Two Sumerian incantations against migraine (sağ-ki-dab-ba) on amulets and cuneiform tablets

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In Revue d’assyriologie et d’archéologie orientale Volume 113, Issue 1, 2019, pages 175 to 188
Publishers P.U.F.

ISSN 0373-6032
ISBN 9782130821656

Article available online at
https://www.cairn-int.info/revue-d-assyriologie-2019-1-page-175.htm
TWO SUMERIAN INCANTATIONS AGAINST MIGRAINE (sağ-ki-dab-ba) 
ON AMULETS AND CUNEIFORM TABLETS

BY
András BÁCSKAY

INTRODUCTION

The Sumerian incantation (é n  s a g - k i  m u - u n - d a b ) was first identified and translated as part of the series UGU by Thompson in his English translation of the relevant part of AMT 104, 1 then Franz Köcher recognised a further duplicate of this text. Later, Irving Finkel established that the incipit of this incantation is also attested on the second tablet of the series Muššu’tu¹ and in the publication of this series, Barbara Böck edited six manuscripts of the incantation. Furthermore, Böck identified additional parallels among medical prescriptions against headache, related to the third tablet of UGU series and other medical tablets. Recently, Anais Schuster-Brandis published this incantation between the amulet-stone lists against headache, providing a transliteration and translation of K 9288+ ii 13-16 (Schuster-Brandis Taf. 39). Finally, the incantation was discussed by Al-Rawi in 2008 as the legends of two cylinder-shaped stone beads from the Tomb II of Assyrian queens in North-West Palace at Kalhu. These two beads were excavated together with two further inscribed beads, and Al-Rawi suggests that the four inscribed beads were worn on the same necklace belonging to Ataliya, queen of the Assyrian king Sargon II (721-705 B.C.). Taking all known manuscripts into consideration, it can be stated that the incipit é n  s a g - k i  m u - u n - d a b relates to two different incantations preserved by the therapeutic series UGU and Muššu’tu as well as by the stone amulets of an Assyrian queen. In my paper I provide not only an edition of both incantations, but also discuss the characteristics of the text and, finally, present the various rituals connected to the incantations.

4. Tablet II lines 53-55 (Böck 2007: 125-126). The manuscripts are the following: SpTU III 65 (MS N), AMT 102-103 (MS a), BAM 489 (MS b), AMT 79 2 (MS c), K 9288 (MS d) and BM 41271 (MS e). Notably, Böck did not separate the text of the two incantations, but presented them under the same incipit.
5. Böck (2007: 44-45). In her recent article about the incantations of the series, she also listed the same therapeutic prescriptions (Böck 2018: 239).
7. Al-Rawi (2008: 132-134 text nos. 9-10). Only the drawings of the beads were published in Al-Rawi’s publication, their photos are not available. The museum number of the beads is unknown and the objects have been stored recently in the vault of the Iraqi Central Bank. The bead was discussed recently as an example for “neck stone” (NA.GÚ) by Zoltán Niederreiter (2018: 4).
8. It is noteworthy to mention that the inscriptions of the beads do not mention any personal name, and Al-Rawi’s suggestion is based on the assumption of the investigation on the royal skeletons by Müller-Carpe, who observed that the corpse of the queen was heated after her death (Müller-Carpe 2008: 144) The heating of the corpse was interpreted by Al-Rawi as a method of “disinfection”; he theorized that the queen possibly suffered from a contagious disease, and therefore wore healing amulets at her time of death (Al-Rawi 2008: 132).

The importance of these incantations is based on three ascertained facts. First, they were applied “in practice”: the medical incantations were inscribed on beads and worn as amulets by a high-ranking member of the Neo-Assyrian royal family. Second, the archaeological evidence for the application of medical incantations written on amulet stones is rare. Third, the incantations became part of two well-known medical series (UGU and Muššu) preserved on cuneiform tablets from the Neo-Assyrian and Late Babylonian periods. It is important to note that these three facts may correlate to each other. Namely, the amulet was presumably made by a court healer (more likely an aššipu) who served the Assyrian king Sargon, and copied the text of the incantations from compendium tablets similar to the ones preserved in Assurbanipal’s library.

THE MANUSCRIPTS: CUNEIFORM TABLETS AND AMULETS

The two discussed Sumerian incantations are preserved on ten cuneiform tablets and fragments from the first millennium, as well as on two cylinder-shaped amulet stones, which probably belong to the same necklace.

Among the tablets and fragments, we can separate a group of texts from Assurbanipal’s library, which relate to the third tablet of the therapeutic Series UGU. The tablet K 2566 + K 10475 + K 2516 (+) Sm159 (+) K 8090 (+) K 14698 (AMT 103, 1, BAM 487, BAM 493, JMC 27 (2016) 60 n. 4.) and tablet K 4023 (AMT 103-104, 1) are complete duplicates representing a two-column library tablet, and these two tablets include the majority of the preserved text. The fragment K 7834 presents the third manuscript of UGU III. Besides these three texts, there is a further fragment which contains at least one part of the text of UGU III. DT 319 (AMT 79, 2) is a small fragment, originally part of a two-column tablet, and its preserved text is parallel to the text of UGU III, but the position of the text of DT 319 differs from other manuscripts of UGU III. It means that, based on the position of the vertical dividing line on DT 319, it is possible that the text can be found in the first or fourth column of the tablet, and that in all further manuscripts of UGU III, this part of the text can be found in

9. Stone or clay beads inscribed with apotropaic incantations were widely used in ancient Babylonia and Assyria, and many objects were inscribed with an incantation from the magical series Ḫulbazzu (for example CUSAS 32, nos. 67-69). It is important to emphasize that no further object inscribed with a medical incantation and owned by a member of the royal family is known to me, but the letters of Neo-Assyrian scholars mention the contemporary use of medical treatment and amulet stones (SAE 10, 241) or amulet stones and phylactery (SAE 10 309).

10. The magical effects of the cylinder-shaped amulet stones were described on the tablet BAM 194 viii’ 9′-15′ and its parallel texts (most recently edited by Simkó 2015). Notably, the praxis of producing amulets made of clay or stone and inscribed with an incantation is well known in medical texts, and they are also attested in the archaeological material. For example, a cylinder-shaped clay amulet inscribed with the canonical Lamaštu incantation was found in the Persian grave at Ugarit, and the same text as well as an instruction for making a cylinder-shaped amulet can be attested on STT 144 rev. 1-4 (Farber 2014: 273). For the magical and medical use of cylinder-shaped amulets, see Goff (1963: 195–211); Salje (1997); Schuster-Brandis (2008: 50–52).

11. The cuneiform sources known to me related to court healers or incantation-priests during the rule of Sargon II are very poor, and no positive identification of the maker of the amulet stones is possible as yet. In the SAA I text corpus, I can identify two tablets for aššipu and a further single tablet for asuš (I owe these references to Ádám Vér). The letter SAA I no. 128 written by Ina-šar-Bēl-allāk, treasurer of Dur-Šarrukken, mentions “two litres of bread and two litres of beer for exorcists” as a surplus of the daily offering of the Nabû temple, but the text does not mention their names (line rev. 16, edited by Parpola 1987: 104). Another text (SAA VII no. 115) is a list which contains flax and wool rations for various Assyrian officers including an “exorcist” who receives “two talent (wool or flax) for the whole year” (lines rev. i 1-2, edited by Fales and Postgate 1992: 123). The letter (SAA XV no. 4) written by Issar-dūri, governor of Arrapha, informs the king that the governor sent two physicians (Nabû-šumu-iddina and Nabû-eriba) to the king (lines obv. 4-15, edited by Fuchs and Parpola 2001: 6).

12. In his publication, Al-Rawi partially identified the cuneiform texts which are parallel to the incantation preserved on the amulets. Cf. Hussein, Aljawal & Gibson (2016: 14 note no. 28).

13. The single work, known to me, for the edition of the whole text of UGU III was published by Thompson (1937) and some passages of the text were published later by Scurlock (2006: 695-696, 747 and 2014: 387-388) and by Böck (as parallels to the tablet II and VII of the series Muššu). The modern edition of UGU III will be published by Cale Johnson and Krisztián Simkó in the near future. Krisztián Simkó, in his presentation at the 63th RAI (Marburg), altogether identified five manuscripts belonging to the third tablet of the therapeutic series UGU, preserved on various fragments from Assurbanipal’s library. If we suppose that the discussed incantations were originally a part of all manuscripts of the third tablet of UGU, the total number of the tablets and fragments relating to the discussed incantations would be fourteen. Furthermore, the incipit en sag-i mu-un-dab was mentioned in further medical texts like AMT 102, 1 i 33 // BAM 485 i 6 (edited in Scurlock 2006: 267-268 nos. 58 and Schuster-Brandis 2008: 133-134) but they do not contain the whole text of the incantation.
the third column. For that reason, I suggest that the tablet DT 319 belongs to another compendium tablet, which contains a part of the text of UGU III.\textsuperscript{14}

The two-column compendium tablet K 239 + K 2509 + K 326 + K 9080 (BAM 489 + BAM 508) includes a list of incantations, together with brief connected rituals (mainly fumigations) against ear complaints, internal pain (ȘA.GIG.GA) and head problems. The last tablet related to UGU III is the Neo- or Late Babylonian Ashm 1924-788 (OECT XI, 71) from Kish, which contains a list of incantations belonging to tablets I-IV of UGU.\textsuperscript{15}

Another group of tablets is connected to the series \textit{Mušši`u}. The Late Babylonian tablet W 22668, 2 (SpTU III 65) belongs to the group of series tablets of \textit{Mušši`u} written by the well-known Urukean scribe Iqṣa. The BM 41271 + BM 41306 is a Neo- or Late Babylonian fragment (middle part) of an at least two-column tablet. It originates from Babylon and contains incantations connected to the series \textit{Mušši`u} and accompanying rituals.\textsuperscript{16}

Finally, the tablet K 9288 belongs to the series \textit{kunuk ḫalti}.\textsuperscript{17}

The first incantation can be found on seven cuneiform tablets and fragments (K 4023, K 2566 + K 10475 + K 2516 (+) Sm159 (+) K 8090 (+) K 14698, DT 319, Ashm 1924-788, K 239 + K 2509 + K 326 + K 9080, BM 41271 + BM 41306 and W 22668, 2) as well as on the amulet stone (Al-Rawi 2008, Text no. 9). The second incantation is preserved on six cuneiform tablets and fragments (K 4023, K 239 + K 2509 + K 326 + K 9080, K 9288, K 7834, Ashm 1924-788 and W 22668, 2) as well as on another amulet (Al-Rawi 2008, text no. 10).

Concerning the text of the first incantation, it can be concluded that its text is identical on three NA tablets (K 4023, DT 319 and K 239 + K 2509 + K 326 + K 9080) and on the amulet stone (Al-Rawi 2008, Text no. 9) but three further manuscripts (Ashm 1924-788, W 22668, 2 and BM 41271+BM 41306) from NB or LB periods exhibit several textual and orthographical differences. Thus, Ashm 1924-788 does not contain one part of the text (lines 3-4) or W 22668, 2 represents a unique text variant in line 5 (saŋ-ki-eš instead of saŋ giš ra). In the case of the first incantation, we can suspect the existence of at least two different source texts.

There are several differences between the various manuscripts in the case of the second incantation. First, the three extra introductory lines on the amulet stone (Al-Rawi 2008, Text no. 10) are omitted in all of its parallels. The manuscripts also contain several differences, both orthographical (like “a-da-pà” in K 4023 and “a-da-pai” in all other manuscripts in line 8) and textual (like the lack of the verb (mu-un-dab) in lines 6, 7 and 11 on amulet stone, or “saŋ-ki sa-ka-ra” in W 22668, 2 and “saŋ sar-ra” in K 7834 versus “saŋ saḥar-ra” in all remaining manuscripts in line 7). In sum, the cuneiform tablets known to me as manuscripts of the two incantations do not contain the source text of the two amulet stones. Moreover, we have to emphasize that the relationship between the text of the amulets and the cuneiform tablets is not entirely clear. The text of the second incantation on an amulet stone (Al-Rawi 2008, Text no. 10) starts with “2 én-n[al]”, which probably suggests that this incantation is the “second” in the order. We find the same order of the two incantations on two cuneiform tablets (K 239 + K 2509 + K 326 + K 9080 and W 22668, 2), but the two incantations follow an opposite order on another two cuneiform tablets (K 4023 and Ashm 1924-788).\textsuperscript{18}

As usual, both incantations have a similar framed structure: the text starts with “é n” and ends with “tē šipīt”. The text of both amulets contains ditto signs, used as an abbreviation for the repetitive text passages of the incantations. Thus, in the first incantation, the ditto sign can be found in all lines referring to the repetition of the verbal prefix chain (“mu-un-dab” in lines 2, 3, 7 or

\textsuperscript{14} Some lines of the tablet DT 319 were edited as a manuscript of the second tablet of \textit{Mušši`u} by Böck (2007: 41).

\textsuperscript{15} Gurney (1989: 9) (description of the tablet). Robson also defined this tablet as a part of a Neo-Babylonian “library” at Kish (Robson 2004: 48).

\textsuperscript{16} The unpublished tablet was identified as a manuscript of the series \textit{Mušši`u} by Finkel (1991: 95) and one part of the text (lines ii' 7'-14' and iii' 4'-5') was elaborated by Böck as a manuscript of the lines 26-34 and 53-55 in the second tablet of the series (Böck 2007: 121-122, 125-126 and 129-129).

\textsuperscript{17} The tablet was identified as a manuscript of \textit{kunuk ḫalti} by Schuster-Brandis, who presented a forthcoming reconstruction of the series (Schuster-Brandis 2008: 193-197).

\textsuperscript{18} If we accept that the fragments Sm 159 and K 8090 belong to K 2566 as non-physical joins, the number of the manuscripts in which the two incantations do not follow each other will be three.
“mu-\text{-}u\text{-}n\text{-}dab\text{-}dab” in line 8). In line 5, the double ditto sign related to the god Asalluhi refers to two terms mentioned in the previous line (“sag giš ra mu-\text{-}u\text{-}n\text{-}dab”). This feature is omitted on the cuneiform tablets, and I suggest the use of the ditto sign as a possible method chosen by the manufacturer of the amulet stones in order to write a relatively long text on the limited space of the amulet stones.

**TRANSLITERATION AND TRANSLATION OF THE TWO INCANTATIONS**

*Manuscripts*

- A = Al-Rawi (2008, Text no. 9 Fig. 15-n).
- B = Al-Rawi (2008, Text no. 10 Fig. 15-o).
- C = K 4023 (AMT 103-104, 1) ii 27-29 (MS B), iii 6'8' (= MS A 1-8)
- D = Sm 159 (BAM 487) iii 9' (= MS A 1-8)
- E = DT 319 (AMT 79, 2) i' 14'-17' (= MS A 1-8)
- f = Ashm 1924-788 (OECT XI, 71) obv. 23'-24' (MS B 4-11), 34'-35' (= MS A 1-2 and 5-8)
- G = K 239 + K 2509 + K 326 + K 9080 (BAM 489 + BAM 508) iv 14'-17' (= MS A 1-8)
- 18-20 (MS B 4-11)
- h = BM 41271+ iii 4'-6' (unpub.) (= MS A 1-8)
- i = W 22668.2 (SpTU III 65) rev. 17-18 (= MS A 1-8), 19-21 (MS B 4-11)
- J = K 9288 (Schuster-Brandis 2008 Taf. 39) ii 13-16 (MS B 4-11)
- K = K 7834 2'-5' (= MS B 4-11)
- L = K 8090 (AMT 103, 1,) 1'-1' (= MS B [4]-11)

*The first incantation*

| A \_1 | [é]n sa\text{-}g\text{-}ki mu\text{-}u\text{-}n\text{-}da[b] |
| Cii₉\_a | én sa\text{-}g\text{-}ki mu\text{-}u\text{-}n\text{-}da[b] |
| Dii₉\_a | t\'én sa\text{-}g\text{-}ki mu\text{-}u\text{-}n\text{-}da[b] |
| Eii₅\_a | […mu\text{-}]t\text{-}un\text{-}t\text{-}dab |
| fobv.₃₄\_a | […] 'sa\text{-}g\text{-}ki mu\text{-}u\text{-}n\text{-}dab |
| Gij₁₄\_a | én sa\text{-}g\text{-}ki m\text{-}u\text{-}u\text{-}n\text{-}dab |
| hii₅\_a | én sa\text{-}g\text{-}ki mu\text{-}u\text{-}n\text{-}dab |
| i\text{rev.}_\text{1₇a} | […m]u\text{-}u\text{-}n\text{-}dab |
| A \_₂ | sa\text{-}g\text{-}s i\text{-}s\text{-}á M\text{IN} (= mu\text{-}u\text{-}n\text{-}dab) |
| Cii₆\_b | […] |
| Dii₆\_b | broken |
| Eii₅\_b | sa\text{-}g\text{-}s i\text{-}s\text{-}á mu\text{-}u\text{-}n\text{-}dab |
| fobv.₃₄\_b | sa\text{-}g\text{-}s i\text{-}s\text{-}á mu\text{-}u\text{-}n\text{-}dab |
| Gij₁₄\_b | […] |
| hii₅\_b | […] |
| irev.₁₇b | sa\text{-}g\text{-}s i\text{-}s\text{-}á mu\text{-}u\text{-}n\text{-}dab |
| A \_₃ | [s]a\text{-}г sa\text{-}h\text{-}r\text{-}ra M\text{IN} (= mu\text{-}u\text{-}n\text{-}dab) |
| Cii₇\_a | sa\text{-}г sa\text{-}h\text{-}r\text{-}ra m\text{-}u\text{-}u\text{-}n\text{-}dab |
| D | broken |
| Ei₅\_a | […] |
| f | omits |

19. I would like to extend my thanks to Strahil Panayotov, who kindly sent me photos of the tablet.
21. As mentioned above, this fragment belongs as a non-physical join to the tablet K 2566 + K 10475 + K 2516 (+) Sm159 (+) K 8090 (+) K 14698. This suggestion was mentioned earlier by Böck (2007: 26 note no. 20).
Incantation. It (= the ghost) has seized (my) temple. It has seized the straight (side) of (my) head. It has seized (my) head (var. temple) in the dust. O Marduk, beater of the head! It (= the ghost) has seized (my head).
O Asalluhi, beater of the head! It (= the ghost) has seized (my head), it has seized (my head), it has seized (my head). Incantation formula.

Notes
Line 1
Concerning the verb mu-un-dab, I suggest that the subject of the sentence is the ghost, and this may indicate that the previous passages of relevant tablet of UGU III deal with physical pains caused by a “ghost” or the “hand of a ghost”.24
Line 2
I followed Schuster-Brandis’s interpretation and translated the term si-sá as an adjective relating to the head.
Line 3
My translation follows Böck and Schuster-Brandis, but the meaning of the sentence “It has seized (my) head (var. temple) in the dust” seems obscure to me.
Line 4
My translation “beater of the head” (saššišra) is based on the interpretation of the medical commentary text on the 39th tablet of Sa-gig (SpTU I 40).

1. DI Š MUNUS a-riš-ti i-di-ip u i-giš-šú BA.Ú
2. ši-bit SAG.DU-šú nu-’u-šu-ru : SAG GIŠ RA
5. šašš-šú GAZ : na-ša-ra : GAZ : hé-pu-u
6. neš’i-ir SAG.DU ma-ša-šú muh-šú

If a confined woman is swollen and belches: she will die. She is stricken by grey hair on her head. SAG GIŠ RA (means) stricken. SAG (means) weapon, GIŠ (means) weapon, RA (means) to beat. Secondly RA (means) to strike (and) RA (also means) to beat. Thirdly GAZ (means): to strike, GAZ (also means) to break. (Consequently, the term neš’i-ir qaqqadi (means) beater of the skull.26

The second incantation

B1  2 ŋn-[a]’
B2  *MES SILIM-na’
B3  *MES BAD’ (hand-copy: QA) KUR
B4  [é]n ság-ki
C1a 27a  én [ság ‘]-[ki]
fobv. 23a  tén ság-ki
G8a  én ság-ki
inv. 19a  [...]1’x1
J1 13a  én ság-ki
K2a  [é]n ság-ki
B5  [m] u-un-dab
C1b 27b  [m] u-un-dab
fobv. 23b  ’mu-un-dab

24. The first passage of K 2566+ (AMT 102, 1) col. i 1-17 starts with rituals and incantations against suffering caused by “hand of ghost” (transliteration on the corpora of Babmed, English translation Thompson 1937: 26-27). Although the passage in lines 24-41 is fragmentary, it can be supposed the same causer (edited by Scurlock 2006: 267-268). Cf. “Es hat die Stirn gepackt” by Böck and “Die Stirn hat er gepackt” by Schuster-Brandis or “it struck (my) forehead” by Al-Rawi.
25. Hunger suggested that sag = kak-ku is a scribal mistake of qaq-qu and that it refers to the patient’s head (Hunger 1976: 49 note to line 3).
27. Al-Rawi hypothetically: *MES di-ni = Marduk is my judgement! If we accept Al-Rawi’s suggestion, this line probably can be interpreted as an abbreviated form of the epithet related to Marduk, Ea and Šamas di ниже дар дуну = “Those who give judgement” (Oshima 2011: 444 with reference to the relevant namburbi incantation).
28. Al-Rawi hypothetically read this sign as *MES qa-sat (O Marduk, the Bow!) but I do not know of this or a similar epithet of Marduk.
TWO SUMERIAN INCANTATIONS AGAINST MIGRAINE

Giv.18b  mu-[un-dab]  
Ji.13b  mu-un-dab
K29  'μu[1-\[n-dab]

B6  sa glean si-sá [MIN']  
C127c  sa glean si-sá mu-un-dab
foev. 23c  sa glean si-sá mu-un-dab:
Giv. 18c  [...]  
iiev. 19c  sa glean si-sá mu-un-dab
Ji.13c  sa glean si-sá mu-un-dab
K29  [...]  

B7  sa glean sahar[u-ra [MIN' MIN']  
C127d-29d  sa glean i[sar-[ra'...]/mu-un-[dab m]u-un-dab-dab
foev. 23d  sa glean i[x'...mu-u\[n-dab mu-u[n-dab] 'μu[1-un-dab
Giv. 18d  [...]  
iiev. 19d  sa glean ka sar-ra mu-un-dab
Ji.14  i[sar'[ sahar-ra mu-un-dab mu-un-dab mu-un-dab
K7  sa glean sar-ra mu-u\[n-dab...]

B8  [a]-da-pà abgal[al]
C128b  a-da-pà abgal
foev. 24a  a '-da-[pà abgal
Giv. 19a  a-da-pà [...]  
iiev. 29a  [a-da]-pà abgal
Ji.15a  i[a]-[dà]-pà abgal
K4  a-da-pà abgal  

B9  [e]ridu'ka-[ke-4]  
C128c  [...]  
foev. 24b  erid\[ka-ke-4:
Giv. 19b  [...]  
iiev. 28b  erid\[ka-ke-4
Ji.15b  erid\[ka-ke-4
K4  [...]  

B10  sa[ã]-ki mu-un-[dab]  
C128a  sa[ã]-ki 'μu[1-un-dab
iiev. 21a  [...]  
foev. 24c  sa[ã]-ki mu-un-dab
Giv. 20a  sa[ã]-ki mu-[un-dab]
Ji.15c  sa[ã]-ki mu-un-dab
K5a  sa[ã]-ki mu-un-dab

B11  sa[ã]-ki sahar-ra [MIN']  
C128b  sa[ã]-sahar-ra mu-un-dab t[u0 én]
foev. 24a  sa[ã]-sahar-ra mu-un-dab tu0 én
Giv. 20b  [...]  
iiev. 21b  [x'-i'] hí sa[ã]-ki-eš mu-un-dab mu-un-dab mu-un-dab-te ÉN\[NA

29. Weiher read [...\{t\}in.tin, but without translation or interpretation (von Weiher 1988: 44). Böck: [...\{l\}û-\[hi (Böck 2007: 126), phps [...\{asl\}û-\[hi. If this reconstruction is correct, this line in MS i seems a scribal mistake, because it is not analogous to further manuscripts of this line, but seems parallel to line 5-8 of the first incantation.
Second incantation. Marduk heal me! Marduk, the lord of the mountains! Incantation. It (= the ghost) has seized (my) temple. It has seized the straight (side) of (my) head. It has seized (my) head in the dust. Adapa, the wise man of Eridu! It (= the ghost) has seized (my) temple. It has seized (my) temple (var. head) in the dust. Adapa, the wise man of Eridu! It (= the ghost) has seized (my) temple. It has seized the straight (side) of (my) head. It has seized (my) head in the dust. Adapa, the wise man of Eridu! It (= the ghost) has seized (my) temple. It has seized (my) temple (var. head) in the dust.

Notes

Line 1
My hypothetical restoration of the text in MS B (2 én [a] én [a]) is based on the assumption that one part of the sign /na/ can be found below the gold end-cap. The term “second incantation” is preserved only in MS B and it could refer to the sequence of incantations quoted probably from an unknown manuscript. An alternative interpretation for this line can also be suggested. The term “second incantation” probably refers to the sequence of the amulet stones in the necklace. It means that the bead inscribed with the discussed incantation was placed as the second one in the necklace. It is noteworthy to mention that similar form ÉN⁵⁴ NA can be found in MS i line rev. 21.

Lines 2-3
Al-Rawi interpreted these two lines as two Akkadian blessings to Marduk (for his interpretation, see my footnotes to those lines). The mixture of language in the same incantation would not be out of the question, but without any duplicates or standard phraseology, his translation seems no more than speculation to me. I presume this part of the incantation to be an addition of the original text. My suggestion SILIM = suillama ("heal me!") is quite hypothetical, but probably fits the context of the text better. My reading for the second epithet of Marduk (“The Lord of the mountains”) is also quite hypothetical, suggesting a scribal mistake, but it may be connected to an Old-Babylonian prayer to Marduk. Another possibility is reading the sign QA as a fragmentary GUL sign.

Line 4
Al-Rawi interpreted the first sign as DINGIR, and suggested a vocative “O god”, similarly to the previous two lines. My restoration of the text in MS B ((é)én sa̱ ̱̱ki) is based on the assumption that one part of the sign /é n/ can be found below the gold end-cap, and that all remaining manuscripts contain the same term.

Line 6-7
My restoration of the text in MS B ([MIN]) is based on the assumption that the sign can be found below the gold end-cap, and that all remaining manuscripts contain the finite verb (mu - un - dab). Moreover, the same text on MS A also includes MIN as an abbreviation to mu - un - dab . See, my further restoration in lines 8-10 of MS B.

Line 7
By the interpretation of the sign /ha/ as phonetic gloss to sa̱ h a r in the term sa̱ g sa̱ h a r - ra in MS B I followed Al-Rawi’s suggestion. The manuscripts MS i and MS J contain two different variants. The form sa̱ g sa - kar - ra in MS i and sa̱ g sar - ra in MS J (instead of the regular sa̱ g sa̱ h a r - ra) seems to me phonetic variants of the same term written syllabically, which could testify to an corrupted original tablet or a misspelling of the original text. Unfortunately, the same sentence of the first incantation is fragmentary in MS i and it remains obscure to me. Notably, another mangled Sumerian incantation against the same illness (AMT 104, 1 col. iii 30 - 31) includes three consecutive terms (sa̱ g sa̱ h a r - ra, z a g - g a r - ra and sa̱ g - g a r - ra) which seem to be a phonetic variant of the same mumbo-jumbo spell.

Line 8
My restoration of the text in MS B ([a] - d a - p a (Text: IGI)) is based on the parallels, and it seems to me a scribal mistake or an abbreviation of the composed sign p a (IGI-RU).

Line 9
Al-Rawi interpreted this line differently: “[e]ridu⁴⁸ dan-num = Eridu, the powerful one” (Al-Rawi 2008: 133). My interpretation is based on the assumption that one part of the sign /ke/ can be found below the gold end-cap, and that all remaining manuscripts contain the same term.

Line 10
My restoration of the text in MS B (sa̱ g - ki mu - un - [d a b] ) is based on the assumption that the sign /d a b / can be found below the gold end-cap, and that all remaining manuscripts contain the verb (mu - un - d a b).

Line 11
My restoration of the text in MS B (sa̱ g - ki sa̱ h a r - ra [MIN]) is based on the assumption that the sign /MIN/ can be found below the gold end-cap and all remaining manuscripts contain the verb (mu - un - d a b). The text of MS i is different from the text of other manuscripts related to this line, and it seems similar to the relevant lines of the first incantation (MS i
rev. 18 = MS A 5-7); contrasting to all remaining parallel which contain the verb only once, the text of MS i includes the finite verb m u - u n - d a b or m u - u n - d a - d a b four times which can be found in the text of the first incantation.

THE CHARACTER OF THE INCANTATIONS én sag - ki mu-un-dab

The incantations on the medical compendium tablets from the first millennium have a heterogeneous character; they include Sumerian, Akkadian, bilingual and the so-called mumbo-jumbo incantations representing both scientific traditions, namely the ašipitūtu and the asûtu.33 The Marduk-Ea type or the Lamaštu incantations and further bilingual incantations belong to the traditional spells used elsewhere in ašipitūtu tradition.34 On the other hand, the incantations with aetiological myths of diseases, the “garbled”35 or “mangled”36 Sumerian spells including rhythmical repetition of Sumerian terms as well as the so-called abracadabra incantations, are considered to be part of the scientific tradition of the asûtu.37

At first sight, the discussed two incantations seem to be a part of the asûtu healing tradition, but their character is also connected to the tradition of the ašišipitūtu. Their language is Sumerian, including the repetition of the term ság - ki (“temple”) and the finite verbal form (m u - u n - d a b and m u - u n - d a b - d a b ).38 Similarly to other incantations against headaches found on the third tablet of UGU III, they also include rhythmical permutations of mumbo-jumbo, but the text of the incantations studied here have a Sumerian syntax and do not contain any gibberish or meaningless words.

The first incantation mentions two Babylonian syncrétic gods, Marduk and Asalluhi, and the introductory part of the second incantation, preserved only in MS B, also mentions Marduk. Both deities are connected to healing magic in general, and especially to expelling specific demon caused illnesses. Headache does not seem a typical or characteristic illness related to Marduk or Asalluhi,39 but the two gods provide the legitimation of the incantation. On the other hand, one part of the prescription in UGU III is connected to the ghost, more precisely physical pains like headache, ear problems etc. caused by the ghost (“seizure of the ghost” or “hand of the ghost”).40

THE RITUALS

One part of the cuneiform tablets discussed as manuscripts of the two incantations includes only the consecutive list of incantations (MS f, MS G, MS i) but another part of the references, preserved on therapeutic series tablets which contains two different types of the connected ritual (MS C, MS E, MS h, MS J, MS K, MS L). Four manuscripts of them describe the use of an amulet made of a set of various stone beads which was applied on the patient’s temple.

9. Dû.Dû.BI in=Zû GE[ x x (x)] NITA u MUNUS 'nax x¹ […]
10. šUBA SIG x x (x)] X¹ ina SAG.KI šù! […]

34. Notably, several medical texts include only elements from the traditional incantations belonging to the ašipitūtu.
For example, the text of the medical incantation against simmu sore in the patient’s eyes only refers to the dialogue of the Marduk-Ea type without describing the whole dialogue, and not Marduk or Ea but the goddess Nammu suggests the healing ritual (Geller 2010: 95) and recently Panayotov (2017: 229-232).
37. The incantations of the asûtu tradition use metaphorical conceptualisation directly related to diseases or bodily functions. For example, the water canal as metaphor is used in medical incantations against gynaecological problems and gastro-intestinal complaints (Steinert 2013). For the metaphors used in medical incantations related to various eye problems, see Panayotov (2017).
38. Thompson, Böck, Schuster-Brandis and Al-Rawi also interpreted the text as a Sumerian text without discussing specific features of this medical incantation type.
39. Based mainly on diagnostic references, Scurlock and Andersen suggest that Marduk caused chest pain, skin lesions and heart problems (Scurlock-Andersen 2005: 456-457, 459-460 and 486).
40. For the discussion of ság - k i - d a b - d a as a type of headache, see Scurlock-Andersen (2005: 311-314). For the edition of the prescription against migraine (ság - k i - d a b - b a), see Scurlock (2006: 264-364 nos. 55-120) and Scurlock (2014: 555-559).
9 Its ritual: black obsidian, male and female [...] stone, [...] green šubû-stone [...] (you knot it) onto his (sick) temple [...] 

K 4023 (AMT 104, 1) iii 9'-10'

18 Its ritual: [...] šubû-stone male and female [...] (you knot it) onto his (sick) temple [...] 

DT 319 (AMT 79, 2) i 18'-19'

Eight stones (against) migraine. You string (them) on white wool. 

You recite the incantation s a g - k i - m u - u n - d a b seven times (on it), tie a knot (on it) (and) tie it onto his (sick) temple. 

K 9288 ii 8-12 // K 4727 Rev. 17-19 (edited by Schuster-Brandis 2008: 134 and 135)

1'x x x1 [...] 

Six stones (against) migraine [...] (You recite) the incantation s a g - k i - m u - u [n - d a b …] 

BM 41271+ iii 2'-3'

Although the list of the stone beads used for amulets is fragmentary in the two texts discussed above, at least three different necklaces consisting of three different set of stones can be identified. The third necklace uses eight stones, the fourth six stones, but the number of the stones of the first and second necklaces is not identifiable. All stone names are preserved only for the third necklace, but I do not know of further references for the same set of stones. 41

In three further manuscripts, the discussed incantation was applied on another type of amulet. In this case the amulet consisted of only a single type of stone, namely the “head-stone”, which was stringed on seven knotted yarns made of wool, and the amulet was knotted to a patient’s sick temple. The texts of the rituals are as follows.

30. DÙ.DÙ. BI¹ 46[HÉ.ME.DA NU.NU 7 u 7 KA.KEŠDA ]ê¹[ina KEŠDA] 

31. 44SAG¹.DU È-ak ÈN 7-ši ŠID-nu 7-ši ina SAG.KI-[ši tara-kás] 

30 Its ritual: you twine a yarn from red wool, tie seven and seven knots (and) whenever [you tie (a knot)], string the “head-stone(s)” (on it), recite an incantation seven times (on it) (and) [tie (it)] to [his] (sick) temple. 

K 4023 (AMT 103, 1) i 30-31

6' [D]Ù.DÙ. BI¹ 44[HÉ.ME.DA…] 

7' 44[SAG.DU È-ak[k…] 

6' Its ritual: [you twine a yarn] from [red wool…] string the “head-stone(s)” (on it) […] 

K 7834 (AMT 103, 1) 6'-7'

41. The amulet stones against s a g,k i - d a b - b a have been discussed by Schuster-Brandis (2008: 132-136 Kette 118-).
The ritual describes the making of an amulet, which consists of seven knots and seven “head-stones”. The use of the “head stone” against headache could be explained by analogical magic; the name of the amulet stone includes the same logogram as the diseases. In the amulet stone lists, the “head stone” (possible reading is aban qaqqadi) was used against two diseases: sa.g - k i - d a - b a (Schuster-Brandis 2008: 133-134 Kette 119, 120, 122) and “hand of ghost” (Schuster-Brandis 2008: 142 Kette 137) but in all of these references, the “head stone” was used together with further stones and never alone. It is noteworthy to mention that a further stone bead inscribed with the inscription “The head-stone of Kurigalzu, the king” was also discovered in Tomb II of Assyrian queens at Kalhu, and it can be hypothetically suggested that this bead and the two amulet stone beads inscribed with the medical incantations originally belonged to the same necklace. It seems to me that the compiler of the UGU series placed the ritual using many different beads after the first version of the incantation (K 4023 (AMT 104, 1) iii 6 -10, K 8090 (AMT 103, 1) 1`-3’, DT 319 (AMT 79, 2) i` 1`-19’, BM 41271+ iii 2`-6’ and K 9288 ii 8-16) and the ritual using a set of head-stone or maybe a single head-stone after the second version of the incantation (K 4023 (AMT 103, 1) ii 24-27, K 7834 (AMT 103, 1) 2`-5’). Based on the organisation of the incantation, their connected rituals and the archaeological context, it can be suggested that the two stone beads with the two incantations were originally applied on two different necklaces. One of them contains many different stone beads, including the one inscribed with the first incantation. Another necklace consisted maybe of seven “head stones”, including a bead which bears the second incantation.

Finally, it is noteworthy to mention that, besides the six discussed rituals, which are placed directly under the two incantations, a further ritual using an amulet made of various stones and plants relates to the incantation s a g - k i m u - n - d a b. This text is preserved on a three-column compendium tablet from Nineveh, which contains incantations and rituals related to the therapeutic series UGU. Here, I provide the edition of the ritual.

42. The stone is undefined but it can be found in the section of grindstones in the lexical texts next to SAG.KAL and SAG.GUL.GUL stones in the forerunner of Ur 3-ra XVI from Sippar line 148 (MSL 10 p. 53). Schuster-Brandis also mentioned these lexical references (Schuster-Brandis 2008: 440: 895). The occurrence of an amulet stone in the OB lexical section of grindstones can be explained with the lexical principle of the acrography.

43. Al-Rawi (2008: 134 Text No. 13). Al-Rawi already suggested that the function of this head stone bead and the two discussed beads inscribed with the two incantations against “headache” could be the same (Al-Rawi 2008: 135). It is important to note that an alternate reading of the text (NA SAG.DU Ku-ri-gal-zu LUGAL) on this bead can also be suggested: “Stone (bead) for Kurigalzu’s head”.

44. The text was elaborated on earlier by Schuster-Brandis (2008: 134-135) and Scurlock (2006: 267-268, No. 58) but none of them edited all the manuscripts.

45. Scurlock: [DIS NA... DAB]45-su-ma SAG.KI.DAB.BA TUK.TUK.-sí NA4 KÜ.BABBAR NA4 KÜ.GI 46-GUG

46. Schuster-Brandis: [NSAG.KI]46 MU aç.GÍR

47. Schuster-Brandis: [nsAG.KI]46 MU aç.GÍR.

48. The text was elaborated on earlier by Schuster-Brandis (2008: 134-135) and Scurlock (2006: 267-268, No. 58) but none of them edited all the manuscripts.
é n s a g (supposedly Ataliya, consort of Sargon II). The references elaborated in this paper clearly testify that the incipit é n s a g

CONCLUSIONS

The medical incantations against headache (s a g - k j i m u - u n - d a b ŠID-nu-ma ina SAG.KI-ši KEŠDA-stu)

A = AMT 102, 1 i 24-33 // B = K 4727+ Obv. 39°-Rev. 5 // C = BAM 485 i 1°-6'

48. Schuster- Brandis: [NA2, MEŠ].

writing of the text on amulet stones. Finally, we have to emphasize that the application of medical incantations written on amulet stones represents the practical use of the medical incantations preserved in medical compendium tablets.

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**ABSTRACT**

This paper discusses two Sumerian incantations against headache (sāg - kī dab bā) preserved on cuneiform medical tablets from the Neo-Assyrian and Late Babylonian period, as well as on two cylinder-shaped stone beads discovered in the royal tomb II. in North-West Palace at Kalhu. The importance of the incantations is twofold. First, they provide an example for the practical use of medical incantations. Second, the two incantations were an integral part of two medical series from the first millennium: the UGU series and the Muššu’u series. The previous editions of the incantations (Böck 2007, Schuster-Brandis 2008 and Al-Rawi 2008) did not take into account all known manuscripts, and this has led to some misunderstandings. In this paper I present not only a new edition of all relevant cuneiform texts but also discuss the textual and orthographical differences between the various manuscripts, as well as the ritual context of the incantations.

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