

From the *Electronic Babylonian Literature Lab* 48-51

Geraldina Rozzi

Julius-Maximilians-Universität Würzburg, Deutschland

Enrique Jiménez

LMU München, Deutschland

Elizabeth Bennett

Independent scholar

Abstract The article includes the following notes: 48. “CBS.11957: A New Manuscript of Middle Babylonian *Atraḫasīs*”; 49. “More *Gilgameš* Fragments”; 50. “A New Late Babylonian Fragment of *Nergal and Ereškigal*”; 51. “New Manuscripts of the *Syncretistic Hymn to Gula* (2)”.

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Summary 48 CBS.11957: A New Manuscript of Middle Babylonian *Atraḫasīs*. – 49 More *Gilgameš* Fragments. – 50 A New Late Babylonian Fragment of *Nergal and Ereškigal*. – 51 New Manuscripts of the *Syncretistic Hymn to Gula* (2).

48. “CBS.11957: A New Manuscript of Middle Babylonian *Atraḫasīs*”, Geraldina Rozzi

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51. “New Manuscripts of the *Syncretistic Hymn to Gula* (2)”, Elizabeth Bennett

After an uncommon two-year hiatus, we are pleased to present the penultimate collection of the *eBL* series. The present installment marks a significant milestone, as it coincides with the conclusion of the funding from the Sofja Kovalevskaja Award (Alexander von Humboldt Foundation) on 30 June 2024. The platform’s development now takes place under the auspices of the “Cuneiform Artefacts of Iraq in Context” (CAIC) project at the Bavarian Academy of Sciences and Humanities. This installment continues the tradition of publishing newly identified fragments and manuscripts. The final collection, slated for publication next year, will include several significant manuscripts of OB *Atraḫasīs*, *Enūma eliš*, and the *Syncretistic Hymn to Gula*, which could not be accommodated in this volume due to time constraints.

Over the past two years, the *eBL* platform has grown substantially: its Library (formerly known as the Fragmentarium) now hosts over 31,000 text editions, comprising more than 450,000 lines. The corpus has expanded beyond its original focus on literary texts, with notable contributions such as the new edition of the higher tablets of the *Šumma Ālu* series by the Geneva team led by Catherine Mittermayer. In the literary corpus, the edition of the *Atraḫasīs* epic constitutes the only major gap: work on this



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text is well advanced, and its publication will follow the release of several large new manuscripts from the Sippar Library.¹

48 CBS.11957: A New Manuscript of Middle Babylonian *Atraḥasīs*

The Middle Babylonian tablet CBS.11957 was found, according to the Catalogue of the Babylonian Section, during J. Peter's Second Expedition in Nippur (1889-90).² Though in a poor state of preservation, the text appears to be an Akkadian narrative with similarities to the *Atraḥasīs* epic.³ CBS.11957 may belong to the same tablet as CBS.13532, which has long been known as part of the Middle Babylonian version of *Atraḥasīs*.⁴ Only the obverse of CBS.13532 is preserved, and it appears to contain the portion of the myth in which Enki/Ea instructs *Atraḥasīs* to build a boat and save himself and his family from the impending flood.⁵ While CBS.13532 is undoubtedly part of the *Atraḥasīs* tradition, it exhibits few direct parallels with other known versions of the epic, suggesting a unique textual variant.⁶

Both CBS.11957 and CBS.13532 exhibit consistently traced guide lines, a feature commonly found in manuscripts of epic texts. This practice dates back to the Old Babylonian period and is particularly prevalent in manuscripts of *Atraḥasīs*.⁷ From the limited portion that can be reconstructed in CBS.11957, the tablet appears to depict an episode connected to the opening of the known Flood Myth narrative. A deity, likely Enlil, is portrayed as unable to sleep. This is followed by what seems to be a dialogue between two individuals, in which the words of one are echoed verbatim by the other. The text incorporates familiar formulaic expressions from the Akkadian epic tradition, such as *ana mārēšu izakkār* "he speaks to his children", as well as repetitions of specific verses (obv. 10'-11' and rev. 13'-16'), a hallmark of Akkadian poetic compositions [fig. 1].⁸

Few CVC signs are attested in either CBS.11957 or CBS.13532; mimation occurs though inconsistently. Plene spelling is observed for long middle and final vowels, e.g. obv. 7' *bé-e-lum*, obv. 10' *bé-e-[li?]*, obv. 12' *ma-re-e-šu* (probably a plural); obv. 11' and 14' *šē²¹-ma¹-a¹-at²¹*, if the reconstruction is correct. The shift *št* > *lt* seems to occur in CBS.11957 obv. 6' *ul-ta-bal-ma*.

The digitization of previously unnumbered fragments from the British Museum collections has enabled the identification of numerous new manuscripts, some of which are included in this collection (e.g. 51 MSS 1 and 13). This effort owes much to the tireless work of J. Taylor, to whom we extend our heartfelt gratitude. Thanks are also expressed to T. Mitto for his careful revision of the articles. We also wish to acknowledge the unwavering support of the KASKAL team, whose collaboration has been invaluable as we follow them into the new, digitally born format of the journal. The tablets edited here are published by permission of the Trustees of the British Museum and the University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology.

1 Fadhil, Jiménez forthcoming.

2 The catalogue adds "cf. Peters, Box 28". In Peters' List of Boxes and Contents (UPMAA Nippur 10.06, 101-4), boxes 23-34 are marked as stemming "From Library at X"; "Mound X" is Peters' designation of what Hilprecht called "Mound VI" and "Kassite library", i.e. the southeasternmost section of the West Mound (see Jiménez 2022, 14). For a summary on the archaeological location of the Nippur archive, see Clayden 2016 and Jiménez 2022, 12-19.

3 The first comprehensive edition of the epic was published by Lambert, Millard 1969; an *eBL* edition is in preparation; cf. also the recent digital edition of OB I by Wasserman and Streck at the link <https://seal.huji.ac.il/node/1515>.

4 CBS.13532, MB Nippur in the forthcoming's *eBL* edition. The tablet was first published by Hilprecht 1910, who believed it to contain "the earliest version of the Babylonian Deluge story", a statement that was challenged almost immediately by others, e.g. King 1911, 709a, who showed the tablet to be Middle Babylonian in date (see in general Kuklick 1996, 135-6). According to Hilprecht, the fragment was found in "Tablet Hill" during the Fourth Expedition (1899-1900), but this statement was put in question by several scholars (Bezold 1910; Barton 1911, 46-7), and in any case Hilprecht also claimed that no Middle Babylonian tablets were found in "Tablet Hill" (Jiménez 2022, 97 fn. 267). See the editions by Lambert, Millard 1969, 126-7 and more recently Wasserman 2020, 77-8. Certain paleographic differences may cast doubt on the proposed connection between CBS.13532 and CBS.11957: for instance, the sign *ma* in CBS.11957 o. 13' and 15' has a vertical at the onset, but towards the middle in CBS.13532 r 5'-6'. Nevertheless, a certain degree of variation in the shape of signs within the same manuscript is not without precedent in Middle Babylonian literary tablets.

5 For similar passages, compare OB *Atraḥasīs* III 25-33 (Lambert, Millard 1969, 66-7; Wasserman 2020, 77-8) and the small Neo-Assyrian fragment DT 42 (Lambert, Millard 1969, 66-7).

6 These are the clearest parallel lines noted in the forthcoming *eBL* edition: OB III 21, cf. MB Nippur a+6; OB III 29, cf. MB Nippur a+9.

7 Hess 2015, 263 with fn. 29. High-quality photographs of both CBS.11957 and CBS.13532, taken by Anna Glenn, are available on the *eBL* site.

8 Wisnom 2023, 112-53 with previous literature.

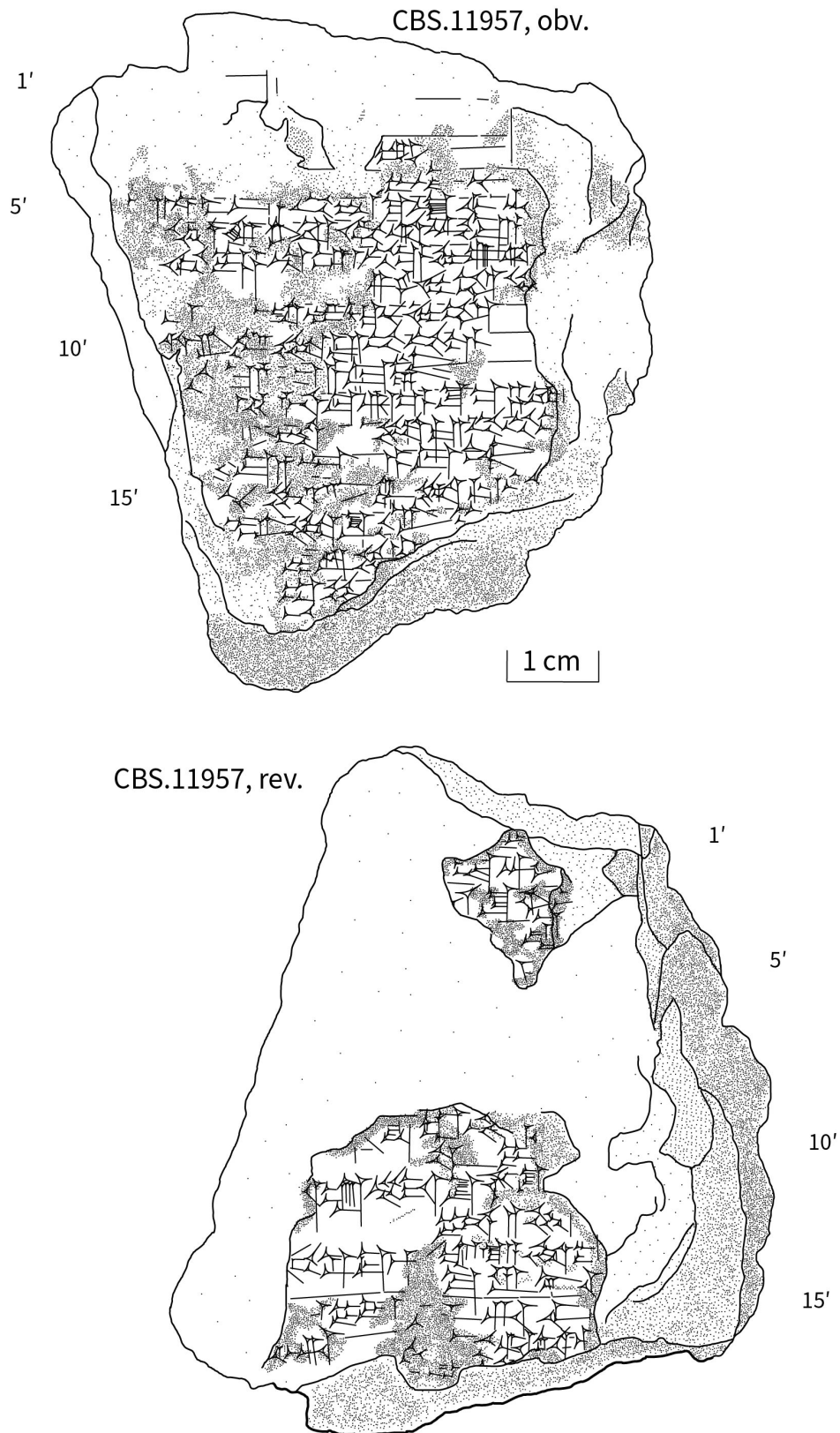


Figure 1 CBS.11957, copy by G. Rozzi

Edition

obverse

1'. [...] ¹A/¹MIN¹ [...]

2'. [...]

3'. [...] ^d+en-[¹lil¹ (x)]

4'. [...] ¹i¹-¹a¹-nu [x x]

5'. [...] x (x) ¹mar¹-rum ¹a¹-bi ¹i¹+¹na¹ ba-la ši-t[i x (x)]

6'. [...] x ¹le¹-em-ni-iš ul-ta-bal(-)ma(-)a-[x x (x)]

7'-8'. [...] x ul i-ša-¹la¹-¹a¹ bé-e-lum ú-ta-[ar²] / [(...)] gi-mi-il-[i x]

9'. [...] x x ¹i¹-¹ša¹-¹ak¹-¹ka¹-nu mi-il-[ka²]

10'. [...] ¹i¹-¹ni¹-¹i¹ ¹li¹-ib-bi bé-e-[¹li²]

11'. [...] ¹lū(?) ¹še²¹-¹ma¹-¹a¹-¹at²¹ a-ma-as¹-[su²]

12'. [...] x x ¹a¹-¹na¹ ma-re-e-šú iz-za-k[a-ar]

13'. [...] ¹ni² ¹i² + ¹na²¹ ¹li¹-ib-bi bé-e-[¹li²]

14'. [...] ¹lū(?) š[e² ma-a-¹at²¹ a-ma-as-[su²]

15'. [...] ¹nu²¹ ¹li¹-¹ni¹-¹i¹ li-ib-b[i bēlim]

16'. [...] ¹i²¹ ni-li-ik ni-¹i¹-[nu (x)]

17'. [...] x ¹i²¹-ru-¹u²¹ x [x x x (x)]

18'. [...] x ab-bu [...]

19'. [...] x ¹ta²¹/¹u²¹ x [...]

rest of side broken

reverse

1'. [...] ¹i²¹+¹na²¹ [...]

2'. [...] AD AN-nu[m² x x (x)]

3'. [...] x šu-ub² [x x x]

4'. [...] x ¹ra¹ [x x x (x)]

5'. [...] x [x x x x]

6'. [...]

7'. [...]

8'. [...]

9'-10'. [...] x ¹ša¹ ¹um¹-¹mu¹-[da² x x x x] / [...] pi-i [x x x]

11'-12'. [...] š[a² um-mu-da šu-up-¹šú¹-[x x x (x)] / [(...)] i+na a-¹li¹ [x x x]

13'-14'. [...] (x) ¹ul²¹/¹bi²¹ si-ma-¹ti²¹ um² x a-li-i[a² x x x x] / [(...)] ma-ru-¹u²¹-[tum² x x (x)]

15'. [...] x i-¹da²¹ x (x) ri ši x [x x]

16'. [...] ¹ar¹ x x x ri ¹ta²¹ x [x x (x)]

17'. [...] x x x x [x x x x]

rest of side broken

Translation

obverse

1'-2'. *too damaged for translation*

3'. [...] En[¹lil¹ ...]

4'. [...] the gods [...]

5'. "[...] ... bitter, o father, without sle[ep ...]

6'. [...] ... he considers with malice and ... [...]

7'-8'. [...] ... he cannot sleep, the lord shall [take] / [...] reven[ge for ...].

9'. [...] ... they will make a deci[sion],

10'. [...] m]ay he appease the heart of the lo[rd],

11'. [...] may(?) [his?] word be heard?!"

12'. [...] ... say[ing] to his sons:

13'. "[...] ... in? the heart of the lo[rd],

14'. [...] may(?) [his] wor[d] [b]e heard.

15'. [...] ... may he appease the hear[t of the lord].
16'. [...] ... let us go our[selves (...)]!"
17'. [...] ... ran ... [...].
rest of obverse too fragmentary for translation

reverse

first 8 lines missing or too fragmentary for translation
9'-10'. [...] ... who reach up ... [...] / [...] mouth [...]
11'-12'. [...] reach up ... [...] / [...] in the city [...].
13'-14'. [...] ... adornment ... m[y] city [...] / [...] distre[ss ...]
rest of reverse too fragmentary for translation

Philological Notes

Obv. 5' *a-bi* may be a vocative, 'o father', or perhaps 'my father', if the line is part of a dialogue. The following signs can be interpreted as the adverbial phrase *ina bala*, meaning 'without', followed by a noun that could tentatively be derived from *šittu* 'sleep', written defectively. At the end of the line, however, there is only room for one or at most two more signs, making any restoration difficult. The form *mar-rum* at the beginning of the line could be understood as *marrum* 'spade' or as the adjective *marrum* 'bitter'.

Obv. 6' I take *ul-ta-bal* to be derived from *šutābulum*, Št-stem of *wabālu* 'to consider, to evaluate'. There is space for about two more signs after A.

Obv. 7'-8' In several passages of *Atraḫasīs*, Enlil laments his sleeplessness, tormented by the incessant clamor of humanity, e.g. OB I 359 [*i+na ḥu-bu-ri-ši*]-*'na'* *'ú'*-*'za'*-*'am'*-*ma* *'ši'*-*'it'*-*ta* "[With their uproar], I am deprived of sleep";⁹ cf. also the Neo-Assyrian version: [*i-na*] *ḥu-bu-ri-ši-na la i-ša-ba-'su'* [*ši-tu*] "[With] their uproar [sleep] did not overcome him"¹⁰ and [*i-na*] *ḥu-b[u]-'ri'*-*'ši'*-*na la i-ša-ba-ta-ni ši-tu* "[With] their uproar sleep did not overcome me".¹¹ After TA there seems to be room for one or at most two signs. The spacing in l. 8' and the lack of a guide line between ll. 7' and 8' suggest that these two lines belong together, thus forming a single verse. The occurrence of *gimilli* in l. 8' suggests restoring *utār* at the end of l. 7'.

Obv. 12' Compare, in SB *Atraḫasīs* V 47-8:¹² *ellil iṣtanakkan puḥuršu / izzakkar ana ilī mārīšu* "Enlil reconvened the assembly / and said to the gods, his children". In the SB version, *mārīšu* replaces OB II 6 *rabūtim*.¹³ The same substitution can be observed in other occurrences of the formula in the SB version, e.g. in OB I 357 // SB IV 2 (IM.132655 o. 2)¹⁴ and IM.132655 r 12b // Sm.292 o. 14' (CT 46, 14), in the latter written, as in this tablet, *ma-re-e-šú*.

Obv. 17' If the form is correctly reconstructed, the verb derives from *rāšu* 'to rush, to help'.

Rev. 10'-12' Like obv. ll. 7'-8', these lines seem to belong together. In l. 9' *'um'*-*'mu'*-*d[a']* and in l. 10' *um-mu-da* could derive from the D-stem of *emēdum*. The form *šu-up-'šu'*-[x (x)] could be tentatively restored with the adverb *šu-up-'šu'*-[*hiš'*] 'in order to rest', cf. *Enūma eliš* I 75:¹⁵ *qerbiš kummīšu šupšuḥiṣ inūḥ-ma* "In his chamber, in profound quiet, he rested", see also CAD P 231 sub *pašāḥu* mng. 5a.

Geraldina Rozzi

⁹ Lambert, Millard 1969, 66-7.

¹⁰ Lambert, Millard 1969, 106 l. 3.

¹¹ Lambert, Millard 1969, 108 l. 41.

¹² George, al Rawi 1996, 176.

¹³ George, al Rawi 1996, 189.

¹⁴ Fadhil, Jiménez forthcoming.

¹⁵ Heinrich 2021.

49 More *Gilgameš* Fragments

1. BM.34153+BM.34449 (*Gilgameš* II)

The fragment BM.34153 joins BM.34449 (George's MS e)¹⁶ and restores ll. II 238-51, bridging the gap between II 242 and 247. The newly recovered passage has parallels in the Old Babylonian versions, in particular in OB III. Moreover, it contains one of the two new occurrences of the line *iššabtū-ma qātī qātūssun* published in this article. The line, which one may style 'joint journey formula', was previously attested only in III 19.

In this passage, *Gilgameš* brushes aside *Enkidu*'s cautionary words in II 217-29 about the dangers that lie ahead on their journey to the Cedar Forest and the battle with its guardian. *Gilgameš* tells his friend to come with him to the forge, the 'gathering place of craftsmen', where the smiths will cast their weapons [fig. 2].

column 5, traces of column 4 are not transliterated

| | |
|--|---|
| 238 ⁽⁵⁾ . <i>iš-ḥu-tú²-ka-ma¹ 'la¹-[ab-bi] 'ka-la¹-[ma tīde]</i> | |
| 239 ⁽⁶⁾ . <i>ù eṭulūtu(GURU⁵meš) iḥ-mu-¹tú¹ qa-'bal-ka¹</i> | // cf. OB III 153 // OB Schøyen ₁ a+5' |
| 240 ⁽⁷⁾ . <i>mu-du-ú lib-ba-ka [t]u-[q]ut-tu₄ 'ti¹-i-de</i> | |
| 241 ⁽⁸⁾ . <i>al-ka ib-ri ana kiš-kát-te-e 'ni-il¹-lik</i> | // cf. OB III 161 |
| 242 ⁽⁹⁾ . <i>'ana kiš¹-[kát]-'te-e¹ pu-'hur¹ 'um-ma¹-ni</i> | // SB II 246 |
| 243 ⁽¹⁰⁾ . <i>[ḥaššinnī li]p-'ti-qu¹ 'ma-ḥar¹-ni</i> | // cf. OB III 162 |
| 244 ⁽¹¹⁾ . <i>[iššabtū-ma qa-ti¹ 'qa-tu-us-su-un¹</i> | // SB III 19 // SB VII 34 (no. 2) |
| 245 ⁽¹²⁾ . <i>[¹giš-gím-maš u¹ +en-ki-dù] 'a-na¹ 'kiš-kát-te-e¹ 'i¹-m[u²]-u[ḥ²-ḥ]u²</i> | // cf. SB III 20 // cf. SB VII 35 // cf. OB III 163 |
| 246 ⁽¹³⁾ . <i>[ana kiš-kát]-'te-e¹ 'pu-hur¹ 'um-ma-ni¹</i> | // SB II 243 |
| 247 ⁽¹⁴⁾ . <i>[áš-bu-m]a 'uš-ta-nam-da¹-an amāt²('INIM¹) 'um-ma-ni²</i> | // cf. OB III 164 |
| 248 ⁽¹⁵⁾ . <i>[ḥa-aš-ši-ni] 'ip¹-t[i-q]u² rabûti('GAL^{meš})</i> | // cf. OB III 165 |
| 249 ⁽¹⁶⁾ . <i>[pāšī sebe bilā(GUN.ṬA.À)M] ip-t[i-qu ma-ḥar-šu]-u[n²]</i> | |
| 250 ⁽¹⁷⁾ . <i>[namšārīšunu sebe bilā(GU)N.ṬA¹.À[M]]</i> | |
| 251 ⁽¹⁸⁾ . <i>[...] x [(o)]</i> | |

"Lions attacked you, [you experienced] all,

"Warriors, too, fled from your battle.

"With experience in your heart, you know combat well.

240

"Come, my friend, let us go to the forge,

"To the forge, the gathering place of craftsmen.

"Let them cast [axes] before us!"

243

[Taking each other] hand in hand,

[*Gilgameš* and *Enkidu*] made their way to the forge,

To the forge, the gathering place of craftsmen.

246

Seated together, they discussed the craftsmen's task.

They cast great [axes],

[Hatches of seven talents] each, they cast [before them].

249

[Their swords, seven] talents each,

[...] ... [...]

Philological Notes

239 There is no place for restoring *iḥ-mu-¹u¹-[tu?]*,¹⁷ so perhaps the variant is best explained as a development of *iḥbutū*, where *b* > *m*; compare the disappearance of final -*b* in *tūb* > *tūw/v* > *tū*.¹⁸ *qabalka* replaces OB *maḥarka*.

¹⁶ George 2003.

¹⁷ So George 2003, 808.

¹⁸ See Mayer 1992, 51; 2017, 237.

245 In the previously known occurrence of the formula (III 20), a verb in present tense appears in the penultimate position of the line, and the destination occupies the last slot. The reading 'kiš-kát-te-e' seems, however, inescapable, so the verb should be at the end. The attempt at decipherment offered here, which adopts the hapax *māhu* from the OB version, fits the traces, but is uncertain: note that the verb is replaced by the more common *alāku* in II 241.

247 OB III 164 reads: *wašbū uštaddanū ummiānū* "(the forge, where) the craftsmen were sitting down in discussion". IM.76941 (MS bb) reads in this line *uš-ta-nam-da-nu a-na* [o o o (o o)], but *ana* does not seem to occur in this manuscript (note that *nadānu* Št₂ is otherwise not attested with an object introduced by *ana*).

248 The spacing suggests that the verb may be a 3rd person sing., instead of the 1st person pl. of IM.76941 (MS bb): *ḥa-aš-ši-nu ni-ip-ti-qu* [o o o (o o)].

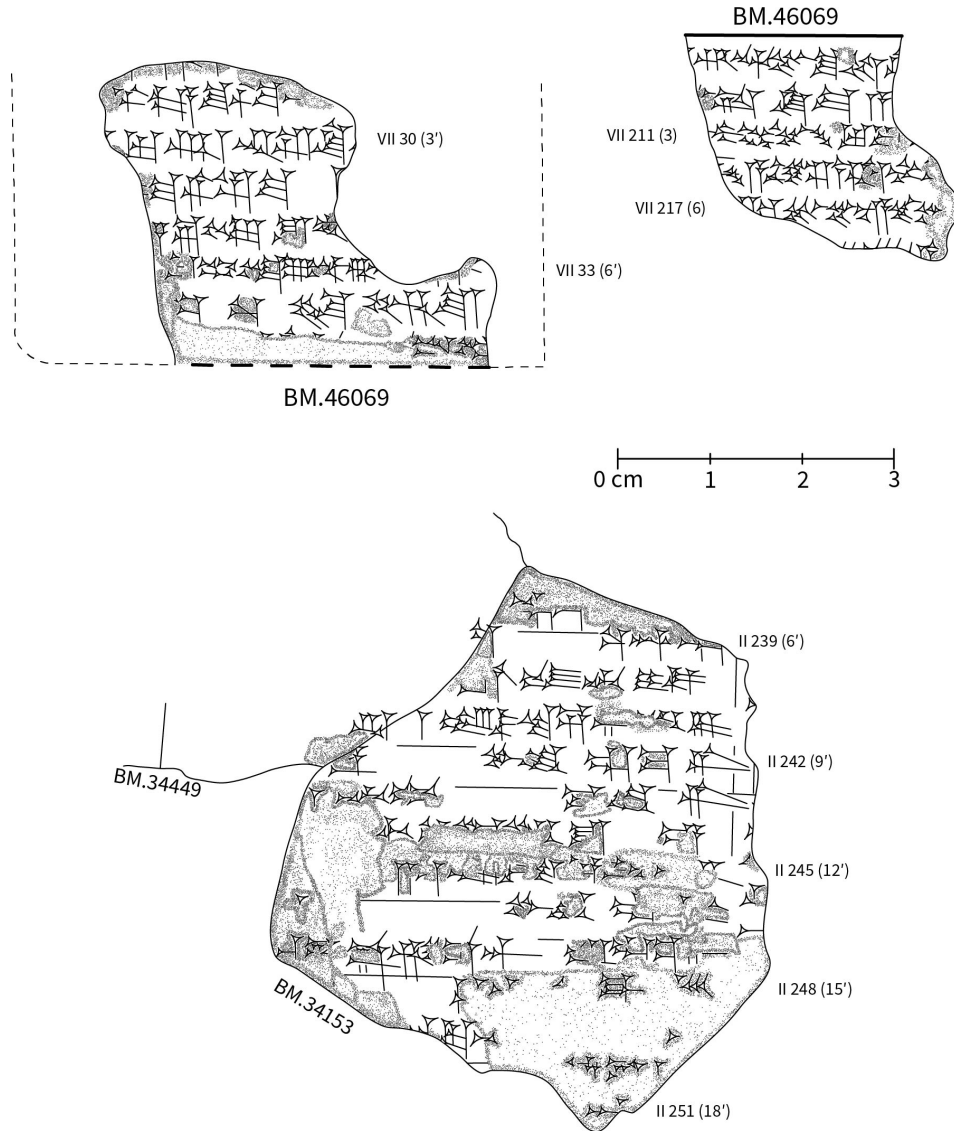


Figure 2 Copies of BM.46069 and BM.34153, by E. Jiménez

2. BM.46069 (*Gilgameš* VII)

BM.46069 is part of MS BabLB1 (George's MS g), a Late Babylonian tablet that constitutes the only known manuscript of *Gilgameš* VII from Babylonia. Several fragments of the same were published in previous installments: BM.34423,¹⁹ BM.43021, and Sp-III.895.²⁰

After slaying Humbaba, *Gilgameš* and Enkidu fashion a great door from the cedars they seized (V 316-17). According to V 318, this door was intended "for the house of Enlil in Nippur", and the companions cast it into the Euphrates with this destination in mind. Yet Enkidu would come to regret this offering: the opening of tablet VII likely contained a dream in which Enkidu beheld Enlil decreeing his death, as reflected in the beginning of tablet III of the Hittite version.²¹ Following a poorly preserved section, Enkidu curses the door – now, in his eyes, a symbol of ingratitude – and in an extended lament (VII 39-63), he regrets not having offered it to another deity, such as Šamaš.

The newly recovered fragment restores the episode preceding this curse. Enkidu urges *Gilgameš* to go with him to Nippur and stand before Enlil of their own accord (? *ina tēmīnī-ma?*), with the express intent of destroying the door of the Ekur. The two companions, 'hand in hand', set out for Nippur.²² When they arrive, Enkidu addresses the door of the Ekur and pronounces his curse: the new passage confirms that this scene takes place in Nippur, before the door itself, and is not the fevered delirium of a dying Enkidu.²³ Moreover, it clarifies that the object of the verb *nasāhu* in VII 64, which follows Enkidu's malediction, is none other than the door itself – i.e., Enkidu fulfills his declared intent to destroy it.²⁴

column 1

27 ⁽¹⁾. [o o] x x x [...]

28 ^(2a). [^d+en-k]i-dù pa-a-šu īpuš(dù)-ma iqabbi(d[UG₄GA]) :.] →

29 ^(2b). [izzakkar ana gilgameš]

30 ⁽³⁾. [al-k]a ib-ri **ana nippur**(NIBRU^{ki}) n[i-il-lik]

31 ⁽⁴⁾. [ina tē-mi-n]i²-ma ni-ru-ba 'ana' [maḥri ellil (?)]

32 ⁽⁵⁾. [dalta] 'šá' é-kur lu-su-u[ḥ] ina sippīša (?)

33 ⁽⁶⁾. [aššu ina² (o)] x-qu-tu lu-še-ši-ri x [(o)] x (x) [o (o)]

34 ⁽⁷⁾. [iṣṣabtū-ma qa-t]u qa-tu-us-su-[un]

// SB II 244 (see no. 1) // SB III 19

35 ⁽⁸⁾. [gilgameš u^a+en-k]i²-dù²¹ 'a²-na²¹ [é-ku]i² 'il¹-l[i-ku-ma]

end of column

36 ^(K.3588 // BM.43021). **ina tē-mi-šú-nu-ma i-ru**-'bu' [ana maḥri ellil (?)]

[...] ... [...]

27

Enkidu prepared to speak

[Saying to *Gilgameš*]

"[Come], my friend, let us [go] to Nippur,

30

"Let us enter [before Enlil of our] own [accord].

"Let me tear [the door] of the Ekur [from its jambs!]

"[Because of what] befell [...], let me set right ... [...]"

33

[They took each other] hand in hand,

[*Gilgameš*] and Enkidu went [to Nippur],

Of [their own accord, they entered before Enlil].

36

*

¹⁹ Jiménez 2020, 238-40.

²⁰ The last two in Jiménez 2023, 106-7.

²¹ George 2003, 479; Beckman 2019, 45 and 50.

²² Bottéro 1992, 136 had anticipated that the two friends travelled to Nippur (see George 2003, 479 fn. 120). He correctly restored VII 30: "Allons, a[mi], [Rendons-nous à Nippur]!".

²³ Cf. Foster 1987, 36-7.

²⁴ Cf. George 2003, 845.

Gilgameš VII 162-253 contains a description of Enkidu's vision of the Netherworld during his dream, which foreshadows his death. In the lines preceding 207, Enkidu enters the "House of Dust" (*bīt epri*), and sees there, seated, a number of chthonic deities, presided over by the queen of the Underworld, Ereškigal, to whom his scribe, Bēlet-šēri, is reading a tablet. When Ereškigal sees Enkidu, she asks, "Who has brought this man here?" (207). Apparently, Ereškigal then instructs a male deity to prepare the tomb, perhaps that of Enkidu.

column 5²⁵

208 ^(1a). [... *ub-la* :.] →

209 ^(1b). [o o o o (o o o)] x-*ri-ti-bu šu-te-e*[*r-si*]

210 ⁽²⁾. [o o o o (o o o) *e-p*]*u-uš ki-ma-a-[h]u*

211 ^(3a). [o o (o)] ^{[i]71}-*qu^l-up-pu* :. →

212 ^(3b). *iB-x* (x) [... *-a-ti*]

213 ^(4a). [o o o o (o o o)-*an-n*]*i* :. →

214 ^(4b). *a-lid šar-rat eršet***(*ki-ti*)** ^{[d]71}[*ereš-ki-gal*]

215 ^(5a). [o o o o (o o o)] x ^{[i]s1}-***pu***-***pu-nu a-bu-^lbu*** →

216 ^(5b). [o o o (o o o o o)]

217 ⁽⁶⁾. [...] x x (x)-^{[i]ni1} [...]

"[Who was it] brought [this man] here?

"Arise and prepare [the funerary offerings]!

"Build a tomb [for ...]!

210

"[...] fell down,

"... [...]

"[...] to me!"

213

The *father* of the queen of the Netherworld, Ereškigal,

The flood flattened ... [...]

[...] ... [...]

216-17

Philological Notes

31 The restoration at the beginning is uncertain: *ina tēmīšu(nu)-ma* is attested at the beginning of the line in *Gilgameš* II 31 and 39;²⁶ as interpreted there, VII 36 is a repetition of VII 31. At the end, the restoration is inspired in SB Anzû III 45: *birdu ultēriba ana maḥri ellil* "He brought Birdu into Enlil's presence". Compare also *Gilgameš* I 272: *itbē-ma iterub ana maḥar(IGI) ištari ummīšu* "(Gilgameš) arose and entered before the goddess, his mother".

33 The line has suffered significant damage, rendering its decipherment uncertain. A comparison with the earlier occurrence of this formula in III 20 might suggest reading **illakū ana nippur*, which, however, appears incompatible with the traces.

209 The manuscript confirms the restoration of *šutērsû* suggested by Landsberger,²⁷ albeit it shows it to be an imperative. *ti-bu* is interpreted as a Late Babylonian form of *tibe*.²⁸

214 A reading *a-na^l* (suggested by T. Mitto) at the beginning is not impossible.

25 Note the misalignment between the columns on the obverse (i) and reverse (v, and not vi). If correctly interpreted, it would mean that the tiny fragment BM.43021 (MS BabLB1d) does not belong to the bottom of the first and top of the sixth column, as stated in the first edition (Jiménez 2023, 106-7), but to the top of the second and bottom of the fifth. It is, however, strange that column 1 of the manuscript should end with VII 35: all other manuscripts of *Gilgameš* VII have around fifty lines per column (George 2003, 407).

26 As noted in Jiménez 2023, 106.

27 Landsberger 1968, 131 fn. 129.

28 On the preference for final /u/ in III-' forms in LB manuscripts, see Jiménez 2017, 346 and 352.

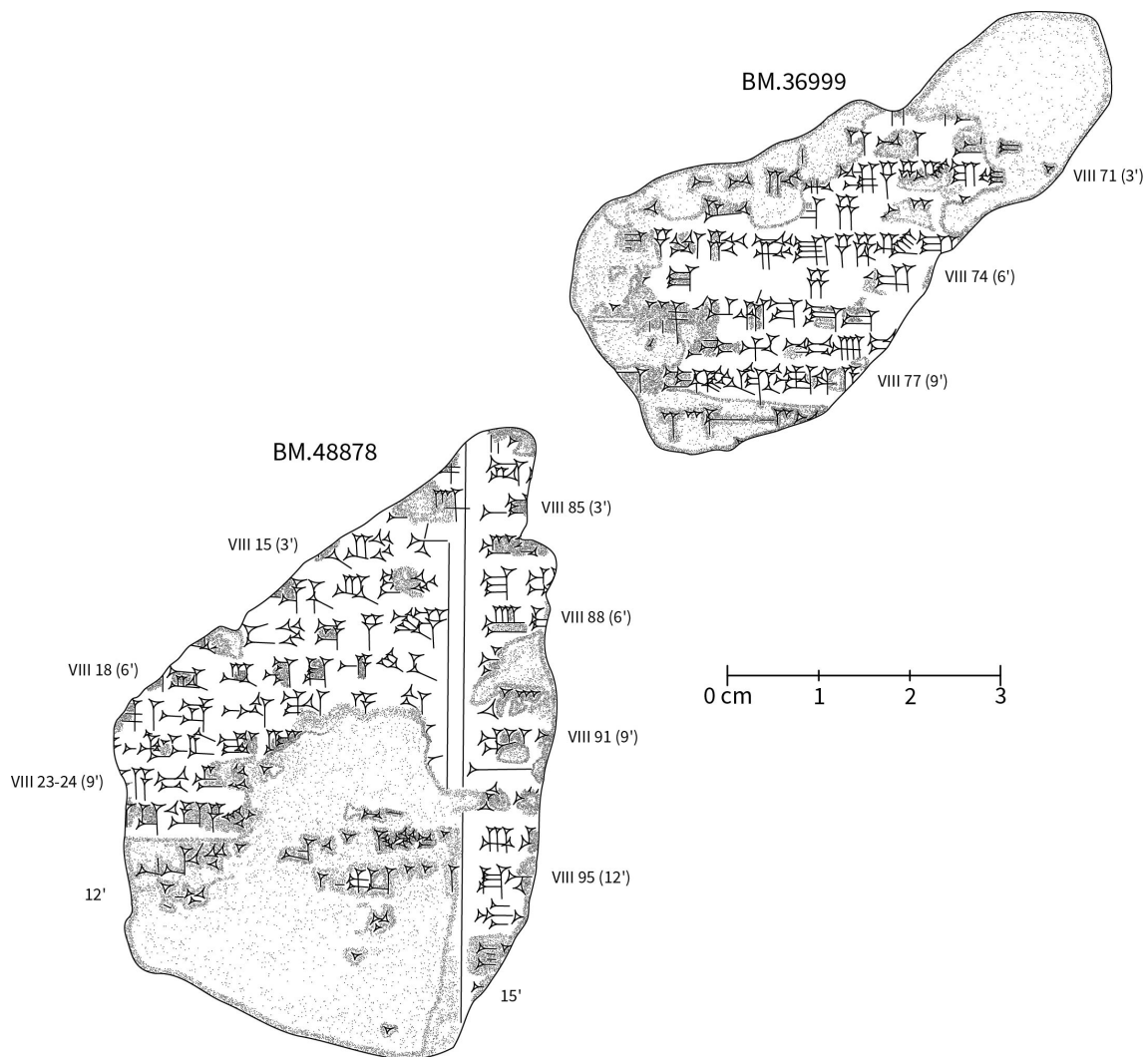


Figure 3 Copies of BM.36999 and BM.48878, by E. Jiménez

3. BM.36999 and BM.48878 (*Gilgameš* VIII)

The fragments BM.36999 (BabNB1c) and BM.48878 (BabNB1d) both belong to the obverse of the only known Babylonian manuscript of tablet VIII, MS BabNB1 (George's MS m). BM.36999 contains text from the first and second columns, while BM.48878 corresponds to the second column [fig. 3].

The eighth tablet of *Gilgameš* contains a description of the lavish funerary rituals that the hero dedicated to his friend Enkidu. The first part includes an invitation for all who loved Enkidu to mourn his death (see § A). The second, of which a new fragment allows the reading of a few new lines, calls upon the artisans of the land to create a sumptuous statue of Enkidu using all sorts of precious materials (see § C). The third part lists the offerings made to the gods of the Netherworld to ensure a safe passage for Enkidu (see § C). No translation is provided for §§ A and C, as almost the entire text was already known (but see VIII 95).

§ A: BM.48878, column i

- 13⁽¹⁾. [linabbâ qerbētu kīma um-mi-k]a
14⁽²⁾. [libkika taskarinnu šurmēnu] erēnu^{(B15)EREN¹}
15⁽³⁾. [ša ina birissunu niḫtallupu ina u]z-zi-nu
16⁽⁴⁾. [libkiku asu būšu nimru mindinu lulīmu dumāmu] →
17⁽⁵⁾. [n]é-e-šú ri-⁽¹⁾i-[m]u | [ayyalu turāḫu būl(u) (u) na]m-maš-še-e šá šēri^(EDIN)
18⁽⁶⁾. [libkika ulāya qadištu ša šam-ḫi-i]š nit-tal-⁽¹⁾la-ku¹ ina a-ḫi-šú
19^(7a). [libkiku elletu purattu] →
20^(7b). [ša nit-taq-qu]-⁽¹⁾ú¹ me-e **ina** na-da-⁽¹⁾a-tú¹
21^(8a). [libkûnikku eṭlûtu ša uruk supûri] →
22^(8b). [š]á ina tāḫāzī^{(1)MĒ¹}-ni iṭ-⁽¹⁾u¹-lu [alâ ni-na-a-r]u
23^(9a). [libkīku ikkaru ina muḫḫi ...] →
24^(9b). [ša (ina) alâla ṭ]a-a-bi ⁽¹⁾ú-še¹-l[⁽¹⁾u-ú šum(MU)-k]a
25^(10a). [libkânīku ... âli rapšī ša uruk s]u-⁽¹⁾pú¹-ru →
26^(10b-11b). **šá** ḫi-x [(o) maḫrī] ⁽¹⁾ú-še¹-l[⁽¹⁾u-ú] | :. šum(MU)-k[a]

only traces preserved of the following three lines

§ B: BM.36999, column ii

- 69⁽¹⁾. [o o o ibnâ] ⁽¹⁾ša¹-[la]m i[b-ri-šú]
70⁽²⁾. [ša ibriya minâtûka (o)] x x x x [o (o o)]
71⁽³⁾. [o o (o o) o šá] uqnî^(ma4ZA.GIN¹) irat^(GABA¹)-ka šá ḫurāšī^(KÙ.GI¹) ⁽¹⁾zu-mur¹-[k]a [(o o)]
72⁽⁴⁾. [o (o) b]i²-⁽¹⁾nî¹-[m]a **ša-lam¹** i[b-ri-ia] // cf. SB VIII 69
73⁽⁵⁾. [o o (o o)] x **šá** uqnî^(ma4ZA.GIN¹) irat^(GABA)-su šá ḫurāšī^(KÙ.GI) ⁽¹⁾zu¹-[mur-šu (o o)] // cf. SB VIII 71-2
74⁽⁶⁾. [ib-na]-⁽¹⁾a²¹-**ma** (?) **ša-lam** [ib-ri-šú] // cf. SB VIII 69
75⁽⁷⁾. [o o (o o)] x x x **lib-ba-⁽¹⁾šu-ma¹** [o o o (o o)]
76⁽⁸⁾. [i-baq-qa-m]u ⁽¹⁾u¹ ⁽¹⁾i-tab¹-**bak** ⁽¹⁾qu¹-nun-t[⁽¹⁾u, **pe-er-tu₄**] // SB VIII 63
77⁽⁹⁾. [i-na-sa]ḫ [u] ⁽¹⁾i¹-**nam-di dam-qa-⁽¹⁾a¹**-[a-a-ti a-sak-kiš²] // SB VIII 64
78⁽¹⁰⁾. [(o o) ⁽¹⁾GIŠ]-**gím¹**-**maš¹** ⁽¹⁾a-na¹ [o o o (o o o o)]

only traces preserved of the following line

- [... they built] the statue of [his friend]. 69
“[The limbs of my friend ...] ... [...]
“[...] of lapis lazuli, your chest of gold, your body [...],
“[...] *build* the statue [of my friend]!” 72
[...] of lapis lazuli, his chest of gold, his body [...],
[*They*] built the statue [of his friend],
[...] ... his heart [...] 75
[He was tearing out] his curls and casting them away,
[Ripping off] his fine garments and flinging them aside [*like something accursed*].
[...] Gilgameš to [...] 78

§ C: BM.48878, column ii

- 83⁽¹⁾. ⁽¹⁾a¹-x [...] 69
84⁽²⁾. uš-n[a-al-ka-ma ina mayyāli rabî]
85⁽³⁾. ina ⁽¹⁾ma¹-[a-a-al taknî ušnālkā-ma]
86⁽⁴⁾. ⁽¹⁾ú¹-š[eš-šeb-ka šubta nēḫta šubat šumēli]
87⁽⁵⁾. ma-a[l-ku ša qaqqari unaššaḳū šēpika]
88⁽⁶⁾. ú-š[ab-kak-ku nišī ša uruk ušadmamakka]
89⁽⁷⁾. ša[m-ḫa-a-ti nišī umallākka dulla]
90⁽⁸⁾. ⁽¹⁾ú¹ [anāku arkika ušaššā malâ pagrī]
91⁽⁹⁾. al-t[ab-biš-ma mašak labbim-ma arappud šēra]

92^(10a). ⁽¹⁾mim¹-m[⁽¹⁾u-ú šēri ina namāri] →

93^(10b). [...]

94⁽¹¹⁾. ri-i[k-si-šú iptur šukutta īmur]

95⁽¹²⁾. **ku-n**[**u-uk** sāndi ... parūtu]

96⁽¹³⁾. **patru(GIR)** x [... eteppuš(u)]

97⁽¹⁴⁾. x [... iš]takan ana ibrišu

Philological Notes

- 20** The line was previously attested, in the Sultantepe MS (HuzNA1, George's MS e), as A^{meš} *na-a-di*; the Nineveh MS NinNA1b (MS V₂) allows a reading A^{meš} [*ina na-d*]*a-a-ti*.
26 A reading *ú-še-l[u-ú]* seems possible in K.8565+ i 26 (V₂).
71-3 No space seems available for reconstructing another material.
72 The decipherment is very uncertain, a reading *-t]e-p[u-u[š]-'ma'* cannot be ruled out (cf. VIII 68: *e-pu-uš*).
78 Perhaps [*gil*]*gāmeš ana [enkīdu ibrišu]*, as in IX 1.
95 The newly recovered 'seal of carnelian' suggests reading MS NinNA2 (George's MS R) as [ⁿ]^a₄^r*KIŠIB*¹.

Enrique Jiménez

50 A New Late Babylonian Fragment of *Nergal and Ereškigal*

BM.39743 (1880,1112.1630) is a Late Babylonian fragment, probably originating in Babylon,²⁹ which contains a few lines of the mythical narrative *Nergal and Ereškigal*. *Nergal and Ereškigal* survives in two main versions: a Middle Babylonian short version from Tell el-Amarna preserved on two indirectly joining fragments;³⁰ and a longer, Standard Babylonian version attested in manuscripts from Huzirina³¹ and Uruk.³² Ponchia and Luukko have provided a comprehensive edition of both versions,³³ incorporating all known manuscripts available at the time. A new digital edition, prepared by T. Mitto for the *eBL* Corpus, will appear soon.³⁴ The fragment edited below, BM.39743, which will also be included there, proves that this rather elusive text was known not only in Huzirina and Uruk, but also in Babylon [fig. 4].³⁵

The present manuscript displays notable variations compared to the Huzirina and Uruk versions, including differences in word order and specific textual variants (see commentary to ll. 7' and 8'). Overall, it appears to align more closely with the Uruk manuscript than with the Huzirina version.

The fragment preserves a pivotal moment in the narrative: Ea's instructions to Nergal as he prepares to enter the netherworld. Ea warns Nergal to refuse food and water and to resist the allure of Ereškigal, setting the stage for the dramatic encounter that follows (// ll. 125-33 ca. in Ponchia, Luukko 2013).

Edition

- 1'-2'a (125)³⁶ [*ultu ullānu ina*] ¹*ka*⁷¹-[*šá-di-ka*] | [*kussā na-š*]*u-¹nik¹-k[a (x x)]*
 2'b (126) [*ē ta'ir-ma ē tušib ina muḥḥi*]
 3' (127) [*nuḥatimmu akla na*]-*ši-ka* ¹*e*¹ *t[a-'i-ir-ma akalšu ē tākul]*
 4' (128) [*tābiḥu šira n*]-*a-ši-ka* ¹*e*¹ *t[a-'i-ir-ma širšu ē tākul]*
 5' (129) [*sirāšū šik*]*ara*(KAŠ.S)AG *na-ši-ka* ¹*e*⁷¹ [*ta'ir-ma šikaršu ē tašti*]
 6' (130) [*mesīt šēpī*](GIR^m)^{es} *na-ši-ka* ¹*e*¹ *ta-²[i-ir-ma šēpika ē tamsi]*
 7' (131) [*u ši*]-¹*i*¹ ¹*i*¹-*ru-um-ma* °^o *ana² n[ar²-ma²-ki²]*
 8' (—) [*te²-qā*]-*ta šamna*(°x\l°) *u lu-bu-š[ú²x x x x (x x)]*
 9' (—) [(x) x] x ¹*giš²ḥa¹-šur-ra* ¹*i*¹-*l[a²/t[e²x x x x x (x x)]*
 (break)

29 See Leichty, Finkel, Walker 2019, 381 and 425.

30 BM.E29865 and VAT.1611+ (EA 357 and 358; AmaMB1a and AmaMB1b in the forthcoming *eBL* edition).

31 SU-1951.108+ (STT 1 28; HuzNA1 in the forthcoming *eBL* edition).

32 IM.74391 (SpTU 1 1; UrkHel1 in the forthcoming *eBL* edition).

33 Ponchia, Luukko 2013.

34 Mitto forthcoming.

35 BM.32667 may represent another fragment of *Nergal and Ereškigal* (*eBL* transl.). This fragment from the left edge of a tablet contains, on its reverse, the sequence of netherworld gatekeepers also found in ll. 195-201 of *Nergal and Ereškigal* (Ponchia, Luukko 2013). On its obverse, it features a dialogue between Anu and his vizier Kaka, which may belong to the missing beginning of the composition. See also IM.45750, the fragment of a related text published by Fadhil, Jiménez 2021, 51-7 no. 2.

36 Numbers in parentheses refer to the lines in the numeration employed in Ponchia, Luukko 2013.

Translation

- 1'. [As soon as you] arr[ive, a throne will b]e brought to y[ou]:
2'. [Don't go and sit on it]!
3'. [The baker wi]ll bring [you bread]: do[n't go and eat his bread]!
4'. [The butcher will b]ring [you meat]: don't g[o and eat his meat]!
5'. [The brewer] will bring you [be]er: don't [go and drink his beer]!
6'. [They] will bring you [water for washing your feet]: don't g[o and wash your feet]!
7'. [Sh]e, [however], will step into the b[ath]
8'. [Ointm]ent, oil and gar[ment ...]
9'. [She] wil[l ...] with *ḥašurru*-cedar [...]

BM.39743

obv.

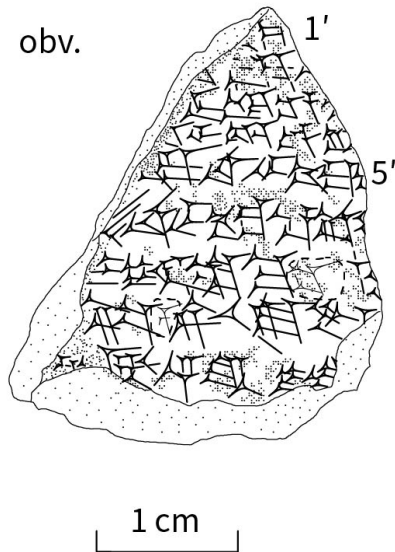


Figure 4
Copy of BM.39743, by G. Rozzi

Notes

1'-2'a L. 1' and the first half of l. 2' seem to correspond to l. 125 of *Nergal and Ereškigal*. This division of the text matches that observed in the Uruk manuscript, which also splits the verse across two lines of tablet (obv. ii 12'b-13'a), and contrasts with the manuscript from Ḫuzirina, where l. 125 occupies an entire line of tablet (obv. ii 37'). Given the limited space available before the break, it seems likely that the fragment employed the short form *ullānu* 'there' found in the Uruk manuscript rather than *ullānum-ma* as in the Ḫuzirina manuscript.

2'b-3' At first glance, l. 126 of *Nergal and Ereškigal* seems to be missing, but since l. 127 appears in l. 3' of BM.39743, it can be hypothesized that l. 126 occupied the second half of l. 2' of the fragment from Babylon.

4' It appears that the signs in this line are written in smaller script. This could either indicate a gloss variant or an error – perhaps the scribe initially skipped the line and later added it in between ll. 3' and 4'. The latter explanation is preferred here.

5' The sign after the break is partially broken, but the extant traces can be reconciled with the last part of SAG, which suggests the restoration with the logographic spelling KAŠ.SAG (suggestion by A. Härtinen). The line is emended based on parallels from the Ḫuzirina and Uruk fragments. In l. 129 of *Nergal and Ereškigal*, the Ḫuzirina manuscript (obv. ii 42') reads: ^{lú}LÚNGA¹ 'KAŠ^{meš}1 'na-ši¹-k[a] 'e¹ [t]a-'mir-ma¹ 'KAŠ^{1m}[^{es}-šú] u[l] taš²]-ti. Later in the text, in l. 213, where Nergal follows Ea's instructions, the line is repeated almost verbatim:

| | | |
|----------|--------------|--|
| Ḫuzirina | obv. iii 41' | [^{lú} LÚNGA ² K]AŠ ^m [^{es} na-šu-niš-š]u e ta-mir-ma KAŠ ^{meš} 71-šú 'ul ¹ [taš ²]-ti |
| Uruk | rev. iv 12 | ^{lú} ŠU.DU _g .A KAŠ ^{bi.a} na-ši-šú ul ir- ¹ a-ma ¹ 'KAŠ ¹ [^{hi} ? ^{al} ?]-[šú x x x] |

Note that the version of the line preserved in the Huzirina manuscript erroneously shows second person singular verbs instead of the expected third person singular forms. Considering that, in BM.39743, there is space for approximately three signs at the beginning of the line, it is likely that BM.39743 employed the variant *šāqû* (¹⁶ŠU.DU₈.A) ‘cup-bearer’ of the Uruk manuscript, instead of *sirāšû* (¹⁶LÚNGA) ‘brewer’.

7' BM.39743 appears to differ in the word order of the line from the Huzirina manuscript, which has (obv. ii 43'): [š]i-i a-na nar-¹ma¹-ki ¹i-ru¹-um-ma. Note, however, that in the later parallel section (l. 215), the Uruk manuscript exhibits much the same syntax as attested in the present fragment (Uruk manuscript rev. iv 14): u ši-ia i-ru-u[m]-m[a ana narmaki].

8' The reconstruction [*te²-qí²*]-ta is based on the Uruk manuscript in the parallel line later in the text (l. 216), which preserves the beginning of the line and reads as follows (rev. iv 15a): *te-¹qit¹ ¹i¹ [...]*. In contrast, the manuscript from Huzirina appears to differ in both of the parallel lines in question (obv. ii 44' // l. 132: [lu]-<<ub>>-bu-ši ¹BAR²¹ ¹MU¹²¹-šú il-la-bi-¹iš¹²¹; obv. iii 44' // l. 216: [lubūši x (x)] x ¹il-ta-ab-bi-iš¹), as well as in yet another parallel line later in the text (rev. iv 6' // l. 240: *lu-bu-ši ¹BAR²¹ [...]*).

9' BM.39743 is the only manuscript of the text to preserve this line, which is missing in both the Huzirina and Uruk manuscripts. Note, however, that in l. 269, when Ereškigal enters the bath yet another time, the Huzirina manuscript (rev. iv 35') reads *šaman*(i*+Giš*) *ha[šurri*(⁹¹⁵*HA*. [ŠUR] ...) “*hašurru*-cedar oil”. Although the present line is damaged, the text appears to mention an ointment with scented oil at this point, likely used by Ereškigal after bathing. The verb might be restored as *ilabbik* “it (sc. her body/skin) will become soft”. Compare also *Enūma eliš* V 92:³⁷ *hašurra ... [...]* *zumuršu ušal[bak]* “With cedar [oil] and [...] he anoi[n]ted his body”.

Geraldina Rozzi

51 New Manuscripts of the *Syncretistic Hymn to Gula* (2)

Presented here is one new manuscript of the *Syncretistic Hymn to Gula*,³⁸ BM.38076, and a reconstruction of the opening lines of the composition in light of the catchline identified as its incipit by Földi in the following article of this collection (**no. 53**) and Mitto's identification of a piece adding to its opening lines.³⁹

1. BM.38076 (1880,0617.1905)

The small fragment BM.38076 (1880,0617.1905) is from the British Museum's Babylonian collection.⁴⁰ The piece is evidently from the right-hand part of the tablet. On its obverse, it contains part of 10 lines of text; the reverse is lost [fig. 5]. The piece was identified by Jiménez as perhaps an indirect join to BM.37616 (1880,0617.1373), a tablet identified as part of the composition by W.G. Lambert. The obverse of BM.37616 supplies the opening of ll. B+10-B+20 of the hymn, providing in ll. B+10-B+15 a partial duplicate of the reverse of the Neo-Assyrian manuscript from Aššur, VAT.9670, published by Ebeling 1919 as KAR 109.

The key to the possibility that this new piece might be part of the *Syncretistic Hymn to Gula* lay in the first fully preserved sign in l. 2', LIL, where a tentative reading *t]e²-lil-t[i²* was proposed by Jiménez: where BM.37616 breaks in l. B+14 with *mar-kás m[a-a-ti ...]*, the duplicate KAR 109 reads *mar-kás māti*(KUR) *te-lil-ti*. A small textual variant would be required by l. 3' of the piece, but the remainder of the text seemed to work well, in particular ll. 4' and 6'. On examination, the two pieces BM.37616 and BM.38076 do in fact join, touching at ll. B+17-B+20 (ll. 5'-8' of BM.38076), although text on the face of the tablet is lost in the break.

³⁷ Heinrich 2021.

³⁸ Bennett 2021; 2023b.

³⁹ Bennett 2023a, 156-8 no. 1.

⁴⁰ For a description of the 80-6-17 collection and its provenance, see Leichty 1986, xxx (Reade).

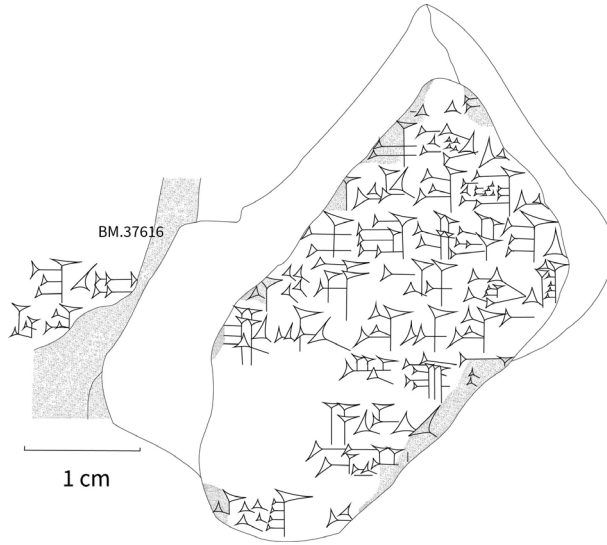


Figure 5
Copy BM.38076, by E. Bennett

BM.38076 supplies a small amount of new text. Newly recovered words and variants are set in bold type below.

- 1' (B+13) [bi-rit šip-pa-a-ti ^dšar-rat-de-er]^[ki] [bīt(É)-sa gaš-rat]
2' (B+14) [ina É.DIM.GAL.KALAM.MA mar-kás m[a-a-ti] (o o) t[e³-lil-t[i] [šá-ki-na-at ki-di-ni]
3' (B+15) [ka-nu-ut ^dba-ú kul-lat ad-na]-¹a¹-ti **na-ram-t[i** ^do (o o)]
4' (B+16) [ina É.UL.ĜÉ.ME.ŠU.DU, x o o o] **pa-ra-aš ša-ma-m[i** (o o)]
5' (B+17) [a-ši-rat as-mat šá-ma-mi x (o)] x-¹šá¹-**tir** **ina kèš**^{ki} [(o o)]
6' (B+18) [ina É.MAĜ x šik-n[a-at na]]-**piš-ti na-an-na x** [o o o]
7' (B+19) [ina karkara(IM)^{ki} a-x o o o] **ri-kis x** [o o (o)]
8' (B+20) [^d? x o o o o o o] **a-ši-bat** [o o o]
9' (B+21) [o o o o o o o o] **BÀD x** [o o o o]
10' (B+22) [o o o o o o o o] **x-tu x** [o o o o o]

Philological Notes

1' KI seems certain, duplicating the determinative which marks the toponym in the goddess' name, Šarrat-Dēr, contained in KAR 109.

2' The insertion of *bēlet* to resolve the grammatical issue presented by the apparently genitive form *tēlilti* (<*bēlet*> *tēlilti* “mistress of purification rights”) is suggested in the edition presented.⁴¹ The space between the text in BM.37616 and BM.38076 is sufficient to accommodate this.

3' The signs ¹a¹-ti are consistent with the reading in KAR 109, *kul-lat ad-na-a-ti* “all the world”. However *na-ram-t[i* ‘beloved’, presumably followed by a divine name (“beloved of [the god of the temple or town]”), presents a variant, where KAR 109 reads *rikis māti* “bond of the land” (B+15). Variants between the manuscripts of the composition (apart from orthographic variants) are very few indeed.⁴² Consequently, it might be wondered whether this different reading calls into question whether BM.37616 and BM.38076 are indeed from the same tablet. However, the physical fit of the two pieces and the thematic evidence in this small piece (cf. notes on ll. 4' and 6') are compelling.

4' *paraš šamāmī* “the ordinances of the heavens” – those divine directions which duly order the universe – form a common motif in Babylonian hymns and prayers. In the *Syncretistic Hymn to Gula* it is a characteristic feature that sacred place names given there are interpreted in the Akkadian text. The temple name given by BM.37616 in B+16 is É.UL.ĜÉ.ME.ŠU.DU, “House of the Firmament of Heaven

⁴¹ Bennett 2021, 325; 2023b.

⁴² See Bennett 2021, 188-90.

and Perfects *Me's*". The phrase *paraš šamāmī* is a scholarly interpretation of this temple name, in the manner of the composition, thus thematically linking the two pieces: both *paršu* and *šamāmū* have the lexical equivalence *me*.

5' Scholarly speculation on the temple named in B+16 continues in BM.37616 in B+17. With this new piece, it is now apparent that the temple (which is known only from this composition) is in Keš, not Dēr.⁴³

6' It is evident that very little is lost in the break. The stock phrase *šiknāt napišti* 'living things', spanning the break between the pieces, is now assured. In this context, *na-an-na-x* can be understood as a form of *nannābu* 'offspring, seed', a thematically related idea. If so, this would tend to indicate that É.MAḤ here is the temple of the mother goddess, perhaps also at Keš,⁴⁴ rather than one of Ištar's temples listed in a geographical temple list from Khorsabad.⁴⁵

7' The bound form *rikis* 'bond' points to a dependent genitive, still lost. The image "bond of the land" is deployed commonly elsewhere in the composition, as it is in B+15 in the Neo-Assyrian manuscript KAR 109, but the traces remaining in l. 7' would not suggest this. Despite the frequency of this image in the composition, it is striking that a variant reading in l. 4' occurs where KAR 109 has *rikis māti*, prompting the question whether text has been displaced in one of these manuscripts.

8' BM.37616 breaks off here. The traces preserved there indicate that the line commenced with a divine name. The uninscribed space on the new piece suggests that only a short phrase could have followed. *āšibat* 'she dwells' is clear.

9' BĀD may be logographic writing for *dūru* 'city wall'; just conceivably, it is perhaps part of a toponym (Dēr = BĀD.[AN^{ki}]?).

2. The Opening Lines of the *Syncretistic Hymn to Gula*

The catchline revealed by the new manuscript of *Bullussa-rabi's Hymn to Gula* (BM.47756) and its join to BM.33849⁴⁶ is presented and edited by Földi in the next article of this collection (no. 53). It serves to confirm the possibility explored by Földi,⁴⁷ that, not later than the Late Babylonian period, *Bullussa-rabi's Hymn to Gula* was given an edition as part of a series of hymns. That another hymn to the healing goddess should follow *Bullussa-rabi's Hymn* in such a series is entirely appropriate. As Földi noted above, the catchline now revealed by the new manuscript BM.47756+, *mukinnat šamē(AN) eršeti(KI) bēlet kala ilat nabnīti*, appears to supply the incipit of the *Syncretistic Hymn to Gula*, of which only the first word, [m]ukinnat, was attested to date.

For many years the first six lines the *Syncretistic Hymn to Gula* were known only from the Neo-Assyrian manuscript from Kuyunjik in the British Museum, K.232+K.3371+K.13776. A fragment from the British Museum's Babylon collection, BM.40298 (1881,0324.165), was identified by Mitto as containing, on its obverse, part of the opening lines of the composition (ll. 4-9) and, on its reverse, just one readable sign from the text, followed by part of a colophon.⁴⁸ As noted there, the colophon has a broken word which perhaps reflects an unusual word contained on the obverse of the piece (*ḫursānu* 'mountain(s)'), giving rise to the suspicion that the incipit of the composition, or a catchline, was set out there. The incidence of this unusual word, which is not used elsewhere in the extant text, might tend to favour the conclusion that it is indeed the incipit. However, until some further manuscript comes to light, it seems compelling now to suppose that the catchline in the new manuscript of *Bullussa-rabi's Hymn to Gula* is correctly identified as the incipit of the *Syncretistic Hymn to Gula*.

From the text preserved in K.232+ it seems certain that the composition commenced with two matching couplets, adopting a Sumerian compositional technique widely used in Akkadian hymns. This formulaic opening enables the reconstruction of its first six lines, in light of the incipit and the text on the fragment BM.40298. Only one short phrase in the passage is incomplete, *ba-na-at* [o o o], which is partially preserved in K.232+ l. 4, undoubtedly replicating the same phrase in l. 2 (from which it

⁴³ As tentatively suggested by George 1993, 155 no. 1171, where the temple name is given as É.UL.ŠĀR.ME.ŠU.DU₇. For the scholarly speculation and this temple name respectively, see Bennett 2021, 383-4 and 328.

⁴⁴ Cf. George 1993, 119 no. 713.

⁴⁵ George 1993, 120 no. 726; Bennett 2021, 328.

⁴⁶ Lambert 1967, Ms. b.

⁴⁷ Földi 2022.

⁴⁸ Bennett 2023a, 156-8 no. 1.

is almost entirely lost). In the edition presented⁴⁹ *ba-na-at* was understood as *banât* ‘she is beautiful’, paralleling the goddess’ physical and intellectual qualities. With the context now clearly set by the newly discovered incipit, it seems best understood as *bānât*, the feminine participle of *banû* ‘to create’: ‘she who creates/created (the) ...’. Words newly recovered from the manuscripts of *Bullussa-rabi’s Hymn to Gula* are set in **bold** type below.

- 1 *mukinnat šamê(AN) eršeti(KI) bēlet kala i’lat¹ [na]bnīti*
- 2 *rapšat uzni b[ānât o o o mušširat gišḫuri]*
- 3 *ninisin [mukinnat šamê(AN) eršeti(KI) bēlet kala ilat nabnīti]*
- 4 *rapšat uzni bānât[t o o o] mušširat gišḫur[i]*
- 5 *ibnī-ma šamû(AN)^u u eršeta(KI)^{ti} gimir ḫursāni⁷*
- 6 *mimma mala šuma nabû ba’ulāt ellil*

Translation

- 1 She who makes firm heaven and earth, lady of all things, goddess of creation,
- 2 She is of profound intelligence, [she who created ..., she (is the one who) draws the (divine) plan].
- 3 Ninisinna, [she who makes firm heaven and earth, lady of all things, goddess of creation,]
- 4 She is of profound intelligence, she who created [...], she (is the one who) draws the (divine) plan.
- 5 It was she who created heaven and earth, all of the mountains,
- 6 Everything that has a name, Enlil’s subjects.

Philological Commentary

With the newly identified incipit, it can be seen with confidence that, as might be expected, the first name given to the goddess in this hymn is interpreted by its scholar-composer at its outset, in the manner developed at length in later passages. Etymological correspondences between elements of the divine name Ninisinna (^dnin-ì-si-in^{ki}) can be understood in l. 1: *šamû* ‘heaven’ may interpret the marker which precedes the divine name, read not as dingir, but as an, as occurs elsewhere in this kind of speculative scholarship; *bēltu* ‘lady’ translates NIN, and perhaps *iltu* ‘goddess’ too may be so understood; *nabnītu* ‘creation’, derived from *banû* ‘to create’, can be understood to interpret both ì and si; *mukinnat*, from *kānu* ‘to be firm’, may also interpret si. Thus the name ^dnin-ì-si-in^{ki} is proclaimed in its first line and the goddess’ character explained and celebrated. These etymological correspondences (which can be detected also in ll. 2-6) and the flexible interchange of *banû* ‘to grow, be beautiful’ and *banû* ‘to create’ are features of this type of scholarship.⁵⁰

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⁴⁹ Bennett 2021; 2023b.

⁵⁰ See Bennett 2021, 339-40.

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