

Two Previously Unedited Early Dynastic Incantations from CUSAS 32 1, Presumably against Scorpions¹

Matouš Mokry – Masaryk University, Brno

[The article provides critical editions of Early Dynastic incantations CUSAS 32 1 d and i, whose functions were ascertained as being against scorpions and their poisonous attacks. Besides detailed philological commentary, the article also situates the spells into the context of broader 3rd-millennium Sumerian incantation tradition and discusses performative aspects of the texts.]

Keywords: Sumerian magic; 3rd-millennium Sumerian incantations; Early Dynastic period; magic against scorpions.

The following text provides textual editions and translations of two incantations found on an Early Dynastic multi-text rectangular incantation tablet CUSAS 32 1 (= MS 4549/1; 16,0 × 14,0 × 3,0 cm), an undated and unlocated textual carrier copied by Andrew George which contains 9 spells accompanied by a colophon.² Namely, the article studies CUSAS 32 1 d (iv: 7–v: 3) with CUSAS 32 1 i (x: 5–11) and furnishes them for the first time with full translation and critical commentary. As their content indicates, the spells were most likely used against scorpions and their poison. Let us start with the more understandable one, CUSAS 32 1 i.

1. CUSAS 32 1 i

Already George (2016: 26–27) remarked from his provisional reading of x: 9–10 that the function of the spell was likely a magical elimination of a scorpion. This purpose seems to be further confirmed by other lines of the text.

Transliteration

Col. x:

5 en₂-e₂-nu-ru

6 ^{mul}ĝir₂ an-na ħa-am₆-tar

7 'x'-gen₇ 'x'-DU

8 'bisag' pa₄-šeš^{r_d} nin-' girim_x'(A.BU.'ĤA'.DU)

1. The assyriological abbreviations used in this article are listed on the Cuneiform Digital Library Initiative (CDLI) website available at http://cdli.ox.ac.uk/wiki/abbreviations_for_assyriology (last accessed on 9. 10. 2022), to which add FSB = Frühe Sumerische Beschwörungen (designation of 3rd-millennium Sumerian incantations edited in Rudik 2015) and MS = Manuscript Schøyen (object signature, Schøyen Collection, Oslo and London).

2. For the general description of the tablet, see George 2016: 13, 25–27. For the photo and autograph (used here in preparing these editions), see *Ibid.*, Pl. I–II.

- 9 ʿsiʿ-be₂ ki ʿḥe₂ʿ-*la*₂
 10 ʿkunʿ-be₂ ʿdaʿ-*ba* ḥe₂-ḡa₂-ḡa₂
 11 ʿgagʿ[?]-gen₇ ʿga-daʿ-*la*₂

Translation

Col. x:

- 5 enenuru(-incantation).
 6 (starry) Scorpion of heavens has verily untied itself.
 7 Like a ...
 8 (with) a basket may the pa₄-šeš-priestess Ningirim
 9 suspend its pincers to the ground,
 10 may she place its tail to its side!
 11 Like a peg(?) I will be able to hang it!

Commentary

x: 6: The reference to heavenly bodies related to the scorpion (often through the scorpion's comparison to other animals) occurs in the introduction of several Ur III and OB incantations against scorpions, e. g.:

^{mul}gu₂ an-na

“(oh, starry) Bull of heavens!” (FSB 70³ obv. 1, Ur III)

mul-mul ʿgu₄ anʿ-*na*

gu₄ si-sa₂ an-na

“(oh) Stars! Bull of heavens! True bull of heavens!” (VS 17 10: 46–47, OB)

mul-mul ʿḡir₂ʿ an-ʿnaʿ

“(oh) Stars!” Scorpion of heavens!” (VS 17 10: 21, OB)

This line thus clearly belongs to the opening part of the spell, where the problem and the entities that ought to solve it are usually introduced and described. Therefore, ḥa-am₆-tar is most likely not to be understood as a wish for the destruction of the scorpion, but as a description of the constellation affecting the banished scorpion due to their perceived similarity.⁴ As such, I interpret the verbal stem tar together with its possible Akkadian translation *paṭārum* as meaning “to loosen, to untie”,⁵ according to which the scorpion-like constellation made a certain movement whose exact meaning and significance for the incantation rite might be lost to us (perhaps elucidated in the obscure and damaged x: 7), with the prefix ḥa- expressing epistemic certainty.⁶ Note also the writing of ḤA / LAK 644 being turned to 90° on the tablet – for a similar turning of ŠE₃ / LAK 794 on this textual carrier, see viii: 1.⁷

3. 3rd-millennium Sumerian incantations edited up until the year 2015 will be referred to in the text according to the catalogue of Rudik 2015 (who was thus unable to contain CUSAS 32 1). If only one textual carrier is known, the spell is designated by a simple number (such as in this instance); if several textual carriers are known, different copies are in the catalogue signed by different letters after the number of the spell (such as FSB 3A, FSB 3B, etc.). For the reading of gu₂ as a phonetic rendering of gu₄ “bull” (justified also by the similar passages here presented), see Al-Rawi 2008: 22; Rudik 2015: 379.

4. For the principle *similia similibus* and the scorpion's bovine symbolism, see Rudik 2015: 378–379 and below.

5. See CAD P, p. 287.

6. See e. g. Jagersma 2010: 562–563; Zólyomi 2017: 243, 247.

7. See George 2016: 120.

x: 8–10: Here, we are turning away from the description of the problem to wish formulae banishing the scorpion. As in another Early Dynastic spell FSB 66 (directed against a snake and a scorpion), the dangerous animal is being bound and neutralized by Ningirim. The deity is in x: 8 further endowed with a similar epithet as in FSB 66 – whereas in the latter, Ningirim is designated as *gudu₄* (FSB 66A iii: 7, B ii: 3¹), here, the goddess bears the title *pa₄-šeš*, priestly title closely related to *gudu₄* already in the Early Dynastic Mesopotamia.⁸

Firstly, Ningirim may suspend the pincers of the scorpion to the ground, presumably using a basket (*bisaĝ*) which would hinder the scorpion's movement. I find the reading of the first sign in x: 8 as *ĝeš* “wooden stick” less probable, since *ĜEŠ* / LAK 673 is usually written slimmer on the tablet, therefore, I read the slightly damaged sign as *ĜA₂* / LAK 674 = *bisaĝ*. The instrumental function of *bisaĝ* presupposes ablative case-ending, which is unfortunately left unwritten. *si* most probably refers to scorpion's pincers, as its Akkadian equivalent *qarnum* can,⁹ and as the lexeme is used in some other 3rd-millennium incantations mentioning scorpions¹⁰. *ki* (“earth”) is most probably to be understood as being in locative 3 / directive case -e since the lack of a case ending is then easily explained by the general absence of its writing after a final vowel in Old Sumerian.¹¹ Secondly, Ningirim may neutralize the scorpion by putting its tail to its side, presumably from its upright position enabling the attack. The tail of a scorpion (*kun ĝir₂*) is being cut off (*tar*) in FSB 66A iii: 9; here, more benign practices are being used.

x: 11: With this line, the attention is shifted by the reciter of the spell (speaking now in 1st ps.) from the divine acts to the human ritual performance. In 3rd-millennium Sumerian incantations against scorpions and snakes, the inclusion of 1st ps. into the description of the treatment of a problem is fairly common – whereas in FSB 66A iii: 8–9; FSB 67; and CUSAS 32 2 ii: 1–3, divine agents solely perform neutralization of the animals and the 1st ps. is only marked by *ma-* (“for me”) in the verbal form,¹² reciter speaking in 1st ps. plays an active role in FSB 44 obv. 7–9; FSB 65 xvii: 2; FSB 68 rev. 1; and FSB 70 obv. 4–rev. 2. In FSB 65 and FSB 70, the speaker is actually designated by the 1st-ps. prefix of volition *ga-*. With verbal form *'ga-da'-la₂* (“I will be able to hang it!”), CUSAS 32 1 i thus here employs fairly normal grammatical formulation. The analogy with a peg (*gag*) as an object of hanging is here most probably used as a way to elicit the conception of easy suspension of the dangerous creature (which was performed in the incantation rite on a model?)¹³

8. Krispijn 2004: 109–110 with further references.

9. CAD Q, p. 134–135, 137.

10. See FSB 61A i: 2–4; FSB 64 obv. 1; and here edited CUSAS 32 1 d iv: 11; Rudik 2015: 341, 351–352 with further OB references.

11. Jagersma 2010: 165. On the contrary, the presence of locative (1) -'a is usually indicated after a final vowel in Old Sumerian – see Jagersma 2010: 172–175; x: 10 in this here edited spell.

12. For the interpretation of the single-text incantation tablet CUSAS 32 2 as containing a divine agent of neutralization, see Rudik 2020.

13. Although the procedure of hanging a scorpion is unattested in 3rd-millennium incantations, it is not an impossible technique of neutralization and ritual act. The phrase “hang on a nail” (*gag la₂*) occurs in several Ur III administrative documents to designate placement of meat, see Steinkeller 1999: 190, n. 15. For the sake of the translation being as faithful to the actual written word as possible, however, it is more advisable to interpret the passage as designating a scenario where the nail itself is being hanged, which is then compared in the incantation to the disabling of a scorpion in a persuasive analogy (I am thankful to Dr. Sergio Alivernini and an anonymous reviewer for this suggestion).

2. CUSAS 32 1 d

This enigmatic incantation unfortunately does not yield any completely unambiguous evidence for its use against scorpions. The dangerous agent is in the spell described as AMAR / LAK 267 and GAG / LAK 504, which are probably to be understood as metaphoric designations of scorpion due to the bovine language (AMAR is most probably to be read as amar = “calf”), the emergence of the entity out of the earth / underworld (iv: 9 ki-ta e₃-a “from the earth / underworld it emerged”), and its description in iv: 11 si nu-bad (most probably to be translated as “(its) pincers were opened no (more)”). The underworld / earth as a potential original place of the scorpion’s departure could be gleaned from FSB 70 obv. 3:

ušum-gal ki-a ʿsa₂ʿ gi₄-gi₄

“(like a) Dragon / Great serpent (he) roars(?)¹⁴ in the underworld / on the earth.”

As we already saw in FSB 70 obv. 1 cited above, other 3rd-millennium spells can also somehow relate the dangerous arachnid to bovine creatures – most notably, Ur III FSB 68 obv. 4 designates the scorpion as amar (“calf”) too.¹⁵ This familiar metaphor is then accompanied by the sign GAG (which could indicate the dangerous agent alone – see iv: 8) that could be interpreted as gag (“peg, nail” = *sikkatum*)¹⁶ and serve as an unfortunately unattested metaphor for the piercing tail of the arachnid (scorpion’s most dangerous part). This interpretation is further supported by the description of the tail of a scorpion as being yellow-green in FSB 68 rev. 3 (ġir₂ kun si₁₂ “scorpion of (i. e. with) the yellow-green tail”), which seems to be present also here in iv: 8 gag sissi_x (“yellow-green nail”). In this respect, amar gag in iv: 14 and v: 2 is probably to be understood as meaning “calf (and) the nail”, referring to the scorpion and its tail.¹⁷ The incantation served most probably as a remedy for a patient already stung by a scorpion.

Transliteration

Col. iv:

7 en₂-e₂-nu-ru

8 gag sissi_x bar bi₂-tur

9 ki-ta e₃-a

10 gi₄ nu-e₃:a

11 si nu-bad

12 ʿasar abzu ġiri₃ i₃-ma-tag

14. sa₂ gi₄ should be most probably understood here as a phonetic rendering of še₂₅ gi₄ (“to roar”) – see Al-Rawi 2008: 23; Rudik 2015: 380.

15. Other bovine descriptions consist of simple gu₄ (“bull” – FSB 64 obv. 1; FSB 70 rev. 4, *pace* the reading as a phonetic rendering of kun “tail” by Rudik 2015: 381), gu₄ (babbar) ġiggi (“black bull (and white bull)” – FSB 62 vi: 5; FSB 63A ix: 5–6, B i: 2; FSB 68 obv. 2; and possibly also in FSB 64 rev. 1–2 – see Michałowski 1985: 222; Rudik 2015: 350, 355), gu₄ ġeš₅šu-dul₅-la (“bull of the yoke” – FSB 69 obv. 3), gu₄ kar (“fleeing bull” – FSB 70 obv. 4), and am (kar) (“fleeing) wild bull” – FSB 70 obv. 2, 5–7, for the reading of am₃ on obv. 5 as phonetic am, see Al-Rawi 2008: 22; Rudik 2015: 379). The existence of this established metaphor then makes it more probable that amar is used here in its bovine connotations, and not as a general designation for young animal (for the possible meanings of amar, see Peterson 2007: 618–619).

16. See CAD S, p. 247.

17. Although gag = *sikkatum* could mean a certain type of skin disease (see CAD S, p. 251; and, in the Sumerian lexical tradition, e. g. OB Ura 3 l. 27 udu gag šub-ba “sheep struck with *sikkatum*-disease”), this interpretation of gag is less likely here – in OB Akkadian incantations against *sikkatum* collected by Goetze 1955, the dangerous disease comes from heavens (and not from earth / underworld, as the entity in question here) and the description of the disease si nu-bad is extremely unlikely.

- 13 utu kur-še₃ du-an-ne₂
 14 amar gag bi₂-keše₂
 Col. v:
 1 kur-ta en na-ĝen
 2 amar gag ba-laḥ
 3 KA+UD ^dnin-^rgirim_x (^rA^r.BU.ḪA.DU)

Translation

- Col. iv:
 7 enenuru(-incantation).
 8 Yellow-green nail reduced (its) shape.
 9 From the earth / underworld it emerged,
 10 (and) the return – (then) it did not emerge (onto the surface again),
 11 (its) pincers were opened no (more).
 12 Asar in abzu stroke (its) legs;
 13 as Utu went to the mountains,
 14 he bound the calf (and its) nail,
 Col. v:
 1 the lord surely went (back) from the mountains,
 2 (and) he dried (the poison of) the calf (and its) nail for himself.
 3 The spell of Ningirim.

Commentary

iv: 8–11: This passage most probably serves as an introduction to the problem of the incantation rite, i. e. scorpion. Here, the scorpion is described as having already attacked and having gone back to its den beneath the surface. iv: 8 thus envisions the scorpion's tail being curled from its attack, more upright position back to its calm state. Although the occurrence of tur (“to be / make small / reduced”) is unexpected, it is fitting to conclude from the sign arrangement in the line that the previous sign NE / LAK 148 indicates that the sign TUR / LAK 528 is a stem of a transitive verb, and TUR is thus most probably to be read as tur and NE as bi₂. In this construction, gag sissi_x should be seen as an ergative agent acting upon an absolutive patient bar, here most probably understood as the “shape / form” of the “nail” (i. e. the tail).¹⁸

The spell then proceeds with the movement of the scorpion – first, it moved out from its den in earth / underworld prior to the attack (iv: 9), iv: 10 accounts for its return back. Given the parallelism of these two lines, I read the sequence NU.A.E₃ in iv: 10 as nu-e₃:a (non-finite verbal form meaning here “it did not emerge”), more elusive gi₄ then most probably marks scorpion's return back after the stinging and is to be understood as an independent verbal noun meaning “return”, since any option making the gi₄ a head of the attributive nu-e₃:a or a subject of the nominal clause with the nominalized predicate nu-e₃:a (“returning one who did not emerge (again) / leave”, “return which did not emerge (again) / leave”, “returning one is the one who did

18. In the 3rd millennium, bar is sometimes used to designate exterior features of animal body, see Peterson 2007: 579–581. Although sheep terminology seems to equate bar with the whole body (Ibid., 580–581), by other animals (e.g., turtles), bar might be used also in reference to individual body parts (Ibid.). In this light, the here used interpretation of bar as “shape”, “form” or “surface body” of the scorpion tail, fitting to this context, seems to be fully in accordance with the Sumerian possibilities of the lexeme.

not emerge (again) / leave”, “return is that which did not emerge (again) / leave (or perhaps in this context “go out?”) etc.?) would be too convoluted or elusive and unfitting for the context describing scorpion resting after its attack.¹⁹ The introduction closes in iv: 11 with the statement that the dangerous arachnid is putting to rest also its pincers destined to pinch and catch its prey.

iv: 12: This line initiates the described neutralization of a scorpion by divine powers. This was probably needed to undo the effects of its poisonous attack on the patient, similarly to the ways through which the patient is being healed from a snakebite via ritual binding of a (model of) a snake in certain 3rd-millennium spells, e. g. Ur III FSB 44 obv. 7–9:

kiri₃-za su₁₁ bi₂-la₂
eme-za gu bi₂-la₂
sa gid₂-da ^{še₃}šeg₉-bar^{bar} ka-ka ma-ra-ni-la₂

“I have bound fibres around your (i. e. the snake’s) snout, I have bound a cord around your tongue, I have bound for you (i. e. the patient) long sinew on the mouth, oh (you) fallow deer (i. e. the snake?)!”²⁰

Here, Asar is most probably striking the legs of the creature. Although George understands the construction ĝiri₃ i₃-ma-TAG / LAK 628 as denoting certain movement of the deity (akin to ĝiri₃ ul₄ “to rush, to hasten”, and perhaps also to ĝiri₃ tag-tag, denoting certain unknown walk),²¹ I find his reading less convincing – to my knowledge, there is no attested value of TAG / LAK 628 as ul, whereas the verb of movement ĝiri₃ tag-tag is always written with reduplicated stem and is only found in OB literature,²² which makes this interpretation of the line less probable. On the other hand, a simple literal understanding of ĝiri₃ as “leg(s)” and tag as “to touch, to strike” = *lapātum*²³ makes sense in a spell describing a neutralization of a scorpion. We would expect the description of the disarming to be in present-future tense as a way to refer to the current situation in the incantation rite; however, if this were so, the agent-marking -e would probably be present in the record of the ending of the verb with the stem tag,²⁴ and it is thus more certain to situate the description into some (mythic) past (for a similar preterite description of neutralization of a scorpion attack, done by Enki, see Ur III FSB 47).

iv: 13–v: 2: These four verses should be seen as representing parallel lines, where the movement to the mountains (kur-še₃ iv: 13) and back from them (kur-ta v: 1) is accompanied by different procedures to render the scorpion harmless.

19. If gi₄ was understood as a preterite non-finite verbal form expressing concrete past actions (as this meaning would be expected on the basis of the forms of e₃ in the passage), the suffix -‘a would be most probably written after the stem, as it is the case with the forms of e₃ and as this writing was common in Old Sumerian – see Jagersma 2010: 640–641, 720. Therefore, unfortunately, we are left with the reading of gi₄ as a tenseless non-finite form (expressing timeless unspecific conditions – Jagersma 2010: 630; Zólyomi 2017: 92) that is here nominalized and to be translated as “return”.

20. Pace Rudik 2015: 278, 280 reading the sequence KA.KA in obv. 9 as ka eme¹ (KA) (“on the mouth and the tongue”), it is more advisable to stick to the actual writing and interpret the sign combination as ka-ka, simply revealing the final -k (archaic for the Ur III times) of the word ka(k) “mouth”. For the presence of the final velar plosive in this lexeme, see Attinger 2005: 48; Jagersma 2010: 36 (I am thankful to the anonymous reviewer for this suggestion). In this light, the first KA in obv. 7 is rather than ka(k) “mouth” in Rudik 2015: 278, 280 to be likely read as kiri₃ “snout”, which avoids the otherwise redundant replication of the same word in two clauses close to each other – for this interpretation, see already van Dijk 1969: 543–545; Cunningham 1997: 87–88.

21. George 2016: 26. For ĝiri₃ tag-tag, see Sjöberg 1970: 95–96.

22. Sjöberg 1970: 95–96.

23. See CAD L, p. 82–84, 87–89.

24. See DP 67 iv: 3, v: 2 from ED IIIb Girsu; Jagersma 2010: 348–349.

Unfortunately, this movement could not be interpreted as being expressed with the same verbal forms – whereas v: 1 uses a finite preterite form with the non-negative affirmative prefix na- (na-ĝen), iv: 13 most probably utilizes so-called “prenominal conjugation” with the stem du (du-an-ne₂). The lexeme ĝen / du prefers to produce its both preterite and present-future 3rd-ps. pronominal conjugation forms using the present-future stem du without any additional suffixes -ed- or -’a.²⁵ Although the expected spelling would occur as du-ne₂,²⁶ there are instances where the vowel -a- of possessive -ane- is preserved after du,²⁷ whereas the very same suffix written with reduplicated -n- is also rarely present in 3rd-millennium textual record.²⁸ Firstly, the movement to the mountains is marked as done by Utu (written without the divine determinative, as it was common in earlier stages of ED III),²⁹ whereas the agent moving back from the mountains is designated as en (“lord”). Unfortunately, the vagueness of the title makes any certain identification impossible (title of Utu, or designation of a specific priest?). However, the parallel movement to the mountains by Utu suggests that en should be read as his title here.

As Utu travelled to the mountains, the scorpion (amar) with its tail (gag) is being bound (keše₂). Unfortunately, the agent of the binding is hard to identify with certainty – both options, Asar and Utu, present themselves with the same level of probability. Utu acts in an unfortunately elusive way against the yellow-green-tailed scorpion in FSB 68,³⁰ whereas Asar already attacked the creature in iv: 12 and could thus be seen as a more apt and present agent for the neutralization than the fleeing Utu, who perhaps just marks the passing of day and night. After en’s return from the mountains, the final strike is achieved by “drying” (laḥ) the scorpion (amar) and its tail (gag). Here, the drying most probably refers to an action done to the poison of the creature, as it seems to be the case in the last line of FSB 44 (rev. 3) before the closing formulae:

ušum-gal uš-zu i₃-laḥ

“Great serpent / Dragon, I dried up your poison!”³¹

25. Jagersma 2010: 674; Zólyomi 2017: 103. For the presence of this verb in 3rd-ps. pronominal conjugation in 3rd-millennium incantations, see e. g. FSB 29A i: 7–8, B iv: 1’–2’; and the already mentioned FSB 47 obv. 2–3, all stemming from the Ur III period.

26. See e. g. FSB 47 obv. 2–3 and MVN 22 71 obv. 8 also from the Ur III period; Jagersma 2010: 215.

27. FSB 29A i 7–8, B iv: 1’–2’.

28. See instances in Jagersma 2010: 216, esp. ED IIIb OSP 1 20 rev. 3. At first glance, the full enigmatic and unusual construction in iv: 13 could be read as u₄ kur-še₃ ḥa_x-am₆-zal (“he (verily) spent the day towards the mountains(?)”, for the reading DU / LAK 484 as ḥa_x in ED incantations, see FSB 57B vi: 5 – Krebernik 1984: 46; Rudik 2015: 325–326 – and CUSAS 32 1 f vii: 3 – George 2016: 101). However, the obvious parallelism with v: 1 together with the terminative construction (“spend the day *towards* some locality” is syntactically highly odd construction) makes this reading improbable. In a similar vein, a less linear reading of the verbal form as an-ni-ĝen (“he made him go to him”) presupposes certain agent-marker between open-syllable prefix allomorph -nni- and the stem in a causative construction, however, this agent impossible to pinpoint exactly in the sentence (If the agent is Sun(god), what is then the patient / causee in absolutive? Asar is unlikely the patient in iv: 13, since this would most likely presuppose the same causative construction in iv: 14, where bi₂- (unable to mark 3rd-ps. sg. causees of the human class in transitive verbal forms – see Jagersma 2010: 429, 432–434) hinders this causative interpretation. If the agent is Asar and the patient / causee is the Sun(god), why would Asar have a say in deploying Sun(god) on his journey?). Again, the parallelism of iv: 13–14 with v: 1–2 (with v: 2 also hindering this causative reading with 3rd-ps. cause of the human class) should be most instructive here.

29. Krebernik 1998: 284; Veldhuis 2006: 1; see also FSB 16 ii: 4.

30. obv. 5: ^dutu za₃ sa-ne₂-še₃ “Utu, the [scorpion’s?] side towards his [i. e. Utu’s] sinew”.

31. For the interpretation of UD as meaning “to dry” and uš as a phonetic rendering of uš₁₁ “poison”, see van Dijk 1969: 543–545; Rudik 2015: 278–279. Unlike Rudik *Ibid.* reading UD in this context as ḥad₂, I prefer to interpret UD in its transitive meaning “to dry” as laḥ. There is certain textual evidence for this reading in Ur III administrative documents (see Lafont 2010: 167–168) and in later lexical tradition (see CAD A/I, p. 29).

In v: 2, the designation of the poison was thus metonymically replaced by the whole creature (amar) and its tail (gag) in a *totum pro parte* way. Since the context does not support the presence of any indirect non-human object and an intransitive meaning of the verb is less likely due to the transitive construction in the parallel iv: 14, ba- is here most probably understood as a middle voice marker signifying that the verb (here: laḥ) has an indirect object being the same as its subject / agent (here: Utu, or Asar),³² and the verb is thus best to be translated in this clause with the added phrase “for himself”, meaning that Utu, or Asar did it for his own purposes.

v: 3: KA+UD represents an older version of the Early Dynastic closing formula (KA+)UD-du₁₁-ga, previously found only without its divine attribute (Ningirim) in texts from ED IIIa Fara.³³ Together with the tablet’s colophon (xi: 1–8) being similar to that of the school texts from ED IIIa Fara and (to a lesser extent) Abu Salabikh³⁴ and the writing of Utu without his divine determinative (iv: 13), the form of the closing formula represents yet another evidence suggesting dating of the tablet to earlier stages of ED III.³⁵

32. See Jagersma 2010: 490–493; Zólyomi 2017: 158–160.

33. FSB 4; FSB 11; FSB 23; FSB 57B; FSB 60; FSB 62; and most probably also in FSB 14B – see Rudik 2015: 147.

34. George 2016: 27.

35. For the same form of closing formula on the tablet, see also ii: 1–2; iii: 6–7; iv: 6; otherwise, the rubrics seem to be replaced by 4 × –5 × KAS on the carrier– see George 2016: 26. However, given the fairly linear nature of the writing on the tablet and ŠE₃ written rotated through 90° (occasional ED scribal practice of Umma, Girsu and other south-eastern Mesopotamian cities; George 2016: 120), I am less prone to interpret this evidence as indicating the origin of the tablet in Fara or Abu Salabikh ED IIIa textual corpus.

Bibliography

- AL-RAWI, FAROUK N. H. 2008. "An Ur III Incantation in the British Museum". Pp. 21–24 in *On the Third Dynasty of Ur: Studies in Honor of Marcel Sigrist* (JCSSS 1), edited by P. Michalowski. Boston: American Schools of Oriental Research.
- ATTINGER, PASCAL. 2005. "A propos de AK "faire"" (I). *ZA* 95(1–2): 46–64.
- Chicago Assyrian Dictionary*. 1956–2011. Chicago: Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago.
- CUNNINGHAM, GRAHAM. 1997. *'Deliver Me from Evil': Mesopotamian Incantations 2500-1500 BC* (Studia Pohl 17). Roma: Pontificium Institutum Biblicum.
- GEORGE, ANDREW R. 2016. *Mesopotamian Incantations and Related Texts in the Schøyen Collection* (CUSAS 32). Bethesda: CDL Press.
- GOETZE, ALBRECHT. 1955. "An Incantation against Diseases". *JCS* 9(1): 8–18.
- JAGERSMA, ABRAHAM. H. 2010. "Descriptive Grammar of Sumerian". Ph.D. Thesis, Leiden University, Leiden.
- KREBERNIK, MANFRED. 1984. *Die Beschwörungen Aus Fara Und Ebla. Untersuchungen zur ältesten keilschriftlichen Beschwörungsliteratur* (TSO 2). Hildesheim; Zürich: G. Olms.
- KREBERNIK, MANFRED. 1998. "Die Texte aus Fāra und Tell Abū Šalābīḥ". Pp. 237–427 in *Mesopotamien: Späturuk-Zeit und Frühdynastische Zeit* (OBO 160/1), edited by J. Bauer, R. K. Englund & M. Krebernik. Freiburg: Universitätsverlag.
- KRISPIJN, THEO J. H. 2004. "pa4-šeš "Ältester"". Pp. 105–112 in *Von Sumer nach Ebla und zurück: Festschrift Giovanni Pettinato zum 27. September 1999 gewidmet von Freunden, Kollegen und Schülern* (HSAO 9), edited by H. Waetzoldt. Heidelberg: Heidelberger Orientverlag.
- LAFONT, BERTRAND. 2010. "Sur Quelques Dossiers des Archives de Girsu". Pp. 167–179 in *Why Should Someone Who Knows Something Conceal It? Cuneiform Studies in Honor of David I. Owen on His 70th Birthday*, edited by A. Kleinerman & J. Sassons, J. Bethesda: CDL Press.
- MICHALOWSKI, PIOTR. 1985. "On Some Early Sumerian Magical Texts". *OrNs* 54(1–2): 216–225.
- PETERSON, JEREMIAH. 2007. "A Study of Sumerian Faunal Conception with a Focus on the Terms Pertaining to the Order *Testudines*". Ph.D. Thesis, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia.
- RUDIK, NADEZDA. 2015. "Die Entwicklung der keilschriftlichen sumerischen Beschwörungsliteratur von den Anfängen bis zur Ur III-Zeit". Ph.D. Thesis, Friedrich-Schiller-Universität Jena, Jena.
- RUDIK, NADEZDA. 2020. "Schnürchen gegen Schlangen: die frühdynastische Beschwörung MS 4549/2". Pp. 630–658 in *The Third Millennium Studies in Early Mesopotamia and Syria in Honor of Walter Sommerfeld and Manfred Krebernik* (CM 50), edited by I. Arkhipov, L. Kogan & N. Koslova. Leiden; Boston: Brill.
- SJÖBERG, ÅKE. 1970. "Beiträge zum sumerischen Wörterbuch". *OrNs* 39(1): 75–98.
- STEINKELLER, PIOTR. 2008. "Joys of cooking in Ur III Babylonia". Pp. 185–192 in *On the Third Dynasty of Ur: Studies in Honor of Marcel Sigrist* (JCSSS 1), edited by P. Michalowski. Boston: American Schools of Oriental Research
- VAN DIJK, JAN J. A. 1969. "Vert comme Tišpak". *OrNs* 38(4): 539–547.
- VELDHUIS, NIEK. 2006. "Another Early Dynastic Incantation". *CDLB* 2: 1–2.
- ZÓLYOMI, GÁBOR. 2017. *An Introduction to the Grammar of Sumerian*. Budapest: Eötvös University Press.