GILGAMESH AND ENKIDU: THE FIRST ENCOUNTER
(THE OLD BABYLONIAN PENNSYLVANIA TABLET)

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2.2. THE STRUCTURE

2.2.1 Introductory

Any attempt at understanding a literary work, or for that matter any work, is bound to deal with questions of structure. Even a crude translation implies some structural understanding: in rendering a single word from one language to another we evoke a wide range of implications which are structural in character. Take the beginning of our text: "He solves the dream." The choice of the word "to solve" is related through its Latin derivation to the primary meaning of Akkadian *ipaššar*, which is "to loosen," but it entails, in English, shades of other meanings, such as "explaining" or "interpreting." If we bring out these implications, we develop explicitly a statement of structural relationships which are otherwise just perceived implicitly at best, or simply missed. A fully explicit statement has several advantages. On the one hand, it gives us a handle on the arguments which underly our understanding. On the other, it serves a heuristic function in that it points in directions which may otherwise escape our attention. Take for instance the translation of the present tense in the same sentence: "he *solves* the dream." This is a correct rendering of the morphemic value of Akkadian *ipaššar*. But the present tense is puzzling in this context: it comes after a past tense ("he arose and he solves"), and in a narrative setting which is generally projected in the past; besides, the rest of the story shows that Gilgamesh does not in fact "solve" his dream: his mother does. A comparison with other similar tense sequences shows that the discrepancy in tense sequence implies intentionality: "he arose with the intention of solving." I said "comparison": comparisons are at the basis of structural analysis, in that they establish recurrent patterns of expression. What gives a comparison a more proper structural dimension, and lifts it from the realm of segmented and atomistic observations, is the identification of common elements which can be described with reference to a more comprehensive expressive system. The discrepancy of tense sequence (or "scalarity," as I call it, see below, 2.4.3), for instance, serves both syntactical and compositional purposes, and can best be understood within the framework of, precisely, syntactical and compositional structures. In this way a structural concern is validated as being very concrete and productive, and not at all a sterile exercise in abstraction - as some might fear.

Fundamentally, a structural understanding implies alertness to the inner life of a work. First, structural relationships must represent the real texture of the work, or else they are but a cage which imprisons from without, rather than a fulcrum which supports at the base. Second, structural relationships must not be viewed in isolation, but in function of the integrated unified whole. It is ultimately our sensitivity which brings together the strands and recovers the inner unity, the inner life of a work. Analysis can and must train our sensitivity, but it cannot replace it.

In approaching the episode of Gilgamesh and Enkidu we will try to attune our sensitivity by educating it through structural analysis. The results are embodied in the translation offered below, and they are prepared in this introduction. Specifically, the avenues we follow in such an analysis may be subsumed under two major sets of headings: content and form, linear and tensional aspects.

In this chapter I will outline the major concepts which underlie my approach, and refer to the text of the P tablet only in order to exemplify the principles described. In the following chapters (3 and 4), I will provide instead a detailed analysis of the text from the perspective of each major heading. The text and commentary which follows will apply the same principle in more sequential order. The relationship between the analysis given in the introduction and in the commentary may be described as one of paradigmatic versus syntagmatic analysis. The observations cover the same ground, except that in the introduction the sorting criterion is derived from the logic of the system, while in the commentary it is derived from the sequence of the narrative.

2.2.2. Form and Content.

Two primary and concomitant dimensions are those of content and form. Content may be understood as the dimension which is referential to the real world context, and form as the dimension which is referential to the inner workings, or inner levels, of the text itself. More specifically, content refers to specific notions which are articulated with varying degrees of explicitness. On the one hand, for instance, the setting of the Gilgamesh dreams is very simple: he lays down to sleep and he has a dream. So is the setting of Enkidu's encounter with the harlot: Enkidu faces her and they make love. More elaborate, on the other hand, is Enkidu's reaction at meeting with the passerby: he sees him, he asks the harlot to make him move on, but then changes his mind and asks to have him give his name; the harlot asks the passerby for his intentions, he gives a long answer, Enkidu grows pale and leads the way to Uruk. Except for the passerby's response, all of these steps are described very briefly, i.e. they have no autonomous status as episodes in terms of sheer length; they are not episodes, they are compositional glides.

The other dimension is that of form, i. e. specific mannerisms which pattern the presentation. For instance, there are certain regularities in the sequence of verbal tenses which can be correlated to notional developments. There are repetitive segmental units of equivalent weight which channel the expression through a specific rhythm (meter). [examples] [markers] [content = notional = message] [form = poetry]

A structural analysis of the work should bring out these different notions and mechanisms. The first task is one of identification and documentation: what are the component parts of the expressive system which can be verified through objective criteria? The second task is one of evaluation: how well do all the various elements, both notional and formal, blend together into a truly unified expressive system? The intended impact of the work will be all the greater the more integrated its elements are. The cultural remoteness of an Old Babylonian text makes such tasks all the more challenging, because our own sensitivity is not intuitively attuned to the work and its background: as a result, it is critical analysis that will in fact train our taste and receptivity. For instance, a discussion about meter should not impose the strictures of other systems, but rather identify the operative mechanisms on the basis of observed internal regularities, and then show if and how it blends with the notional message. By taking distance from the work, we gain eventually greater closeness to it.

2.2.3. Linear and tensional aspects

A second major distinction is that between linear and tensional aspects. A linear aspect is one that results from a simple sequence or juxtaposition of elements. For instance the two sentences: "The harlot opened her mouth and said to Enkidu ... " represent a linear sequence: first there is reference to the intention underlying the action (she prepared to speak by opening her mouth) and then there is the description of the action itself (she spoke giving a specific message which is related in the form of a direct speech). The transition from one moment to the next is a logical and chronological, or simply a linear, sequence.

The tensional aspect results from the connection of elements which are not linked sequentially or, we might say, not in physical contact within the enunciation stream. For instance, the same two sentences "The harlot opened her mouth and said to Enkidu ..." are repeated each time she addresses Enkidu directly; in fact, they are also found with a different interlocutor vis-a-vis Enkidu: "The man opened his mouth and said to Enkidu ..." (iv 12). This creates a tensional link which overarches specific segments of the narrative. The repetition of sentences acquires a certain weight which alerts the audience in a given direction: Enkidu is going to be addressed next. The formula, specialized (at least

in our episode) for direct speech to Enkidu, serves as an expressive flag or signal. Note that in literary expression such codes are never identified explicitly – it is not like having a list of abbreviations at the beginning of a bibliography. Rather, they develop their own explanation out of their own volition, through the sheer momentum of the narrative. In this sense, the tensional elements punctuate the linear sequence and add a dynamic vigor to it, precisely because they derive their semiotic value from it.

Some of the traditional categories of literary analysis can perhaps best be understood within the framework I have just outlined. This is true especially of plot, themes, and meter.

2.2.4. Linear aspects of content: the plot.

The linear dimension of the content is what emerges from a consideration of the plot. The narrative presents us with a concatenation of events which declares a certain message through its very unfolding. What is present and what is missing in the form of either transitions or caesuras is equally meaningful. For instance the first male encounter of Enkidu (with the passerby) is introduced by a description of Enkidu's frame of mind: he is anxious about the new arrival, and expresses contradictory feelings about him – he wants him to move on, but at the same time he is intrigued and wants to find out more about him. Against this background, and in directly following it, comes the long answer of the passerby which describes the wedding he is planning to attend in Uruk. This will in turn serve as a transition to Enkidu's decision to go to Uruk. The linear sequence in this case consists of a set of transitions which follow each other in progressive order: the selection of the specific elements of the sequence is so ordered as to raise gradually the expectation for Enkidu's eventual arrival in Uruk.

The linear sequence may be marked not only by transitions, but also by juxtaposed breaks or caesuras. (Alternatively, transitions may be called closed junctures, and caesuras may be called open junctures.) Elements in a sequence are juxtaposed when the setting as a whole, or some major component of it (e. g. the subject of the action or the time frame) change abruptly, i. e. without any lead. Take for instance the dreams of Gilgamesh: they follow one another without any description of the setting, and with only a temporal reference: "He THEN laid down and saw a SECOND dream" (1 24). Similarly for the change of scene from the dreams of Gilgamesh to the episode where Enkidu meets the harlot: "While Gilgamesh resolves his dream, Enkidu sits in front of the harlot." Here, in addition to the temporal reference (of contemporaneity) there is also a reference to the change of subjects and of occupations: but all such notations are kept to a minimum, and they barely signal the change of setting, with no elaboration about the impact or the significance of the change itself.

caesura: Gilgamesh' dream || [temporal linkage] || seduction of Enkidu

transitions: seduction
-> invitation to go to Uruk : rationale "you seem like a god"
: invitation "come..."
: anticipation "you'll love Gilgamesh..."
-> intermediate stop with shepherds "like a mother ..."
-> anxiety about passerby "make the man move on..."
-> curiosity about passerby "what is his name?"
-> decision "Enkidu leads the way..."
-> arrival "he reached the center..."

It should be apparent that a consideration of the plot along these lines is much more than giving a mere summary of the story. We are not at this stage interested in the notional information contained in the text, but in the manner and nature of the progression itself. It may be significant in this connection to point out two types of progression which, though frequent in other literary works from Mesopotamia, including the SB version of Gilgamesh, are missing generally from the P tablet – the verbatim repetition of narrative segments (a rare occurrence is found with the double introduction of Anu and of Giligamesh), and the litany repetition of partly different phrases. They both break the flow of the narrative with a pause which serves to heighten the linearity of the progression, as underscoring does in the graphic representation of a text. Albeit through different means, the effect is similar to that obtained by means of flashbacks in modern narratives or film scripts.

2.2.5. Tensional aspects of content: themes

The tensional elements of the content in this episode of Gilgamesh and Enkidu are limited to the themes which are found to recur through it. The themes are like spans of a bridge which overarch a single body of water and define it from above much as the river bed defines it from below. Instead of linear progression we have tensional recall. There are degrees of prominence and explicitness. The theme of Enkidu's growth of consciousness, for instance, is very much in evidence: it is punctuated by reflective statements ("He is truly human..."), by changes in attitude (at first the harlot leads Enkidu like a mother, then Enkidu leads the way), by stepped increases (sex, marriage, men's club). The theme of anxiety, on the other hand, is suggested only in the background: Gilgamesh' anxiety is presented at the very onset, as he worries about his dreams; Enkidu's anxiety begins after his introduction to civilization, when he meets the passerby. The effect of these themes is to encase the development of the narrative within a series of internal frames which bond together to form an extremely complex and intricate network. The success of this expressive system results from achieving harmony between complexity and simplicity: the correlation between thematic moments has to be complex enough to be intriguing, yet simple enough to be perceptible. Take for instance the theme of anxiety. The first moment (Gilgamesh' dreams) heralds a mode of uncertainty: Gilgamesh worries and is in need of an explanation. This mood is emphasized by the contrast with Enkidu's carefree attitude toward the harlot, in the episode which is directly juxtaposed to that of Gilgamesh' dreams: Enkidu immerses himself totally in the experience, without fear of consequences, with the freshness of savage innocence. When anxiety emerges in Enkidu as he meets the passerby, a sudden trigger recalls the mood previously described for Gilgamesh. The tensional bond between the two thematic moments tightens the sequence of events and increases by a geometric factor the impact of the new mood as it affects Enkidu.

Such tensional recalls are no less real for being often subtle. In fact, the richness of a text, especially a poetic text, lies mostly in the abundance ad effectiveness of such thematic developments. The episode of Gilgamesh and Enkidu is a small masterpiece in this respect, as I will endeavor to show in detail below. It is all the more interesting then to notice the lack, in this same episode of another major non-linear phenomenon which is otherwise very common in Mesopotamian literature, and particularly in the SB version of Gilgamesh. I refer to what I call transpositional devices, i. e. similes, metaphors and the like. Strangely perhaps, there are none in the P tablet. The important thing is that they are not missed. It is as though the flow of the narrative is so tight and bent on following the psychological development that there is no room for pursuing other expressive registers.

2.2.6. Linear aspects of form: meter.

The episode of Gilgamesh and Enkidu contained in the P tablet is a poetic text. A simple statement such as this is fraught with implications when one tries to identify more closely its import, all the

more so for a culture as remote from us as the Mesopotamian. Very little has been written on the subject of Mesopotamian poetry, and this is not the place to embark on a full treatment of the issue. But we should describe some at least of the general principles which give validity to the statement that the P tablet is a poetic text. The formal device which we most readily identify (out of our own cultural training and acquired aesthetic sensitivity) with poetry is versification, i. e. number or length of syllables in recurring linear patterns (verses), phonological echoes which mark the boundaries of the same linear patterns (rhyme), and so on. We should however take some distance from tese specific types of versification, and look at the underlying and more basic factors, of which versification is but a particular realization. What I view as the essential component of poetry is a *predictable channeling of the discourse*. The are three parts to this definition. *Channeling* refers to the presence of constraints which are not of necessity, but of choice: a grammatical constraint is necessary (for instance in English one cannot say "I are"), whereas a channeling constraint is chosen freely as a self-imposed boundary (for instance exactly so many lines for a statement in a sonnet). *Discourse* refers to a maximal self-contained expressive unit, larger especially than the sentence; depending on the scope of the intended analysis, it would apply for instance either to the single episode of Gilgamesh and Enkidu, or to the entire Gilgamesh epic. *Predictability* refers to patterns of recurrence which are communicated in some ways to the audience. They are certainly not prefaced by explicit disclaimers ("I am going to versify in hyambics") no more than we advertise at he beginnning of an utterance what language we are going to use ("I am going to speak in English"). Thus if poetic patterns are predictable it is because of an inner momentum which is heralded by its own thrust forward: the unfolding becomes necessary because of an inner necessity, which declares itself at the moment it posits itself. Paul Valery has written some of the most beautiful pages on this topic. [Quote and give references.]

A general term which can be used aptly for such predictable channeling of discourse is "meter." Meter is "measure" in a more generic sense than versification, which refers to very culturally specific types of constraints. It is in such a sense that we can speak of Akkadian meter. Before we try to identify the specific constraints proper to it, I would like to propose a few considerations as to the impact of meter on communication. In other words, I wish to ask the question as to why poetry strikes such a different cord in the audience. A full answer would take us a long way from our current concerns; but the main direction would be as follows. The self-imposed metrical channels posit a tension between freedom and constraint, and a successful effort at overcoming such a tension leads to a communicative climax, i. e., poetry. The poet's creative powers flow unbounded AND bounded at the same time: unbounded, because the message springs from no other source but inner inspiration; and yet bounded, because at each step the poet anticipates for his audience the expressive dimension of the message. Within a metrical framework, the flow of discourse proceeds along two registers at once. While the notional register (i.e. the content or message) unfolds, the formal register (i.e. the metrical structure) is aready a few steps ahead: the audience knows that only so much metrical space is allowed for a resolution of the current notional moment. This expressive complexity creates a feeling of extended tension and concomitant release, which keeps the function of the message at a constant high plane. Almost paradoxically, such complexity will be all the more effective the more simple it appears: true poetry is marked by a feeling of effortless fusion, where many strands are inextricably woven together. Again, in Valéry's terms, there is a sense of inevitability, of necessity which is absent from common prose.

When dealing then with the question of Akkadian poetry we must try to see if we can detect in the discourse as textually established a flow of recurrent, patterned constraints – i.e., more generally, a predictable channeling of discourse. The proposal which I have advanced in 1979 and which I will explain below with some measure of technical detail as it applies to our present text (2.4.1), is that such channeling revolves not around phonological elements (quantity or number of syllables, recurrent sound combinations), but rather around syntactical elements. Different syntactical elements have different

metrical weight, and the combinatory variants which are possible among them establish different patterns. A fuller explanation can only be based on the Akkadian text itself, but it may be useful to try to introduce here an English example in order to elucidate the basic principles involved.

Let us read an episode from Milton's Paradise Lost. (The choice of the subject matter is not accidental, because the themes are reminiscent in part of those found in the P tablet of Gilgamesh. For Milton as for the author of Gilgamesh, the sexual encounter is a major step in the process of human growth. As in Gilgamesh, the experience itself is viewed as being occasioned by extraordinary circumstances: and even though these circumstances are considered, in Milton, as reprehensible – the sin of disobedience – the sexual experience as such is described with empathy and tenderness; this is an internal contradiction in Milton which is well known and has been perceptively described by William Blake. The subsequent character development of Adam is also reminiscent of Gilgamesh as the anti-hero who reaches wisdom through suffering and introspection. Here, however, we are not going to develop a parallel in terms of the content of the two works. Rather, I will simply use a portion of Milton's text to illustrate the general principles which govern Akkadian metrics.) The moment of the story is when Adam and Eve discover a new depth in their reciprocal bond. Adam says:

> I feel
> the link of nature draw me: flesh of flesh,
> bone of my bone thou art, and from thy state
> mine never shall be parted, bliss or woe. [IX 913-916]
> ...
> So forcible within my heart I feel
> the bond of nature draw me to my own,
> my own in thee, for what thou art is mine;
> our state cannot be severed; we are one,
> one flesh: to lose thee were to lose myself." [IX 955-959]

Soon, this brings them to the sexual encounter:

> Her hand he seized, and to a shady bank,
> thick overhead with verdant roof embowered,
> he led her, nothing loath; flowers were the couch,
> pansies, and violets, and asphodel,
> and hyacinth, Earth's freshest, softest lap.
> There they their fill of love and love's disport
> took largely, of their mutual guilt the seal,
> the solace of their sin, till dewy sleep
> oppressed them, wearied with their amorous play. [IX 1037-1045]

The English metrical device is the number and sequence of stressed syllables, i. e. a phonological rythm which cuts across lexical and syntactical boundaries:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Her	hand	he	SEIZED,	and	to	a	sha-	dy	BANK

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
thick	o-	ver-	HEAD	with	ver-	dant	roof	em-	BOWERED

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
he	led	her,	NO-	thing	loath;	flowers	were	the	COUCH
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
pan-	sies	and	VI-	o-	lets	and	as-	pho-	DEL
....									

In Akkadian, syntactical patterns would prevail over phonological ones: not only would metrical boundaries and syntactical boundaries overlap, there would also be configurations of syntactical elements recurring in patterned sequences. For example:

object - VERB / object - VERB
NOUN - apposition / NOUN - apposition.

With such syntactical constraints, phonological patterns became secondary; the main carrier of metrical patterning is the proportional weight of syntactical, rather than phonological, units. This is what I have called "syntactical isotonism."

Let us now try to translate the English poetic pattern of Milton's verses into an Akkadian poetic pattern, albeit in English words. It is a bit like giving an English word-by-word retranslation of an Akkadian version of the English original!

HE SEIZED her hand and then

HE LED her away nothing loath, and
TOOK her to a shady bank.

A verdant bower ROOFED them above, and
flowers FORMED a couch for them:

pansies and violets WERE the Earth's freshest flowers,
asphodel and hyacinth WERE the Earth's softest lap.

There they TOOK their fill of love,
there they ENGAGED in love's disport:

their love BECAME of their mutual guilt the seal, and
the embrace BECAME the solace of their sin.

Thus they CONTINUED with their amorous play
till dewy sleep OPPRESSED them.

If this sounds lke a parody, it is meant to some extent as such. It simply goes to prove how inadequate a metrical device can be if taken in and of itself. We know this only too well from extrinsic attempts at versification or rhythm, whether in translation or not: a series of blank verses does not make a poet. I think however that the "translation" of Milton's original given above may serve to focus on what is the essence of metric structure (predictable channeling of the discourse) as different from the specific devices chosen by the various poetic traditions (e.g. syntactic isotonism or blank verse).

It is from the correlation bewteen syntactical and metrical categories that derives the phenomenon of parallelism, so generally well-known as the main characteristics of ancient Near Eastern poetry. In the example from Milton read above there are in fact examples of parallelism, but they are not operational at the metrical level because they clash, rather than coincide, with metrical boundaries. See for example the following verses where the slashes refer to parallelism boundaries, while the line arrangement refers to the verse boundaries:

"...pansies and violets, / and asphodel
and hyacinth, // Earth's freshest, / softest lap ..."

In fact the repetitions, characteristic of Milton's style, are a form of parallelism which regularly straddle, rather than respect, verse boundaries:

" ... flesh of flesh, [semantic variation]
bone of my bone ...."

" ... to my own, [semantic accumulation]
my own in thee ..."

" ... we are one, [semantic accumulation]
one flesh ..."

Where syntactical and metrical boundaries overlap, we are more likely to find a poetic structure that is reminiscent of Akkadian metrical patterns. This is true, for instance, of English songs, from Shakespeare to Bob Dylan. For the two examples below, a "metrical" translation like the one attemoted for Milton would yield a text very little different from the original. Note that the formal constraints are more than in Milton's blank verse, since in addition to the regular sequence of stressed syllables there is also rhyme (in Shakespeare), repetition and syntactical/metrical coincidence. Here are the two examples:

"Take, oh, take those lips away
that so sweetly were forsworn;
and those eyes, the break of day,
lights that do mislead the morn:
but my kisses bring again, bring again,
seals of love, but sealed in vain, sealed in vain." [*Measure for Measure* IV i 1ff]

"How many roads must a man walk down
before he's called a man,
How many seas must a white dove sail
before he sleeps in the sand,
How many times must the cannon balls fly
before they're foerever banned?
The answer, my friend, is blowing in the wind,
the answer is blowing in the wind." [*Blowing in the Wind*]

Syntactic isotonism, typical of Akkadian, differs from the syntactic/metrical coincidence just noted in one major respect. In the case of coincidence there is simply a correlation of boundaries between the

syntactical and the metrical sphere. In the case of isotonism, on the other hand, a different metrical status is assigned to different syntactical categories in their possible reciprocal relationships, such as the pedicate and the object, the head and the modifier, the construct and the genitive, etc. Some illustrations of these metrical categories from the Akkadian text will be explained below, 2.4.2.

2.2.7. Tensional Aspects of Form: Interlocking Devices

Meter is primarily a linear element of form inasmuch as it consists of units whose segmentation derives from their sequential arrangement. There is however also a non-linear or tensional element to meter deriving from the recall value of the individual metrical units, of which however no example exists in our text. There are instead other devices which are properly non linear and tensional: I call these interlocking devices. The one which is most clearly evidenced in our text is based on morphological considerations: there are unusual correlations among the verbal tenses, which reflect a certain "scalarity" or progression, from the point of view of temporal categories. I have already mentioned above the case of the opening lines:

> "He rose, Gilgamesh, and the dream he solves,
> he then spoke to his mother."

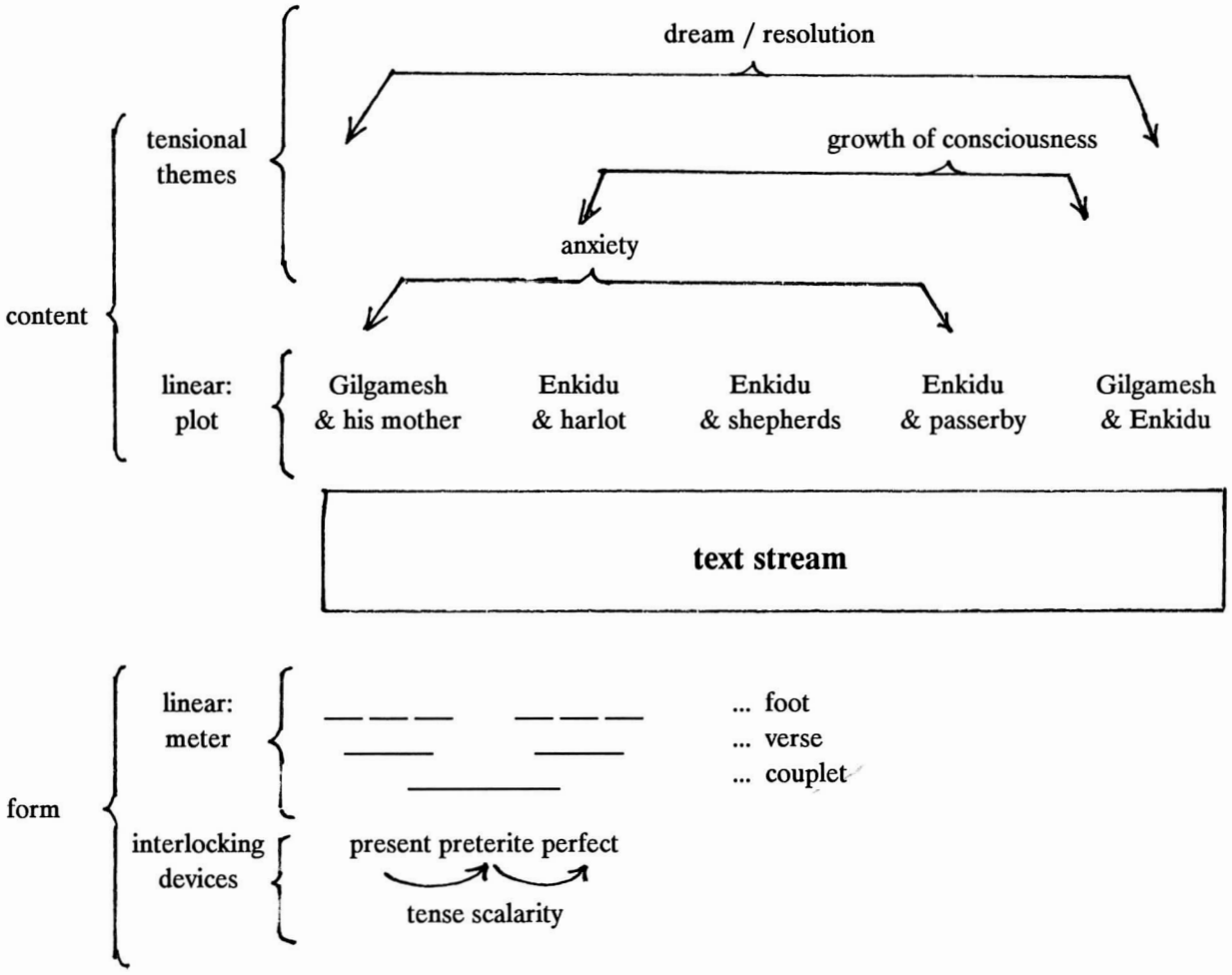
The temporal sequence is: preterite, present, perfect. It must be stressed that this is a grammatical, rather than a real time, sequence: the proper value of the tenses is derived not from their individual function, typical of normal language, but from their interlocking relationship within a poetic context. It is not so that something is poetic simply because it is at variance with the normal sequence; what gives the phenomenon a poetic value is that it raises the need for a special resolution by positing an unexpected formal pattern and triggering thereby a dynamic expectation for things to fall back in place again. The natural sequence is dislocated in such a way that it requires a special alertness to recompose it in an intelligible dimension. This tension and its resolution are an important part of the poetic organism. That is why to simply be at variance with the norm is not a guarantee of successful poetic expression. Rather, the tension created by the dislocation of the natural sequence must bear within itself the grounds for its resolution, the disarray must proclaim its own rules for a successful realignment at the same time that it is posited. This is a dynamic and goal-oriented experience which is communicated to the audience as a share in the creative effort, whereas sheer disorder without a built-in formula for a proper resolution is destructive and meaningless. When viewed in this perspective, the temporal scalarity of Akkadian poetry, as seen for instance in our text, acquires a new value and a poetic efficacy which would otherwise be missed.

A similar function is served by the alterations of the normal word order. The most apparent is the shift of the verbal predicate to sentence initial position. This change heightens the sense of interdependence among the constituents of the various sentences: they are truly interlocked in a mesh whose structure is emphasized by the unusual arrangement of its component parts. An expectation is raised, and a resolution is provided. In the specific case of the inversion of the verbal predicate, this is further emphasized by the special value of the enclitic *-ma*, which, occurring as it does at the beginning of a sentence when the verb is in sentence initial position, sends a signal which arches all the way over the span of the two coordinated sentences to the verb of the last sentence. Our initial verse of P will serve once again as a paradigm:

Itbē-ma Gilgameš	*šunātam ipaššar*
He rose and Gilgamesh	the dream he solves.

2.2.8. Summary

I have stressed that the devices described above are not to be seen in isolation: in and of themselves, they are fragmented views of a single organic whole, which is all the more successful the more the parts are, precisely, integrated with each other. Ultimately, it is for our sensitivity as readers to recreate their unity in our perception of the work. This is what has been called so aptly the "secret kinship" of the parts within the whole of a living poetic text (Jakobson). As an aid in that direction we can only show here how the various types of analysis suggested are interrelated in one and the same structural whole. The simplest way is to highlight possible relationships in diagrammatic form:



2.3. THE MESSAGE

2.3.1. Linear elements: the plot

The sequence of events as we have it represents a linear progression which carries its own message through the way it is structured. Both what is present and what is assumed have their importance, and create a dynamic flow which holds the attention of the audience. I will try here not so much to give a summary as rather to help gain an insight of the inner momentum which propels the story forward.

2.3.1.a. Forebodings: the challenge of physical strength

The story, as we have it in the P tablet, begins without preambles. (It begins, in fact, with a verb in sentence initial position which for Akkadian is acceptable only in poetry.) We will not venture to imagine the background in the previous tablet(s), which might have given some clues about Gilgamesh and his mother. In a way we do not miss the lack of an antefact: the attention is drawn entirely to the dream itself, and we identify directly with the dreamer through the impact of the dream, rather than through any other concomitant circumstance. There is only a hint of anxiety: Gilgamesh does not explicitly ask for help in understanding his dream, but he needs to share it, and this alone implies a need for explanation. Also, the dream is simply stated in a way that calls, from within, for a resolution of its meaning. The dream events themselves are unusual, and call for a clarification of a perceived unbalance with reality. Against the backdrop of a normal setting (men promenading in the city) unusual happenings develop: a lump of dense material, much like a meteorite, falls from the sky, and it is so heavy that Gilgamesh cannot lift it; it is also awesome in outlook, so that the people of the city see fit to kiss it; finally Gilgamesh succeeds in lifting it and, always in his dream, he brings it to his mother. The anxiety is lifted by the mother's foreknowledge: she begins to speak as though she were guessing ("Perhaps...") and searching for the explanation of the dream. But then the details flow with such precision and clarity that there is no room for anxious doubts: the celestial body is the prefiguration of a special companion who will appear suddenly from the high ground where he's being reared; he will command the awed affection of both Gilgamesh and his people, and Gilgamesh will somehow carry him and lead him to his mother.

2.3.1.b. Forebodings: the challenge of physical attraction

There is no comment as to Gilgamesh' reaction. The juxtaposition of the next dream is all that keeps the flow going, except for the bare transitional statement that Gilgamesh lays down to sleep again and dreams a second time. The new dream is parallel to the first one: this repetition stresses the importance of the intended dream message, while at the same time the differentiation in some of the details helps to clarify, and expand on, the projected experience. The elements which recur are:

- the physical setting (Uruk);
- the public exposure of a private experience (the people are active spectators);
- the discovery of an unusual inanimate object (a meteor in the first deram, an axe of special appearance in the second;
- the unusual reaction caused by the object (first dream: exceptional weight and unusual interest stimulated in the men who come to kiss it; second dream: Gilgamesh loves and fondles the axe);
- the appropriation of the object on the part of Gilgamesh.

The elements which are different introduce a polarity which heightens the parallelism:

- no temporal setting is given in the second dream, whereas it is emphasized in the first (nighttime, a starry heaven, company of other men); this links the two dreams, implying that the temporal setting remains the same from one to the other, just as the local setting remains the same (Uruk);
- the origin of the axe is not indicated: its extraordinary nature implies that it, too, like the boulder, may have materialized suddenly and out of nowhere;
- Gilgamesh feels a strong fondness and tenderness for the axe, and has no difficulty in holding it up in his arms, whereas the boulder had posed resistance to his attempts at lifting it up.

The polarity of the last element is the most important. Both objects evoke a similar reaction in Gilgamesh but from quite a different point of view: the boulder challenges the physical strength, the axe on other hand arouses physical attraction. The difference between objects in the two successive dream experiences is thus *not* the main difference; rather, it is the *different emotional reaction* which each of them elicits. The two objects are the prefigurations of a *single* character which stimulates two opposing emotional reactions. This consideration explains, one may note, the nature of the surprise caused by the weight of the meteor: if this was unexpected, it was on account of its small size, which would not suggest heaviness. Much in the same manner, people will be surprised at how Enkidu, known to have been a formidable savage being, is in fact small in size (P v 11' f). The prefiguration of Enkidu is thus fractured in a somewhat surrealistic manner: two distinct aspects of his personality are heralded through the phantasms of two distinct, partly parallel and partly divergent, dream experiences.

2.3.1.c. The shock of novelty

The second part of the episode describes the transformation of Enkidu, the taming of a male shrew, represented with great finesse and intuition through a progression of natural stages. Each stage is a new shock for Enkidu, described in different terms. First comes the sexual experience, which leaves him feeling like a god. Next, the encounter with the trappings of cultured living – good food and drink, elgance of appearance. At first Enkidu "squints and looks and gapes"; then he becomes inhebriated and happy; finally, all groomed, perfumed and properly dressed, he turns human and urbane. Then, the discovery of the legal dimension which encases in a regulated framework (wedding) what he had just experienced in unregulated spontaneity (the sexual rapport): Enkidu is disturbed by the appearance of the passer-by, he grows pale while listening to him, and then takes the initiative in leading the way to Uruk. Finally, he is faced with the cultic observances, the cult libations pertaining to men's ceremonies relating possibly to military conscription. Here an interesting change occurs in Enkidu's reaction, which can best be understood against the background of the previous stages. The first shock (of the sexual encounter) had occurred point blank, without any previous dialog, i. e. with no questions on the part of Enkidu, no explanations on the part of the harlot. When exposed next to the amenities of urban life, Enkidu's surprise is noted, and the harlot speaks out to advise and urge him to take advantage of what is available. When the passer-by arrives, it is Enkidu himself who asks for an explanation, and his surprise grows as he listens to the answer. When he arrives in Uruk, he becomes himself the object of gaping surprise: while he remains silent, the crowd gathers and speaks *about* him. Finally, he reverts to the first pattern – action without dialog or explanation. He blocks Gilgamesh from entering a building, passing directly to action, and a violent one at that. It is the setting of a men's gathering that allows for a rediscovery, on the part of Enkidu, of his spontaneity which seemed to have been frustrated by the

growth of ever new constraints around him. There is, in other words, a clear crescendo: (1) action without dialog (the sexual encounter), (2) unsolicited explanation (urban culture), (3) request for explanation on Enkidu's part (legal customs), (4) Enkidu is the object of curious comments (arrival in Uruk), (5) (violent) action without dialog (integration into a male society).

2.3.1.d. The unquestioned urge

The transition from the dreams to the next scene is quick but not unduly abrupt. The two scenes are juxtaposed without any narrative or conceptual transition; however, the justaposition is not jarring, perhaps simply because it is declared. It has the effect of a cinematic cut: the matter-of-fact tone elicited by the simple juxtaposition of two seemingly unrelated scenes carries over to the nature of the scene so introduced. Enkidu's lovemaking with the harlot is such that he forgets himself and extends the sexual encounter for an uniterrupted period of six days and seven nights. This is nothing short of extraordinary, but there is no editorializing in the text. The descriptive nature of this statement is terse and stark: the narrative itself is realistic in tone, without any qualification of surprise, irony, admiration, or the like.

The implication of the episode, the overall thrust of the narrative and, thereby, the editorial comment of the author is found instead in the words of the harlot that follow: the explosive maleness of Enkidu is a mark of his humanity. Her words steer us, and Enkidu, away from the sexual experience, but starting precisely from it: Enkidu's fulfillment gives a special ring to the words of the harlot when he compares him with a god. Precisely because, through the sexual experience she has made possible for him, he *feels* like a god, the harlot's verbalization, to him, of his own feelings lends credibility to the rest of what she has to say. She was sent out to seduce Enkidu, through a seduction which is sexual only inasmuch as it leads to a psychological dimension. Accordingly, the success of the sexual seduction is described simply and matter-of-factly; the psychological inference, on the other hand, is expounded in detail. While the sexual fulfillment she has offered him has been so complete to lift Enkidu to the sphere of the divine, she can promise him even more: she will elad him to broad urban spaces, pure temple buildings and – a different experience of love. The credentials of the harlot are only too real for Enkidu, and he cannot doubt her promise. The seduction is complete.

But at this point the narrative seems to shift its rhythm: while so far the dialog had carried the main line of the story, now a fuller descriptive mode is introduced. The author describes in his own words how Enkidu accepted the invitation of the harlot to go to Uruk, how she shares with him her clothing, and how she then leads him by the hand to the shepherd's camp. The change in style coincides with a change in pace: the action had been brisk, with scenes following each other rapidly. Now there is a slowing down in the sequence of events. Enkidu has agreed to go to Uruk, but the harlot takes him to a shepherd's camp, and it will be a while before Enkidu actually arrives in the city. This diversion from the main flow adds special importance to the eventual resolution – the actual arrival in Uruk. It also gives special value to the intervening stages which interrupt the flow. These are by no means idle digressions: they all point in the same direction, the arrival in Uruk as the exposure to a new world, a physical destination which is the symbol of the arrival to a new stage in personal development.

2.3.1.e. The reasoned introduction to urban culture

The sojourn with the shepherds represents as if a moment of decompression in the gradual, stage by stage development of Enkidu, of which this is the most light-hearted phase. During the interlude in the rural setting of the shepherd's camp, Enkidu learns about cultural trappings while still in the open environment in which he had been brought up. Baking and brewing are activities Enkidu had never

known, bread and beer are the symbols of a sophistication which has excaped him so far. But they are more than abstract symbols, they are something concrete to which he can relate: he gets inhebriated! The parallel development is the external appearance of his body: he shaves, he treats his body to fragrant lotions, he puts on proper human clothes (he was barely covered with half the harlot's clothes). For all the light-heartedness of the situation, the author inserts here the profoundest editorial remark in the whole story: Enkidu has now turned human, he has become urbane.

The consequences are just as momentous. The transformation of Enkidu is not into the equivalent of a "bon vivant": to be urbane means the rejection of the wild. Enkidu turns now against the animals with which he had been associated previously: the lions and wolves are now his enemies, and the shepherds instead his charge.

It would appear as though the taming has been completed, as though the seduction has achieved its goal. But the real goal is not just taming, it is integration as well. The narrative implies that the sojourn with the shepherds lasts for some limited amount of time. And then one day there is a new intrusion in what had begun to develop as Enkidu's new stable world.

2.3.1.f. Coming into his own: facing the urban crowd

[To be completed]

2.3.1.g. Integration into a male society

[To be completed]

2.3.2. Non-linear elements: the themes

2.3.2.a. Introductory

The P tablet of Gilgamesh is one of the most controversial in terms of content. There are in particular three themes which have been derived almost exclusively from this tablet and which contain far-reaching implications: the oppression of Uruk by Gilgamesh, the custom of the ius primae noctis exercised by the king, and the ceremony of the hieros gamos. As it happens, there are reasons to argue against all three of these interpretations, and I will do so in two ways. (1) The main argument is a positive one, i. e. there is a simpler interpretation of the tablet, which accounts better for both textual and compositional matters. I will first give in broad outline this largely new reading of the episode , emphasizing at this point the literary dimension, i. e. the internal unity and coherence of the story when understood in this sense. (2) I will then come to back to individual themes, both those proposed and those rejected, and will deal in greater detail with textual, historical and bibliographical considerations.

The direction of the plot, i. e. the encounter of Gilgamesh and Enkidu, is declared not by a comment register, but by the structure of the narrative. The dreams at the beginning announce and expect a resolution, and this comes at the end with the arrival of Enkidu in Uruk and his encounter with Gilgamesh. Such encounter is then the dominant narrative theme of the entire episode. [also anticipation by harlot]

A concomitant development is the blossoming of Enkidu to full human consciousness. In terms of the extent of the relevant narrative portion, this theme looms larger than the encounter with Gilgamesh; but it is subordinate to the latter because it is encased within it and serves its purposes. Enkidu undergoes a series of mutations which he is able to integrate in his own personality and which get him ready for the final encounter. The encounter itself is both a climax and a validation of his pilgrimage

toward urbanity: Enkidu can operate within the new context while remaining, at the same time, his own self.

Broader issues are grafted onto the narrative – such as the stunning statements about Enkidu becoming a man (iii 28) or about human destiny (iv 27f). They all remain, however, very closely tied to the unfolding of the plot and to the needs and dimensions of individuals as protagonists, and do not assume any special choral quality. This is even more true of considerations which are not spelled out explicitly in the text, but are borne out by the importance they derive from the events. The main instance of this is the role of sex both as a trigger and as a paradigm: as a trigger it sets in motion the humanization process of Enkidu, as a paradigm it imprints on Enkidu his first awareness for interpersonal relationships. The message of the author, then, is carried by the plot as the principal expressive mechanism, and only by implication can it be expanded and analyzed further.

2.3.2.b. The central theme: the encounters and the Encounter

The encounter between Gilgamesh and Enkidu is developed skillfully in terms of character development for both. Both are, in fact, protagonists in their own right, and their separate stories lead up inevitably, from within, to their meeting on a common ground.

There are parallel strands to their stories. The first section is dominated by the encounter of each with a woman – Gilgamesh and his mother, Enkidu and the harlot. Both women have, for different reasons and through different means, a similar goal: they want to curb some aspect of their male counterpart. Ninsun is worried about her son's unbridled arrogance, which can only lead to trouble: she expects him to be diverted in his drives by a male companion who may become the target of Gilgamesh ebullient nature. The harlot seduces Enkidu so that he may be tamed into a civilized status. The bait for Gilgamesh is psychological: being privy to civilization, he shares in psychological anxiety as an integral aspect of a civilized being; his mother capitalizes on this and molds her son's phantasies to match her expectations. The bait for Enkidu is physical: he brings to the baring of sex a richness and freshness of instinct which cries out to be tamed; the harlot capitalizes on this and molds her lover's urge to match the goals of a civilized human being.

(There is a terseness in this presentation which is worth noting. Neither the mother nor the harlot express what their intentions might be, if any, unless this had been present in an earlier passage of the epic which we have now lost, at least in its OB version; the SB version does in fact expand on the motives of the two women. In the OB tablet as we have it, the mother and the harlot speak and act matter-of-factly, without any parallel editorial register. In any case, regardless of what might have preceded, the justaposition of the two sequences is so abrupt that its effect can hardly be un-intentional: the emphasis is clearly on an almost cinematic sequence of actions and dialog.)

The second section is handed over to male encounters. First, Enkidu meets a passerby (unnamed, like the harlot): he is presumably an urban dweller who introduces Enkidu to the legal dimension of life [expand]. Second, Enkidu, meets Gilgamesh. The build-up of the plot has been in terms of a progress of Enkidu toward civilization: the encounter with Gilgamesh is the climax of this progress, but it is at the same time a throwback to the beginning. On the one hand, Gilgamesh sees his dreams reenacted in front of him: his anxiety fades away because he can now grapple physically with what had only seemed a shadow. Enkidu, on the other hand, gives once again free rein to his instincts and faces the urban world on his own terms: he can wrestle with civilization, he is not after all going to be swallowed and engulfed by it.

The stories of the two heroes are parallel in this tablet, but they are also parallel in the broader scope of the whole story. In this tablet, Enkidu's role is certainly primary; but bearing in mind the whole of the story as we know it at least from the SB version, Enkidu's progress foreshadows that of

Gilgamesh in capsule form. Through the discovery of sex, Enkidu becomes aware of a new human dimension in life, namely that the physical world is also the world of interpersonal relationships. A HUMAN dimension: the text stresses the investiture of Enkidu as a newly found human being with an explicitness and self-awareness worthy of Sophocles. The surprise of Enkidu is also stressed: food and drinks, cleanliness and elegance are elements of an urban private life which Enkidu has so far ignored. His reaction leads him to a confrontation with his previous wild world of nature, which he rejects with the same passion with which he had heretofore been a part of it. Next, Enkidu is made aware by the passerby of the legal dimensions of human life. Interpersonal relationships are borne out of instinct, but they are also channeled by norms, customs and laws: a wedding is the public counterpart of the private sexual encounter. Interpersonal relationships are still, and will remain, the paradigm of Enkidu's itinerary. From the wedding to the religious festival, i. e. from the legal to the cultic dimension of life - Enkidu discovers one more set of norms, which involves the supernatural sphere. It is at this point that Enkidu meets for the first time a divine being, Ishhara, on the occasion of a religious celebration. This is the climax of Enkidu's discoveries, and at that point he reacquires his own personal balance with an act of physical violence. This may appear at first like a retrogression to the stage of Enkidu the wild sub-human. In fact, the eruption is framed within the civil context of a sport-like event which channels and directs even violence. He has come full circle, to a point where his spontaneity is matched by the institutions. His loss to Gilgamesh is not to be construed as a demise; in fact, as we know from the SB version, it is here that the friendship between Enkidu and Gilgamesh is born.

It is, I said, a mirror image of the longer and more complex history of Gilgamesh. The main themes are those we have seen already (2.3.1) and their sequential connection acquires greater cogency when it is seen to be validated by the prefiguration in Enkidu's story:

ENKIDU	GILGAMESH
wild life	arrogance
harlot/interpersonal relationships	Enkidu/friendship
rejection of the wild	bravados
private life as common norm	death as destiny
legal dimension as common norm	proper mourning
cultic dimension as common norm	flood story
wrestling with Gilgamesh	arguing with Ut-Napishtim
loss to Gilgamesh	loss to snake
(friendship with Gilgamesh)	renewed commitment to Uruk

2.3.2.c. The challenge that expands the potential (not: oppression of Uruk)

[To be completed]

2.3.2.d. Initiation into male adulthood (not: "hieros gamos")

[To be completed]

2.3.2.e. Civilization as a constraining channel (not: "ius primae noctis")

[To be completed]

5. The Text: Phonemic transcription with morpho-lexical and semio-syntactic translation

I. ANTICIPATION

1. The challenge
   A. The raw material
   B. The savage alter ego

2. The attraction
   A. The fashioned tool
   B. [The newly civlized] alter ego

II. DISCOVERY - THE SELF

1. The unquestioned urge
   A. "...and they become one body."
   B. "...and you will be like gods..."
   C. "...and they knew they were naked"

2. The acquired taste
   A. Hesitation
   B. From acceptance to enthusiasm
   C. Adaptation as second nature

III. DISCOVERY - THE CITY

1. A world of duty
   A. The public use of violence: Hunting as service
   B. Presage of the urban sphere: The first words of Enkidu
   C. The formal control of instinct: Sex as marriage

2. The male companionship
   A. Enkidu is on his own (Entry into the urban sphere)
   B. Male purification (induction) rites
   C. Integration of spontaneity: Violence as sport

IV. RESOLUTION

Recognition of Gilgamesh and his mother

I. ANTICIPATION

1. The challenge

A. The raw material

1.	*Itbē-ma Gilgameš*	*šunātam ipaššar*	i1. Gilgamesh rose
	he rose-and Gilgameš	(the) dream he solves	trying to understand his dream.
2.	*izzakram*	*ana ummīšu*	2. He approached his mother
	he then spoke to	to his mother	and described it thus:
3.	*"Ummī*	*ina šāt mūšūtīya*	3. "Mother,
	my mother	in that of my night-time	when a certain time of night had come for me
4.	*šamhāku-ma*	*attanallak*	4. I found myself
	I am happy-and	I keep walking	happily parading
5.	*ina bīrit etlūtim.*		5. among the men.
	in between men		
6.	*Iphurūnim*[1]*-ma*	*kakkabū šamā'ī*	6. But then, it was the stars of heaven
	they gathered to me-and		had gathered round me
7.	*kušrum ša Anim*	*imqut ana ṣērīya.*	7. when a celestial ingot
	ingot that of Anum/"sky"	fell towards me	came tumbling down at me:
8.	*Aššī-šu-ma*	*iktabit elīya*	8. I bent to lift it -
	I lifted it and	it then became too heavy upon me	it proved too heavy;
9.	*uniš-šu-ma*	*nuššа-šu ul elte'ī.*	9. I tried to move it -
	I moved it and	moving it not I then was able to	it did not budge.
10.	*Uruk mātum*	*pahir elīšu*	10. All of the city of Uruk
	Uruk the land	is gathered upon it	hovers around it,
11.	*etlūtum*	*unaššakū šēpēšu.*	11. and even did the men
	the men	kiss its feet	stoop down to kiss it.
12.	*Ummid-ma pūtī*	*īmidū yāti*	12. Strapping my forehead, I pushed,
	I made leaning-and	my forehead	and pushed, and they with me:
14.	*aššīaš-šu-ma*	*atbalaššu ana ṣērīkī*	14. At last I lifted it -
	I raised it toward and	I brought it toward to your back	and then I came with it to you.

[1]Or: *ibbašûnim-ma* "they came to be for me," "they stars had come in sight", with lexical qualification "in sight" rendering the ingressive value of the N-stem.

B. The savage alter ego

i15.	*Ummi Gilgameš*	*mūdiat kalā-ma*	i15. Gilgamesh' mother,
	mother of Gilgamaš	knower of all – indeed	well versed in all,
16.	*izzakram*	*ana Gilgameš*	16. spoke back
	she then spoke to	to Gilgameš	to Gilgamesh:
17.	*"Mindi, Gilgameš*	*ša kīma kāti*	17. "Who knows, but that
	Perhaps, o Gilgameš	he who (is) like you	your match, o Gilgamesh,
18.	*ina ṣēri*	*iwwalid-ma*	18. may have been born
	in the steppe	he has been born – and	out in the steppe?
19.	*urabbīšu*	*šadū.*	19. The highland, as if a nurse,
	he educates him	the mountain	itself has reared him:
20.	*Tammar-šu-ma*	*[lū] taḫaddū atta*	20. When you now see him,
	you will see him and	indeed you will rejoice you	you will in fact rejoice
21.	*etlūtum*	*unaššakū šēpē-ma.*	21. just as the men
	the men	they will kiss even the feet.	will even kiss his feet.
22.	*Teddiraš-[šu*	*tanaššī-š]u-ma*	22. Your arms around him,
	you will embrace him	you will lift him up and	[you'll lift him up]
23.	*tatarr[aš]šu*	*ana ṣē[rī]ya"*	23. and you will come
	you will lead him	to my back.	to me with him."

2. Attraction

A. The fashioned tool

i24.	*[It]tūlam-ma*	*ītamar*	i24. He laid back down to sleep
	he then laid down and	he then saw	only to dream again.
	šanītam	25. *[šunāt]a*	25. [A scond time he rose]
	a second	dream	and went to tell his mother:
	ītawām	*ana ummīšu.*	
	he spoke to	to his mother	
26.	*"Ummī,*	*ātamar*	26. "My mother,
	my mother	I then saw	I have seen
	šanītam	27. *[šunātam]* e-mi-a	27. a second dream!
	a second	dream.	
	Ina sūqim	28. *[ša Uruk] rebītim*	28. I now was out
	in the street	that of Uruk the square	in the wide squares [of Uruk].
29.	*hassinnu*	*nadī-ma*	29. This time an axe
	an ax	is lying down – and	laid on the ground,
30.	*elīšu*	*pahrū.*	30. with the men hovering
	upon it	are assembled	around to see:
31.	*Hassinnum-ma*	*šanī bunūša*	31. an axe - an axe that looked
	the ax indeed	is different its appearance	so much out of the ordinary
32.	*āmur-šu-ma*	*ahtadū anāku*	32. that, as I saw it,
	I saw it and	I then rejoiced I	I - I became full of joy
33.	*arām-šu-ma*	*kīma aššatim*	33. and promptly fell in love
	I loved it and	like a wife	with it as with a wife,
34.	*ahabbub*	*elšu.*	34. hugging it
	I whisp[ered/caressed	over it.	warmly.
35.	*Elqīšu – ma*	*aštakan-šu*	35. I held it up
	I took it and	I then placed it	and set it
36.	*ana ahīya."*		36. beside me."
	at my side.		

B. The newly civilized alter ego

37.	*Ummi Gilgameš*	*mūdāt kalā-ma*	37. Gilgamesh' mother, well versed in all,
38.	*[izzakram*	*ana Gilgameš:]*	38. [spoke back to Gilgamesh:
39.	*["Mindi Gilgameš*	*ša tāmuru hassinnum]*	39. "Who knows, but that
	perhaps o Gilgameš	what you saw the ax	the axe you saw
40.	*[awīlum*	*ša kīma kāti]*	40. may be in fact the man
	is a man	who is like you	[...]
ii1.	*aššum uš[ta]mahharu*	*ittīka"*	ii1 since he will rise up to be
	because he will be made equal	with you.	equal with you."

5.6

II 1A "...and they become one flesh..." (Gen i 24)

ii 2. *Gilgameš* *šūnātam ipaššar*
Gilgameš the dream he solves

3. *Enki[du wa]šib* *mahar harimtim*
Enkidu sits before the harlot

4. *ur[ta']'amū* *kilallūn*
they reciprocally make love both

5. *ṣē[r]am imtaši* *ašar iwwaldu:*
the steppe he forgets the place where he was born:

6. *ūmī 6* *u 7 mūšātim*
for 6 days and 7 night periods

7. *En[kidu]* *tibī-ma*
Enkidu was rising and

8. *ša[mhata]* *irhī.*
with the voluptuous one he had intercourse.

II 1B. "... and you will be like god ..." (Gen iii 5)

9. *Ha[rimtum pā]ša* *īpušam-ma*
The harlot her mouth she made (open) and

10. *izza[kram]* *ana Enkidu*
she then spoke to to Enkidu

11. *"Anattalka Enkidu* *kīma ili tabaššī.*
I look at you, oh Enkidu, like a god you exist

12. *Ammīnim* *itti nammaštē*
Why with wild animals

13. *tatta[nal]lak* *ṣēram?*
you keep going in the steppe?

14. *Alkam* *lurdīka*
Come to let me accompany you

15. *ana libbi Uruk* *rebītim*
to the heart of Uruk the broad-marted

16. *ana bītim ellim* *mūšabi ša Anim*
to the bright house dwelling that of Anum

17. *Enkidu tibī* *lūrūka*
Enkidu rise let me lead you

18. *ana Eanna* *mūšabi ša Anim*
to Eanna dwelling of Anum

19. *ašar [Gilgameš* *gi]tm[āl nēpešētim*
the place where Gilgamesh perfect of actions

20. *u atta Enkidu* *x x x*
and you oh Enkidu x x x

21. *tan[aṣṣar]* *ramanka.*
you will protect your self.

22. *Alka* *tība ina qaqqarim*
Come, rise from the ground

23. *mayyāl* *rē'īm.*
bed of the shepherd.

II 1C "...and they knew they were naked ..." (Gen iii 7)

24. *Išmē awassa* *imtagar qabāša,*
he heard her word he then accepted her speech

25. *milkum* *ša aššatim*
the advice that of the woman

26. *imtaqut* *ana libbīšu.*
it then fell to his heart.

27. *Išhut* *libšam*
she pulled off the clothing

28. *ištīnam* *ulabbissu*
with one she clothed him

29. *lib[ša]m* *šanīam*
with a clothing another

30. *šī* *ittalbaš.*
she she then clothed herself.

31. *ṣabtat* *qassu*
she holds his hand

32. *kīma [il]im* *ireddīšu*
like a deity she accompanies him

33. *ana gubri* *ša rē'īm*
to the hut that of the shepherd

34. *aša[r] tarbaṣim*
the place of the pen

35. *ina [mah]rīšu* *[ip]hurū rēyā'ū*
to his front gathered the shepherds

II. DISCOVERY - THE SELF

1. The unquestioned urge

A. "...and they become one body..."

ii2 While Gilgamesh
sees through his dream,

3. Enkidu
faces the harlot:

4. such is the passion
both bring to love

5. that he forgets
he had been born in Eden.

6. Six days,
seven nights long

7. Enkidu
rises

8. and has
the woman.

B. "...and you will be like gods..."

9. And then the harlot
set out to speak

10. and said
to Enkidu:

11. "As I now look at you, Enkidu,
you have come to be just like a god.

12. Why then
with beasts

13. you roam
the steppe?

14. Come,
let me lead you

15. to the broad spaces
of urban Uruk,

16. to the pure house
where dwells the "Sky."

17. Rise now, Enkidu,
that I may show your way,

18. now, to Eanna,
where Anum dwells,

19. to where is Gilgamesh,
perfect in deeds -

20. and thus, oh Enkidu,
[?]

21. you'll bring yourself
to safety.

22. Come on and rise
from the bare ground,

23. the shepherds'
bed."

C. "...and they knew they were naked..."

24. He listened to her words,
he did accept her talk:

25. the advice
the woman gave

26. fell
on a receptive heart.

27. So she tore up
her clothing:

28. one piece
she put on him,

29. and with another
piece

30. she clothed
herself.

31. Holding
his hand

32. she leads him,
as if his goddess,

33. to the hut
where the shepherd lives:

34. there at the place
of the sheepfold,

35. the shepherds came
and gathered round him.

II 2 The acquired taste

II 2A Hesitation

iii 1. *Šizba ša nammaštē* *ītenniq*
milk that of the wild beasts he was habitually sucking

3. *akalam* *iškunū maharšu*
bread they placed before him

4. *iptīq-ma* *inaṭṭal*
he then squinted and then he looks

5. *u ippallas.*
and he considers

6. *Ul īdī* *Enkidu*
not he knows Enkidu

7. *akalam* *ana akālim*
bread for eating

8. *šikaram* *ana šatēm*
beer for drinking

9. *lā lummud.*
he is untaught

II 2B From acceptance to enthusiasm

10. *Harimtum* *pīša īpušam-ma*
the harlot her mouth she made open and then

11. *izzakram* *ana Enkidu*
she then spoke to to Enkidu

12. *"Akul aklam* *Enkidu*
Eat the bread oh Enkidu

13. *simat balāṭim*
that which is fitting for life

14. *šikaram* *šitī*
the beer drink

šimti māti!"
that which is established for the country

15. *I:kul akalam* *Enkidu*
he ate the bread Enkidu

16. *adi šebēšu*
up to his being sated

17. *šikaram* *ištīam*
the beer he drank

18. *sibitta assammīm.*
seven of the large cup

19. *Ittapšar* *kabtatum*
it became loose the inside

inangū
he sings joyously

20. *īliṣ* *libbašu-ma*
it rejoiced his very heart

21. *pānūšu* *[it]amrū.*
his face it then became bright

II 2C Adaptation as second nature

22. *Ultappit* *[gal]ābum*
then touched a barber

23. *šu"uram* *pagaršu:*
hairy his body

24. *šamnam* *iptašaš-ma*
with oil he anointed himself and then

25. *awīliš* *īwī;*
into a man he became

26. *ilbaš* *libšam*
he dressed with a garment

27. *kīma mūti* *ibbaššī.*
like a gentleman he comes to exist

III DISCOVERY – THE CITY
III 1 A world of duty

III 1A The public use of violence: Hunting as service

28. *Ilqī* *kakkašu*
he took his weapon

29. *labbī* *ugerre*
lions he attacks

30. *issakpū* *rē'ū*
they laid themselves down the shepherds

mušītim
in the nighttimes

31. *Uttappiṣ* *barbarī*
he then warded off wolves

32. *labbī* *uktaššid*
lions he then chased away

33. *itti[lū]* *nāqi[dū]*
they then laid down to sleep the herdsmen

rabūtum.
great

34. *Enkidu* *maṣṣaršunū*
Enkidu is their watch

35. *awīlum* *gešrum*
man strong

36. *ištēn* *eṭlum.*
one hero

2. The acquired taste

A. Hesitation

iii1 While he was used
to sucking

2. milk at the breast of beasts,

3. he's now presented
with food that's baked:

4. at that he squints
and looks

5. and gapes.

6. For Enkidu
had yet to come to know

7. bread
such as we have for eating

8. he was as yet unlearned

9. of beer
such as we have for drinking.

B. From acceptance to enthusiasm

10. The harlot then
set out to speak

11. and said
to Enkidu:

12. "Come, Enkidu,
come, eat the bread,

13. the proper mark of life,

14. come, drink the beer
the proper social custom!"

15. And so
he ate the bread

16. till he was full,

17. he drank
the beer

18. a full seven mugs.

19. That loosened up his spirit
and made him sing aloud,

20. all happy
inside,

21. his face
aglow.

C. Adaptation as second nature

22. A barber
grooms

23. his hairy
body:

24. fragrant
with oil,

25. he has now turned
into a human;

26. dressed up
in clothes,

27. he has become
a civilized man.

5.11

III. DISCOVERY - THE CITY

1. A world of duty

A. The public use of violence: Hunting as service

28. Having picked up
his weapon,

29. he now attacks
the lions

30. and lets the shepherds
rest in the night.

31. Yes, he would now
ward off the wolves,

32. the lions
he would subdue -

33. while the head herdsmen
were now able to sleep:

34. Enkidu
is now their guardian,

35. strong
among men,

36. first
among heroes.

B. Presage of the urban sphere: The first words of Enkidu

iv2' [In his new role]
he now rejoices.

3' But as he then one day
looked up

4' and saw
a city man had come,

5' he turned to her,
his friend the harlot:

6' "Oh please,
make him move on!

7' What for
could he have come?

8' Yet -
let me find out his name."

9' The harlot then
called out the man,

10' she started out for him
and thus addressed him:

11' "Sir, whereto
such rush?

12' Wherefore is destined
what you are carrying?

C. The formal control of instinct: Sex as marriage

13' The man
set out to speak

14' and said
to Enkidu:

16' "As social custom
has it

17' for when a formal choice is made
of a new bride,

15' I am going, invited,
to the bridal house.

18' On the reception table
I will pile up

19' my cheerful presents
for all the bride's family.

20' Even the king is present,
the king of sprawling Uruk,

21' because the privacy of the home
is lifted
the day a formal choice is made -

22' yes, Gilgamesh is present,
the king of sprawling Uruk,

23' because the privacy of the home
is lifted
24' the day a formal choice is made.

26' As he, the chosen spouse,
for the first time

25' joins in the flesh
the one who is destined to be his wife,

27' he will then be considered
truly as a husband.

28' Thus was it it decreed
by a divine decision,

30' such is his destiny
29' ever since his cord

was cut."

31' All while the man was speaking,
32' Enkidu's face
grew pale.

2. The male companionship

A. Enkidu is on his own

v2' Enkidu leads
the way

3' and the Voluptuous
follows.

4' He reached the center
of sprawling Uruk

5' and a crowd
gathered
behind to see him;

6' he stood
in the square
7' of sprawling Uruk,

8' and the people
were now assembled

9' all full of comments
about him:

10' "How much like Gilgamesh
is he in build,

11' shorter in size
12' but larger in frame!

13' Where he was born,
[Enkidu]

14' ate
the fresh
grass of the spring,

15' he used to suck
milk
16' of the wild animals."

B. The male purification rites

17' Just then were planned
within the city of Uruk
the cult libations

18' wherein the men
are purified.[1]

20' For each grown man
whose state is right

19' one had set up
the appropriate challenger;

21' for Gilgamesh
as if a god

22' one had set up
his counterpart;

23' for Ishara
a bed
24' was laid -

25' and then did Gilgamesh
26' arrive to join them

at night
25' with his retainers.

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[1] Cf. *ubbubu* in Mari, used for the census.

5.14

III 2 The male companionship

III 2C Violence as sport

vi 2. *Gilgameš* — *[...]*
Gilgamesh

3. *ina ṣērī[šu* — *ippalis]*
at his back — he looked

4. *i'annip* — *[kabattašu].*
he becomes angry — in his liver

5. *Itbī-ma* — *[Enkidu]*
he rose and — Enkidu

6. *ana panīšu*
towards his face

7. *ittamharū* — *ina rebīt ummāti*[1]
they came to meet — in the square of the land

8. *Enkidu* — *bābam*
Enkidu — the door

9. *iptarik* — *ina šēpīšu*
he then blocked — with his foot,

10. *Gilgameš* — *erēbam*
to Gilgamesh — the entering

ul iddin
he did not give

11. *Iṣṣabtū-ma* — *kīma lē'īm*
they grasped each other and — like the expert

12. *ilūdū.*
they bent the knee.

13. *Sippam* — *i'butū*
the doorpost — they destroyed

14. *igārum* — *irtut.*
the wall — shook

15. *Gilgameš* — *u Enkidu*
Gilgamesh — and Enkidu

16. *iššabtū-ma* — *kīma lē'īm*

17. *ilūdū.*

18. *Sippam* — *i'butū*

19. *igārum* — *irtut.*

20. *Ikmis-ma* — *Gilgameš*
he knelt — Gilgamesh

21. *ina qaqqari* — *šepšu*
on the ground — his foot

22. *ipših* — *uzzašu-ma*
calmed down — his anger and

23. *inī'* — *irassu.*
turned back — his breast.

IV. RESOLUTION

vi 24. *Ištu irassu* — *inī'u*
since he turned back — his breast

25. *Enkidu* — *ana šāšim*
Enkidu — to him

26. *izzakaram* — *ana Gilgameš*:
he then spoke — to Gilgamesh

27. *"Kīma ištēn-ma* — *ummaka*
like a single one indeed — your mother

28. *ulidka*
bore you

29. *rimtum* — *ša supuri,*
the wild cow — that of the pen

30. *Ninsunna!*
Ninsun

31. *Ullū* — *eli mūtī rešķa,*
the raising — above men your head

32. *šarrūtam* — *ša nišī*
the kingship — that of the people

33. *išīm-kum* — *Enlil."*
decreed for you — Enlil

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34. *tuppu 2* KAM.MA
tablet second

35. *"Šūtur eli ..."*
he is exhalted above ...

36. *4 šūši*
4 60'es

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[1]Cf. *re-bi-it* KUR, *GC* 1, 1:6 (Terqa). Or *ina rebi:tu:m ma:ti*?

C. Integration of spontaneity:
Violence as sport

27' When he arrived as planned,

28' Enkidu
stood up
out in the public square

29' and thus he cut off
his stride,

30' as though to take
the place of Gilgamesh.

[...]

vi2' Gilgamesh
3' looked up
at him

4' bursting
in anger.

5' Enkidu
moved
6' in his direction.

7' They came to clash
out in the People's square.

8-9' Enkidu
set down his foot

so as to block
the access,

10' he would not let
Gilgamesh
in.

11' As if in wrestling
they tried to seize each other's belt,

12' firm on their knees.

13' They shattered
the doorpost,

14' and the wall
shook.

15' Gilgamesh
and Enkidu -

16' as if in wrestling
they tried to seize each other's belt,

17' firm on their knees.

18' They shattered
the doorpost,

19' and the wall
shook.

20' Finally Gilgamesh
bent down to find

21' a solid hold
on which to lean
(as he lifted Enkidu) -

22' and then his rage
calmed down,

23' and his emotions
went back to normal.

IV. RESOLUTION

Recognition of Gilgamesh and his mother

24' As soon as he
was at peace again

25' Enkidu
approached him

26' and said to him,
to Gilgamesh:

27' "As one of a kind
your mother
28' bore you -

29' the wild cow
of the sheepfold,
30' Ninsuna!

31' For your head
to be raised
above the heads of households,

32' for you to have
kingship above the people

33' is the decree
of Enlil."

34' The second tablet of
35' "He is the most excellent..."
36' 240 (lines)