

# Reallexikon der Assyriologie und Vorderasiatischen Archäologie

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### Vogel (bird). A. In Mesopotamien.

§ 1. Sources for Mesopotamian avifauna. – § 2. Birds in general. – § 3. Mesopotamian animal taxonomy. – § 4. Terminology related to birds. – § 5. Bird imagery. – § 6. Typology of Sumerian and Akkadian bird names.

#### § 1. Sources for Mesopotamian avifauna.

§ 1.1. *Lexical lists*. For Sum. lex. lists up to the Old Bab. Period s. Veldhuis 2004, 149–207; s. a. CUSAS 12, 191f. The lex. list Hh. lists b. in tablet XVIII (MSL 8/2; commentary Hg. *ibid.* 165–177). For the Emar version s. Emar 6/4, 555, with additions by M. Civil, *AulaOr.* 7 (1989) 18f. An Old Bab. (lex.?) list of b. from Sippar was published in *Eduzza* 7, 100 (previous ed.: *Black/al-Rawi* 1987).

§ 1.2. *Literary texts*. Many different b. names are mentioned in the Sum. lit. text *Nanše and the birds* (Veldhuis 2004, 115–147; ETCSL 4.14.3; *Literatur\** § 3.6.1.f; *Nanše\** A. § 3). B. figure as opponents in several Sum. debate poems (*Streitgespräch\**): *Bird and fish* (ETCSL 5.3.5; *Literatur\** § 3.6.1.h), *Heron and turtle* (Peterson 2007, 269–410; ETCSL 5.9.2; *Literatur\** § 3.6.1.f), *Goose and raven* (B. Alster, *Wisdom of ancient Sumer* [2005] 352–361). For b. in Sum. lit. texts in general s. Veldhuis 2004, 98–102, in Sum. proverbs *ibid.* 96–98.

The eagle plays an important role in the Akk. *Etana epic* (*Literatur\** § 4.1.1.e), and the Anzu b. in the *Anzu epic* (*Literatur\** § 4.1.1.b). Avian imagery is common in Akk. love literature (N. Wasserman, *Fruits*

and desires: Akkadian literature of the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium BCE [= LAOS 4, 2016]). The so-called birdcall text relates b. to certain deities on the basis of the b.s' calls (W. G. Lambert, *AnSt.* 20 [1970] 111–117).

§ 1.3. *Omen texts*. S. *Omina\** und *Orakel.* § 4: Tab. 64–79 of the series *Šumma ālu* contain signs which were observed with b.; *ibid.* § 8: inspection of dead b.; *ibid.* § 12: observation of the flight of b.

§ 1.4. *Secondary literature*. Salonen 1973 is a monograph on b. in Sum. and Akk. sources. It contains, *inter alia*, a survey of modern avifauna in Iraq, a catalogue of Sum. and Akk. b. names, a list of body parts of b., a list of b. cries in cun. texts, and a list of the terminology related to b. Plates show illustrations of b.

Gilbert 2002, 59–75 offers a survey of avian fauna in the Near East.

Veldhuis 2004 offers an edition of the Sum. lit. composition *Nanše and the birds* and Sum. lex. lists mentioning b. The book also contains a catalogue of Sum. b. names and illustrations of some b.

A monograph on aviculture is von der Osten-Sacken 2015.

S. the survey in *Tierwelt\** § 4 on specific b.

§ 2. Birds in general. “B.” is in Sum. *mušen*, in Akk. *iššūru*, rarely *iššūrtu* for the fem. b. Sum. *mušen* serves as postpositive determinative for b. names in the cun. script.

Also Sum. *buru*<sub>5</sub><sup>(mušen)</sup> corresponds to Akk. *iš-šūru* (PSD B 206–209), but more specifically, at least in Old Bab. lit. texts, denotes a small b. that lives in flocks, perhaps the sparrow, s. Veldhuis 2004, 229. For Sem. cognates of Akk. *iššūru* s. Kogan 2011, 60f.; cf. also Militarev/Kogan 2005, 275–277 for Hebr. *šippor*, Arab. *ʿuṣfūr* etc.

Kogan L. 2011: Proto-Semitic lexicon, in: S. Weninger, in collab. with G. Khan, M. P. Streck, J. C. Watson (ed.), *The Semitic languages: an international handbook*, 179–258.

§ 3. In Mesopotamian animal taxonomy b. form a separate class, including bats, which share the same habitat (*Tierwelt\** §§ 1f.). In some lex. texts insects (*Insekten\**) are written with the b. determinative (nim<sup>mušen</sup> “fly”, bir<sub>5</sub><sup>mušen</sup> “locust”, s. Veldhuis 2004, 242, 272), but they are not classified as b. elsewhere.

The organization of lex. texts sometimes allows us to recognize groups of b. that

share certain characteristics. E.g., Old Bab. 𒊠𒊠 has a section for b. of prey (nin-ninna “harrier”, the mythological Anzu “eagle”, sūr-dù “falcon”), followed by waterfowl (bibad “duck”, ígira “heron”), s. Veldhuis 2004, 87f. The b. list Edubba 7, 100 starts with a group of edible b.: *tarlugallu* “rooster”, *kurkû* “goose”, *ûsu* “(wild) duck” (ll. 1–5); other groups consist of “doves” (*summatu*, *uršānu*, *sukannīnu*; ll. 8–10), waterfowl (*igirû* “heron”, *arabû*, *kīpu*, *uburrû*; ll. 11–15, which means that the otherwise unknown *ABratemu* [l. 12] is probably a water b., too), and b. of prey (*surdû* “falcon”, *erû* “eagle”, *šē’û*, lit. “searching”, *mesukku* “falcon”; ll. 45–49).

§ 4. Terminology related to birds. Only a few important terms can be mentioned here:

“Nest”: Sum. *gùd* (Ú.KI.SÌ.GA), Akk. *qinnu*.

“Egg”: Sum. *nunuz*, Akk. *pelû*.

“Fledgling”: Sum. *amar mušen*, lit. “young of the b.”, Akk. (*w*)*atmu*.

“Wing”: Sum. *pa*, Akk. *kappu*, NA (*a*)*gappu*.

“Claw”: Sum. *umbin*, Akk. *šupru*.

“to fly”: Sum. *dal*, Akk. *naprušu*, *šâ’ul šē’u*.

For a full list of the terminology related to b. s. Salonen 1973, 302–324, 327–371.

#### § 5. Bird imagery.

§ 5.1. In Sumerian texts, the vehicle *mušen* occurs with the following main groups of *tertia comparationis*:

a) *Tertium comparationis* flying: *nin-bi/Nin-gal-e mušen dal-la-gin<sub>7</sub> úru-ni ba-ra-è* “Its queen/Ningal, like a flying b., departed from her city” *Lament for Ur* (ETCSL 2.2.2) 236f.; *kíĝ-gi<sub>4</sub>-a mušen-gin<sub>7</sub> á dúb ì-ak-e* “The messenger, like a b., constantly flapped his wings” *Enmerkar and the lord of Aratta* (ETCSL 1.8.2.3) 507.

b) *Tertium comparationis* trapping, catching: *mušen-dù kù-zu-gin<sub>7</sub> igi-ten sa lá-a-ni mušen nu-è* “Like from (the net) of a clever fowler, no b. escapes

the mesh of her spread net” *Inanna C* (ETCSL 4.7.3) 65.

Cf. W. Heimpel, *Tierbilder in der sumerischen Literatur* (= StPohl 9, 1968) 380–389. Based on the word *buru<sub>5</sub>*, Black 1996 distinguishes the following images in Old Bab. lit. texts: “catching b. in a net”, “the gods are small b.”, “chasing b. from reed-beds, from their hiding places”, “b. flocking together”, “b. wheeling around in the air”, “b. flying away” and “b. rising suddenly into the air”.

§ 5.2. In Akkadian texts, the vehicle *iš-šuru* is used similarly to Sum. *mušen* and *buru<sub>5</sub>* (s. § 5.1, above) and occurs with two groups of *tertia comparationis*:

a) *Tertium comparationis* flying, e.g., *ana qereb birāti šu’ātina kīma iššūri ip-paršū* “They flew like a b. into those fortresses” TCL 3: 291 (NA royal inscription).

b) *Tertium comparationis* hunting, trapping and binding: *ša šāri lemni kīma iššūri akassā idāšu* “I shall bind the arms of the evil wind as (the wings) of a b.” Erra I 187. *āšib Babili šunūti iššurumma arrašunu at-tama* “These inhabitants of Babylon – they are a b. and you their decoy” Erra IV 18. The following simile is hardly understandable without assuming falconry: *kīma iššūri ša ina pāni kasūsi ana sūn awilim ūrubu* “Like a bird which enters a man’s lap (fleeing) before a falcon” Sumer 23, 161: 12–15 (OB letter); the point is that the bird’s panic-stricken flight leads him in a situation even worse for him.

Cf. CAD I 211 *iššuru* 1b. For b. as a vehicle in similes and metaphors in Akk. epic texts s. Streck, *Die Bildersprache der akkadischen Epik* (= AOAT 264, 1999) 174f. For b. as a vehicle in similes in Old Bab. lit. s. Wasserman, *Style and form in Old-Babylonian literary texts* (= CunMon. 27, 2003) 144, 154 (“image of the running chicks”); 155 (“image of the flying b.”).

§ 6. Typology of Sumerian and Akkadian bird names. The following survey cannot be exhaustive. It rather gives characteristic examples for the different types. Many names cannot be classified, e.g., Akk. *lurmu* “ostrich” (Strauß\*), which has, as far as we know, neither a Sum. nor a Sem. etymology, nor a meaning deducible from an Akk. word.

For a typology of Akk. b. names s. the remarks in Black/al-Rawi 1987, 119–122. For an extensive

discussion of Sum. faunal terminology in general, including b. names, s. Peterson 2007, 41–120.

§ 6.1. *Sumerian primary names.* buru<sub>5</sub> “sparrow(?)” Veldhuis 2004, 229. dar “francolin” ibid. 234. gambi “crane” ibid. 242f. ga-nu<sub>11</sub> “ostrich” ibid. 242 (Strauß\*). hu-rí-in “eagle” ibid. 253f. numma ibid. 276f. sim “swallow” (connected to Akk. *sinūntu*?) ibid. 279f. (Schwalbe\*). te<sub>8</sub> “buzzard” ibid. 286f. u<sub>5</sub> “goose” ibid. 294f. uga “raven” ibid. 299–301 (Rabe(nvögel)\*). um “coot(?)” ibid. 302.

§ 6.2. *Akkadian primary names with Semitic etymology.* āribu “crow, raven” Militarev/Kogan 2005, 129–131 (Rabe(nvögel)\*). erū “eagle” ibid. 58f. (but s. Geier\*). sinūntu “swallow” ibid. 258f. (Schwalbe\*). summatu “(wild?) dove” ibid. 257f. (Tauben\*). urnūqu “crane” ibid. 131f. zību “vulture” ibid. 105f. (in other Sem. languages meaning “wolf” or “hyena”; s. Schakal\*).

§ 6.3. *Loans from Sumerian into Akkadian.* igirū < igira “heron” (Stelzvogel\*). kīpu < ki-ib Edubba 7, 100: 14, a water b. surdū < sūr-dū “falcon” (Falke\*). tarlugallu < dar-lugal, lit. “royal francolin”, “rooster” (Hahn\*, Huhn\*). tarru < dar “francolin” Salonen 1973, 151; Militarev/Kogan 2005, 293 with possible Sem. cognates. tigil(l)ū < ti-gi-lá Edubba 7, 100: 25. ummu < um “coot(?)” Veldhuis 2004, 302.

§ 6.4. *Loans from Akkadian into Sumerian.* akan < akkannu “wild donkey”, a water b., Veldhuis 2004, 217. ba-ba-az < paspasu “duck” ibid. 223. uz <? ūsu “(wild) duck” Veldhuis 2004, 303 (Gans\*; s. Militarev/Kogan 2005, 32f. for the direction of borrowing; von der Osten-Sacken 2015, 245: “goose”). kur-gi<sub>4</sub> < kurkū “goose” (s. Militarev/Kogan 2005, 160 for Sem. cognates; von der Osten-Sacken 2015, 344: “crane”).

§ 6.5. *Reference to the appearance of the bird.* bunnū “beautiful” Edubba 7, 100: 61. diqdiqqu (cf. daqāqu “to be minute”) “wren” (Zaunkönig\*). kubšī-barmat, lit. “my cap is multicolored”, “hoopoe(?)” (cf.

Salonen 1973, 198 s. v. *iššūr kubšī* “b. with a crest”). *usukkānu* “the one with a (multi-colored) cheek” Edubba 7, 100: 61.

§ 6.6. *Reference to the cry of the bird.* Often reduplicated forms. ha-ia “peacock” Veldhuis 2004, 251f. (note that his cry is represented as ha-ia ha-ia in *Nanše and the birds* l. 50, s. Veldhuis 2004, 119; Pfau\*). hū’a (or hu’a), a kind of owl. ittīdū “black francolin” Veldhuis 2004, 234f. (the b. “calls his own name” STT 1, 52: 53, s. Salonen 1973, 152). kab-kab/kapkappu ibid. 261f. kiri<sub>6</sub>-kiri<sub>6</sub>/kirikaru Edubba 7, 100: 67. nāgū, lit. “singing” ibid. 51. paspasu “duck” (Gans\*; von der Osten-Sacken 2015, 244–250: “goose”). qaqū, a wild goose(?), Wasserman, CRRAI 41 (1999) 345–347. raqraqqu/laqlaqqu “stork” (note that the cry is represented as rīqa rīqa in AnSt. 20, 112: 8; Stelzvogel\*). sā’īju, lit. “wheezing(?)” Edubba 7, 100: 69. sajjāhu, lit. “laughing”, a kind of gull, Veldhuis 2004, 244. šeg<sub>5</sub>-šeg<sub>5</sub>/šeššekku ibid. 284.

§ 6.7. *Reference to the behaviour of the bird.* ḡi<sub>6</sub>, lit. “night”, a night b., perhaps a kind of owl, Veldhuis 2004, 249. hattārītu “the bobbing one” Edubba 7, 100: 59. ū-ku-ku-ba-ūš/ittīl-imūt, lit. “it lies down and (pretends to be) dead”, “grouse(?)”, or a species of nightjar, Salonen 1973, 203f.; von der Osten-Sacken, NABU 2006/72. nī-gur<sub>11</sub>-mu-du-um/makkūr-ubla, lit. “he brought property”, “magpie” Veldhuis 2004, 271. šē’ū, lit. “searching”, a b. of prey, Edubba 7, 100: 48. ū-ku-ku/šallallu, lit. “sleeper” Veldhuis 2004, 293f. (but s. Militarev/Kogan 2005, 273 for a possible “folk-etymological re-interpretation of a Common Semitic b. name”).

§ 6.8. *Reference to the habitat of the bird.* ālānū?, lit. “city-dweller(?)” Edubba 7, 100: 26. buru<sub>5</sub>-ḡabrud-da/iš-šūr hurri, lit. “b. of the hole”, “partridge” Veldhuis 2004, 231–233. kutlānu, lit. “(sitting on the) fence” Edubba 7, 100: 38.

Black J. 1996: The imagery of birds in Sumerian poetry, in: M. Vogelzang/H. Vanstiphout (ed.), *Mesopotamian poetic language: Sumerian and Akkadian* (= *CunMon.* 6), 23–46. – Black J. A./al-Rawi F. N. H. 1987: A contribution to

the study of Akkadian bird names, ZA 77, 117–126. – Gilbert A. S. 2002: The native fauna of the Ancient Near East, in: B. J. Collins (ed.), A history of the animal world in the Ancient Near East (= HdOr. 1/64), 3–75. – Militarev A./Kogán L. 2005: Semitic etymological dictionary 2: animal names (= AOAT 278/2). – von der Osten-Sacken E. 2015: Untersuchungen zur Geflügelwirtschaft im Alten Orient (= OBO 272). – Peterson J. 2007: A study of Sumerian faunal conception with a focus on the terms pertaining to the order *testudines* (Diss. Univ. of Pennsylvania). – Salonen A. 1973: Vögel. – Veldhuis N. 2004: Religion, literature, and scholarship: the Sumerian composition “Nanše and the birds” (= CunMon. 22).

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### Vogel (bird). B. Bei den Hethitern.

§ 1. Attested bird varieties. – § 2. Hunting and fowling. – § 3. Oracles, rituals, incantations and myths.

§ 1. Attested bird varieties. Hitt. *wattai-* “b.” is, with a single exception (KBo. 4, 2 ii 32), always written with the Sumerogram MUŠEN. The MUŠEN determinative is also used consistently with the logogr. writings of b. varieties (with the exception of the two bat species), but for syll. writings, it is used only inconsistently and only in pre-Neo-Hitt. texts.

Sakuma (2009/1, 254) notes that the use or non-use of the determinative in the oracle reports is tablet-dependent.

Hitt. texts reference the following varieties (Zinko 1987; for oracle b. Sakuma 2009/1, 75f., 254, 335–411; cf. Haas 2008, 35–38):

*alliya-*, *alili-*, *ammanašši-*, *aramanti-laramnant-* (a b. of prey), *aršintara-*, *aršintat̃i-*, *arda-*, *halliya-(ra)-*, *halwašši-*, *hapupi-* (“swallow”[?], perhaps equivalent to SIM<sup>mušen</sup>; cf. Schwalbe\*), *hāra(n)-* (“eagle”, TI<sub>8</sub><sup>mušen</sup>), *harrani-*, *harliti-*, *haššiharši-*, *haštapi-* (“bearded vulture”[?]), *hu(wa)ranni-*, *hūša-*, *hūwa(ra)-* (a type of owl), *huwala-* (a river b.), *kallikalli-* (“falcon”, SUR<sub>14</sub>.DÜ.A<sup>mušen</sup>), *kalmuši-*, *kaltarši-*, *kanišdu-* (a b. of prey), *kipriti-*, *labhanza-* (“seagull”[?]), *marāšši-*, *maršanašši-/maršawašši-*, *mula-*, *partūni-*, *pattarpal̃i-* (a b. of prey), *šaluwaya-/šaluwašaluwa-*, *šalwini-*, *šaša-*, *šulupi-*, *šurašūra-* (“crow”, “raven”, “jackdaw”), *tašašši-*, *tarla-*, *tarumaki-*(?), *urayanni-* (“woodpecker”[?]), *wešši-*, *zamnašši-*, *zarijanalla-*, *zinzapu-* (“pigeon”; Taube\* A. II), AL.DI.RI.GA<sup>mušen</sup> (“wren”; Zaunkönig\*), MUŠEN.GAL (“goose”[?] or “duck”[?]), HAR.-HAR, MUŠEN HUR-RI (“partridge”[?] or “shel-

duck”[?]), KA<sub>5</sub>.A (“fruit bat”), SIM<sup>mušen</sup> (“swallow”, *hapupi-*[?]), MUŠEN.MUŠ (“snake b.”, perhaps darter or snake eagle), MUŠEN.TUR (lit. “small b.”), PÉŠ (“bat”), UGA<sup>mušen</sup> (“crow”, “raven”, also wr. IRIBU<sup>mušen</sup>).

Most of these terms appear exclusively in b. oracle texts, others are attested only outside of them. The eagle and falcon are widely attested both within and outside of the b. oracle reports, while the HURRI-b. features in its own distinct oracular procedure in addition to rituals (cf. § 3.2). Of the few names with proposed identifications, two are bats (KA<sub>5</sub>.A, PÉŠ), five are b. of prey (*aramnant-*, *hāran-*, *kallikalli-*, *kanišdu-*, *pattarpal̃i-*), one is an owl (*hūwa-(ra)-*), and two are water fowl (*huwala-*, *labhanza-*) (Sakuma 2009/1, 335–411).

§ 2. Hunting and fowling. Visual references to fowling and falconry are linked to royal imagery and so of limited use in reconstructing actual practice. Falconry may have been practiced (Canby 2002), but is not attested in the texts themselves, and it is possible that the relevant iconography projects only an ideology of kingship.

The frontier-post governors (CTH 261) were instructed to maintain the health of the b. ponds in their jurisdiction (KUB 13, 2 ii 24f.). Such ponds may have been man-made in some cases, as, for example, the reservoirs located adjacent to the citadel at Hattuša, which may have attracted water fowl (*lulijaš* MUŠEN). That such b. were highly valued is indicated in the Hitt. laws where a stiff fine was imposed on anyone stealing one. LH § 119 states: “If anyone [steals] a trained water b. ... [or] a trained *gaggapa-*, [formerly] they paid [one] mina of silver, but now [he shall pay] twelve shekels [of silver], and he shall look [to his house for it].” Much less valued were *ummijant-*b., the theft of ten of these incurring a penalty of only one shekel (LH § 120).

B. were also actively hunted for captivity as indicated by a letter written to the Hitt. king by his officials in Tapikka (Maṣat-höyük\* A. § 2): “Concerning the fact that you, Your Majesty, my lord, commanded me, Habiri, as follows: ‘On this trip collect b.’ (People) kindly collected b. for us, ...