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## Age and Masculinities during the Neo-Assyrian Period

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University of Chicago press

2023

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Bennett, E 2023, 'Age and Masculinities during the Neo-Assyrian Period', *Journal of Cuneiform Studies*, vol. 75, pp. 123-154.

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<http://hdl.handle.net/10138/578930>

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# AGE AND MASCULINITIES DURING THE NEO-ASSYRIAN PERIOD

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## Abstract

The age of an individual changes how other elements of identity, like masculinity, are expressed. For example, the modern expectations of “old men” and “young men” are very different. Here, I explore the differences between “young” and “old” men as expressed in the Neo-Assyrian textual corpus on the Open Richly Annotated Cuneiform Corpus (Oracc). This corpus offers a unique opportunity to incorporate recently developed word co-occurrence methods alongside a traditional close reading approach in order to explore the differences between old and young men in Neo-Assyrian texts. I demonstrate that young men were conceptually different from old men, and both were key to the construction of Neo-Assyrian hegemonic masculinities.

## 1. Introduction

Digital methods are used more and more often for Assyriological research.<sup>1</sup> The large open digital dataset available on the Open Richly Annotated Cuneiform Corpus (Oracc) that covers the Neo-Assyrian period offers the prospect to use digital methods alongside traditional ones for research. The lemmatized data on Oracc offers a unique opportunity to use methods developed in computational linguistics, and one such long-standing method for understanding patterns of word usage is word co-occurrence. This method has only recently been applied to Assyriological data but shows potential for producing a more emic understanding of identities within ancient datasets.<sup>2</sup> By measuring word frequencies and co-occurrences, we can

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1. See, e.g., Svärd et al. (2018, 2020); Alstola et al. (2019, 2023); Kulikov, Anderson, and Veldhuis (2021); Lazar et al. (2021); Sahala (2021); Sahala and Svärd (2021); King and Pirngruber (2022). This manuscript would not have been possible without the support of many people. I would like to thank Niek Veldhuis and Aleks Sahala, who graciously allowed me access to their code and allowed me to experiment and remix them for this project. I would also like to thank the members of Team 1 of the Centre of Excellence in Ancient Near Eastern Empires (ANEE) at the University of Helsinki for their unique expertise in digital approaches to Near Eastern texts and network analysis, which has greatly improved my work. In addition, I would like to acknowledge the Academy of Finland for its financial support in the research and writing behind this article. I would also like to thank Céline Debourse, Lena Tambs, Tero Alstola, editors of *Journal of Cuneiform Studies*, and an anonymous reviewer for their insightful comments on a previous draft of this work. Finally, this type of research would not have been possible without the tireless efforts of the scores of researchers who lemmatize, annotate, and digitize the swathes of texts available on Oracc. I would particularly like to thank the steering committee of Oracc: Jamie Novotny, Eleanor Robson, Steve Tinney, and Niek Veldhuis. Without their continued efforts this valuable open data resource would not exist, and they continue to push the principles of open data within the Assyriological community. A full list of the Oracc subprojects whose texts I have used can be found in the Zenodo file; link and further explanation can be found in appendix 1.

2. One method for this has been developed by the scholars at the University of Helsinki, whose results can be found in Svärd et al. 2018, 2020; Alstola et al. 2019; Sahala and Lindén 2020; Sahala 2021; Sahala and Svärd 2021.

avoid modern categorizations and assumptions that could be inadvertently imposed upon the data. Word co-occurrences are therefore uniquely suited to research into emic perspectives of ancient identities—in this case, how age and masculinities collided into categories of “young” and “old” men in Neo-Assyrian texts.<sup>3</sup>

The intersection of age and gender—and masculinities in particular—is complex and has not been fully explored in Neo-Assyrian texts. The following section provides a fuller explanation of the theoretical issues involved in such an investigation. I begin by providing an overview of masculinities and intersectionality, and the need for furthering such research in Neo-Assyrian texts. I then provide a similar overview of theories regarding age in sociology and research into age and gender in Mesopotamian material. Both sections will reveal an investigation into the Neo-Assyrian conceptualization of “young” and “old” man is overdue.

### 1.1. *Masculinities and Intersectionality*

The study of masculinities remains relatively uncommon in Assyriology.<sup>4</sup> Studying gender is still seen as studying women, and the two terms are often interchangeable. However, it is not just women who perform and practice gender. Men also do so and are restricted by gender norms in the same manner as women.<sup>5</sup> It is therefore vital that men are included in discussions of ancient gender. It is only through exploring all gender performances that we will fully understand the gendered dynamics and paradigms in the ancient world.

Research into Neo-Assyrian masculinities has largely focused on the king (Assante 2016; N’Shea 2018; Bennett 2019). This is an important step in understanding Neo-Assyrian masculinities, as the sovereign was depicted as the ideal man—all others in the empire were to measure themselves against this perfect example.<sup>6</sup> This correlates with Raewynn Connell’s “hegemonic masculinity”: a series of traits, which may contradict one another, that men in a society should aspire to (Connell, 1995; Connell and Messerschmidt, 2005). Not many men (in many cases, no men) will be able to realize these traits, but the important element here is the attempts to conform to this standard. Connell (1995: 78–81) also described four further categories of men: (1) Complicit—those who do not conform to hegemonic ideals completely, but try to attain these traits, thus upholding the patriarchal status quo. (2) Marginalized—those who have a marginalized identity within society (such as being Black in the US, gay, or disabled), but who still actively try to attain these hegemonic traits. (3) Subordinate—these are men who inhabit traits outside of the hegemonic ideal.<sup>7</sup>

A key aspect of masculinities studies is the sheer diversity of masculine norms and behavior. Many different elements of an individual’s identity influence how they practice their gender (Beynon 2002: 10, 23; Christensen and Jensen 2014: 69).<sup>8</sup> This element of hegemonic masculinities theory is based on the concept of intersectionality—a term coined by Kimberlé Crenshaw (1991a, 1991b) to describe the entanglement

3. For an overview of intersectional gender identities, see Crenshaw 1991a, 1991b; Cho, Crenshaw, and McCall 2013; Carbado et al. 2013; Christensen and Jensen 2014. For age as an element of intersectional identities, see McMullin 1995; Ginn and Arber 1995; Lucy 2005.

4. For examples of masculinities studies in other historical fields, see Jones 2012; Morris 2021; Hinsch 2013; Clements, Friedman, and Healey 2002. Most informative has been the work on masculinities in Hebrew Bible studies. See, e.g., Nissinen 2014, 2017; Creangă 2010; Kirova 2019; Haddox and Creangă 2010.

5. For the concept of gender as a performance, see Butler 2011.

6. Sennacherib’s royal inscriptions even go so far as to describe him as *eṭlum gitmālum* (e.g., *RINAP* 3/1, 1 3; *RINAP* 3/1, 9 3; and *RINAP* 3/2, 230 4), or “perfect man” (Bennett 2019: 387–88).

7. Connell’s analysis was based on mid-1990s Australian culture, so it is still to be seen how well this framework can be mapped onto the Neo-Assyrian period. In a later update to her 1995 monograph, Connell and Messerschmidt (2005: 836) clarified that any individual in society can engage in masculine behavior and the pursuit of the hegemonic ideal, not just men.

8. Examples include their age, ethnicity, geographical location, profession, class, sexual orientation, and whether they were disabled.

that happens when two distinct identities collide.<sup>9</sup> The collision of two identities needs to be examined and analyzed *as a collision*, not as the cars in the crash. An old man is not simply “old” or a “man,” but an “old man”; his age and gender need to be considered in tandem in any analysis of his identity. The study of intersectional identities of Neo-Assyrian men is the next stage in analyzing Neo-Assyrian masculinities; in this article, I focus on how masculinities collided with age.

## 1.2. Age

The study of masculinities and age in the Neo-Assyrian period has a limited research history, and this is partially due to the limited sociological research in the field. In the vast amount of research into age, aging, and gender, it is only since 2006 that aging masculinities has become its own distinct field (Meadows and Davidson 2006; Tarrant 2019).<sup>10</sup> The work of Robert Meadows and Kate Davidson (2006) has been particularly influential. They used three of the conceptual arenas that Connell suggested (production, power, and emotional relations) to analyze what being an “old man” meant in contemporary society. The results highlighted a bias in studying men that takes youth as the standard for all analysis (Meadows and Davidson 2006: 298–302).<sup>11</sup>

I found a useful theoretical framework in Jay Ginn and Sara Arber (1995: 5), who suggested separating the concept of aging into three categories: (1) chronological; (2) physiological; and (3) social age. Chronological age refers to the amount of time someone has lived. In the modern world, this is the number we give when someone asks, “How old are you?” Physiological can be thought of as the biological or medical view of age. This view of age has resulted in a perspective in sociology that aging is a period of decline, as the body starts to deteriorate (Ginn and Arber 1995: 10–12). However, some have pushed back on this perspective, stating that simply because the body does not work as it used to does not mean it is a period of despair in an individual’s life. Linn Sandberg (2013) has given a different perspective on aging—it is not a period of decline, but a period of new types of difference. She rightly pointed out that the view of old age as a period of decline is a modern, Western-centric perspective, that must be interrogated before assuming it is valid elsewhere. This last sentiment is particularly important for the study of ancient cultures, and as such I will only discuss old age as decline if the sources state so. Finally, social age refers to the norms

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The fluidity of men’s gender identity has led N’Shea (2018: 318) to go so far as to describe masculinities as “volatile.” Indeed, Beynon (2002) has suggested it is impossible to map out all of the different variations of “man,” as there are so many different ways to “be a man.”

9. Crenshaw was not the first to conceptualize this theory, but she was the first to use the analogy of a traffic collision at an intersection to describe the unique difficulties and oppressions faced by Black women in the US during the 1980s and early 1990s. Since then, intersectionality has been a powerful tool for analyzing modern and ancient societies. Examples can be seen in Bahrani 2001, 2006; McCaffrey 2002; Melville 2004; Bolger 2008a, 2008b; Carbado et al. 2013; Cho, Crenshaw, and McCall 2013; Christensen and Jensen 2014; Svård 2015; Helle 2018; Ehalt 2021.

10. Since the mid-1990s there has been a great development in the integration of gender and age. On the lack of integration of feminist theory in studies of modern aging in the 1990s, see Bury 1995; Ginn and Arber 1995; McMullin 1995. In general, when investigating age and men, the focus has been on masculine youth culture (Ravn and Roberts 2019). Two emerging research fields are the relation between the youthful body and masculinities, and how different spaces influence how aging men construct their masculinities (Ravn and Roberts 2019; Tarrant 2019).

11. The research of Calasanti (Calasanti and King 2005) was also vital for the development of Meadows and Davidson’s ideas, but it did not fully integrate Connell’s hegemonic masculinity model. This bias is even present in osteological studies of excavated human remains. In general, modern scholars tend to under-age older individuals and over-age younger ones (Lucy 2005: 48–52). This raises an important question regarding previous scholarship into Neo-Assyrian masculinities: Did the scribes and artists who described and created images of the king focus on the young, middle-aged, or elderly version of the kingly image? While the royal inscriptions will stress the youth of the Assyrian king, when they began their reign the kings were at an age that we would define as “adult.” E.g., Grayson and Novotny (2012: 1) have stated that Sennacherib was approximately forty years old when he became king of Assyria. By today’s standards in Western Europe, that would not be considered young, but approaching middle-age. Therefore, the royal inscriptions should be thought of as talking about the *image* of the Assyrian king, not the *real* Assyrian king.

and expectations that are associated with certain life stages. This can be seen in rites of passage, but also in activities and behaviors. For example, one of the interviewees in Meadows and Davidson (2006: 302–3) stated that they were not old because they did not “do the old man’s walk.” Since he did not behave in a certain way he expected of the elderly, the man did not see himself as old.

It has already been demonstrated that in Mesopotamian texts it is difficult to map our understanding of age onto the native one. Modern concepts of aging are based on the chronological and physiological (Meadows and Davidson 2006), whereas Mesopotamian concepts of aging were based on social ages.<sup>12</sup> The mismatch between this and how modern scholars define ancient ages has resulted in attempts to assign chronological age to Mesopotamian age categories, imposing modern concepts of age onto societies that conceptualized age in a different manner.<sup>13</sup>

There have been limited discussions into the intersection of Mesopotamian age and gender—and even fewer regarding age and masculinities.<sup>14</sup> A notable exception is found in the works of Rivkah Harris (1992) and Joan Goodnick Westenholz with Ilona Zsolnay (2017). Harris analyzed how age intersected with women’s and men’s gender identities, but her discussion was limited to myths like the Epic of Gilgamesh, or generated sweeping statements that covered all of Mesopotamian society. The research of Goodnick Westenholz and Zsolnay was more focused and analyzed the categories of men as documented by Ur III period texts and included a brief discussion on age categories of young men in this material. Sadly, this analysis was not expanded for whether there were categories for old men, and the impact this might have had on Ur III society. One notable addition outside of Assyriology is Milena Kirova’s (2019) study of old age and masculinities in the Hebrew Bible. She pointed out the striking fact that—counter to the Mesopotamian evidence—the authors of the Hebrew Bible viewed chronological age as particularly important. Age and masculinities are clearly overlooked topics for those interested in intersectional identity in Mesopotamia, and even more so for the Neo-Assyrian period.

This overview demonstrates a need to reconsider age in Neo-Assyrian material. We need to ask whether there are any biases in how we conceptualize individuals in the texts, and if our understanding of age can be mapped onto Assyrian categories. Further, age is an integral element of intersectional identities, and changes how gender is performed. The social categories of “young” and “old” men need to be interrogated for a fuller understanding of both age and gender in Neo-Assyrian society.

## 2. Word Co-occurrences as a Method

Investigating word co-occurrences is a computational linguistics method based on a concept developed by John Rupert Firth, where the meaning of a word is partly defined by the words surrounding it.<sup>15</sup> For example, the word “orange” can mean two different things: the color and the fruit. When we look at the words surrounding “orange” in a sentence, for example, “brush,” “paint,” and “red,” we can understand whether we are looking at the color or the fruit.<sup>16</sup> The field of computational linguistics has developed methods for identifying the words most likely to occur close to another word and provide statistics to express this

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12. Curchin 1980; Harris 2000: 3; Bartash 2015; Goodnick Westenholz and Zsolnay 2017.

13. One example is Bartash 2015. In this article, Vitali Bartash discussed the classification of children in Late Uruk texts. Part of his analysis was an attempt to understand what chronological age these different classifications referred to. He determined a division at around age three.

14. Most studies about gender and age as an intersectional identity in Mesopotamia are focused on old women, childhood, or motherhood. Examples can be found in Roth 1987; Harris 1992, 2000; Bartash 2015; Budin 2015; Couto-Ferreira 2015; Garroway 2018; McIntosh 2020; Pezzulla 2020; and Kelley 2018.

15. This is summarized by Firth (1968: 179) in the elegant phrase “You shall know a word by the company it keeps!”

16. This is the example used in Svård et al. 2018.

concept. Generating lists of these word co-occurrences is now a firmly established method within computational linguistics.<sup>17</sup> However, it has only recently been applied to ancient texts—partly due to the slow increase of digital editions, and partly due to a recent interest in digital methods from other fields.<sup>18</sup>

The word co-occurrence approach highlights patterns of usage for specific words and allows for a bird’s-eye view of the dataset. By investigating what words are likely to occur close to words related to age, I was able to identify the age-words that related to masculinities. For example, *labīru* can be translated as “old,”<sup>19</sup> but when we look at its co-occurrence list (table 2), it is clear it was not used for masculinities. Instead, it was used for describing time, rites, buildings, and objects as “old,” and for describing copies of texts.<sup>20</sup> Furthermore, word co-occurrences allow for a more targeted approach to close reading. Rather than scour through all Neo-Assyrian texts for instances of “old” and “young” men, I was able to focus only on the texts where specific co-occurrences appear. The potential for such an approach is therefore the ability to narrow down which age-words relate to masculinities, as well as which texts discuss the social categories of “young” and “old” man.

Table 1. Age-related words identified in *CDA*.

“Young” words	“Old” words
<i>ayyaru</i> , “young man”	<i>labāriš</i> , “become old”
<i>batūlu</i> , “young man (adolescent)”	<i>labāru</i> , “growing to old age”
<i>duppassū</i> , “younger brother”	<i>labīru</i> , “old”
<i>eṭlu</i> , “young man/man”	<i>labīrūtu</i> , “old age”
<i>šerru</i> “baby, infant, young child”	<i>littūtu</i> , “extreme old age”
<i>šubultinbi</i> “young”	<i>puršumu</i> , “elder”
<i>šuhurtu</i> “adolescent”	<i>šibu</i> , “old man”
	<i>šibūtu</i> , “old age”

In order to implement this method, I followed the workflow established in Svärd et al. (2018). I began by downloading 6,103 texts (consisting of 770,593 words) from Oracc that were tagged as “Neo-Assyrian” and “Akkadian.”<sup>21</sup> I then created a list of all words that related to age according to *CDA* (table 1). This list will be referred to as the “target words.”

17. The methods can be found in several textbooks for natural language processing, e.g., Jurafsky and Martin (2023: 116–19) and Mihalcea and Radev (2011: 78–81). The specific measurement used in this article, pointwise mutual information (PMI), as well as several variations, are outlined in Bouma 2009. An overview of PMI and its use for Assyriological datasets can be found in Sahala and Lindén 2020; Sahala 2021: 60–61.

18. For recent developments in the use of these methods in Akkadian material, see Svärd et al. 2018, 2020; Sahala and Lindén 2020; Sahala and Svärd 2021; Alstola et al. 2023. Word co-occurrences have been applied to digital Greek and Latin texts since Rydberg-Cox (2000), and investigations into co-occurrences continue to provide fruitful results in this field (la Roi 2020). See Hoffman et al. 2018 for using this method for the Medieval New Testament, and Kaše and Glomb 2022 for similar methods in early Christian literature.

19. *CAD* L:26 *labīru*.

20. A list of the 168 texts that contain *labīru* can be found in the Korp search results found here: <https://tinyurl.com/mr8ufb8n>.

21. I did this through a version of Veldhuis’s Oracc parser code. Veldhuis’s code is available on Github: <https://github.com/niekveldhuis/compass>. My version is available on Github (<https://github.com/ElleBennett91/ORACC-download>), as well as in the Zenodo repository (see appendix 1). I extend my sincere gratitude to Niek Veldhuis, who held my hand through his code and as a result greatly improved my coding skills.

Table 2. Example of two co-occurrence lists. On the left are the top fifteen co-occurrences for *labīru*, and on the right are the top fifteen co-occurrences for *eṭlu*.

Co-occurrences for <i>labīru</i> _AJ[old]AJ		Co-occurrences of <i>eṭlu</i> [manly-one]N	
Co-occurrence	PMI <sup>2</sup> Score	Co-occurrence	PMI <sup>2</sup> Score
<i>barū</i> [seen]AJ	-13.68	<i>naṭālu</i> [look]V	-17.372
<i>šaṭru</i> [written]AJ	-16.41	<i>narāmu</i> [loved-one]N	-17.832
<i>eššu</i> [new]AJ	-17	<i>rapšu</i> [wide]AJ	-18.424
<i>ṭuppu</i> [tablet]N	-18.254	<i>eṭlu</i> [manly one]N	-19.414
<i>dullu</i> [trouble]N	-18.747	<i>rašû</i> [acquire]V	-20.485
<i>āšipu</i> [sorcerer]N	-19.192	<i>wardatu</i> [girl]N	-20.551
<i>epēšu</i> [do]V	-20.813	<i>ilu</i> [god]N	-21.758
<i>muḥḥu</i> [skull]N	-20.975	<i>nišu</i> [people]N	-22.038
<i>eššūtu</i> [newness]N	-21.124	<i>gimru</i> [totality]N	-22.94
<i>šapālu</i> [be(come)-deep]V	-21.161	<i>ālu</i> [city]N	-23.063
<i>ēkallu</i> [palace]N	-21.268	<i>kibru</i> [bank]N	-23.12
<i>ḥurāšu</i> [gold]N	-21.275	<i>qardu</i> _AJ[valiant]AJ	-23.534
<i>qabû</i> [say]V	-21.321	<i>abu</i> [father]N	-23.795
<i>manû</i> [unit]N	-21.477	<i>kullatu</i> [totality]N	-23.954
<i>ilu</i> [god]N	-21.975	<i>libbu</i> [interior]N	-24.526

Once I had the target words, I ran Aleks Sahala's (2019) *pmizer2* script.<sup>22</sup> This script asked: What Akkadian words were most likely to occur within ten words of one of the target words? The script used the measurement pointwise mutual information (PMI) to derive word co-occurrence scores.<sup>23</sup> Finally, the script printed the top fifteen results (i.e., the top fifteen Akkadian words most likely to occur close to a target word). The version used here had boundaries of zero and minus infinity. A score of zero means the two words always co-occur next to each other, and a score of minus infinity would mean the two words never occur together. All the scores are in the negative range, but I was most interested in the word pairs that were closest to zero. For example, table 1 is the co-occurrence lists for the words *labīru* and *eṭlu*.<sup>24</sup> As the script generated 15 results for each age-related word in the target word list, I ended up with a results table of 134 co-occurrences. These lists allowed for an understanding of how individual words were used within the Oracc texts. I could then identify the age-related words that were used to express masculinities within Neo-Assyrian texts, and discount those that were not. The final list of co-occurrences can be found in appendix 2.

I was particularly interested in whether age played a recurrent role in the expression of masculinities. In order to explore this, I identified a new target word list that consisted of Akkadian lexemes relating to Neo-Assyrian masculinities: strength, piety, intelligence/wisdom, bravery, and virility. I also included words that meant the opposite, as these may indicate nonhegemonic masculinities (Connell 1995: 78–79).

22. I give my deepest thanks to Aleks Sahala, who guided me through the script and was able to troubleshoot whenever I was confused.

23. Mutual information measurements have been used in computational linguistics since 2008 (Church and Hanks 2008). There are many different versions of PMI, and which one is used is dependent on the research goal. In this case, I used PMI<sup>2</sup> (Bouma 2009). Full documentation for this process can be found in the accompanying Zenodo file; see appendix 1.

24. For *eṭlu*, see CADE:407 *eṭlu*.

Therefore, “man” and “woman,” “brave” and “coward,” “strong” and “weak” were all included.<sup>25</sup> I then ran the `pmizer2` script with these target words, generating 3,464 results.<sup>26</sup> With so many outcomes, it is difficult for a researcher to identify broad patterns in the data so I followed the workflow of Svärd et al. (2018) and create a word co-occurrence network to help with this process.

I imported the word co-occurrence lists into the network analysis software Gephi that visualized each word as a dot (in network analysis, this is called a node), and each PMI score as a line connecting two nodes (the lines are called edges).<sup>27</sup> The thicker the edge, the higher the PMI score.<sup>28</sup> By generating a word co-occurrence network, I could then apply formal network measures to the PMI results.<sup>29</sup> These measurements allowed for a broad overview of how words relating to masculinities were used, and to contextualize the importance of age-related words in expressing masculinities. In other words, the word co-occurrence network of words relating to masculinities meant I could understand how likely age was used in expressions of Neo-Assyrian masculinities.

Once I generated these co-occurrence lists and networks, I could turn to Oracc in Korp to explain the patterns I had identified (Sahala, Jauhiainen, and Alstola 2021). Korp hosts data taken from Oracc in 2021 and allows for complex searches to be conducted on the dataset. I was able to recreate the PMI parameters and immediately find the texts that were the basis of the PMI scores. For example, Korp allows for a search for Neo-Assyrian texts in Akkadian that have the word *eṭlu* and *naṭālu* (“to see”)<sup>30</sup> within fifteen words of each other. Korp then provided a list of texts that matched these search parameters and formed the basis of the PMI score given to the word pairs. I was then able to conduct a more traditional close reading of these texts, informed by hegemonic masculinities theory and sociological research into age.

### 3. Results and Analysis

The results from the word co-occurrence network suggested that age was not used frequently in expressing masculinities in Neo-Assyrian texts.<sup>31</sup> The exceptions were *eṭlu* and *puršumu* (“old man or woman”),<sup>32</sup>

25. A full list is included in appendix 3.

26. The full list can be found in the accompanying Zenodo repository; see appendix 1.

27. Bastian, Heymann, and Jacomy 2009. The full documentation of how I generated this network is available in the accompanying Zenodo repository; see appendix 1.

28. Importing the  $PMI^2$  scores required some processing. The scores of  $PMI^2$  are in the negative range, which Gephi cannot render. In order to make the scores readable, I needed to bring them into the positive range. I did this by finding the lowest  $PMI^2$  score (the collocate *nakriš* and *šarru*), which had a score of -37.973. Using this figure, I then added 38 to all of the  $PMI^2$  scores. The  $PMI^2$  score of -37.973 therefore became 0.027. These new scores were the edge weights in the networks. In addition, I had to make a choice regarding word co-occurrences that appear twice (or multiple times) in the results list. To reflect the pattern in the data, I chose to sum the edge weights for these repeated co-occurrences.

29. Full documentation of how this network visualization was generated can be found in the accompanying Zenodo file; see appendix 1.

30. CAD N2:121 *naṭālu*.

31. Here I provide a brief overview of how I came to this conclusion. After importing the word co-occurrence lists into Gephi, I ran the layout algorithm ForceAtlas2. This draws nodes together that are connected through thick ties and repels nodes that are not connected from each other. This helped identify clusters of words that co-occur together as a group. I then ran the weighted degree centrality score, which sums the PMI score of the ties surrounding a node. E.g., the weighted degree of *eṭlu* is 256.913, as this is the sum of all the PMI scores connected to it—which includes the co-occurrences to this word from other word co-occurrence lists. According to this measure, those words with higher weighted degrees are more likely to co-occur with other words in the network. In this case, those words with high weighted degree scores are more likely to be connected to several masculinity words. I then sized the nodes according to weighted degree in order to visualize this measurement. After performing this procedure, I noticed the age-related words were not very big. When looking at the list of words in the network organized according to weighted degree, age-related words were ranked 83rd to 1148th (out of 1373). Based on this, I concluded that age-related words in general were not frequently used in the expression of masculinities.

32. CAD P1:525 *puršumu*.

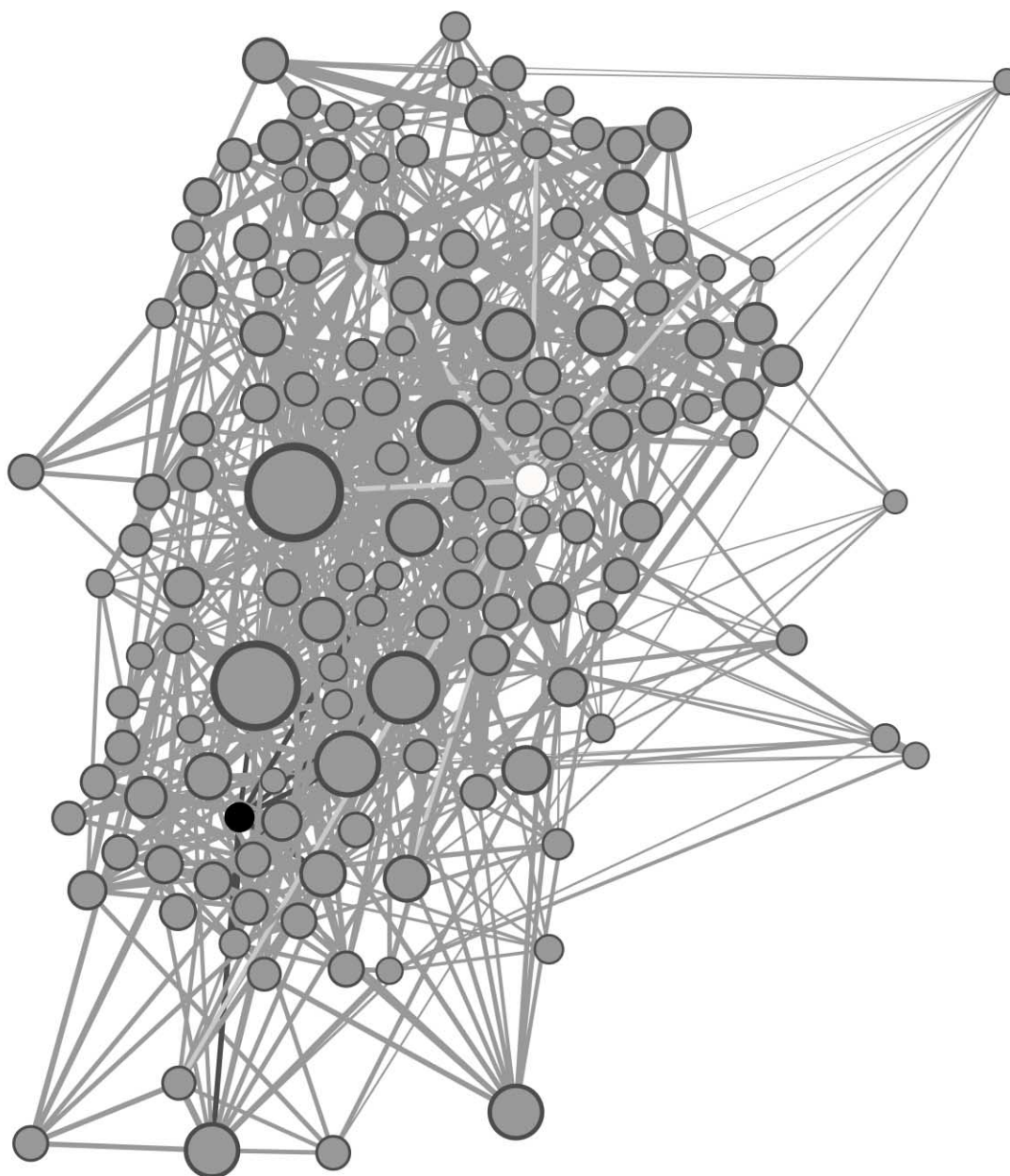


Fig. 1. *K*-core of the masculinities word co-occurrence network. The white node represents *eṭlu*, and the black node represents *puršumu*.

the only age-related words found in the core of the network (fig. 1).<sup>33</sup> This indicated that these were commonly used alongside other words relating to masculinities in Neo-Assyrian. However, the limited results from this method means the rest of this article will focus on the individual word co-occurrence lists of age words and the Korp search results. I will begin by discussing the connotations of “young man,” followed by those for “old man.”

33. This was identified through the *k*-core filter built into Gephi (Bastian, Heymann, and Jacomy 2009).

### 3.1. “Young Man”

In this section I discuss how words relating to “youth” were used in combination with masculinities to express the concept of “young man.” I focus on the following words (see table 3): *eṭlu* (“young man”), *batūlu* (“young man [adolescent]”),<sup>34</sup> and *ṣuḫurtu* (“adolescence [an age group]”).<sup>35</sup> After generating their word co-occurrences and conducting a close reading of the texts that resulted in these scores, I was able to create the following portrait of how the Assyrians conceptualized a “young man.”

*Eṭlu* was a key term for describing the concept of “young man” in Neo-Assyrian texts, with 110 occurrences in the Oracc dataset. According to the *CAD*, *eṭlu* referred to a short period in a man’s life between adolescence and becoming a full-grown man.<sup>36</sup> The very definition of *eṭlu* has an intersectional concept baked into it, as it was used to describe a socially specific period of the Neo-Assyrian man’s life course. In addition, lexical lists point toward another intersection of identity: the *eṭlu* was an Assyrian young man.<sup>37</sup> The word *eṭlu* was equated with words for reeds in lexical lists,<sup>38</sup> and in Nabnitu 27, *eṭlu* was specifically listed as a “tall” youth.<sup>39</sup> It can therefore be assumed that *eṭlu* was conceptualized as a young man who was tall like a reed. Megan Cifarelli’s (1998) analysis of postures in Assurnasirpal II’s palace reliefs suggest that an upright, straight posture—like a reed—was key in visually communicating that an individual was Assyrian. I suggest that *eṭlu* was not just used to describe an individual was “young” and “a man,” but one who was also “Assyrian.”

*Eṭlu* is attested most frequently in the royal inscriptions of Assyrian kings (81 attestations), where it appears in 68 texts.<sup>40</sup> A key co-occurrence is with *qardu* (“heroic, valiant”),<sup>41</sup> which reflects these two words’

34. *CAD* B:174 *batūlu*.

35. *CAD* Š:237 *ṣuḫurtu* 2.

36. *CAD* E:407 *eṭlu*.

37. Syllabary B, 2 obv. ii 9’; Antagal, D rev. ii 23; Antagal, E obv. i’ 7’; Aa, rev. 8’; Nabnitu, 27 rev. ii 4; Emesal Vocabulary, 3 obv. i 10’; Ura, 1 i’ 10’; Ea, rev. ii 15; Reciprocal Ea, ii 45’.

38. Antagal, D rev. ii 23; Antagal, E obv. i’ 7’.

39. Nabnitu, 27 rev. ii 4.

40. *RIMA* 2, A.0.99.2 23, 77; *RIMA* 2, A.0.99.4 obv. 13’; *RIMA* 3, A.0.104.2011 3’; *RIMA* 1, A.0.101.1 i 12, ii 126, iii 114; *RIMA* 1, A.0.101.2 2; *RIMA* 1, A.0.101.3 21; *RIMA* 1, A.0.101.23 2; *RIMA* 1, A.0.101.26 3; *RIMA* 1, A.0.101.28 ii 1; *RIMA* 1, A.0.101.29 5’; *RIMA* 1, A.0.101.30 3; *RIMA* 1, A.0.101.31 2; *RIMA* 1, A.0.101.32 2; *RIMA* 1, A.0.101.34 4; *RIMA* 1, A.0.101.35 2; *RIMA* 1, A.0.101.38 3; *RIMA* 1, A.0.101.40 2, 12; *RIMA* 1, A.0.101.47 obv. 16; *RIMA* 1, A.0.101.50 4; *RIMA* 1, A.0.101.51 3; *RIMA* 1, A.0.101.56 7; *RIMA* 1, A.0.101.66 4; *RIMA* 3, A.0.102.5 i 1; *RIMA* 3, A.0.102.9 obv. 4; *RIMA* 3, A.0.102.28 9; *RIMA* 3, A.0.102.30 10; *RINAP* 1, 1 6; *RINAP* 1, 47 obv. 2; *RINAP* 1, 51 2; *RINAP* 1, 52 2; *RINAP* 2, 13 13; *RINAP* 2, 43 17; *RINAP* 2, 73 4; *RINAP* 2, 76 10’; *RINAP* 2, 88 5’; *RINAP* 2, 105 i’ 14’; *RINAP* 2, 116 12; *RINAP* 2, 129 18; *RINAP* 3/1, 1 3; *RINAP* 3/1, 2 3; *RINAP* 3/1, 3 3; *RINAP* 3/1, 4 3; *RINAP* 3/1, 5 3; *RINAP* 3/1, 8 3; *RINAP* 3/1, 9 3; *RINAP* 3/1, 15 i 10; *RINAP* 3/1, 16 i 11; *RINAP* 3/1, 17 i 8; *RINAP* 3/1, 18 i 5’; *RINAP* 3/1, 18 vi 35’; *RINAP* 3/1, 22 i 7, v 20, v 83; *RINAP* 3/1, 23 i 6, v 12, v 71; *RINAP* 3/1, 24 i 6; *RINAP* 3/1, 27 i 22; *RINAP* 3/1, 31 i 6’; *RINAP* 3/2, 136 obv. i 7; *RINAP* 3/2, 146 obv. 7; *RINAP* 3/2, 147 obv. 7; *RINAP* 3/2, 213 3; *RINAP* 3/2, 230 4; *RINAP* 4, 33 obv. ii 5; *RINAP* 4, 44 obv. 2; *RINAP* 4, 1006 i 9’; *RINAP* 5/1, 6 ix 2’; *RINAP* 5/1, 7 viii 27’, 28’, 37’; *RINAP* 5/1, 8 v 21’’; *RINAP* 5/1, 11 iii 118; *RINAP* 5/2, 161 iii 24’; *RINAP* 5/2, 166 3’; *RINAP* 5/2, Sin-šarru iškun 1 12; *RINAP* 5/2, Sin-šarru iškun 6 obv. 13. *eṭlu* also appears in nine lexical lists (Syllabary B, 2 obv. ii 9’; Antagal, D rev. ii 23; Antagal, E obv. i’ 7’; Aa, rev. 8’; Nabnitu, 27 rev. ii 4; Emesal Vocabulary, 3 obv. i 10’; Ura, 1 i’ 10’; Ea, rev. ii 15; Reciprocal Ea, ii 45’), one proverb (*BWL* 58 obv. i 3, 5), one liturgical text (*FAOS* 18 la–III obv. ii 59), five literary texts (Standard Babylonian *Gilgameš* Epic tablet VIII obv. 13, rev. 3; Erra and Išum 1 obv. i 22, obv. i 51, rev. i 24; Poor Man of Nippur obv. i 1, rev. i 31, 37, 39, rev. i 40; Šu’ila to Šamaš obv. 10; Šurpu 7 obv. 7), two treaties (*SAA* 2, 6 obv. 482; *SAA* 2, 15 obv. 481–482 T vi 62—the latter is included in the *SAA* 2 digital project, but not the printed book, and is included through <http://oracc.org/saa/saa02/P500551/html>), one hymn (*SAA* 3, 1 obv. 18), four astrological reports (*SAA* 8, 155 obv. 6; *SAA* 8, 295 rev. 4; *SAA* 8, 378 obv. 2; *SAA* 8, 406 obv. 3), one report of a priest visiting a temple (*SAA* 13, 45 rev. 3), and one list of religious sites in Ashur (*SAA* 20, 49 166, 168). The co-occurrence *eṭlu* and *qardu* is therefore found in 1.5 percent of the dataset from Oracc.

41. *CAD* Q:129 *qardu*. The PMI<sup>2</sup> score for *eṭlu* and *qardu* is -23.534. The connection between the two words in the word co-occurrence network is the strongest, as the connection represents that *eṭlu* and *qardu* are on each other’s co-occurrence lists. The two PMI<sup>2</sup> scores (after being manipulated by adding 38 to their score in order to bring them into the positive range and thus be readable by Gephi), are summed together to give a combined score of 28.837.

Table 3. The top fifteen co-occurrences for *batūlu*, *eṭlu*, and *ṣuḥurtu*.

“Young” word	Co-occurrence	PMI <sup>2</sup> Score
<i>batūlu</i> [boy]N	<i>batultu</i> [adolescent]N	-13.385
<i>batūlu</i> [boy]N	<i>maqlūtu</i> [burn(ing)]N	-14.86
<i>batūlu</i> [boy]N	<i>qilūtu</i> [burning]N	-15.923
<i>batūlu</i> [boy]N	<i>iṣātu</i> [fire]N	-19.406
<i>batūlu</i> [boy]N	<i>qaqqadu</i> [head]N	-19.898
<i>batūlu</i> [boy]N	<i>napālu</i> [dig out]V	-20.693
<i>batūlu</i> [boy]N	<i>naqāru</i> [demolish]V	-20.936
<i>batūlu</i> [boy]N	<i>nērebu</i> [entrance]N	-21.575
<i>batūlu</i> [boy]N	<i>šalālu</i> [carry-off]V	-22.488
<i>batūlu</i> [boy]N	<i>tāru</i> [turn]V	-23.381
<i>batūlu</i> [boy]N	<i>ālu</i> [city]N	-23.903
<i>eṭlu</i> [manly one]N	<i>naṭālu</i> [look]V	-17.372
<i>eṭlu</i> [manly-one]N	<i>narāmu</i> [loved-one]N	-17.832
<i>eṭlu</i> [manly-one]N	<i>rapšu</i> [wide]AJ	-18.424
<i>eṭlu</i> [manly-one]N	<i>eṭlu</i> [manly-one]N	-19.414
<i>eṭlu</i> [manly-one]N	<i>rašū</i> [acquire]V	-20.485
<i>eṭlu</i> [manly-one]N	<i>wardatu</i> [girl]N	-20.551
<i>eṭlu</i> [manly-one]N	<i>ilu</i> [god]N	-21.758
<i>eṭlu</i> [manly-one]N	<i>nišu</i> [people]N	-22.038
<i>eṭlu</i> [manly-one]N	<i>gimru</i> [totality]N	-22.94
<i>eṭlu</i> [manly-one]N	<i>ālu</i> [city]N	-23.063
<i>eṭlu</i> [manly-one]N	<i>kibru</i> [bank]N	-23.12
<i>eṭlu</i> [manly-one]N	<i>qardu_AJ</i> [valiant]AJ	-23.534
<i>eṭlu</i> [manly-one]N	<i>abu</i> [father]N	-23.795
<i>eṭlu</i> [manly-one]N	<i>kullatu</i> [totality]N	-23.954
<i>eṭlu</i> [manly-one]N	<i>libbu</i> [interior]N	-24.526
<i>ṣuḥurtu</i> [the-young-youth(s)]N	<i>pirsu</i> [weaned]AJ	-13.701
<i>ṣuḥurtu</i> [the-young-youth(s)]N	<i>sinništu</i> [woman]N	-15.534
<i>ṣuḥurtu</i> [the-young-youth(s)]N	<i>nukaribbu</i> [gardener]N	-15.752
<i>ṣuḥurtu</i> [the-young-youth(s)]N	<i>ikkaru</i> [farmer]N	-15.951
<i>ṣuḥurtu</i> [the-young-youth(s)]N	<i>mārtu</i> [daughter]N	-16.108
<i>ṣuḥurtu</i> [the-young-youth(s)]N	<i>gimru</i> [totality]N	-16.212
<i>ṣuḥurtu</i> [the-young-youth(s)]N	<i>māru</i> [son]N	-17.96
<i>ṣuḥurtu</i> [the-young-youth(s)]N	<i>imēru</i> [unit]N	-19.212
<i>ṣuḥurtu</i> [the-young-youth(s)]N	<i>napištu</i> [throat]N	-19.583
<i>ṣuḥurtu</i> [the-young-youth(s)]N	<i>bītu</i> [house]N	-21.102

usage in the titles of six Assyrian kings: Assurnasirpal II,<sup>42</sup> Shalmeneser III,<sup>43</sup> Adad-Nērārī II,<sup>44</sup> Tiglath-Pileser III,<sup>45</sup> Sennacherib,<sup>46</sup> and Esarhaddon.<sup>47</sup> It is striking that the royal inscriptions of Assurnasirpal II and Sennacherib use this co-occurrence the most (20 and 19 attestations, respectively). The royal inscriptions of Assurnasirpal II uses these words in the phrase *eṭlu qardu* (“valiant man”),<sup>48</sup> whereas Sennacherib uses the longer phrase *eṭlu gitmalu zikaru qardu* (“perfect man, valiant man”).<sup>49</sup> Both emphasize that bravery was a key element of the conceptualization of *eṭlu*, with the latter implying it was important in the formulation of a “perfect” *eṭlu*.

While the connection between youth and bravery was not surprising, the PMI score for the co-occurrence of *eṭlu* and *rapšu* (“intelligence”) certainly was.<sup>50</sup> This co-occurrence ranks higher than that of *eṭlu* and *qardu*—the latter is the twelfth highest score, whereas the co-occurrence between *eṭlu* and *rapšu* was the third highest.<sup>51</sup> These co-occurrences are found in the titulary of Sin-šarru-iškun (ca. 626–612 BCE) in the phrases *eṭlu šūpū* (“resplendent man”) and *rapšu karaš* (“broad-minded,” or “intelligent”) on successive lines.<sup>52</sup> In the same passages is the word *ayyaru*, or “young man,” which is used in the phrase *ayyaru šūturu*, translated as “superb man.”<sup>53</sup> It follows directly after the phrase *eṭlu šūpū*. The overall effect of these three phrases is twofold: (1) a young man had the potential to be superb and resplendent. (2) Intelligence is one element of being a superb young man. To be young was to be in the prime of life, and to be in the prime of life required having intelligence.

The epithet *eṭlu na’dū* (“pious young man”) was used in the royal inscriptions of Esarhaddon, and suggests piety was another element in the conceptualization of “young man.”<sup>54</sup> As the Assyrian king was ideologically the perfect example of a man, I suggest that this epithet goes beyond an exaltation of the king. It is virtually impossible to disentangle the identity of the king from his gender, so perhaps it is better to think of this as an aspect of *royal* masculinities. Not only was the king young (no matter the king’s actual age), but he was pious as well. The limited attestation of this phrase adds to the argument that this was not a common conceptualization of young man, and was thus restricted to the king—specifically to Esarhaddon.

42. *RIMA* 2, A.0.101.1 i 12, ii 126, iii 114; *RIMA* 2, A.0.101.2 2; *RIMA* 2, A.0.101.3 21; *RIMA* 2, A.0.101.23 2; *RIMA* 2, A.0.101.26 3; *RIMA* 2, A.0.101.28 ii 1; *RIMA* 2, A.0.101.29 5; *RIMA* 2, A.0.101.30 3; *RIMA* 2, A.0.101.31 2; *RIMA* 2, A.0.101.32 2; *RIMA* 2, A.0.101.34 4; *RIMA* 2, A.0.101.35 2; *RIMA* 2, A.0.101.38 3; *RIMA* 2, A.0.101.40 2, 12; *RIMA* 2, A.0.101.47 obv. 16; *RIMA* 2, A.0.101.50 4–5a; *RIMA* 2, A.0.101.51 3; *RIMA* 2, A.0.101.56 7; *RIMA* 2, A.0.101.66 4. These texts represent 0.27 percent of the corpus.

43. *RIMA* 3, A.0.102.5 i 1; *RIMA* 3, A.0.102.9 obv. 4; *RIMA* 3, A.0.102.28 9; *RIMA* 3, A.0.102.30 10. These texts represent 0.066 percent of the corpus.

44. *RIMA* 2, A.0.99.2 23, 77; *RIMA* 2, A.0.99.4 obv. 13’. These texts represent 0.033 percent of the corpus.

45. *RINAP* 1, 1 6; *RINAP* 1, 47 obv. 2; *RINAP* 1, 51 2; *RINAP* 1, 52 2. These texts represent 0.066 percent of the corpus.

46. *RINAP* 3/1, 1 3; *RINAP* 3/1, 2 3; *RINAP* 3/1, 3 3; *RINAP* 3/1, 4 3; *RINAP* 3/1, 5 3; *RINAP* 3/1, 8 3; *RINAP* 3/1, 9 3; *RINAP* 3/1, 15 i 10; *RINAP* 3/1, 16 i 11; *RINAP* 3/1, 17 i 8; *RINAP* 3/1, 18 i 5; *RINAP* 3/1, 22 i 7; *RINAP* 3/1, 23 i 6; *RINAP* 3/1, 24 i 6; *RINAP* 3/1, 27 i 22; *RINAP* 3/1, 31 i 6; *RINAP* 3/2, 136 obv. i 7; *RINAP* 3/2, 213 3; *RINAP* 3/2, 230 4. These texts represent 0.31 percent of the corpus.

47. *RINAP* 4, 1006 i 9’.

48. See n. 43 for a list of the texts.

49. See n. 47 for a list of the texts.

50. *CAD* R:161 *rapšu* 3.

51. The PMI<sup>2</sup> score for *eṭlu* and *qardu* is -23.534, but is -18.424 for *eṭlu* and *rapšu*. Following the same procedure outlined in n. 32, the summed PMI<sup>2</sup> score for *eṭlu* and *rapšu* is 19.576.

52. *RINAP* 5/2, 1 12, 13; *RINAP* 5/2, 6 obv. 14, 15.

53. *CAD* A1:230 *ajaru* D “young man.” This has been lemmatized in Oracc projects as *ayyaru*. I therefore will follow the spelling as found on Oracc. However, there are no co-occurrence lists as *ayyaru* did not meet the parameters of the pmizer2 script (occurring at least twice in the corpus and each co-occurrence had to appear at least twice in the corpus). *RINAP* 5.3, Sin-šarru-iškun 1 12 and Sin-šarru-iškun 6 obv.14. These texts are currently only available as online editions: <http://oracc.org/rinap/rinap5/Q003862> and <http://oracc.org/rinap/rinap5/Q003867>.

54. *RINAP* 4, 44 obv. 2.

Outside of the titulary of Assyrian kings, young men feature in narratives describing the total destruction of towns and regions. The first and second co-occurrences of *eṭlu* were *naṭālu* (“look”) and *narāmu* (“loved one”).<sup>55</sup> These co-occurrences derive from two passages describing the chaos of a famine in Babylonia during the reign of Assurbanipal, and use young men to underscore the totality of destruction.<sup>56</sup> Because of the turmoil, young men and women saw each other’s “concealed parts,” and a father would be forced to abandon his sons “whom his heart loved.” Deprivation drove Babylonians to transgress social norms, impressing upon the reader that even those in the prime of their lives were affected by the events.

Indeed, *batūlu* (“young man (adolescent)”) was similarly used to emphasize utter destruction at the hands of the Assyrians.<sup>57</sup> The co-occurrence list for this word includes *maqlūtu* and *qilūtu* (“burning” and “burnt material”).<sup>58</sup> This includes ten attestations of the phrase *batūlišunu batulātešunu ana maqlūte qilūti*, “I burned their adolescent boys (and) girls,” in the royal inscriptions of Assurnasirpal II.<sup>59</sup> In three cases, only adolescent boys were burnt.<sup>60</sup> The dramatic phrase underscored the total destruction the Assyrian army wrought upon foreign lands. Not even the young men, in the prime of their lives, could escape.

There is an important distinction between different words for young men in the royal inscriptions. In addition to the Assyrian king, Babylonian young men were referred to as *eṭlu*, but the young men from other non-Assyrian towns and cities could also be referred to as *batūlu*. One explanation for this distinction may be due to the dates of these texts. *Batūlu* is only found in the texts of Assurnasirpal II and Shalmaneser III,<sup>61</sup> whereas the passages of *eṭlu* in chaos are from the reign of Assurbanipal.<sup>62</sup> The diachronic difference between the two groups suggests the possibility that *batūlu* fell out of usage.<sup>63</sup> However, there is evidence for a more nuanced perspective. During the reign of Assurnasirpal, *eṭlu* was used to describe the Assyrian king, whereas *batūlu* was used for non-Assyrian young men. The point of alterity rested on whether the young man was Assyrian or not. I suggest that by the time of Assurbanipal this point of alterity was no longer emphasized for young men, and *eṭlu* was the favored term for all young men—whether they were Assyrian or Babylonian.

Census lists and sales documents provide evidence of the institutionalization of the concept of “young man” within the wider population. Individuals were grouped according to household, and then itemized according to age categories. This explains the otherwise eclectic co-occurrence words as identified by PMI: *pirsu* (“weaned”),<sup>64</sup> *sinništu* (“woman”),<sup>65</sup> and *nukaribbu* (“gardener”)<sup>66</sup> are the top three words to co-occur close to *ṣuḫurtu* (“adolescence”).<sup>67</sup> The usage of *ṣuḫurtu* in the Neo-Assyrian dataset is almost entirely restricted to sales and census documents; the only exception within eleven texts is in a lexical text.<sup>68</sup> While these do not provide evidence for the behaviors or characteristics of young men, these documents do

55. CAD N2:121 *naṭālu* “to see”; CAD N1:343 *narāmu* “beloved one.” The PMI<sup>2</sup> scores for these words occurring with *eṭlu* are -17.372 and -17.832 respectively.

56. RINAP 5.1, 8 viii 21’–22’; 7 viii 35’.

57. CAD B:174 *batūlu*.

58. CAD M1:251 *maqlūtu* 3 “burning, combustion”; CAD Q:252 *qilūtu*, “firewood, burnt material.” These words are ranked second (PMI<sup>2</sup> score -14.86) and third (PMI<sup>2</sup> score -15.923), respectively.

59. RIMA 2, A.0.101.1 i 109, 118, ii 19, 43, 57, 109; RIMA 2, A.0.101.17 ii 1, 62, 50.

60. RIMA 2, A.0.101.17 iii 13, iv 82; RIMA 2, A.0.101.19 76. The translations in RIMA are not consistent, as RIMA 2 A.0.101.19 76 translates this phrase as the adolescent boys were burnt “as an offering.”

61. RIMA 2, A.0.101.1 i 109, 118, ii 19, 43, 57, 109; RIMA 2, A.0.101.17 ii 1, 62, 50, iii 13, iv 82; RIMA 2, A.0.101.19 76; RIMA 3, A.0.102.2 i 17.

62. RINAP 5/1, 8 viii 21’–22’; 7 viii 35’.

63. The end of Shalmaneser III’s reign was 824, whereas Assurbanipal’s reign began in 668—a difference of 156 years.

64. CAD P:412 *pirsu* B.

65. CAD S:293 *sinnišu*.

66. CAD N2:323 *nukaribbu*.

67. CAD S:237 *ṣuḫurtu*. The PMI<sup>2</sup> scores were -13.701, -15.534, and -15.752 respectively.

68. It is a lexical list (Murgud B, 6 rev. i’ 16’). The sales contracts document Rēmāni-Adad’s purchases of land and people (SAA 6, 343 obv. 6; SAA 6, 344 obv. 3’; SAA 6, 326 obv. 9’, 11’). For the census documents, see SAA 11, 201 i 5, 26, ii 2, 19, 28, 40; SAA 11, 202 obv. i 15’,

demonstrate that *ṣuḥurtu* was an institutionalized category for young men within Assyria. In comparison, the evidence from the royal inscriptions suggest *eḫlu* was a social conceptualization that being an Assyrian young man involved bravery, intelligence, an upright posture, and the prime of life. Some of these were likely also expectations of *batūlu*, but this word was used to describe non-Assyrian young men in passages intended to stress how even the young men were in despair.

### 3.2. “Old Man”

As discussed by Harris (2000: 54), reaching old age was a goal for many men in Mesopotamia,<sup>69</sup> and this is no different in the Neo-Assyrian corpus under discussion. In the hymn Blessings for the Assyrian King, there are multiple phrases wishing for the king to attain a long life.<sup>70</sup> In *Enuma Anu Enlil* there is an omen of a lunar eclipse that presages the king attaining a long life.<sup>71</sup> Finally, an incantation to the goddess Tašmetu hopes she will “give him days of old age, a reign of abundance.”<sup>72</sup> From a quantitative perspective, the 149 attestations in 132 texts of the word *labāru* (“long duration, longevity, growing to old age, disrepair”)<sup>73</sup> emphasize that this was a concern for Assyrian scribes.

Nowhere is this concern clearer than in the letters to the king, and the royal inscriptions. Forty-seven texts within the Neo-Assyrian corpus use *šibūtu* (“old age”).<sup>74</sup> Twenty-eight use *šibūtu* to ask the gods to bless the king with old age,<sup>75</sup> and five royal inscriptions use *šibūtu* to request that the gods give the Assyrian king a long life after completing a construction project.<sup>76</sup> There are seventy-four attestations of *littūtu* (“extreme old age”) in the corpus.<sup>77</sup> In seventy attestations the writer asks for the gods to bestow an exceedingly long life upon a king.<sup>78</sup> Four attestations were embedded in Babylonian inscriptions asking for an extreme long life for Assurbanipal’s brother Šamaš-šumu-ukin.<sup>79</sup> The relationship between Assyrian and Babylonian kings with a long life was also tied to the length of their reign, as seen in the co-occurrence between *labāru* and *palū* (“reign”).<sup>80</sup> This co-occurrence is the tenth highest, with a PMI<sup>2</sup> score of -19.519 (as can be seen in table 4). It reflects the frequent expression wishing for the king’s reign to be long. It was not enough to hope that the king would attain old age, but the king had to be able to rule at that age.

21’, ii 6’, 7’, iii 3’; SAA 11, 203 obv. iii 11, rev. i 5’, ii 8’, 17’, iv 4’; SAA 11, 219 i 12’, 4’, 13’, 22’, ii 12’, 19’, 25’, rev. iv 14; SAA 11, 206 obv. i 21’; SAA 11, 205 i 12’; SAA 12, 87 rev. 1, 2, 4, 6).

69. Arnett (1985) went further, and suggested old age was a reward for being virtuous and pious. I would advise caution with this statement, as this was based on biblical, Egyptian, Neo-Babylonian, and Achaemenid data, and thus I would not immediately suggest this is direct evidence for Neo-Assyrian old age.

70. E.g.: *ilū rabū ina puḫrušnu šīmat labāri lišrakuka*, “may the great gods in their assembly bestow upon you the fate of growing old” (Blessings for the Assyrian King, rev. 3).

71. *Enuma Anu Enlil*, 20 rev. ii 8.

72. *Tanamdinšu ūmē ša lubburi pale ša nuḫši* (Šu’ilas to Goddesses, obv. ii 48).

73. CAD L:13 *labāru*.

74. CAD Š2:399 *šibūtu*.

75. SAA 1, 134 obv. 3; SAA 10, 58 rev. 6; SAA 10, 59 rev. 10; SAA 10, 121 rev. 6’, r.e. 8; SAA 10, 233 obv. 8; SAA 10, 234 obv. 7; SAA 10, 245 obv. 10; SAA 10, 247 obv. 2’; SAA 10, 248 obv. 11; SAA 10, 249 obv. 6’; SAA 10, 252 obv. 12; SAA 10, 253 obv. 13; SAA 10, 293 obv. 9; SAA 10, 333 rev. 7; SAA 13, 56 obv. 11; SAA 13, 57 obv. 13; SAA 13, 58 obv. 11; SAA 13, 60 obv. 10; SAA 13, 61 obv. 12; SAA 13, 62 obv. 11; SAA 13, 64 obv. 12; SAA 13, 65 obv. 12; SAA 13, 66 obv. 10; SAA 13, 68 obv. 12; SAA 13, 69 obv. 9; SAA 13, 117 obv. 12; SAA 13, 123 obv. 3’; SAA 13, 126 obv. 6.

76. An interesting pattern is that *šibūtu* is only used in the royal inscriptions of two Neo-Assyrian kings: Sargon II and Esarhaddon. The usages in Sargon II’s royal inscriptions were exclusively on wall slabs and express a desire for the king to live a long life: *RINAP* 2, 2 499; *RINAP* 2, 7 191; *RINAP* 2, 8 75; *RINAP* 2, 13 142; *RINAP* 2, 16 4; *RINAP* 4, 57 iii 39. Only one royal inscription of Esarhaddon uses *šibūtu* and was from outside of Babylon and discusses the dilapidated and old state of a temple (*RINAP* 4, 57 iii 39). Its usage was not confined to the king, as in SAA 17, 5 rev. 7’ the king wishes that the dynastic house of the recipient will grow old.

77. CAD L:220 *littūtu*.

78. Two examples are SAA 2, 2 rev. v 12; SAA 17, 5 rev. 8.

79. *RIMB* 2, B.6.32.4 20; *RIMB* 2, B.6.32.5 20; *RINAP* 5/2, 244 20; *RINAP* 5/2, 243 20.

80. CAD P:70 *palū* A.

Table 4. Words relating to “old men” and their top fifteen co-occurrences.

Target Word	Co-occurrence	PMI <sup>2</sup> Score
<i>labāru</i> [be(come)-old]V	<i>palū</i> [period-of-office]N	-16.507
<i>labāru</i> [be(come)-old]V	<i>šiāmu</i> [fix]V	-17.383
<i>labāru</i> [be(come)-old]V	<i>aššatu</i> [wife]N	-17.941
<i>labāru</i> [be(come)-old]V	<i>šīmtu</i> [fate]N	-18.154
<i>labāru</i> [be(come)-old]V	<i>arku</i> [long]AJ	-18.38
<i>labāru</i> [be(come)-old]V	<i>dumqu</i> [goodness]N	-18.586
<i>labāru</i> [be(come)-old]V	<i>išdu</i> [foundation]N	-18.758
<i>labāru</i> [be(come)-old]V	<i>rašū</i> [acquire]V	-19.218
<i>labāru</i> [be(come)-old]V	<i>zēru</i> [seed(s)]N	-19.411
<i>labāru</i> [be(come)-old]V	<i>palū</i> [reign-(of-a-king)]N	-19.519
<i>labāru</i> [be(come)-old]V	<i>ūmu</i> [day]N	-19.583
<i>labāru</i> [be(come)-old]V	<i>kānu</i> [be(come)-permanent]V	-19.606
<i>labāru</i> [be(come)-old]V	<i>magru</i> [agreed]AJ	-19.645
<i>labāru</i> [be(come)-old]V	<i>atwū</i> [speech]N	-19.741
<i>labāru</i> [be(come)-old]V	<i>kussū</i> [chair]N	-19.832
<i>littūtu</i> [(extreme)-old-age]N	<i>šībūtu</i> [old-age]N	-16.201
<i>littūtu</i> [(extreme) old-age]N	<i>arku</i> [long]AJ	-17.812
<i>littūtu</i> [(extreme) old-age]N	<i>šebū</i> [be(come)-full]V	-18.979
<i>littūtu</i> [(extreme) old-age]N	<i>arāku</i> [be(come)-long]V	-19.073
<i>littūtu</i> [(extreme) old-age]N	<i>karābu</i> [pray]V	-21.463
<i>littūtu</i> [(extreme) old-age]N	<i>tadānu</i> [give]V	-21.975
<i>littūtu</i> [(extreme) old-age]N	<i>balātu</i> [live]V	-22.471
<i>littūtu</i> [(extreme) old-age]N	<i>kussū</i> [chair]N	-22.747
<i>littūtu</i> [(extreme) old-age]N	<i>šattu</i> [year]N	-23.143
<i>littūtu</i> [(extreme) old-age]N	<i>ūmu</i> [day]N	-23.482
<i>littūtu</i> [(extreme) old-age]N	<i>šīru</i> [flesh]N	-23.655
<i>littūtu</i> [(extreme) old-age]N	<i>rūqu</i> [distant]AJ	-23.672
<i>littūtu</i> [(extreme) old-age]N	<i>išdu</i> [foundation]N	-23.777
<i>littūtu</i> [(extreme) old-age]N	<i>ṭūbu</i> [goodness]N	-24.034
<i>littūtu</i> [(extreme) old-age]N	<i>ḥūdu</i> [happiness]N	-24.247
<i>šībūtu</i> [old-age]N	<i>littūtu</i> [(extreme)-old-age]N	-16.43
<i>šībūtu</i> [old-age]N	<i>arku</i> [long]AJ	-18.288
<i>šībūtu</i> [old-age]N	<i>šebū</i> [be(come)-full]V	-19.26
<i>šībūtu</i> [old-age]N	<i>ṭūbu</i> [goodness]N	-21.192
<i>šībūtu</i> [old-age]N	<i>tadānu</i> [give]V	-21.646
<i>šībūtu</i> [old-age]N	<i>šattu</i> [year]N	-21.848
<i>šībūtu</i> [old-age]N	<i>libbu</i> [interior]N	-21.91
<i>šībūtu</i> [old-age]N	<i>karābu</i> [pray]V	-21.945

Health in old age was important, and Assyrian scribes were under no illusion about the physical changes that came with old age. While there are no overviews of how scribes perceived men's physiology in old age,<sup>81</sup> it was understood that the changes affected a man's ability to carry out his duties. In SAA 3, 12, which is a prayer to Nabû asking for relief from his circumstances, the writer described how "old age (*šibūtu*) has confined me to my bed before my time."<sup>82</sup> A medical report described how "an old man (*puršumu*) does not know the work."<sup>83</sup> In the letter SAA 21, 58, an Elamite named Danēšu comments to the Assyrian messenger Sīn-šarru-ibni that Assyria should have supported him, rather than the "old man" Menānu.<sup>84</sup> Danēšu is using the shared understanding that old men are frail as his evidence for why Menānu was unfit to rule. Assyrian scribes were under no illusion that reaching old age could mean a decrease in physical and mental capabilities, and therefore becoming an old man involved some sort of decline in health.

The co-occurrence lists for *labāru*, *šibūtu*, and *littūtu* imply that simply reaching old age was not enough: it had to be positive and accomplish a "full" life.<sup>85</sup> The sixth co-occurrence for *labāru* was *dumqu* ("good luck, good fortune"),<sup>86</sup> which reflects the usage of these terms in expressions for the king to have a long and good life.<sup>87</sup> The third and fourth co-occurrences for *šibūtu* are *šebū* ("to become filled")<sup>88</sup> and *tūbu* ("goodness"),<sup>89</sup> which are also in the co-occurrence list for *littūtu*.<sup>90</sup> These words were used in expressions wishing the king not just a long life, but a full and healthy one.<sup>91</sup> These words also appear in the opening lines of letters addressed to the king,<sup>92</sup> whereas the royal inscriptions use the phrase *šebē littūti* "fullness of old age" in an expression of hope that they will be granted long and fulfilling lives.<sup>93</sup> Old age was therefore only worth achieving if the man was able to enjoy it.

81. Only one text refers to the physicality of old age. It described the process of the king's beard growing gray with age: *lu tābšu ša piqitte ša Belēt-parši šarru bēli mar'īšu ina burkēšu lintūhu paršumāte ina ziqnīšunu lemur* "May the king, my lord, lift the grandchildren of the charge of the 'Lady of Cults' upon his knees and see gray hairs in their beards!" (SAA 10, 301 rev. 1–9).

82. SAA 3, 12 obv. 12, *šibūte ina lā simeniya tussēlanni ina erši*.

83. SAA 10, 230 b.e. 7'–rev.1, <sup>10</sup>*puršumu dullu la ūda*.

84. SAA 21, 58 rev. 12.

85. What exactly constituted a full life in the Assyrian texts is not clear. Did producing many children result in a full life? Did being productive? Being good at your profession? Would simply being healthy qualify as a full life? It is important not to impose our modern assumptions on this concept, but at this point I cannot suggest what precisely would qualify as a full life for the Assyrians.

86. CAD D:180 *dumqu*.

87. E.g., SAA 10, 348 obv. 19–b.e. 21 ("May Bel and Nabû destine dignity, fortune, fullness of life and old age for the king, my lord, for the queen mother and my lords the princes!") and RINAP 4, 43 rev. 14'–17' ("Decree as my fate a life of long days, years of good health and happiness, a destiny of longevity, secure reign, (and) healthy offspring."). In these examples there are expressions that largely reflect a hope that the gods and goddesses would bestow a long life to the Assyrian king. The PMI<sup>2</sup> scores was -18.586. See also RINAP 4, 1015 rev. vi 5, which uses *tābtu* (CAD T:15 *tābtu*).

88. CAD Š2:251 *šebū*.

89. CAD T:116 *tūbu*.

90. The PMI<sup>2</sup> score for *šibūtu* and *šebū* is -19.26; for *šibūtu* and *tūbu* -21.192. *Šebū* and *tūbu* are listed as third and fourteenth in the co-occurrence list for *šibūtu*. The PMI<sup>2</sup> scores are -18.979 and -24.034 respectively.

91. E.g., "May they give the king my lord a long life, peace of mind and good health, extreme old age, a strong army, a long reign and as many years as [...]; may they make all countries submit themselves [to you]!" (SAA 1, 134 obv. 3–5). Other examples can be found in SAA 13, 117 obv. 12; SAA 10, 249 obv. 4'; SAA 10, 233 obv. 6; SAA 10, 293 obv. 8; SAA 10, 252 obv. 10; SAA 10, 253 obv. 10; and SAA 10, 248 obv. 8. This has been expressed in general for Mesopotamian culture in Arnett (1985) and Harris (2000: 53). Here we can see a parallel with the concept of the "third age" in age theory, where there is a glorious period of personal fulfillment as one gets older (Bury 1995: 21–24). An overview of sociological perspectives on aging can be found in Bury (1995) and Venn, Davidson, and Arber (2011). However, this interpretation does run the risk of imposing a modern understanding of the phrase "a full life."

92. E.g., "May they grant the king, my lord, the satisfaction of old age, extreme old age." (SAA 13, 58 obv. 10–12). For the definition in CAD and attestations of *šibūtu*, see nn. 75–77 above. For *littūtu*, see SAA 1, 134 obv. 3; SAA 2, 6 obv. 416; SAA 10, 58 rev. 7; SAA 10, 59 rev. 10; SAA 10, 193 obv. 9; SAA 10, 227 obv. 11; SAA 10, 233 obv. 8; SAA 10, 234 obv. 7; SAA 10, 245 obv. 10; SAA 10, 247 obv. 2'; SAA 10, 248 obv. 11; SAA 10, 249 obv. 7'; SAA 10, 252 obv. 12; SAA 10, 253 obv. 13; SAA 10, 333 rev. 7; SAA 10, 348 obv. 20; SAA 13, 56 obv. 11; SAA 13, 57 obv. 13; SAA 13, 60 obv. 10; SAA 13, 61 obv. 12; SAA 13, 62 obv. 11; SAA 13, 64 obv. 12; SAA 13, 65 obv. 12; SAA 13, 66 obv. 10; SAA 13, 68 obv. 12; SAA 13, 69 obv. 9; SAA 13, 123 obv. 4'; SAA 13, 126 obv. 6; SAA 16, 98 obv. 9; SAA 18, 200 obv. 7.

93. There are twenty-eight attestations of *šebē littūtu* or *šebē littūti*: RIMB 2, B.2.8.5 7; RIMB 2, B.6.31.128 17; RIMB 2, B.6.31.129 34; RIMB 2, B.6.31.134 18; RIMB 2, B.6.31.135 18; RIMB 2, B.6.32.5 22; RIMB 2, B.6.32.6 70; RIMB 2, B.6.32.13 41; RIMB 2, B.6.32.14 20; RIMB 2, B.6.32.15

Another aspect of becoming an old man was it was a blessing from the gods. *Karābu* (“prayer”)<sup>94</sup> appears in the top fifteen PMI co-occurrences for *littūtu* (ranked fifth with a PMI<sup>2</sup> score of -21.463) and *šibūtu* (ranked eighth with a PMI<sup>2</sup> score of -21.945). The co-occurrence between *littūtu* and *karābu* is due to nine letters to the king that included passages that wished for the gods to bless the king with a long and full life.<sup>95</sup> *Šibūtu* and *karābu* occurred together in letters where the writer hoped the gods will bless the Assyrian king for a long and full life.<sup>96</sup> Old age was a gift from the gods, and for a man to reach old age he must have been chosen as the recipient of such a divine blessing. This is even more so for the Assyrian king, who in these texts was often the recipient of these blessings. Old age would therefore be a physical representation of the king’s closeness to the gods, and proof that the king was acting in a manner that pleased the gods. By pleasing the gods with his actions, one of the rewards for the king was reaching old age.<sup>97</sup>

The ideal of reaching old age was cemented in Assyria through the institutionalized position of the “elders.”<sup>98</sup> The evidence regarding this group of old men revolves around the words *puršumu* (“old man or woman,” “elder”)<sup>99</sup> and *šibu* (“old men”).<sup>100</sup> While the previous analysis used the word co-occurrence tables to understand words relating to age, for these words it was not possible. *Puršumu* and *šibu* can both be represented by the same logogram: LÚ.AB.BA.<sup>101</sup> Nineteen texts in the dataset use this logogram,<sup>102</sup> and the scholars who have encoded this for the Oracc subprojects have given either *puršumu* or *šibu* as its lemma.<sup>103</sup> There appears to be no consistent framework or guidelines for how LÚ.AB.BA was lemmatized across the Oracc subprojects. The result is two-word co-occurrence tables that are misleading—the *puršumu* PMI scores were built on the assumption there were seventeen attestations of LÚ.AB.BA that represent *puršumu*. When looking at the corpus, there are actually only four attestations that are not a logogram. If we only used those attestations spelled syllabically, the PMI results for *puršumu* would have been drastically different. This is also the case for *šibu*.<sup>104</sup> Therefore, while I have included their word co-occurrence tables in appendix 2, I will be continuing this section with an analysis based on close reading alone.

26; RINAP 3/2, 162 rev. iii 14; RINAP 4, 1 vi 56; RINAP 4, 2 vi 28; RINAP 4, 3 vi 8; RINAP 4, 128 17; RINAP 4, 129 34; RINAP 4, 134 18; RINAP 4, 135 18; RINAP 5/2, 245 22; RINAP 5/2, 254 20; RINAP 5/2, 255 26.

94. CAD K:192 *karābu*.

95. E.g., “May Assur, the king of the gods, who dwells in Ešar[ra], bless the king, my lord. May he gi[ve] the king, [m]y [lord], long days, [nu]merous years and the satisfaction of extreme old age.” (SAA 16, 98 obv. 6–10). Other examples include SAA 1, 134 obv. 3; SAA 10, 59 rev. 8; SAA 10, 234 obv. 6; SAA 10, 58 rev. 5; SAA 10, 293 obv. 7; SAA 10, 245 obv. 7; SAA 10, 227 obv. 9; SAA 13, 126 obv. 5.

96. SAA 1, 134 obv. 3–4; SAA 10, 58 rev. 4–7; SAA 10, 59 rev. 8–2; SAA 10, 234 obv. 6–9; SAA 10, 245 obv. 10; SAA 10, 293 obv. 7–10; SAA 13, 126 obv. 5–8.

97. There is a vast body of scholarly literature about the relationship between the Assyrian king and the gods; e.g., Winter 1997; Holloway 2002; Radner 2010; Pongratz-Leisten 2015; and Sonik 2015.

98. At this point it is worth clarifying that there is no evidence that all “elders” had to be old men. The importance here is that the elders as a group were conceptualized as old man, no matter who was a member of the group.

99. CAD P:525 *puršumu*. Even though “old woman” is given as a definition in CAD, I have not seen any Neo-Assyrian attestations that specifically refer to women. They appear to only refer to old men, so for the Neo-Assyrian period I suggest *puršumu* only refers to old men.

100. The CAD defines *šibu* as “old man, old woman” (CAD Š2:390 “*šibu*”). As with *puršumu*, I have not seen explicit reference for *šibu* used for women in the Neo-Assyrian textual corpus.

101. Borger 2004: 299.

102. SAA 1, 77 obv. 13; SAA 1, 179 obv. 25; SAA 1, 187 obv. 5; SAA 1, 195 obv. 10; SAA 3, 10 rev. 7; SAA 8, 535 obv. 2; SAA 11, 34 obv. 4; SAA 13, 80 obv. 16; SAA 15, 116 obv. 11; SAA 15, 352 obv. 11; SAA 16, 63 obv. 31; SAA 17, 145 obv. 2; SAA 19, 89 rev. 9, 5, 14; SAA 21, 17 obv. 12; SAA 21, 27 obv. 8; SAA 21, 65 obv. 1; SAA 21, 115 obv. 6; SAA 21, 116 obv. 1; SAA 21, 123 rev. 3.

103. Thirteen of these texts encode this logogram as *puršumu* (SAA 1, 77 obv. 13; SAA 1, 179 obv. 25; SAA 1, 187 obv. 5; SAA 1, 195 obv. 10; SAA 3, 10 rev. 7; SAA 11, 34 obv. 4; SAA 13, 80 obv. 16; SAA 15, 116 obv. 11; SAA 15, 352 obv. 11; SAA 16, 63 obv. 31; SAA 19, 89 rev. 9, 5, 14; SAA 21, 65 obv. 1; SAA 21, 123 rev. 3), and six encode it as *šibu* (SAA 8, 535 obv. 2; SAA 17, 145 obv. 2; SAA 21, 17 obv. 12; SAA 21, 27 obv. 8; SAA 21, 115 obv. 6; SAA 21, 116 obv. 1).

104. There are six attestations of LÚ.AB.BA that are encoded as *šibu*, and six attestations of *šibu* that were written syllabically. Up to half of the encoded attestations of *šibu* could therefore be inaccurate.

The “elders” were recognized as a group with special rights, privileges, and roles within Assyria and in foreign populations. They were an institutionalized social category within Assyrian culture. In a fragmentary section of Blessing for the City of Assur (rev. 2’–7’), there are prayers for lands, descendants, craftsman (*ummânû*),<sup>105</sup> and city elders (*puršumû*). The inclusion of *puršumu* directly after the category of *ummânû* suggests that it designated a social group like the craftspeople who had a similarly institutionalized recognition within Assyrian culture.

Elders were clearly granted special privileges in Assyria. Elders participated in a procession involving the king, and in one text were mentioned as part of the Assyrian palace personnel.<sup>106</sup> Furthermore, if their special privileges were rescinded, the elders had the power to complain directly to the king. In the letter SAA 16, 96, mayors and *puršumû* wrote to the Assyrian king Esarhaddon asking why they had additional taxes imposed upon them after his father had granted them special privileges.<sup>107</sup> In SAA 17, 145 obv. 2, “temple-enterers”<sup>108</sup> and elders (LÚ.AB.BA.MEŠ) of Nemed-Laguda requested that Sargon II restore their previous privileges.

Not only could elders directly correspond with the Assyrian king,<sup>109</sup> but they could request an audience with him. SAA 21, 17 describes how fifteen elders from Nippur went to visit the king personally, but half were rejected. The letter was sent from Assurbanipal, and it is clear this was a severe breach of protocol. The king put the blame for this breach on four people: a man called Issār-bāni, the *šandabakku*,<sup>110</sup> their prefect, and the overseer of the palace. Assurbanipal was very keen to claim he had not intentionally rejected half of the party and was seeking to make amends. The delegation of elders from Nippur points to this group having a special significance—no doubt partially due to the position of Nippur in the war against his brother Šamaš-šumu-ukin, but also due to their status as elders.<sup>111</sup> Their intersection of age, gender, and ethnicity all collided in their identities, which resulted in their special attention from the Assyrian king.

Elders were important in the governing and ruling of lands outside of the Assyrian heartland. For example, the writer of SAA 1, 77 (obv. 10–rev. 3) included a report of a decision made through consultation of mayors, masons, and *puršumû*. In other letters elders were consulted in matters regarding local trade, land disputes, and information gathering.<sup>112</sup> Elders were an important element in the management of Assyrian territory, and clearly needed to be consulted by Assyrian agents in order for appropriate action by governors and the king to be carried out.

The importance of elders carried through to non-Assyrians. In SAA 18, 86, the elders of the Sealand directly addressed the king with an intelligence report of Nabû-ušallim’s activities. SAA 21, 116 is another letter written by elders directly to the Assyrian king—in this case, the *šibû* of Elam wrote to Assurbanipal asking for troops to help repel the Persians. The Assyrian letters also show how elders played a key role in forming alliances with Assyria. In SAA 18, 162, an Assyrian agent named Katiya signed a treaty with

105. CAD U:108 *ummânû* 2.

106. SAA 13, 80 obv. 16; SAA 10, 182 obv. 15.

107. SAA 16, 96 obv. 3.

108. Obv. 2: LÚ.TU-É.MEŠ.

109. SAA 18, 86 obv. 2; SAA 21, 116 obv. 1.

110. CAD Š1:371 *šandabakku* “(a high-ranking official in civil and temple administrations).”

111. Parpola 2018: XXI. Nippurean elders were not always held in high esteem, as SAA 10, 112 appears to accuse four noble elders and a priest of helping to conspire against Esarhaddon (obv. 28–rev. 33). This text acts as a reminder that different identities can collide in ways that change how they were discussed in ancient documents. In this case, the changing political situation in Nippur means Nippurean elders were not always seen as trustworthy by Assyrian scribes (or in this case, astrologers).

112. Local trade: SAA 1, 179 obv. 25; the elders contest the allegation that iron was sold to the Arabs. Land disputes: SAA 19, 89 rev. 1–7; here an Assyrian official in Que asked the local elders what happened to an abandoned field. Information gathering: SAA 19, 92 obv. 9; in this text an Assyrian official was sent to the fort at Erimziqû to understand what happened there. Due to snow, he did not travel all the way, and instead asked for the fort’s *puršumû* to meet him at a midway point to discuss what happened. Other examples include SAA 1, 195 obv. 10; SAA 15, 166 obv. 11’.

Babylon, which was only able to occur once the *šibū* of Nippur and Uruk were present.<sup>113</sup> The elders were acting as the representatives of Nippur and Uruk—a role that could only be carried out by individuals who were recognized as such by all parties. Additionally, SAA 16, 63 described how the *puršumū* from Guzana, in the face of rebellion, asserted their loyalty to Esarhaddon. The elders were seen as the bulwarks of Assyrian loyalty—a community’s loyalties were represented by their elders.<sup>114</sup>

The stubbornness of the elders in the face of Assyrian enemies as in SAA 16, 63 was not always in evidence. In SAA 18, 68 (obv. 11), a change in alliance was achieved partly by informing the *šibū* of Bit-Yakin that Nebû-ušallim was their new leader. The exact circumstances are not preserved, but the changeover from one ruler to another seemed to require the approval of the elders.

But there should be no mistake: the elders were not on the same diplomatic level as foreign rulers. The tone of SAA 21, 65 makes this abundantly clear. The letter was addressed directly to the *puršumū* of Elam, and the king gives his reasons for campaigning against Elam.<sup>115</sup> The tone is particularly startling. The writer responded to the question “Why does Assyria treat us like this?” with “You know perfectly well why you have been treated this way, and you have the affront of asking such a question now!” The king’s anger fills the letter: How dare the elders of Elam question the Assyrian king’s actions? Assurbanipal felt no need to hide his anger—there was no risk of offending a foreign leader and jeopardizing friendly relations. Indeed, this angry chastisement is followed by a request for the *puršumū* of Elam to deliver the rebel Nabû-bēl-šumāti to him. The elders of Elam were therefore not seen as on a par with foreign rulers and could be intimidated into carrying out Assyrian orders.

Elders were therefore a group within Assyrian society that were institutionally recognized. They had special privileges and could act on behalf of populations. According to Raewynn Connell and James Messerschmidt (2005: 846), aspects of hegemonic masculinity can be institutionalized within society. In this case, reaching old age was an aspect of hegemonic masculinities, and was institutionalized by the social category *elders*. However, it is important to point out an inherent contradiction within this. The frailties associated with old age meant that Assyrians were acutely aware that old men were not in their physical prime. Indeed, in SAA 10, 218, the writer describes in great length how he was subservient to the king calling himself a dog, a servant, and an old man. Being an old man was clearly not seen as the social category that embodied all elements of hegemonic masculinity, but instead represented only one element of it. Perhaps this is best expressed through the phrase used to describe the totality of a population: the “young and old” or the “old and young.”<sup>116</sup> Not only was this phrase describing extremes in age, but was an allusion to the hegemonic aspects of masculinities: the brave and intelligent young men and the respected old men who had reached the ultimate goal of a long life, who both represented different ideals of men’s lives, were to be included in the population total.

To be an old man was to have achieved a goal and was even more important if the man had a good life. Frailty was part of becoming an old man, which resulted in wishes for the king to achieve a long life (and reign) in good health. The ideal of reaching old age was institutionalized with the position of “elders,” which was a social category used within Assyria and beyond.

113. SAA 18, 162 rev. 15.

114. Another fragmented letter (SAA 21, 115) mentioned that the *šibū* of Elam were allied to Assyria. The exact reason for the alliance with the elders of Elam is not preserved, but the implication is that the Elamite elders were recognized by the Assyrians to hold a key position within Elam. By having the elders on the Assyrians’ side, we can assume the elders were key to forming alliances.

115. Assurbanipal makes it clear the reasons for the campaign lie squarely at the feet of Nabû-bēl-šumāti, Nabû-qāti-šabat, and Kiribtu, who defied a previous treaty between Assyria and Elam.

116. E.g., in SAA 21, 33 the king sends a letter to Kudurru and the people of Uruk, *šibūti u šehrūti* (obv. 3). Other examples can be found in SAA 17, 150 obv. 4; SAA 21, 49 obv. 8; SAA 21, 53 obv. 3; SAA 21, 43 obv. 2; SAA 21, 51 obv. 3; SAA 21, 18 obv. 2; SAA 21, 33 obv. 3; SAA 21, 29 obv. 2; SAA 21, 112 obv. 2; SAA 21, 55 obv. 2; SAA 21, 32 obv. 2.

#### 4. Conclusions

The first conclusion concerns method. Word co-occurrences and their networks are a key method in the toolbox available to Assyriologists. It allowed for an overall idea of how likely age was used in expressing masculinities and formed the basis for a more targeted approach for close readings.

Word co-occurrences and the close reading of Neo-Assyrian texts allowed for an understanding of how Assyrians conceptualized “young” and “old” men. “Young men” were seen as being in the prime of their life. “Old men” had achieved a goal in life: old age. However, this was accompanied with physical and mental frailties. These categories demonstrated the importance of an intersectional approach to Neo-Assyrian masculinities, as age played an integral factor as to how men were discussed in the texts.

Furthermore, young and old men were conceptualized as upholding different hegemonic masculinities. Young men were subdivided into three further categories, thus adhering to a key tenet of hegemonic masculinities theory: there are many ways of “being a man.” At least one of these categories was institutionalized as a demographic category. This was also the case for old men with the social category of “elder.” The institutionalization of these categories demonstrated the inherent contradictions within hegemonic masculinities—the ideal for an Assyrian man was to be both young, and in the prime of life, but also to be old, and to have achieved a life goal.

The differences between Assyrian young and old men, and the different ways in which they upheld Assyrian hegemonic masculinities demonstrate that age was a key component in the construction of Assyrian gender. Intersectional approaches that include the role of age should therefore be incorporated in all analyses of gender in the ancient Near East.

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### Appendix 1. Supplemental Data

Supplemental data has been collated into a folder and uploaded to the stable data repository Zenodo. The data are available for those who are interested in the method, and who would like more information regarding the technical aspects of the methods used in this article. The folder includes the code used to retrieve the Oracc textual corpus, the code used for the PMI measurement, the data imported to Gephi, the word co-occurrence networks, and Excel spreadsheets used in the analysis of the results. Included are several .txt “Readme” files. These provide more information for the files within the repository, both as a whole and for each subfolder. There is also a .txt file that outlines the workflow for generating the word co-occurrences as well as the word co-occurrence networks.

Zenodo repository url: <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.7677180>

### Appendix 2. Co-occurrence Lists

The following is the full list of the word co-occurrence for age-related words in the Neo-Assyrian dataset. “Target word” refers to the age-related word. “Co-occurrence” refers to the word that appears in the Neo-Assyrian dataset close (within fifteen words) to the target word. The words in these two columns follow the format of the Neo-Assyrian dataset—each word is represented as: lemma[guideword]EPOS. The lemma is the Akkadian word as found in the dictionaries *CAD* or *CDA*, and conform to Oracc standards—therefore ḥ is represented here as h. The guideword is the main translation as found in either *CAD* or *CDA*. Finally, EPOS is the “effective part of speech,” which represents the grammar of the word. The “Frequency” column is the raw count of how often the two words occur close together within the dataset. The final column gives the PMI<sup>2</sup> score according to Sahala’s (2019) pmizer2 script. The lower bound is minus infinity, and the upper bound is zero. Therefore, the closer the zero, the more likely the word pairs are to occur close together within the Neo-Assyrian dataset. According to this version of PMI, all numbers are in the negative. The table is organized alphabetically according to the “Target word” column.

Target word	Co-occurrence	Frequency of two words in data	PMI <sup>2</sup> Score (-infinity to 0)
<i>batūlu</i> [boy]N	<i>batultu</i> [adolescent]N	11	-13.385
<i>batūlu</i> [boy]N	<i>maqlūtu</i> [burn(ing)]N	22	-14.86
<i>batūlu</i> [boy]N	<i>qilūtu</i> [burning]N	36	-15.923

Target word	Co-occurrence	Frequency of two words in data	PMI <sup>2</sup> Score (-infinity to 0)
<i>batūlu</i> [boy]N	<i>išātu</i> [fire]N	311	-19.406
<i>batūlu</i> [boy]N	<i>qaqqadu</i> [head]N	391	-19.898
<i>batūlu</i> [boy]N	<i>napālu</i> [dig-out]V	272	-20.693
<i>batūlu</i> [boy]N	<i>naqāru</i> [demolish]V	322	-20.936
<i>batūlu</i> [boy]N	<i>nērebu</i> [entrance]N	187	-21.575
<i>batūlu</i> [boy]N	<i>šalālu</i> [carry-off]V	472	-22.488
<i>batūlu</i> [boy]N	<i>tāru</i> [turn]V	1326	-23.381
<i>batūlu</i> [boy]N	<i>ālu</i> [city]N	2766	-23.903
<i>batultu</i> [adolescent]N	<i>batūlu</i> [boy]N	14	-13.385
<i>batultu</i> [adolescent]N	<i>maqlūtu</i> [burn(ing)]N	22	-14.037
<i>batultu</i> [adolescent]N	<i>qilūtu</i> [burning]N	36	-15.213
<i>batultu</i> [adolescent]N	<i>išātu</i> [fire]N	311	-19.36
<i>batultu</i> [adolescent]N	<i>qaqqadu</i> [head]N	391	-19.693
<i>batultu</i> [adolescent]N	<i>napālu</i> [dig-out]V	272	-19.836
<i>batultu</i> [adolescent]N	<i>naqāru</i> [demolish]V	322	-20.08
<i>batultu</i> [adolescent]N	<i>ālu</i> [city]N	2766	-23.232
<i>eṭlu</i> [manly-one]N	<i>naṭālu</i> [look]V	49	-17.372
<i>eṭlu</i> [manly-one]N	<i>narāmu</i> [loved-one]N	80	-17.832
<i>eṭlu</i> [manly-one]N	<i>rapšu</i> [wide]AJ	258	-18.424
<i>eṭlu</i> [manly-one]N	<i>eṭlu</i> [manly-one]N	98	-19.414
<i>eṭlu</i> [manly-one]N	<i>rašû</i> [acquire]V	308	-20.485
<i>eṭlu</i> [manly-one]N	<i>wardatu</i> [girl]N	21	-20.551
<i>eṭlu</i> [manly-one]N	<i>ilu</i> [god]N	3545	-21.758
<i>eṭlu</i> [manly-one]N	<i>nišu</i> [people]N	1880	-22.038
<i>eṭlu</i> [manly-one]N	<i>gimru</i> [totality]N	1768	-22.94
<i>eṭlu</i> [manly-one]N	<i>ālu</i> [city]N	2766	-23.063
<i>eṭlu</i> [manly-one]N	<i>kibru</i> [bank]N	283	-23.12
<i>eṭlu</i> [manly-one]N	<i>qardu_AJ</i> [valiant]AJ	88	-23.534
<i>eṭlu</i> [manly-one]N	<i>abu</i> [father]N	1157	-23.795
<i>eṭlu</i> [manly-one]N	<i>kullatu</i> [totality]N	197	-23.954
<i>eṭlu</i> [manly-one]N	<i>libbu</i> [interior]N	4805	-24.526
<i>labāru</i> [be(come)-old]V	<i>palû</i> [period-of-office]N	146	-16.507
<i>labāru</i> [be(come)-old]V	<i>šīamu</i> [fix]V	111	-17.383
<i>labāru</i> [be(come)-old]V	<i>aššatu</i> [wife]N	83	-17.941
<i>labāru</i> [be(come)-old]V	<i>šimtu</i> [fate]N	100	-18.154
<i>labāru</i> [be(come)-old]V	<i>arku</i> [long]AJ	250	-18.38
<i>labāru</i> [be(come)-old]V	<i>dumqu</i> [goodness]N	165	-18.586
<i>labāru</i> [be(come)-old]V	<i>išdu</i> [foundation]N	211	-18.758

Target word	Co-occurrence	Frequency of two words in data	PMI <sup>2</sup> Score (-infinity to 0)
<i>labāru</i> [be(come)-old]V	<i>rašû</i> [acquire]V	308	-19.218
<i>labāru</i> [be(come)-old]V	<i>zēru</i> [seed(s)]N	480	-19.411
<i>labāru</i> [be(come)-old]V	<i>palû</i> [reign-(of-a-king)]N	366	-19.519
<i>labāru</i> [be(come)-old]V	<i>ûmu</i> [day]N	4927	-19.583
<i>labāru</i> [be(come)-old]V	<i>kânu</i> [be(come)-permanent]V	622	-19.606
<i>labāru</i> [be(come)-old]V	<i>magru</i> [agreed]AJ	26	-19.645
<i>labāru</i> [be(come)-old]V	<i>atwû</i> [speech]N	43	-19.741
<i>labāru</i> [be(come)-old]V	<i>kussû</i> [chair]N	531	-19.832
<i>labîru</i> _AJ[old]AJ	<i>barû</i> [seen]AJ	33	-13.68
<i>labîru</i> _AJ[old]AJ	<i>šaṭru</i> [written]AJ	258	-16.41
<i>labîru</i> _AJ[old]AJ	<i>eššu</i> [new]AJ	97	-17
<i>labîru</i> _AJ[old]AJ	<i>ṭuppu</i> [tablet]N	241	-18.254
<i>labîru</i> _AJ[old]AJ	<i>dullu</i> [trouble]N	553	-18.747
<i>labîru</i> _AJ[old]AJ	<i>āšîpu</i> [sorcerer]N	67	-19.192
<i>labîru</i> _AJ[old]AJ	<i>epēšu</i> [do]V	2975	-20.813
<i>labîru</i> _AJ[old]AJ	<i>muḥḥu</i> [skull]N	3507	-20.975
<i>labîru</i> _AJ[old]AJ	<i>eššûtu</i> [newness]N	72	-21.124
<i>labîru</i> _AJ[old]AJ	<i>šapālu</i> [be(come)-deep]V	36	-21.161
<i>labîru</i> _AJ[old]AJ	<i>ēkallu</i> [palace]N	1382	-21.268
<i>labîru</i> _AJ[old]AJ	<i>ḥurāšu</i> [gold]N	943	-21.275
<i>labîru</i> _AJ[old]AJ	<i>qabû</i> [say]V	2064	-21.321
<i>labîru</i> _AJ[old]AJ	<i>manû</i> [unit]N	1395	-21.477
<i>labîru</i> _AJ[old]AJ	<i>ilu</i> [god]N	3545	-21.975
<i>labîru</i> _N[old-one]N	<i>šamallû</i> [purse-bearer]N	18	-11.757
<i>labîru</i> _N[old-one]N	<i>barû</i> [seen]AJ	33	-11.886
<i>labîru</i> _N[old-one]N	<i>šaṭru</i> [written]AJ	258	-14.063
<i>labîru</i> _N[old-one]N	<i>ṭuppu</i> [tablet]N	241	-16.371
<i>labîru</i> _N[old-one]N	<i>ṭupšarru</i> [scribe]N	527	-17.996
<i>labîrûtu</i> [old-age]N	<i>epēšu</i> [do]V	2975	-19.751
<i>labîrûtu</i> [old-age]N	<i>alāku</i> [go]V	3964	-20.175
<i>labîrûtu</i> [old-age]N	<i>bîtu</i> [house]N	3292	-22.477
<i>littûtu</i> [(extreme)-old-age]N	<i>šîbûtu</i> [old-age]N	43	-16.201
<i>littûtu</i> [(extreme)-old-age]N	<i>arku</i> [long]AJ	250	-17.812
<i>littûtu</i> [(extreme)-old-age]N	<i>šebû</i> [be(come)-full]V	93	-18.979
<i>littûtu</i> [(extreme)-old-age]N	<i>arāku</i> [be(come)-long]V	216	-19.073
<i>littûtu</i> [(extreme)-old-age]N	<i>karābu</i> [pray]V	890	-21.463
<i>littûtu</i> [(extreme)-old-age]N	<i>tadānu</i> [give]V	1412	-21.975
<i>littûtu</i> [(extreme)-old-age]N	<i>balāṭu</i> [live]V	574	-22.471

Target word	Co-occurrence	Frequency of two words in data	PMI <sup>2</sup> Score (-infinity to 0)
<i>littūtu</i> [(extreme)-old-age]N	<i>kussū</i> [chair]N	531	-22.747
<i>littūtu</i> [(extreme)-old-age]N	<i>šattu</i> [year]N	696	-23.143
<i>littūtu</i> [(extreme)-old-age]N	<i>ūmu</i> [day]N	4927	-23.482
<i>littūtu</i> [(extreme)-old-age]N	<i>šīru</i> [flesh]N	473	-23.655
<i>littūtu</i> [(extreme)-old-age]N	<i>rūqu</i> [distant]AJ	185	-23.672
<i>littūtu</i> [(extreme)-old-age]N	<i>išdu</i> [foundation]N	211	-23.777
<i>littūtu</i> [(extreme)-old-age]N	<i>ṭūbu</i> [goodness]N	309	-24.034
<i>littūtu</i> [(extreme)-old-age]N	<i>ḥūdu</i> [happiness]N	138	-24.247
<i>puršumu</i> [old-(man)]N <sup>117</sup>	<i>ardu</i> [slave]N	2120	-19.734
<i>puršumu</i> [old-(man)]N	<i>šapāru</i> [send]V	2584	-20.256
<i>puršumu</i> [old-(man)]N	<i>māru</i> [son]N	5055	-20.978
<i>puršumu</i> [old-(man)]N	<i>alāku</i> [go]V	3964	-21.157
<i>puršumu</i> [old-(man)]N	<i>mātu</i> [land]N	5200	-21.592
<i>puršumu</i> [old-(man)]N	<i>bēlu</i> [lord]N	11546	-21.739
<i>puršumu</i> [old-(man)]N	<i>libbu</i> [interior]N	4805	-22.097
<i>puršumu</i> [old-(man)]N	<i>šarru</i> [king]N	17888	-22.42
<i>puršumu</i> [old-(man)]N	<i>karābu</i> [pray]V	890	-24.403
<i>šibu</i> [old-man]N	<i>šeḥru</i> [small]AJ	11	-15.173
<i>šibu</i> [old-man]N	<i>šulmu</i> [completeness]N	14	-17.63
<i>šibu</i> [old-man]N	<i>ṭābu</i> [good]AJ	8	-18.233
<i>šibu</i> [old-man]N	<i>šarru</i> [king]N	28	-18.771
<i>šibu</i> [old-man]N	<i>libbu</i> [interior]N	14	-18.874
<i>šibu</i> [old-man]N	<i>ardu</i> [slave]N	7	-19.694
<i>šibu</i> [old-man]N	<i>bēlu</i> [lord]N	16	-19.754
<i>šibu</i> [old-man]N	<i>muḥḥu</i> [skull]N	7	-20.42
<i>šibu</i> [old-man]N	<i>šapāru</i> [send]V	6	-20.424
<i>šibu</i> [old-man]N	<i>māru</i> [son]N	7	-20.947
<i>šibu</i> [old-man]N	<i>alāku</i> [go]V	5	-21.567
<i>šibūtu</i> [old-age]N	<i>littūtu</i> [(extreme)-old-age]N	70	-16.43
<i>šibūtu</i> [old-age]N	<i>arku</i> [long]AJ	250	-18.288
<i>šibūtu</i> [old-age]N	<i>šebū</i> [be(come)-full]V	93	-19.26
<i>šibūtu</i> [old-age]N	<i>ṭūbu</i> [goodness]N	309	-21.192
<i>šibūtu</i> [old-age]N	<i>tadānu</i> [give]V	1412	-21.646
<i>šibūtu</i> [old-age]N	<i>šattu</i> [year]N	696	-21.848
<i>šibūtu</i> [old-age]N	<i>libbu</i> [interior]N	4805	-21.91

117. I have included the PMI<sup>2</sup> scores and co-occurrences here for *puršumu* and *šibu*, but these were based on inconsistent lemmatizations of the Oracc dataset. See §3.2 of the main body for more details about this issue. I have included them here for the sake of completion.

Target word	Co-occurrence	Frequency of two words in data	PMI <sup>2</sup> Score (-infinity to 0)
<i>šibūtu</i> [old-age]N	<i>karābu</i> [pray]V	890	-21.945
<i>šibūtu</i> [old-age]N	<i>ūmu</i> [day]N	4927	-22.307
<i>šibūtu</i> [old-age]N	<i>rūqu</i> [distant]AJ	185	-22.364
<i>šibūtu</i> [old-age]N	<i>išdu</i> [foundation]N	211	-22.742
<i>šibūtu</i> [old-age]N	<i>šīru</i> [flesh]N	473	-22.977
<i>šibūtu</i> [old-age]N	<i>kussū</i> [chair]N	531	-23.481
<i>šibūtu</i> [old-age]N	<i>rā'imu</i> [one-who-loves]N	76	-23.709
<i>šibūtu</i> [old-age]N	<i>balātu</i> [live]V	574	-23.838
<i>šubultinbi</i> [young]AJ	<i>aplu</i> [heir]N	67	-16.53
<i>šubultinbi</i> [young]AJ	<i>ṭupšarru</i> [scribe]N	527	-17.763
<i>šuḥurtu</i> [the-young-youth(s)]N	<i>pirsu</i> [weaned]AJ	21	-13.701
<i>šuḥurtu</i> [the-young-youth(s)]N	<i>sinništu</i> [woman]N	625	-15.534
<i>šuḥurtu</i> [the-young-youth(s)]N	<i>nukaribbu</i> [gardener]N	100	-15.752
<i>šuḥurtu</i> [the-young-youth(s)]N	<i>ikkaru</i> [farmer]N	273	-15.951
<i>šuḥurtu</i> [the-young-youth(s)]N	<i>mārtu</i> [daughter]N	361	-16.108
<i>šuḥurtu</i> [the-young-youth(s)]N	<i>gimru</i> [totality]N	1768	-16.212
<i>šuḥurtu</i> [the-young-youth(s)]N	<i>māru</i> [son]N	5055	-17.96
<i>šuḥurtu</i> [the-young-youth(s)]N	<i>imēru</i> [unit]N	753	-19.212
<i>šuḥurtu</i> [the-young-youth(s)]N	<i>napištu</i> [throat]N	746	-19.583
<i>šuḥurtu</i> [the-young-youth(s)]N	<i>bītu</i> [house]N	3292	-21.102

### Appendix 3. Masculinities Words for Co-occurrence Network

This appendix contains the list of words used to generate the word co-occurrence network. Each word in the list was chosen due to its possible connotations of Assyrian masculinities. Based on current understandings of Assyrian hegemonic masculinities, aspects like strength, hunting, martial prowess, intelligence, and words relating to anatomy were included.<sup>118</sup> In order to ensure nonhegemonic masculinities were included, there are also many words that connote the opposite of hegemonic masculinities. For example, words denoting “strength” as well as “weak” were included.

The words are in the same format as the Oracc dataset: lemma[guideword]EPOS. The lemma is the Akkadian word as found in the dictionaries *CAD* or *CDA*. In the case of homonyms they are followed by a number to disambiguate them in the data. The guideword is the main translation as found in either *CAD* or *CDA*. Finally, EPOS is the “effective part of speech,” which represents the grammar of the word.

There are 518 target words in the list.

118. This is based on recent scholarship into Neo-Assyrian masculinities, e.g., Bennett 2019; N’Shea 2016; Helle 2019; Chapman 2004.

A	D	
<i>abātu</i> _1[destroy]V	<i>dādu</i> [darling]N	<i>ezēzu</i> [be(come)-angry]V
<i>abātu</i> _2[run-away]V	<i>dahru</i> [angry]AJ	<i>ezzu</i> [furious]AJ
<i>abru</i> [strong-one]N	<i>dāku</i> [kill]V	<i>ezzis</i> [furiously]AV
<i>abu</i> [father]N	<i>danānu</i> _V[be(come)-strong]V	G
<i>adāru</i> _1[be(come)-afraid]V	<i>danānu</i> _N[power]N	<i>galamāḥu</i> [chief-lamentation-priest]N
<i>adāru</i> _2[be(come)-dark]V	<i>dandannu</i> _AJ[all-powerful]AJ	<i>gallāniš</i> [like-a-gallu-demon]AV
<i>agāgu</i> [be(come)-furious]V	<i>dandannu</i> _N[all-powerful-one]N	<i>gallû</i> [(a-demon)]N
<i>agašgû</i> [youngest-son]N	<i>dannu</i> [strong]AJ	<i>gāmiru</i> _AJ[strong]AJ
<i>aggiš</i> [furiously]AV	<i>dannûtu</i> [strength]N	<i>gāmiru</i> _N[strong-one]N
<i>aggu</i> [furious]AJ	<i>dumqu</i> [goodness]N	<i>gašāru</i> [be(come)-strong]V
<i>aḥurrû</i> [junior]N	<i>dunnu</i> [power]N	<i>gaššu</i> [cruel]AJ
<i>akû</i> [weak-one]N	<i>dunnunu</i> [very-strong]AJ	<i>gašru</i> _N[very-strong-one]N
<i>akûtu</i> [disablement]N	<i>duppussû</i> [younger-brother]N	<i>gašru</i> _AJ[very-strong]AJ
<i>alilu</i> [powerful]AJ	E	<i>gašrûtu</i> [great-strength]N
<i>allallu</i> [powerful]AJ	<i>ebbu</i> [bright]AJ	<i>gerru</i> [way]N
<i>aplû</i> [heir]N	<i>edû</i> _V[know]V	<i>gērû</i> [opponent]N
<i>alû</i> [(an-evil-demon)]N	<i>edû</i> _N[flood]N	<i>gilittu</i> [terror]N
<i>anantu</i> [battle]N	<i>e'iltu</i> [bond]N	<i>gillatu</i> [sin]N
<i>angallu</i> [wise]AJ	<i>ekdu</i> [wild]AJ	<i>ginû</i> [regular-contribution-(to-temple)]N
<i>apkallu</i> [wise-man]N	<i>ekēpu</i> [come-close]V	<i>gišparru</i> [trap]N
<i>ariktu</i> [(a-type-of-spear)]N	<i>ekû</i> [impoverished]AJ	<i>gitmālu</i> _N[perfect-one]N
<i>arirû</i> [(a-priest-uttering-curses)]N	<i>elēlu</i> [be(come)-pure]V	<i>gitmālu</i> _AJ[perfect]AJ
<i>arnu</i> [guilt]N	<i>elēpu</i> [sprout]V	<i>gugallu</i> [irrigation-controller]N
<i>ašāšu</i> [be(come)-distressed]V	<i>ellu</i> _AJ[pure]AJ	<i>gullubu</i> _AJ[shorn]AJ
Aššur[1]DN	<i>ellu</i> _N[pure-one]N	<i>gullubu</i> _V[shear]V
<i>assinnu</i> [(male-cultic-prostitute)]N	<i>elû</i> [go-up]V	<i>gumāḥu</i> [prize-bull]N
<i>asû</i> [physician]N	<i>emēqu</i> [be(come)-wise]V	<i>gupāru</i> [neck]N
<i>awilû</i> [man]N	<i>emqu</i> _AJ[wise]AJ	Ḫ
<i>ayyābu</i> [enemy]N	<i>emqu</i> _N[wise-one]N	<i>ḫabālu</i> _V[do-wrong]V
<i>ayyalu</i> [ally]N	<i>emu</i> [father-in-law]N	<i>ḫābilu</i> _1[criminal]N
<i>ayyaru</i> [young-man]N	<i>emûqu</i> [strength]N	<i>ḫābilu</i> _2[trapper]N
B	<i>enēšu</i> [be(come)-weak]V	<i>ḫakāmu</i> [understand]V
<i>ba'āšu</i> [smell-bad]V	<i>enšu</i> _AJ[weak]AJ	<i>ḫallulāya</i> [centipede]N
<i>bā'eru</i> [hunter]N	<i>enšu</i> _N[weak-one]N	<i>ḫamātu</i> [help]N
<i>bāru</i> _1[revolt]V	<i>enu</i> [lord]N	<i>ḫarmu</i> [(male)-lover]N
<i>bāru</i> _2[catch]V	<i>enû</i> [change]V	<i>ḫasāsu</i> [be(come)-conscious]V
<i>batultu</i> [adolescent]N	<i>erḫu</i> [aggressive]AJ	<i>ḫasīsu</i> [ear]N
<i>batûlu</i> [boy]N	<i>erinnu</i> [neck-stock]N	<i>ḫassu</i> [clever]AJ
<i>bīnu</i> [son]N	<i>eršu</i> _AJ[wise]AJ	<i>ḫastu</i> [hole]N
<i>birku</i> [knee]N	<i>eršu</i> _N[wise-one]N	<i>ḫaṭṭā'u</i> [sinner]N
<i>biššûru</i> [female-genitals]N	<i>ešēdu</i> _V[harvest]V	<i>ḫatāpu</i> [slaughter]V
<i>bukru</i> [son]N	<i>ešēdu</i> _N[harvest]N	<i>ḫaṭṭu</i> [stick]N
<i>būnu</i> [goodness]N	<i>ešû</i> _AJ[confused]AJ	<i>ḫātu</i> [terror]N
<i>bu'uru</i> [hunting]N	<i>ešû</i> _V[confuse]V	<i>ḫatû</i> _1[struck-down]AJ
<i>būru</i> [(bull)-calf]N	<i>ešû</i> _N[confusion]N	<i>ḫatû</i> _2[(meaning-unclear)]V
<i>būštu</i> [shame]N	<i>eṭlu</i> [manly-one]N	

*ḥayyattu*[(pathological)-terror]N  
*ḥissatu*[understanding]N  
*ḥuppalû*[(a-weapon)]N

## I

*igigallu*[wisdom]N  
*igigallûtu*[wisdom]N  
*iltu*[goddess]N  
*inbu*[fruit]N  
*irtu*[breast]N  
*išpatu*[quiver]N  
*iššūriš*[like-a-bird]AV  
*iššurtu*[female-bird]N  
*iššuru*[bird]N  
*išaru\_AJ*[straight]AJ  
*išaru\_N*[penis]N  
*išku*[testicle]N  
*Ištar*[1]DN  
*itpēšu\_AJ*[expert]AJ  
*itpēšu\_N*[expert]N

## K

*kabāsu*[tread]V  
*kakku*[stick]N  
*kakugallûtu*[profession-of-  
 incantation-priest]N  
*kalû*[totality]N  
*kalûtu*[lamentation-priesthood]N  
*kamālu*[be(come)-angry]V  
*kamāru\_V*[smite]V  
*kamāru\_2*[defeat]N  
*kamāru\_1*[hunting-trap]N  
*kamlu*[angry]AJ  
*kanāšu*[bow-down]V  
*kapādu*[plan]V  
*kapkapu*[powerful]AJ  
*karābu*[pray]V  
*kāribu*[one-who-blesses]N  
*kaškaššu\_AJ*[all-powerful]AJ  
*kaškaššu\_N*[all-powerful-one]N  
*kaššu*[massive]AJ  
*kašūšu*[(divine-weapon)]N  
*katû*[weak]AJ  
*kayyamānû*[reliable]AJ  
*kibsu*[track]N  
*kililu*[wreath]N  
*kiništu*[priesthood]N  
*kīnu*[permanent]AJ  
*kīniš*[reliably]AV

*kippu*[loop]N  
*kišādu*[neck]N  
*kisittu*[branches]N  
*kiššūtu*[exercise-of-power]N  
*kitru*[help]N  
*kudurru*[carrying-frame]N  
*kulu'û*[(male-cultic-prostitute)]N  
*kūru*[depression]N  
*kutāhu*[spear]N  
*kuzbu*[attractiveness]N

## L

*labābu*[rage]V  
*labāšu*[(a-disease-demon)]N  
*labāru*[be(come)-old]V  
*lābiš*[like-a-lion]AV  
*lābu*[lion]N  
*labbu*[angry]AJ  
*labīru\_AJ*[old]AJ  
*labīru\_N*[old-one]N  
*labīrūtu*[old-age]N  
*lakû\_N*[weak-(person)]N  
*lakû\_AJ*[weak]AJ  
*lalû*[plenty]N  
*lalûtu*[vigour]N  
*lamādu*[learn]V  
*Lamaštu*[1]DN  
*lapānu*[be(come)-poor]V  
*lemēnu*[be(come)-bad]V  
*lemnū\_AJ*[bad]AJ  
*lemnū\_N*[evil-one]N  
*le'û*[be-able]V  
*lē'û\_AJ*[powerful]AJ  
*lē'û\_N*[powerful-one]N  
*lē'ûtū*[competence]N  
*libbātu*[rage]N  
*līdānu*[chick]N  
*lipištu*[male-genitalia]N  
*līpu*[descendant]N  
*littūtu*[(extreme)-old-age]N  
*lītu*[power]N  
*lī'û*[bull]N

## M

*magāgu*[spread]V  
*magšaru*[superior-strength]N  
*māḥīru*[opponent]N  
*māḥiṣu*[beater]N  
*mahrû\_AJ*[first]AJ

*mahrû\_N*[first-one]N  
*massû*[leader]N  
*māru*[son]N  
*mārūtu*[status-of-son]N  
*mašmaššu*[incantation-priest]N  
*matnu*[sinew]N  
*mazā'û*[press]V  
*mērešu\_1*[desire]N  
*mērešu\_2*[wisdom]N  
*mešherūtu*[childhood]N  
*mētellu*[lordship]N  
*mētellūtu*[rulership]N  
*migru*[consent]N  
*milku*[advice]N  
*mīrānu*[young-dog]N  
*mīru*[breeding-bull]N  
*mitgurtu*[agreement]N  
*mithuṣūtu*[battle]N  
*mitru\_AJ*[strong]AJ  
*mitru\_N*[strong-one]N  
*miṭṭu*[(a-divine-weapon)]N  
*mūdānūtu*[knowledge]N  
*mūdū\_AJ*[knowing]AJ  
*mūdū\_N*[knower]N  
*mugdašru*[powerful]AJ  
*mugerru*[two-wheeled-vehicle]N  
*muḥḥuru*[offering]N  
*mulmullu*[arrow]N  
*munnišu*[weakening]AJ  
*muqqu*[weakened]AJ  
*mūru*[young-animal]N  
*muškēnūtu*[poverty]AJ  
*mūtu*[death]N

## N

*na'āru*[roar]V  
*nabāru*[(fish-)trap]N  
*nadāru*[be(come)-wild]V  
*nadru*[wild]AJ  
*na'du*[attentive]AJ  
*naḥātu*[be(come)-small]V  
*nāḥu*[rest]V  
*nakbatu*[weight]N  
*nakādu*[beat]V  
*nakāpu*[push]V  
*nakāru\_V*[be(come)-different]V  
*nakāru\_N*[enemy]N  
*nakriš*[like-an-enemy]AV

<i>nakru</i> [enemy]N		
<i>nakru</i> [strange]AJ		
<i>nalbubu</i> [furious]AJ		
<i>namsāru</i> [sword]N		
<i>nannābu</i> [offspring]N		
<i>nanduru</i> [very-wild]AJ		
<i>nāqidu</i> [stock-breeder]N		
<i>nar'amtu</i> [javelin]N		
<i>narkabtu</i> [chariot]N		
<i>nazarbubu</i> [(tremble-with)-rage]V		
<i>nēmequ</i> [wisdom]N		
<i>ne'rāru</i> [aid]N		
<i>nērārūtu</i> [aid]N		
<i>nēru</i> _V[strike]V		
<i>nēru</i> _N[killer]N		
<i>nēšu</i> [lion]N		
<i>nīku</i> [(sexually)-known]AJ		
<i>nīlu</i> [wetness]N		
<i>nindabū</i> [(food)-offering]N		
Ninurta[1]DN		
<i>nīqu</i> [offering]N		
<i>nīšu</i> _1[(oath-on-the)-life]N		
<i>nīšu</i> _2[lifting]N		
<i>nukurtu</i> [enmity]N		
		<b>P</b>
<i>pādū</i> [forgiving]AJ		
<i>pagru</i> [body]N		
<i>pakku</i> [(a-metal-object)]N		
<i>palāḥu</i> [fear]V		
<i>palḥiš</i> [fearfully]AV		
<i>palḥu</i> [fearful]AJ		
<i>palkū</i> [wide]AJ		
<i>pānū</i> [first]AJ		
<i>pardu</i> [afraid]AJ		
<i>paršumu</i> [outlive]V		
<i>pāšu</i> [axe]N		
<i>patānu</i> [become-strong]V		
<i>patru</i> [sword]N		
Pazūzu[(a-demon)]N		
<i>perniqqu</i> [(a-mythical-weapon)]N		
<i>per'u</i> [bud]N		
<i>pirittu</i> [terror]N		
<i>puggulu</i> [very-strong]AJ		
<i>puḥālu</i> [male-animal]N		
<i>pulḥu</i> [terror]N		
<i>puršumu</i> [old-(man)]N		
	<b>Q</b>	
	<i>qablu</i> [battle]N	
	<i>qadādu</i> [bow-down]V	
	<i>qalālu</i> [be(come)-light]V	
	<i>qanū</i> _N[reed]N	
	<i>qanū</i> _V[acquire]V	
	<i>qarābu</i> [battle]N	
	<i>qarādu</i> [be(come)-warlike]V	
	<i>qardammu</i> [enemy]N	
	<i>qardu</i> _AJ[valiant]AJ	
	<i>qardu</i> _N[valiant-one]N	
	<i>qardūtu</i> [heroism]N	
	<i>qarrādu</i> [warlike]N	
	<i>qarrādūtu</i> [heroism]N	
	<i>qašdu</i> [pure]AJ	
	<i>qaštu</i> [bow]N	
	<i>qerēbu</i> [be(come)-close]V	
	<i>qurādu</i> [hero]N	
	<i>qurdu</i> [warriorhood]N	
		<b>R</b>
	<i>ra'ābu</i> [shake]V	
	<i>rabābu</i> [be(come)-weak]V	
	<i>rabū</i> _N[big-one]N	
	<i>rabū</i> _V[to-be-big]V	
	<i>rabū</i> _AJ[big]AJ	
	<i>ra'bu</i> [raging]AJ	
	<i>raggu</i> _AJ[wicked]AJ	
	<i>raggu</i> [wicked-person]N	
	<i>rakābu</i> [ride]V	
	<i>ramāmu</i> [roar]V	
	<i>rappu</i> [hoop]N	
	<i>rašānu</i> [be-powerful-(of-voice)]V	
	<i>rašbu</i> [terrifying]AJ	
	<i>rašmu</i> [powerful]AJ	
	<i>rāšu</i> [rush-(to-help)]V	
	<i>rašubbatu</i> [terrifying- appearance]N	
	<i>reḥū</i> _V[pour-out]V	
	<i>reḥū</i> _AJ[poured-out]AJ	
	<i>rēšu</i> [help]V	
	<i>re'ū</i> [pasture]V	
	<i>rē'ūtu</i> [shepherdship]N	
	<i>riḥūtu</i> [progeny]N	
	<i>rīmāniš</i> [like-a-wild-bull]AV	
	<i>rīmu</i> [wild-bull]N	
	<i>rīšu</i> [help]N	
	<i>rūbu</i> _1[adulthood]N	
		<i>rūbu</i> _2[anger]N
		<i>rukūbu</i> [vehicle]N
		<i>ru'ubtu</i> [rage]N
		<b>Š</b>
		<i>šabāsu</i> [be(come)-angry]V
		<i>šabbasū</i> [very-angry]AJ
		<i>šabsu</i> [angry]AJ
		<i>šaggāšu</i> [murderer]N
		<i>šahātu</i> [be(come)-afraid]V
		<i>šahātu</i> _1[tear-away]V
		<i>šahātu</i> _2[jump-(on)]V
		<i>šahātu</i> _3[be(come)-angry]V
		<i>šaḥtu</i> _AJ[reverent]AJ
		<i>šaḥtu</i> _N[reverent-one]N
		<i>šalāmu</i> _V[be(come)-healthy]V
		<i>šalāmu</i> _N[peace]N
		<i>šalātu</i> [rule]V
		<i>šalbubu</i> [furious]AJ
		<i>šalšāya</i> [third-brother]N
		<i>šamāru</i> _1[gloat?]V
		<i>šamāru</i> _2[raze]V
		<i>šamriš</i> [furiously]AV
		<i>šamru</i> [furious]AJ
		<i>šangū</i> [priest]N
		<i>šanānu</i> [equal]V
		<i>šanūdu</i> [illustrious]AJ
		<i>šapšu</i> _AJ[recalcitrant]AJ
		<i>šapšu</i> _N[recalcitrant-one]N
		<i>šarāḥu</i> [take-pride-in]V
		<i>šašmu</i> [(single)-combat]N
		<i>šaltu</i> _AJ[authoritative]AJ
		<i>šaltu</i> _N[bow-case]N
		<i>šeḥtu</i> _N[jump]N
		<i>šeḥtu</i> _AJ[jumping]AJ
		<i>šeriktu</i> [present]N
		<i>šerru</i> [(young)-child]N
		<i>šešgallūtu</i> [post-of-šešgallu]N
		<i>šešgallu</i> [big-brother]N
		<i>šēru</i> [fierce]AJ
		<i>šētū</i> [(hunting)-net]N
		<i>šētū</i> [miss-(accidentally)]V
		<i>šibirru</i> [shepherd's-staff]N
		<i>šibsātu</i> [anger]N
		<i>šibu</i> [witness]N
		<i>šibūtu</i> [old-age]N
		<i>šiltāḥu</i> [arrow]N
		<i>šukudu</i> [arrow]N

*šumu*[name]N  
*šuribatu*[terror?]N  
*šūru*[bull]N  
*šuškallu*[battle-net]N  
*šuttatu*[(hunter's)-pitfall]N  
*šūturu*[very-great]AJ  
*šēlūtu*[pointed-blade]N  
*šisītu*[cry]N  
*šitmāru*[very-wild]AJ  
*šitmuris*[wildly]AV  
*šitmuru*[very-wild]AJ  
*šuklulu\_AJ*[complete]AJ  
*šuklulu\_V*[complete]V  
*šubultinbi*[young]AJ  
 §  
*šabātu*[seize]V  
*šabtu\_AJ*[seized]AJ  
*šabtu\_N*[captive]N  
*šahūrānūtu*[(time-of)-youth]N  
*šā'idu*[roaming]AJ  
*šalālu*[lie-(down)]V  
*šāltu*[combat]N  
*šayyādu*[vagrant]N  
*šeḥēru*[be(come)-small]V  
*šeḥḥeru*[tiny]AJ  
*šeḥru\_AJ*[small]AJ  
*šeḥru\_1*[small-one]N  
*šeḥru\_2*[(time-of)-youth]N  
*šerru*[snake]N  
*šertu*[nipple]N  
*šīru\_1*[envoy]N  
*šīru\_AJ*[exalted]AJ  
*šīru\_2*[exalted-one]N  
*šuḥāru*[boy]N  
*šuḥurtu*[the-young-youth(s)]N  
*šūlātu*[battle]N  
 S  
*sadirtu*[battle-line]N  
*sādu*[smite]V

*salītu*[net]N  
*sapāku*[catch]V  
*sapāqu*[be(come)-sufficient]V  
*sapāru*[(deity's)-net]N  
*sarruru*[pray-to]V  
*sasinnu*[bowyer]N  
*sattukku*[regular-delivery]N  
*sidirtu*[row]N  
*sūnu*[loin]N  
 †  
*ṭābu*[good]AJ  
*ṭarādu*[send-off]V  
*ṭēmānu\_AJ*[wise]AJ  
*ṭēmānu\_N*[wise]N  
*ṭēmu*[(fore)thought]N  
 T  
*tahanātu*[help]N  
*tāḥāziš*[in-battle]AV  
*tāḥāzu*[battle]N  
*taklu*[reliable]AJ  
*talīmu*[favourite-brother]N  
*tamḥāru*[battle]N  
*taqqītu*[offering]N  
*taqrubtu*[battle]N  
*taqribtu*[(a-ritual)]N  
*tardennu*[second(ary)]AJ  
*targīgu*[evildoer]N  
*tašnintu*[battle]N  
*tēšū*[confusion]N  
*tību*[arousal]N  
*tibūtu\_1*[rise]N  
*tibūtu\_2*[levy]N  
*tīdū*[knowing]AJ  
*tīdūku*[battle]N  
*tikku*[neck]N  
*tiklu*[help]N  
*tillatu*[vine]N  
*tilpānu*[bow]N  
*tubāqu*[trap]N

*tulū*[breast]N  
*tuqumtu*[battle]N  
 U  
*ugallu*[storm-demon]N  
*uggatu*[rage]N  
*ulālu\_AJ*[weak]AJ  
*ulālu\_N*[weak-(person)]N  
*ummānūtu*[craftmanship]N  
*ummiānu*[expert]N  
*urinnu*[eagle]N  
*uršānu*[warrior]N  
*urū*[team-of-equids]N  
*usandū*[bird-catcher]N  
*usātu*[help]N  
*ūšu*[arrow(head)]N  
*ušumgallu*[great-dragon]N  
*Ušumgallu*[dragon]DN  
*utukku*[(an-evil-demon)]N  
*utukkiš*[like-an-utukku-demon]V  
*uznu*[ear]N  
*uzzu*[anger]N  
 Z  
*zā'eru*[enemy]N  
*zakkāru*[man]N  
*zāmānū*[hostile-one]N  
*zaqānu*[wear-a-beard]V  
*zaqāpu*[fix-upright]V  
*zaqnu*[bearded]AJ  
*zāwiānu*[enemy]N  
*zayyāru*[foe]N  
*zē'irānu*[enemy]N  
*zenū\_V*[be(come)-angry]V  
*zenū\_AJ*[angry]AJ