calendrical setting and netherworld dimension of Maqlā and the possible
implications for several other texts (e.g., BBR 2 52; TuL 124–33; BAM 231 // 332) will be presented in a
later study. Here it is my intention to do no more than to point to the likelihood of the performance of
the final version of Maqlā in Abu and to the appropriateness of that month for the performance.
Although it is not my intention at this time to exclude the possibility that Maqlā was performed in other
months, I might speculate further that the configurations of the night sky reflected in VI 1 ff. and VII
50 ff. would agree with those of Abu. I hope to test this hypothesis in a later study.

37 See texts 1, (2), 3, 4, 81, and 9 cited above n.
34 and A. Ungnad, Or. n.s. 12 307.

38 See the citations from anti-witchcraft texts interspersed among the passages collected in CAD B
299, mng. 2c; additional examples can be cited. It should be noted, furthermore, that the period of the
disappearance of the moon probably underlies such Maqlā passages as II 19 ff. and 104 ff., in which the
absence of Sin and Šamaš from the sky is alluded to, and for that reason the fire-god, who is present,
is asked to function in their stead.
One should be able to uncover the meaning of a ceremony of *Maqlā’s type by isolating its inner points, by constructing them into segmented lines of thought, and by connecting and following these lines through the work. Yet, while *Maqlā does lend itself, by and large, to this form of analysis, there appears to be a residual layer of either incongruous or nonsequential elements that defy descriptive analysis. This labyrinthine dimension confronts us with the possibility that *Maqlā is, even if only partially, ultimately nonsensical. This possibility will be qualified by a demonstration that the present text of *Maqlā is the end product of a complex historical development which has its beginnings in the short sequence of incantations presently extant in *BRR 2 26 v *71–76 and *PBS 1/1 13 rev. 41–50 // K.15234 (+) 16344, and that the aforementioned illogicalities, far from being symptomatic of an original lack of inner logic, are actually the result of changes introduced into the *Maqlā ceremony and the composition in which it is preserved.