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THE DOGS OF NINKILIM, PART TWO: BABYLONIAN RITUALS TO COUNTER FIELD PESTS

By A. R. George and Junko Taniguchi

with a contribution by M. J. Geller

I say unto you, O bugs, behave yourself one and all, and leave your abode for this night and remain quiet in one place, and keep your distance from the servants of God.


This article presents editions of all the extant Babylonian incantations against field pests. The sources date to the first millennium BC and many have not been published before. They are mostly tablets of the Neo-Assyrian period, from Ashurbanipal’s library at Nineveh, but the corpus also contains some Neo-Babylonian fragments from Nineveh, as well as a tablet from Sultantepe (ancient Huzirina) and two Late Babylonian tablets from southern Mesopotamia. Some of the pieces certainly belong to a series called in antiquity Zu-buru-dabbeda “To Seize the Locust-Tooth”, a compendium of incantations and rituals designed to combat by magic means the destruction of crops by locusts, insect larvae and other pests; other pieces are parts of related and similar texts. Some of the rituals require the observation of the Goat-star rising above the eastern horizon, which suggests they were performed at night as a precautionary measure during the winter months of the barley-growing season.

Prolegomenon

“May your beans always be broad!” With this benediction, composed by Roger Matthews, friends of David Hawkins wished him well on his retirement from the School of Oriental and African Studies at a party in our back garden at Buckhurst Hill in June 2005. The benediction forms the central message of a commemorative ceramic plate signed by all present. The message had in mind David’s house in Minster Lovell, where he fights with mostly unseen foes an unending battle for control of his garden, particularly the parts of it where the beans should be broad. Lately David’s friends have heard him lament that moles, rabbits, field mice and other of nature’s creatures are getting the better of him and ruining his crops. He puts this down to the passing of the orphaned cat (“Beryl the feral”) which for many years occupied his shed as an uninvited guest and tyrannized any moving thing that was less than half her size. We think there may be another explanation. The author of the apocryphal Acts of St John knew that the apostle’s power over nature came through his special relationship with God. The Babylonians understood likewise, that to work effective magic you have to enlist the aid of the appropriate divine powers, in word and in deed. What we should have painted on the plate we presented to David was, “By command of the god So-and-so [choose one of many], may your beans always be broad!” It is too late for that now, so we encourage David to find for himself, somewhere in these old texts from Babylonia, dicenda et agenda that he can easily perform in Oxfordshire.

Introduction

The Babylonian incantations and rituals against field pests have been described in a preliminary paper read to the 41st Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale in Berlin in 1994 and published five years later (George 1999). That article gave an introduction to the cuneiform series Zu-buru-dabbeda “To Seize (i.e. Paralyze) the Locust-Tooth”. The series is the main source of Babylonian incantations and rituals against field pests, including locusts, grasshoppers, insect larvae, weevils and other vermin. In that article the reading of the series’ title zû-buru₃-dab-bê-da was defended,
its contents briefly described, and the image of the field pests as the “great dogs of Ninkilim” explored.¹

The god Ninkilim is well attested as a deity with special responsibility for wildlife in general and vermin in particular. Though Ninkilim is feminine in the great god-list, An V 33 (ed. Litke 1998: 171), the field-pest incantations know him as masculine, as do other texts of the later periods. His epithet en a.za.lu.lu “lord of teeming creatures” // bel nammašti “lord of wild animals”, which often occurs in the field-pest incantations (texts Nos. 8: 22 // 9: 1, 10: 14, 11: 5, 21 obv. 6, 22: 7, 13), is also given him in an incantation against sickness, Šaru VII 69: [ nin.ki]lim en a.za.lu.lu = 6MIN be-el nam-maš-ti (ed. Reiner 1958: 38). This epithet is essentially a reinterpretation of his Sumerian name, Nin-kilim “Lord Rodent” as a genitive compound, nin kilim-a(k), with reference to the lexical equation kilim = nammaštu.²

The present article cannot deal with all aspects of field pests in ancient Mesopotamia and the magic used against them, for this is a large and multidisciplinary topic in which Assyriology feeds such other disciplines as social and economic history, the histories of religion and agriculture, and paleozoology.³ It does not add to the recent edition of a Sumerian field-pest text from Tell Haddad (Cavigneaux and Al-Rawi 2002), nor does it edit the fragmentary field-pest incantations on Old Babylonian tablets excavated in 1912 at Babylon and published by van Dijk in /AS XXIV (1987).⁴ Instead it will be limited to a philological edition of the series Zu-buru-dabbeda and related texts of the first millennium. The edition is followed by a short discussion of what these texts reveal about when the rituals were performed.

Few of these texts have been published before. The credit for identifying most of the previously unpublished sources lies with W. G. Lambert, especially, whose list of manuscripts in the British Museum formed the basis of this work. He, Marten Stol and Werner R. Mayer are thanked for their generous interest in furthering knowledge of this understudied genre of the Babylonian magic repertoire. Tablets in London are published by permission of the Trustees of the British Museum. The Sultantepe tablet (STT 243) is republished by the kind offices of the Director of the Museum of Anatolian Civilizations, Ankara. First-hand study of it in 1992 was facilitated by research grants from the British Academy and the School of Oriental and African Studies, the University of London.

The series Zu-buru-dabbeda is entered in two first-millennium catalogues of exorcistic texts: (a) the list known as the Exorcist’s Manual, which has survived on tablets from Nineveh, Aššur, Babylon, Sippar and Uruk and was evidently in wide circulation (Geller 2000: 248 l. 22), and (b) a catalogue of apotropaic and prophylactic rituals (nambahuri) surviving on two copies from Nineveh (Maul 1994: 197 l. 4, coll., read ka.inim.ma zu´ .bu [ru,] dab.bé. da); copy Geller 2000: 255). In the former it follows the generic title ud.de`.ra.ra dab/dib.bé. da, which probably denoted a composition to avert that other bane of Babylonian farmers, storm-damage to crops.⁵

In the Nineveh catalogue Zu-buru-dabbeda is paired with the incantation incipit İṣgum nēṣu kalab Iṣtar “Roared the Lion, Hound of Iṣtar”, which is used against field pests in one of the

¹ We may add that in this reading of the series’ name, the emphasis is on disabling the field pests’ weapons of destruction (zu´ “teeth”; see further below, the note on No. 17 ii 17). By contrast, the well-known magic practice of ka.dab.bé.da “seizing the mouth” disables the victim’s power of speech (Schwemer 2007: 15). Since the latter strategy is clearly inappropriate to field-pest magic, we find a further reason to read zu´.buru, dab.bé.da rather than ka.buru, dab.bé.da.


³ It may be useful to present a roll-call of relevant literature not cited in George 1999. On the destruction of crops by locusts in eighteenth-century Qattunan see further Ziegler 1999–2000: 329–30, van Koppen 2001: 496–9. For the behaviour and zoology of locusts reported in the Mari letters see Heimpel 1996, Lion and Michel 1997. A locust plague in the Habur basin in the twelfth century, reported in letters from Dur-Katlimmu, is examined alongside other such events in ancient Mesopotamia by Radner 2004. On practical agricultural responses to field pests in third and second-millennium Mesopotamia see Wasserman 1999. Wolfgang Heimpel’s articles on insects (1976–80) and mice (1990) offer an entry to the paleozoology of some relevant vermin. For locusts as a culinary treat see Lion and Michel 1997. The god Ninkilim is well attested as a deity with special responsibility for wildlife in general and vermin in particular. Though Ninkilim is feminine in the great god-list, An V 33 (ed. Litke 1998: 171), the field-pest incantations know him as masculine, as do other texts of the later periods. His epithet en a.za.lu.lu “lord of teeming creatures” // bel nammašti “lord of wild animals”, which often occurs in the field-pest incantations (texts Nos. 8: 22 // 9: 1, 10: 14, 11: 5, 21 obv. 6, 22: 7, 13), is also given him in an incantation against sickness, Šaru VII 69: [ nin.ki]lim en a.za.lu.lu = 6MIN be-el nam-maš-ti (ed. Reiner 1958: 38). This epithet is essentially a reinterpretation of his Sumerian name, Nin-kilim “Lord Rodent” as a genitive compound, nin kilim-a(k), with reference to the lexical equation kilim = nammaštu.

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rituals edited below (No. 24 i 24, 30–1). The incipit may thus be the opening line of the entire series, which, as we shall see, remains lost. The following line of the Nineveh catalogue pairs the incantation incipit en baqbaqqu “O baqbaqqu-fly” with the generic title ka.inim.ma mi-nu a-[ki-lu . . .], where minu “grub, insect larva” and akilla “devourer-pest” are field pests frequently encountered in Zu-buru-dabbeda. The generic title clearly denotes a composition or series that is concerned with field pests, but the incipit refers to an insect that afflicts field-workers rather than crops. Neither this latter incipit nor its generic title exactly matches any incipit or rubric in the material published here. This points to the existence of texts that were thematically related to the series Zu-buru-dabbeda but not formally incorporated in it.

According to a subscript appended to the final tablet of Zu-buru-dabbeda, the series was attributed to one Papsukkal-ša- iqibu- ul-inni, a scholar and cleric of Babylon and Borsippa (see No. 18 iii 18). However, text belonging to Zu-buru-dabbeda is so far known only from Nineveh. No Babylonian tablet bearing comparable material finds a definite place in the series. At Nineveh the series was inscribed on tablets of two columns each side, at least four of them bearing the same colophon of King Ashurbanipal (Type c). The series is insuffciently preserved to allow complete knowledge of its contents and is reconstructed below not as a connected text but in a sequence of interrupted passages. These passages are presented as texts Nos. 1–18. The order of these snatches of text can be determined for some by the presence of catch-lines, rubrics or incipits, for others by content and place on the tablet (Nos. 1–9, 18), but many remain unplaced and their ordering in the present edition is provisional (Nos. 10–17). A working scheme of the series’ reconstruction is given in Table 1. As currently understood the beginning of the series comprises a sequence of incantation-prayers for use against field pests (Nos. 1–7, 10–14), while later parts of the text are a mixture of incantations and rituals (Nos. 8–9, 15–18).

The best-preserved part of the series Zu-buru-dabbeda is a tablet that begins with an incantation-prayer to Ninurta and is known from seven fragments, which provide seven disconnected passages comprising between them some one hundred and twenty lines of text (Nos. 2–8). Only in this tablet is there any overlap between fragments: texts Nos. 2, 6 and 8 are reconstructed from two sources each. The duplication of text and the fragments’ physical characteristics allow us to place them in groups. K 3270+ and K 6888+ would join, if more clay survived at their point of contact, and K 9210 certainly belongs to the same tablet; this tablet is lightly pierced and its column dividers were ruled with a narrow cord that split the tablet’s central margin into unequal parts. K 4456+ is from the middle of the obverse of a pierced tablet whose column dividers were achieved with a thicker cord and more equally spaced, and it therefore represents a second exemplar. K 5315, also pierced, has no preserved ruling and could be the top-left corner of either K 3270+ or K 4456+; on handling the fragments, the latter seemed a better match. 79-7-8, 219 duplicates K 5315 but cannot be part of K 3270+ either, for its reverse is physically incompatible with K 9210; it thus represents a third manuscript. K 8123 duplicates K 3270+ and cannot be part of it; in any case it is from the reverse of a tablet whose column dividers were made with a thick cord and spaced equally as on K 4456+. A lack of piercings makes K 8123 a poor partner for K 4456+ and K 5315, and it may belong to the same tablet as 79-7-8, 219. From first-hand study of the fragments it appears that the royal libraries of Nineveh held at least three copies of this part of Zu-buru-dabbeda, which in the following we provisionally identify as Tablet II (Table 2).

This tablet of seven disconnected passages is not the beginning of the series, for a small fragment is extant on which its incipit is given as the catch-line (No. 1). The position adopted here as a working assumption is that fragment No. 1 is part of Tablet I of the series – indeed, the only extant source identifiable as such. Consequently the tablet that begins with Ninurta’s incantation (No. 2) is taken to be Tablet II. The catch-line of the latter is the incipit of an incantation-prayer to Ninkilim, which thus opens what is here identified as Tablet III. The beginning of the incantation is extant (No. 9) but the rest of Tablet III cannot be reconstructed at present. Several of the pieces

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6 The word baqbaqqu is a hapax legomenon usually explained as a derivative of baqqu. The latter is conventionally rendered “gnat, midge” (e.g. CAD B 100), but its equivalence with Sumerian nim.tur.sahar.ra “little dust fly” in Ura XIV 306 (ed. Landsberger 1962: 34) suggests that it may rather be Phlebotomus papatasii, the sand fly that so bothers those who work in the open in southern Iraq – archaeologists among them.

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Table 1: Sequence of extant passages of the series Zu-buru-dabbeda, as far as it can be determined from their labelling, content and physical location on the tablet.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Label</th>
<th>Genre, content or label</th>
<th>Tablet and column</th>
<th>Text no.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>rubric</td>
<td>incantation-prayer to Marduk</td>
<td>I iv</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>catch-line</td>
<td>incantation-prayer to Ninurta</td>
<td>I iv</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>colophon</td>
<td>[Tablet n, Zu-buru-dabbeda]</td>
<td>I iv</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>incipit</td>
<td>incantation-prayer to Ninurta</td>
<td>II i</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(content)</td>
<td>incantation-prayer to [Adad]</td>
<td>II i</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(content)</td>
<td>incantation-prayer to Adad</td>
<td>II i</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rubric</td>
<td>incantation-prayer to the [south wind]</td>
<td>II ii</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>incipit</td>
<td>incantation-prayer to the north wind</td>
<td>II ii</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rubric</td>
<td>incantation-prayer to the [north wind]</td>
<td>II iii</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>incipit</td>
<td>incantation-prayer to the east wind</td>
<td>II iii</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rubric</td>
<td>incantation-prayer to the [east wind]</td>
<td>II iii</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>incipit</td>
<td>incantation-prayer to the [west wind]</td>
<td>II iii</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(content)</td>
<td>incantation-prayer to the west wind</td>
<td>II iii</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rubric</td>
<td>incantation-prayer to the west wind</td>
<td>II iv</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>incipit</td>
<td>incantation Tutu-anna hursangake</td>
<td>II iv</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(content)</td>
<td>ritual, dais of Ninkilim</td>
<td>II iv</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>catch-line</td>
<td>incantation-prayer to Ninkilim</td>
<td>II iv</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>colophon</td>
<td>[Tablet n + 1, Zu-buru-dabbeda]</td>
<td>II iv</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>incipit</td>
<td>incantation-prayer to Ninkilim</td>
<td>III i</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(content)</td>
<td>incantation-prayer to an unidentified god</td>
<td>unplacd, ii or iii</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(content)</td>
<td>incantation-prayer to an unidentified god</td>
<td>unplacd</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>incipit</td>
<td>exorcist’s incantation-prayer to the Igigi gods</td>
<td>unplacd, i</td>
<td>12</td>
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<tr>
<td>(content)</td>
<td>incantation-prayer to an unidentified god</td>
<td>unplacd, i</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(content)</td>
<td>client’s incantation-prayer to the Igigi gods</td>
<td>unplacd, ii</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(content)</td>
<td>ritual</td>
<td>unplacd, ii</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rubric</td>
<td>[n]th section of Zu-buru-dabbeda</td>
<td>unplacd, ii</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(content)</td>
<td>ritual</td>
<td>unplacd, iii</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(content)</td>
<td>incantation-prayer to an unidentified goddess</td>
<td>unplacd, iii</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(content)</td>
<td>incantation-prayer to [Kusu]</td>
<td>unplacd, ii</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rubric</td>
<td>incantation-prayer to Kusu</td>
<td>unplacd, iii</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(content)</td>
<td>ritual</td>
<td>unplacd, iii</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(content)</td>
<td>incantation-prayer to an unidentified goddess</td>
<td>Concluding tablet, ii</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(content)</td>
<td>rituals</td>
<td>Concluding tablet, ii–iii</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rubric</td>
<td>Zu-buru-dabbeda, concluded</td>
<td>Concluding tablet, iii–iv</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>colophon</td>
<td>[Tablet x, series of Zu-buru-dabbeda]</td>
<td>Concluding tablet, iv</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: The probable division of the seven surviving fragments of Zu-buru-dabbeda II among three manuscripts.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MS</th>
<th>Museum number</th>
<th>Columns divided by</th>
<th>Pierced</th>
<th>Extant columns</th>
<th>Text no.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A1</td>
<td>K 3270 + 7829 + 8151</td>
<td>thin cord</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>i, iii, iv</td>
<td>3, 6, 8 + colophon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A2</td>
<td>K 6888 + 8113</td>
<td>thin cord</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>iii, iv</td>
<td>6, 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A3</td>
<td>K 9210</td>
<td>thin cord</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>iii, iv</td>
<td>7 + colophon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B1</td>
<td>K 4456 + 5897 + 11709</td>
<td>thick cord</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>i, ii</td>
<td>4, 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B2</td>
<td>K 5315</td>
<td>[?]</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>i</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C1</td>
<td>K 8123</td>
<td>thick cord</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>iii, iv</td>
<td>6, 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C2</td>
<td>79-7-8, 219</td>
<td>[?]</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>i, iv</td>
<td>2 + colophon</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

published here as unplaced fragments of Zu-buru-dabbeda (Nos. 10–17) may belong in Tablet I or Tablet III, but we do not know how many tablets the series comprised, and it may be that some of these pieces bear witness to one or more later tablets. The final tablet of the series, which may be Tablet III, IV, V, VI or more, is represented by a large piece with a colophon that explicitly
identifies it as the series’ conclusion (No. 18). An interesting feature of the final tablet is the appendix that lists the apparatus and magic ingredients required in the rituals (No. 18 iii–iv).

The catch-line of the final tablet is damaged, but mentions rodents (No. 18 iv 22) and so reveals that the series Zu-buru-dabbeda was followed by incantations against other destructive animals. The rituals of Zu-buru-dabbeda were carried out in the field and make it clear that the series was a weapon against vermin that destroyed growing and standing crops, or the threat of the same. Perhaps in what followed attention was turned to those creatures that caused losses in storage, among whom rodents would have been prominent.

Related material in Babylonian and Assyrian copies is presented as texts Nos. 19–25. These fragments are mostly a mixture of rituals against field pests and short incantations embedded in the rituals, and some of them appear to run parallel with the Nineveh series. Consequently they confirm what was suggested by the Nineveh catalogue of namburbis: the existence of texts that have no certain place in the series Zu-buru-dabbeda, as it now stands, but are nevertheless of the same genre. It seems that several different bodies of material of this kind were extant in first-millennium Mesopotamia, and not all of them were organized in the series Zu-buru-dabbeda.

Three less closely related fragments from Nineveh are appended as texts Nos. 26–8; they are exorcistic in character and refer to fields and Ninkilim. Also distantly related to the field-pest incantations is a prophylactic ritual to counter the prospect of damage to crops by storm, extant on the Nineveh tablet K 151 (Schwemer 2001: 678–83, 1023–4) and a tablet from the library of Nabû at Kalâb (CTN IV 96, see Schwemer 2003). The text is noteworthy in the present context because the god Ninkilim is there, as in some of the material published here, invoked as a deity with power over cultivated land (K 151 obv. 10 // CTN IV 96 obv. 3’): [m]nîn-kîlim bel(ēn) ugarî(a.ûr) “Ninkilim, lord of the arable land”.

Catalogue of texts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Text no.</th>
<th>Museum no.</th>
<th>Content</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Sm 1250</td>
<td>Zu-buru-dabbeda I end</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>K 5315 // 79-7-8, 219 obv.</td>
<td>Zu-buru-dabbeda II A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>K 3270 + i</td>
<td>Zu-buru-dabbeda II B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>K 4456 + i</td>
<td>Zu-buru-dabbeda II C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>K 4456 + ii</td>
<td>Zu-buru-dabbeda II D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>K 3270 + // 8123 iii</td>
<td>Zu-buru-dabbeda II E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>K 9210 iii</td>
<td>Zu-buru-dabbeda II F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>K 3270 + // 8123 iv</td>
<td>Zu-buru-dabbeda II G</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>K 2783</td>
<td>Zu-buru-dabbeda III A</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>K 8072</td>
<td>Zu-buru-dabbeda (unplaced)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>K 6945</td>
<td>Zu-buru-dabbeda (unplaced)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>K 2629</td>
<td>Zu-buru-dabbeda (unplaced)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>80-7-19, 189</td>
<td>Zu-buru-dabbeda (unplaced)</td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>82-5-22, 532</td>
<td>Zu-buru-dabbeda (unplaced)</td>
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<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>81-2-4, 319</td>
<td>Zu-buru-dabbeda (unplaced)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>81-2-4, 260</td>
<td>Zu-buru-dabbeda (unplaced)</td>
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<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>K 2546</td>
<td>Zu-buru-dabbeda (unplaced)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>K 2596</td>
<td>Zu-buru-dabbeda (unplaced)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>BM 123370</td>
<td>Zu-buru-dabbeda (conclusion)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Rm II 359</td>
<td>Text related to Zu-buru-dabbeda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>K 2775</td>
<td>Text related to Zu-buru-dabbeda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>K 9611</td>
<td>Text related to Zu-buru-dabbeda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>S.U. 52:214 = STT 243</td>
<td>Text related to Zu-buru-dabbeda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>BM 45686 + 55561</td>
<td>Text related to Zu-buru-dabbeda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>A 44250 (1 NT 25)</td>
<td>Field-pest incantation, to Alulu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>K 13301</td>
<td>Ritual mentioning Ninkilim</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>K 5905</td>
<td>Namburbi mentioning Ninkilim</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>Sm 1277</td>
<td>Ritual with an agricultural setting</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I. Zu-buru-dabbeda Tablets I–III (Texts Nos. 1–9)

No. 1  
Zu-buru-dabbeda I end (Sm 1250) Fig. 1

This fragment of six lines from the middle of a tablet from Nineveh concludes with a catch-line and library colophon of Ashurbanipal, and thus clearly derives from the tablet’s reverse. The subscript and catch-line (ll. 3–4) were already made public in Bezold’s monumental Catalogue (1896: 1473). The subscript indicates that the immediately preceding text was an incantation-prayer to Marduk (fragment L in Kunstmann’s list, 1932: 98, no. 20 in Mayer’s catalogue, 1976: 397). The catch-line addresses Ninurta and is the incipit of a tablet of the series Zu-buru-dabbeda, here represented by texts Nos. 2–8. The colophon identifies Sm 1250 as a witness to the same series. It is assumed that the fragment is all that can so far be identified of Tablet I.

1’ [ēn ‘marduk . . .
2’ [ēn ‘nin-urta bēlu(en) ašarē]d([sag.kal]) ē.kur dan-dan-nu šur-bu-u git-ma-lu ši-i-r[u]
3’ [ku.inim.ma sˇu.ı´ l.la damar.utu.k[e]
4’ [ēn ‘nin-urta bēlu(en) ašarē]d([sag.kal]) ē.kur dan-dan-nu šur-bu-u git-ma-lu ši-i-r[u]
5’ [ku.inim.ma sˇu.ı´ l.la damar.utu.k[e]

[Incantation. O Marduk, . . . (long gap) 1] By your] great [divine personage’s command,] which cannot be altered, 2 [by your] stern [decision,] which cannot be overturned!

[Incantation-formula,] šullā-prayer to Marduk.

[Incantation. O lord Ninurta, foremost] one of E-kur, almighty, most great, superb, exalted!

[Tablet I(?), series Zu]-buru-dabbeda.

[Palace property of Ashurbanipal,] king of the world, [. . .

No. 2  
Zu-buru-dabbeda II A (K 5315 // 79-7-8, 219) Fig. 1

The catch-line of No. 1 tallies with the incipit of two further fragments from Nineveh, which are thus identified as holding the opening lines of the succeeding tablet of Zu-buru-dabbeda, here identified as Tablet II. K 5315 was previously published by K. D. Macmillan in BA V (1906: 673 no. 29); it is a fragment from the top edge of a large library tablet, with parts of eighteen lines preserved. The duplicate, 79-7-8, 219, is from the top left-hand corner and holds a few signs of each of the opening ten lines only. On its reverse are the beginnings of three lines from the end of a standard colophon of Ashurbanipal, either Type c or Type e in Hermann Hunger’s catalogue of colophons (Hunger 1968: 98 II. 10–12).

Together K 5315 and 79-7-8, 219 provide much of a short incantation-prayer to Ninurta, the divine ploughman and patron of agriculture (booked as Kunstmann 1932: 101 Ninurta 2; Mayer 1976: 405 Ninurta 7). In it he is invoked first as a mighty warrior and victor over the forces of disorder, then as the god of Nippur with responsibility for safeguarding the insignia of mortal kingship, next as a farmer and stockman, who keeps the temples supplied with grain and meat, and finally as a merciful protector. Thus extolled in his power and reminded of his goodwill, Ninurta is presented with an offering of food and asked, in return, to free an infested field from vermin. The end of the prayer is lost but can be restored after any one of the similar incantations whose conclusions are preserved, e.g. texts Nos. 6 and 10 below.

In the following transliteration B = K 5315 and C = 79-7-8, 219. The two manuscripts do not agree on the place of the line divisions. Here the divisions, and consequently also the line-numbers, follow B.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BC 1</td>
<td>ēn ‘n[i]u-urta bēlu(en) aš<a href="sag.kal">arēd</a> ē.kur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BC 2</td>
<td>[dan-dan-n]u šur-bu-u git-ma-l[u ši-i-ru]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C 3</td>
<td>[ne-ir a]n-zi-i x[. . .]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BC 4</td>
<td>da-[i[k] ‘a’sak-ki m[u- . . .]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BC 5</td>
<td>qar-ra-du šit-ra-hu i-[i-ti . . .]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Incantation. O lord Ninurta, foremost [one of E-kur, 2 almighty,] most great, superb, [exalted, 3 slayer of] Anzu, [ . . . ,] who defeated the Asuukku-demon, who [ . . . ,] 5 proud warrior, offspring [of . . . ,] 6 progeny of Enlil and Ninlil, who [ . . . ,] 7 lord in charge of [staff,] throne, palú-insignia (and) boundary markers, 8 who heaps up the seed of Alala for [ . . . , 9 who delivers] temple-income and offerings, who slaughters oxen [and sheep,] 10 compassionate [ . . . ,] whose shelter [is sweet,] 11 I, an exorcist of Ea and Asallûhe, hereby call on you (as) [your slave(?),] 12 arrange for you a sacred ritual apparatus, present before [you] a pure offering, 13 [pour] for you a libation of sweet wine worthy of your divine personage. 14 Accept, O Ninurta, foremost one of E-kur! 15 Eat the tasty food, drink the sweet drink! 16 Show goodwill towards this plot of farmland and 17 [expel them(!), the great dogs of Ninkilim,] 18 locust (and) “devourer”-[pest whose] mouths are the Deluge! (remainder lost)

[Incantation-formula, suiala-prayer to Ninurta.]

Notes
1. The epithet asarêd Ekur is routine in field-pest incantations, being attributed to Ninurta in texts Nos. 23 obv. 12 and 24 ii 33, and probably also in Nos. 6 iii 1, 28; 10: 20.
8. The “seed of Alala” is a literary expression for barleycorn, which is thus characterized as the product of the work-song of the harvesters (alala). The prefixing of this alala with the divine determinative also occurs in manuscripts of Maqû VI 49 // IX 104, VIII 51 // IX 175, Ludult 1 101 and Erra III A 18, and implies that the work-song is identified with the homophonous primeval deity Alala.
11. The end of the line might also be read as a vocative 15[nin-urta], but aradka finds support in the parallel passages Nos. 4 i 7, 13: 4.
17. For the dogs of Ninkilim as a metaphor for field pests see George 1999: 296–8. The expression occurs outside the genre of field-pest incantations in a Neo-Assyrian copy of a medical prescription from Assûr, where tsu-lîm ur.gi, “nin.kilim “Dog of Ninkilim’s spleen” signifies a herb or other ingredient in a medicine to be taken for an enlarged(?) spleen (BAM 77: 30; ref. courtesy M. Stol).
18. On the akitu see Urnu XIV 279–82. Marten Stol suggests to us privately that an Old Babylonian incantation found at Mari and published by Thuereau-Dangin (1939: 11–12 obv. 11), which is usually understood to have no specific aim (Farber 1981: 53 C5, Foster 1969: 119, Cunningham 1997: 151 no. 340), was directed against this pest; he reads the concluding line a-ki-la amatbás éntaka. In this and similar lines of Zu-buru-dabbeda which pair abûbu with melî (Nos. 4: 17; 6: 19–20; 7: 48–9; 11: 3), “the deluge and tempest” are metaphors that evoke the most destructive forces of nature; in a fable the wolf uses the same expression about a treacherous ally, the fox (Lambert 1960: 208 obv. 20): ib-ru-ut-ka mi-tu-ru a-bu-bu “making friends with you was a tempest and a deluge”.

No. 3
Zu-buru-dabbeda II B (K 3270 + i) Fig. 1

The best-preserved manuscript of Zu-buru-dabbeda II from Ashurbanipal’s library at Nineveh survives in three pieces made up of six fragments, K 3270 + 7829 + 8151, K 6888 + 8113 and K 9210 (MS A in Table 2); its reverse is given below as texts Nos. 6–8. The obverse is largely
Fig. 1 Texts Nos. 1–3. Drawn by Taniguchi
Fig. 2 Texts Nos. 6A, 7 and 8A. Drawn by Taniguchi
destroyed but traces of a few lines from the lower part of col. i survive at the tablet’s left edge, and will belong in the break that follows passage No. 2. The remaining text includes a succession of participles, presumably epithets of a god addressed, but they do not match the corresponding passage of the incantation to Ninurta (No. 2: 1–10). For this reason it can be identified as a remnant of the incantation to Adad. What little survives may overlap with the opening of fragment No. 4.

\[ \text{[\ldots] } \text{sa-b[ir?]} \ldots \]
\[ \text{mu[.]} \ldots \]

No. 4  
**Zu-buru-dabbda II C (K 4456 + i)**

K 4456 + 5897 + 11709 is a fragment from the middle of the obverse of a two-column tablet from Nineveh, put together from three separate pieces. K 5897 was first published in transliteration and photograph by Richard Caplice in his study of the *Namburbi* texts (1971: 155–6 and pl. 9); the additional fragments were subsequently joined by Werner Mayer and W. G. Lambert (Schwemer 2001: 682 fn. 5611). The whole is now published in cuneiform by Daniel Schwemer (2001: 1020).

The text contained in col. i is eighteen lines from an incantation-prayer to the storm god, Adad. What little survives may overlap with the opening of fragment No. 4.

\[ \text{[\ldots] } \text{sa-b[ir?]} \ldots \]
\[ \text{mu[.]} \ldots \]

The end of the incantation, containing the adjuration, is lost.

Followed the incipit, but the exorcist’s self-identification and request for his client are well preserved.

The tablets has been collated, and an asterisk for certain, restored in the incantation-prayers addressed to the winds and others). The whole is now published in cuneiform by Daniel Schwemer (2001: 682 fn. 5611). The usual includes a succession of participles, presumably epithets of a god addressed, but they do not match the corresponding

\[ \text{[\ldots] } \text{sa-b[ir?]} \ldots \]
\[ \text{mu[.]} \ldots \]

The text contained in col. i is eighteen lines from an incantation-prayer to the storm god, Adad. What little survives may overlap with the opening of fragment No. 4.

\[ \text{[\ldots] } \text{sa-b[ir?]} \ldots \]
\[ \text{mu[.]} \ldots \]

\[ \text{[\ldots] } \text{sa-b[ir?]} \ldots \]
\[ \text{mu[.]} \ldots \]

The end of the incantation, containing the adjuration, is lost.

Followed the incipit, but the exorcist’s self-identification and request for his client are well preserved.

The tablets has been collated, and an asterisk for certain, restored in the incantation-prayers addressed to the winds and others). The whole is now published in cuneiform by Daniel Schwemer (2001: 682 fn. 5611). The usual includes a succession of participles, presumably epithets of a god addressed, but they do not match the corresponding
Notes

6. The first word is open to other readings, e.g. [muš-t]a-ë-zic1, [muš-t]a-ë-mit1. After the break a reading . . . x rabiti(gal)õmet seems unlikely when x ̸= mek; [g]u-ñamõt recommends itself because Adad is well known as the divine gn-ñam = gugallu “canal-inspector” (see the epithets collected by Schwemer 2001: 701, 708). If the restoration is correct the line refers to his patronage of human members of the profession.

16. The conventional English translation of mûmu is “caterpillar”; i.e. the larva of butterflies and moths, following Landsberger 1934: 128 “Raupe”. Heimpel’s study of insects in Sumerian and Akkadian sources proposed a more general identification of mûmu as the active larva of any insect (1976–80: 106). “Caterpillar” is too specific a translation for a word that was equated variously by ancient philologists with Sumerian uh (Wilcke 1976: 148 l. 80) and even usˇum “snake”, and with Akkadian nı´ g.ki “ground-vermin”, za.na (the diet of crows, according to the hymn to H...)

No. 5 Zu-buru-dabbeda II D (K 4456 + ii)

The second column of K 4456+ contains a short snatch of text that begins with the rubric of a lost incantation and continues with the opening twelve lines of an incantation-prayer to the north wind. The lost incantation that preceded it was addressed to the south wind, for it is expected that the winds appear in the standard sequence: south, north, east, west. The rubric is restored accordingly. The incipit of the incantation-prayer to the south wind can be restored from the Sultantepe tablet, text No. 23 (STT 243 obv. 13), where this wind bears the epithet mušappikat ugãrî “that piles up (grain in) the arable land”. This epithet alludes to the fact that in Iraq a southerly wind predominates during the end of the growing season and the barley harvest.

The incipit of the incantation-prayer to the north wind is likewise restored from the same source (No. 23 obv. 13), where it is dubbed mukin karâši “that keeps the (army’s) camp in good order”. The reference is to the fact that northerly winds predominate in Iraq during the summer months, a season when in antiquity the harvest was in, little agricultural activity took place and men were often occupied by military service. In referring to the storage of grain the following lines confirm this seasonal allusion, for this was an activity that was completed as the harvest period came to an end (Hruška 1990: 109). Traces of the very end of the incantation to the north wind and its rubric survive on No. 6 (K 3270 + iii 1–2).

[én šû(u) (im.û18.lu) mušappikat ugârî . . .] break

ii 1’ ka.inim.ma [šu.ll.la im.û18.lu.ke₁]

2’ [én ilišnu(im.si.sá) šaru(im) m[u-šin ka-ra-šî]

3’ muš-qaq-qû-u iš-pîk [e-gal-li . . .]
Notes
1. Incantation. O South Wind, that piles up (grain in) the arable land, . . . (remainder missing)
2. Incantation-formula, [suulla-prayer to the south wind.]

Incantation. O North Wind, wind that [keeps the camp in good order,] that [piles high the grain bins of {plenty . . . .} that stocks the granaries, that [. . . .] that [. . . .] with its sweet breeze, [. . . .] with its pure probing, [. . . .] makes plentiful [. . . .] hay [. . . .] the human [race . . . .] son of [Ninlil(?). . . .!]

12. On [this] day [I hereby arrange a sacred ritual apparatus for you, present you with a pure gift worthy of your divine personage . . .] (gap, then conclusion and rubric in No. 6: 1’–2’)

6’. For ħātu “to scrutinize, seek out” as an action associated with the blowing of the wind, see Erra I 36, which sets out the destiny of the fifth of Erra’s seven weapons thus: ki-ma sārēt(īm) zi-qū-ma kip-pa-ta ū-t an “Blow like the wind, explore the whole world!” The nuance of exploration in which no place is left unvisited is made very clear in SB Gilgamesh 5: [ī-hi-ī]-ma mit-ḫa-riṣ pa-[ak-ki] “he explored everywhere the seats of power”, as at long last definitively restored from the newly published Ugarit tablet (George 2007: 239).

10. The restoration of Ninlil as the north wind’s mother is based on their pairing in several scholastic texts, according to which the south wind was associated with Ea, “father of the gods” (where abu “father” is perhaps a mistake for apkalšu “sage”), the east wind with Enlil, “lord of all, var. winds”, the north wind with Ninlil, “lady of airs”, and the west wind with Anu, also “father of the gods”; the sources are quoted by George 1992: 152–3 §11, 447–8. Note that the incantation-prayer to the east wind reports it as the son of Enlil (No. 6: 10), in accordance with the scholastic tradition. However, other traditions existed in which the north wind was associated (a) with Adad and Ninurta and (b) with Sin (Livingstone 1986: 74–6). In Esarhaddon’s time the association was expressed more concretely: the south wind was ma-nu4 े-a “Ea’s breath” (Börger 1956: 45 ii 3), so it can be assumed that the scholarly texts allude to the idea that the winds were each the breath of a god.

12. ff. Restored from No. 6 (K 6888 + iii 12’–14’ // 8123 iii 2–4).

No. 6

Zu-buru-dabbeda II E (K 3270+ // 8123 iii) Figs. 2–3

The latter part of Tablet II survives on two different manuscripts from Ashurbanipal’s library. The larger manuscript comprises the three pieces K 3270+, K 6888+ and K 9210 (MS A in Table 2). These give parts of forty-two lines in col. iii and twenty-one (including catchline) in col. iv, to which is appended a standard colophon of Ashurbanipal. The colophon is Type c in Hunger’s catalogue (1968: 97–8). K 9210 was partly transliterated by R. Börger fifty years ago (1957: 3). K 6888 was subsequently published in transliteration and photograph by R. Caplice (1971: 155 and pl. 9). The two assemblages K 3270+ and 6888+ touch in col. iii but cannot be glued without plaster reinforcement. For the moment they are stored separately but the copy published here shows them as if joined (Fig. 2). The other source for the latter part of this tablet of Zu-buru-dabbeda is K 8123, a fragment from the top edge of the reverse inscribed with seventeen lines in col. iii and the ends of fourteen in col. iv (Fig. 3).

Col. iii of K 3270+ contains a trace of the very end of an incantation-prayer and its rubric, the opening line of a third
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incantation-prayer, also addressed to a wind (iii 30: én i̱tm). It can safely be assumed that the sequence of winds follows the usual order, so that the first rubric of the column will identify the preceding text as an incantation to the north wind, i.e. the missing end of text No. 5. For the same reason the incantation following that addressed to the east wind must have been addressed to the west wind. The middle of this fourth incantation to a wind is partly preserved on K 9210 (text No. 7), and traces of the end appear on col. iv (text No. 8).

According to the incipit of the incantation-prayer to the east wind, restored from l. 16 and the Sultantepe tablet (text No. 23 obv. 14), it bears the epithet maššāq rīṣī “which averts storm-damage”. This phrase would indicate that an easterly wind, blowing from the Zagros, carried little threat of damage to crops. Other phrases in the invocation to this wind report the gentle character and health-enhancing properties of its mountain air (ll. 4–5).

In the following transliteration A = K 3270 + 7829 + 8115 (+) 6888 + 8113 and C = K 8123. The line division and numeration follow A. The passage here given as ll. 11–18’ has already been translated by W. G. Lambert (1990: 126).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A</th>
<th>iii</th>
<th>1’</th>
<th>ina ́qi-b[itr ́nin-urta a-sá-red ́ekur]</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>2’</td>
<td>ka.inim.m[a šu.il.la im.si.sá.ke₄]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>3’</td>
<td>én šādā(im.kur.ra) m[w̃še-ti-iq ri̱ly-ši]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>4’</td>
<td>e-mu-ga-an rab-ba-tu[mn . . .]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>5’</td>
<td>mu-rab-bi-bi mu-šā-ādx[x . . .]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>6’</td>
<td>šā-hi-il nag-bi šādā(kur) x[ . . .]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>7’</td>
<td>re-é-um bu-li ́qi Shakkan x[ . . .]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>8’</td>
<td>nu-dīn bu-a-ri ana qa-x[ . . .]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>9’</td>
<td>ra-́im hūr-šā-na x[ . . .]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>10’</td>
<td>mār(dumu) 4en-liš šur-[bu-u . . .]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC</td>
<td>11’</td>
<td>ana-ku āšipu(ša)ša ́eva(60) ́al-si-ka aq-rí-ka</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC</td>
<td>12’</td>
<td>ina ū-x-me anné(šēš)’arkus(šēš)-ka rikša(šēš) ellá(šu) ́ubānīqū(siskur)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>ebbā(šu) ubahmar(šu) ṭašmār(šu) (gabara.r[1]) [pāni(igi)-ka]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC</td>
<td>13’</td>
<td>ina mahār(igi) 2marduk(amar.utu) 2adad(šiskur) 4nin-urta [li̱li̱(dingir)meši]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>rabūtī(gal) mešû]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC</td>
<td>14’</td>
<td>́aqtiš(nig.ba)-ka qīsta(nig.ba) si-mat ili[ti-ka]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC</td>
<td>16’</td>
<td>mu-šur šādā(im.kur.ra) mu-šē-ti-[iq ri-iš-ši]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC</td>
<td>17’</td>
<td>a-kul šādā(tabat[du10, ga] ši-ti [da-šā-pa]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC</td>
<td>18’</td>
<td>puruš(kud)² kalhi(ü[r.gi]-) rābūti(gal) mešû ša ⁴nin-šilim</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC</td>
<td>19’</td>
<td>e-re-bu-ša pi-š(u)-ša-na a-b[u-bu me-šu-u?]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC</td>
<td>20’</td>
<td>hū-mar-si-ru-ša pi-sā-nu a-b[u-bu me-šu-u?]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC</td>
<td>21’</td>
<td>eš[i uu]eq[a-ša] ugarı(a.gar) an-né-e su₂₄-[ra-am-ma?]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC</td>
<td>22’</td>
<td>ū-su-na-šu-ti [ . . . . . . .]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC</td>
<td>23’</td>
<td>qat-su-nu ša-[bat šu-li-šu-su-ti]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC</td>
<td>24’</td>
<td>ana hū-an-duh šāmē(śen)“[ . . . .]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>25’</td>
<td>ši-mi-šu-nu-[ti . . . . . . .]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC</td>
<td>26’</td>
<td>ina qi-bit ́marduk(amar.[utu]) bēl(en) a-ši-pu-ti</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC</td>
<td>27’</td>
<td>ina qi-bit ́da-a[dad]šiskur) sūr hengallit(he.[galt]]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>28’</td>
<td>ina qi-bit ́nin-urta a-sā-red ́ekur]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A  | 29’ | ka.in[m.ma šu.il.la im.kur.ra.ka₄] |

A  | 30’ | én i[m.mar.dú . . .] break |

Variant. 14’ A: [a]q-tiš-[ka] qi-[iš-ta]
[By command of Marduk, lord of exorcism, by command of Adad, king of plenty,] iii 1'

2. Incantation-formula. [šuilla-prayer to the north wind]

3. Incantation. O East Wind that [averts storm-damage.] 4' great power [...]. 5' that brings softness, that ... [. . .] 6' filtered by mountain springs [. . .]. 7' shepherd of Sakkâ's herds [. . .]. 8' that conveys healthiness to ... [. . .]. 9' that loves the mountain ranges [. . .]. 10' most [great] son of Enlil [. . .] 11' I, an exorcist of Ea and [Asallûhe], hereby call and invite you! 12' On this day I hereby arrange a ritual apparatus for you, present [before you] a pure offering. 13' In the presence of Marduk, Adad, Ninurta, [the great gods(?)]. 14' I have bestowed on you a gift worthy of [your divine personage:] 15' a silver deer, a [golden] stag. 16' Accept, O East Wind that averts [storm-damage!] 17' Eat the tasty food, drink [the sweet liquid!] 18' Get rid of the great dogs of [Ninkilim.]. 19' locusts whose mouths are a Deluge, [a tempest!]. 20' mice whose mouths are a Deluge, [a tempest!] 21' Come [around] to this plot of farmland and 22' lead them [away ...!] 23' Seize them by the hand, [take them away!] 24' Take them off] to the latch of the heavens! 25' Roast them. 26' By command of Marduk, [lord of exorcism,] 27' by command of Adad, [king of plenty,] 28' by command of [Ninurta, foremost one of E-kur!]

29' Incantation-formula, [šuilla-prayer to the east wind.]

30' Incantation. O [West Wind ...] (gap, then continued on No. 7)

Notes

1. This and the preceding two lines can be restored from ll. 26–8 // No. 8: 1–3.
10'. For the connection between the east wind and Enlil see the note on No. 5: 10'.
24'. The expression  handjob šamâ ‘latch of heaven’ alludes to the ancient notion that passage of the celestial bodies across the sky was guarded by bolted gates (Heimpel 1986: 132–40, Horowitz 1998: 266–7). It otherwise occurs in two protases of the astrological omen tablet VAT 9436 (Weidner 1941–4 pl. 16 rev. 9 and 12), where it is a figurative, literary expression for some observable feature of the night sky.

No. 7

Zu-buru-dabbeda II F (K 9210 iii) Fig. 2

Col. iii of K 3270+ continues after a break with K 9210, whose col. iii provides twelve more lines from the incantation to the west wind. The length of the gap in the text between K 3270+ and K 9210 can be estimated from col. iv, where four widely spaced lines of Ashurbanipal’s colophon Type c are missing between the two pieces. On this evidence it can be judged that twelve lines of text are missing between them in col. iii, so that a consecutive numeration of lines can be employed in which K 9210 iii 1’ is K 3270+ iii 43’. Some of the missing lines can be restored from similar passages in other incantation-prayers of Zu-buru-dabbeda (ll. 39’–42’ // Nos. 5: 11’–14’ // 6: 11’–14’; cf. Nos. 2: 11–13 // 4: 7’–10’ // 10: 4’–8’).

39' [anâku ašīpu ša Ea u Marduk alsika (aqrika)]
40' [ina imî aum aruskas riksa ella niqâ ebba ušamšîr pânika]
41' [ina naḫar Marduk Adad Ninurta ili rabûti(?)]
42' [aqtîsha quša simat ilîtîka (rabîtî)]
43' ban[dudûd('ba.an1,du₈₂,du₈₃)] kasp? [...]
44' bandudî(ba.an,du₈₂,du₈₃)' [jûrâši? ...]
45' mu-[k˘]ur 'amar[ru(mar,[du])] ...]
46' a-kil ū-[a-[b[u šî-ti da-âš-pa]]
47' puras(kud) 'kalbi(ur.gi, ) 'mès rabûti(gal)'mès ša 'nin-kîlîm]
48' e-re-ru-u ša [pi-î-sù-nu me-łu-û]
49' ha-ša-šu-ru'-[u'] [ša pi-î-sù-nu a-đu-ša]
50' el(tug) eqel(aša) uga(r(t[a,gâr] ) an-nê-e suhramma?]
51' ū-ru-[šu-n]u-ti ...]
52' qat-su-nu [ša-bat-ma šu-li-šu-nu-ti]
53' ana ha-an-[ul] šamâ(an)’...]
54' še'[miš-šu-nu-ti ...]

break
[... 39] I, an exorcist of Ea and Marduk, hereby call (and invite) you! 40 On this day I hereby arrange a sacred ritual apparatus for you, present to you a pure offering. 41 In the presence of Marduk, Adad, Ninurta, the great gods(?) , 42 I have bestowed on you a gift worthy of your (great) divine personage; 43 a bucket [of silver(?)] ... 44 a bucket [of gold(?)] ... 45 Accept, O West [Wind that ...!] 46 Eat the tasty [food, drink the sweet liquid!] 47 Get rid of the [great] dogs [of Ninkilim,] 48 locusts whose [mouths are a tempest,] 49 mice [whose mouths are a Deluge!] 50 [Come around] to this plot of farmland and 51 lead them [away ...! 52 Seize] them by the hand, [take them away! 53 Take them off] to the latch [of the heavens!] 54 Roast [them, ... them!] (continued on No. 8)

No. 8  Zu-buru-dabbida II G (K 3270 + (+) 6888 + // 8123 iv)  Figs. 2–3

The last two lines and rubric of the incantation to the west wind occur on K 3270 + 7829 + 8151 (+) 6888 + 8113 at iv 1′–3′. From this it appears that the incantation closed with the same three-line adjuration as its immediate predecessors. Further comparison indicates that this passage probably followed šimišūtu (iii 54′) without any intervening text (as in No. 6: 25′–6′), so that only one line of tablet is lost at the top of col. iv.

The incantation to the west wind is followed by a mixed-language incantation, Tutu-anna hursangake, which is also encountered in texts Nos. 23 rev. 6–10 // 24 iii 8′–10′, and then by a magic ritual that concludes with a prayer to Ninkilim. The ritual directs the farmer (indicated by the 3rd person verbs) to place figs in the field affected by pests, to construct a ritual platform (parakkū) for Ninkilim, the god responsible for field pests, and to make a bonfire. Then, having waited for the Goat-star to rise, he beats his bared breast and calls on Ninkilim, thus symbolically rid of locusts whose [mouths are a tempest,]  mice [whose mouths are a Deluge!] [Come around] to this plot of farmland and  lead them [away ...!]  Seize them by the hand, [take them away!  Take them off] to the latch [of the heavens!] Roast [them, ... them!] (continued on No. 8)

iv 1 [ina qi-bit "marduk bēl(en) a-ši-put-ti]
iv 2 [ina qi-bit "adad šar] hengallıt(he` ā.g[āl])
iv 3 [ina qi-bit "nin-urta a-ša-re]d ē.k[ur]
A 4 [ka.inim.ma šu.ill,la i]m.mar.dū.ka₄
A 5 [tu.tu.an.na ḫu]r.(x)sag.ga.ka₄
A 6 [kalbā(ur,gi₄)mēi rabāṭ(gal)₄mei] šā "nin-kilim
A 7 [ki-is-sat-ku-nu mah-ra]t-u-ru at-la-a
A 8 [ka.inim.ma mu-na šṭā eqlit(a.ṣā) šu-lī-i
A 9 [dū.dū.bi]šikkar volunt(engar) x] x ileu(qe(ti)-ma e-ma eqli(a.ṣā) i-za-qāp
AC 10 [x x x x x x x] x tuba(ub) eqli(a.ṣā) ēliš(an,ta) u šapliš(ki.ta) i-ti-mer
A 11 [x x x x x x x x t]i-it-ta 1.ta.ā[m išakkan(gar)]₄mei
C 12 [e-ma ...] i-it-me-ru / [. . . ā]m išakkan(gar)₄mei
AC 13 [miris ("ninda,1.[dē,]) (dīši(lāl) ūmēr)i[i[n.un.n,a] išakkan(gar)₄mei
AC 14 parakkū(bāra) "nin-kil(um lu) i{-kaš-ma inaddi(sub,ma) [ab-ra i-se-en]
AC 15 ab-ra anu "nin-kilim k[i-t [ereb šamsi] u(tu,šu,a)? inap]pul[(sa,])₄mei
AC 16 akka(ninda) bi-ra-a la ikkal(gu₄) gaqqad(sag,du)-s[u ippaṭtar(duh)
subāt(tug)-s[u šu-la-ma-as
AC 17 irat(gaba)-su iṣepṭā(gāl.tag₄)₄mei[ma [tulā(ubur)?-šu] imahj̱aṣ(sig)₄mei
AC 18 "nin-kilim k[i-ša-sa-ka mah-ja]t(-a)
AC 19 kalbi(ur,gi₄)mēi-ša-ši-si ma-la-a
 Variant. 10 C: 'i'-tem-mer


4 [Incantation-formula, šuilla-prayer to the] west wind.

5 [Tutu-anna of the] mountain range! 6 [O great dogs] of Ninkilim, 7 you have [received your fodder! Be gone!]

8 [Incantation-formula] for expelling [grubs] from a field.

9 [Its ritual: The farmer] takes [ . . . ] and stands (it) upright wherever the field is. 10 He buries [ . . . at] the corners of the field, top and bottom. 11 [Wherever] he buried [the . . . ] he places one fig each. 12 He places four date-cakes made of syrup and ghee. 13 Without] delay he lays down a plinth for Ninkilim and [makes a brushwood bonfire.] 14 As [the sun goes down(?) he lights the] bonfire for Ninkilim and, 15 after the Goat-star has risen [in the east,] 16 he must not eat anywhere. [He uncovers] his head, strips off his [garment,] 17 bares his chest and beats [his breast(?):]

"O Ninkilim, you have received your fodder! 19 Summon your dogs and be gone!"

20 When the farmer has said this to Ninkilim, 21 the exorcist says three times to Ninkilim as follows:

22 [Incantation. O Ninkilim,] lord of the animals of the earth, creator of everything.

23 [Tablet II, series Zu-buru-dabbeda.]

Notes

5–8. Restored from Nos. 23 rev. 6–10 // 24 iii 8–10', q.v.

15. On the Goat-star and its rising, see the commentary on the timing of field-pest rituals at the end of this article.

19. The first verb is šisi: see the better-spelled parallel, text No. 24 iii 23'.

22. On this epithet of Ninkilim, see the note on No. 9: 1.

No. 9

Zu-buru-dabbeda III A (K 2783) Fig. 3

K 2783 is the top-left-hand corner of a multi-column tablet from Ashurbanipal’s library. We thank Werner Mayer for finding it among the Geers copies and sending us his annotations. The obverse contains parts of the first seven lines of an incantation-prayer to Ninkilim (booked as Mayer 1976: 403 Ninkilim(? 1). The incipit is probably the same as the catch-line of Zu-buru-dabbeda II, as preserved on text No. 8 iv 22. For this reason we provisionally identify K 2783 as a manuscript of Zu-buru-dabbeda III. Like K 3270+ (No. 8), 81-2-4, 260 (No. 16) and K 2596 (No. 18), K 2783 concludes with a Type c colophon of Ashurbanipal.

obv.

1 én 4ninkilim bêl(en) 'nannaššit(û.û.û) qaq qa'-[ri ba-mu-u mim-ma šum-šû]
2 be-el eqli(a.šā) uqârî(a.âr) ušallî(û'.û[.šal]) [ . . . . . . ]
3 [p]a-qî-du x te x[ . . . . . . ]
4 [mul]-î'-ir eršet(êki)' [ . . . . . . ]
5 [mu-kil] šer-šer [ . . . . . . ]
6 [x x] 16 'he-šet uš [ . . . . . . ]
7 [x x] 1î[û] rî [ . . . . . . ]
8 break
Incantation. O Ninkilim, lord of the animals of the earth, [creator of everything.]  lord of field, farmland, meadowland [ . . . ] who looks after [ . . . ] who directs the earth [ . . . ] who holds] the nose-ropes of [all creatures . . . . of the Lady of [ . . . (remainder lost)]


Note
1. If this incipit repeats the catch-line of Zu-buru-dabbeda II, we are confronted by a new equation, ūz.lu = nammasṭu “animals”. The compound of ūz (or ud.) “goat” and lu = udu “sheep” is probably a learned etymology of the conventional Sumerian equivalent of nammasṭu, a.za.lu.lu. Such an etymology might have been partly substantiated in antiquity by the lexical passage Ura XIV 404–6, where ūz and nammasṭu are thrice associated: nīg gir.ūz, anše(ūlak + pu).ūz, mir.ūz = nam-mas-tu. A longer name of Ninkilim is 4inis.kīlīm.ki.dū (An V 34), which clearly lies behind the extended form of the god’s Akkadian epithet bēl nammasṭī in the present line: nin = bēl, kīlim = nammasṭu, ki = qaqqaru, dū = bā(mīn minma šəntu).

II. Unplaced tablets of Zu-buru-dabbeda (Texts Nos. 10–17)

No. 10

K 8072 is a fragment of twenty-one lines from the right edge of a tablet from Ashurbanipal’s library. It was first recognized as a close parallel to K 5315 (MS A of text No. 2) by R. Borger, who transcribed part of it (Borger 1957: 3). It was eventually published in cuneiform by Daniel Schwemer (2001: 1021). The content is an incantation to a deity whose name is absent, but who is addressed as masculine. The opening invocation to this god is all but lost, with traces of only three lines surviving, but the exorcist’s self-identification and request for help with banishing pests from his client’s field are almost entirely preserved. The text has been collated.

1’ . . . [x [x]
2’ . . . ] šat-tu[k-kī?]
3’ . . . ša šu-līl-ša t[a-a-bu
4’ [ana-ku āšipu(‘maš,maš) ša 4ē-a u 4asa]-l-lā-l[e]
5’ [al-st-ka īš-tu šāmē(an)]eš ša 4a-n[im]
6’ [ar-kus-ka ri]k-sa el-[l[u]
7’ [ni-qa-ur eb-hu] ū’-šām-li-ra maḥār(igi)-[k[a]
8’ [aq-gi-ka da-āš-pa ku]r*ru-[na] si-mat ilu(dingir)-ti-ka rabīti(gal)y*[t]
9’ [nu-ḫur 4x x x ]x a-kul tāba(du10, ga) šī-ti da-āš-p[a]
10’ [sa-li-ma ana eq]el([a.s]ā) ugārī(a.gār) an-nē-e ri-ši-ma
11’ [šu-li-šu-nu-ti kal]bi([ur].gi)-ymeš rabārī(gal)ymeš ša 4nin-šūl
12’ [e-re-bu a-k[a]-lu mu-nu mu-bat-ti-ru ar-ra-bu
13’ [sa-ma-na? ina līb bi elg]el(aš.ša) ugārī(a.gār) ša ta-ra-mu šu-li-šu-nu-ti
14’ [ana 4nin-šūl bēl(en) nam-maš,lāš-tī] pi-’gd-su-nu-ti
15’ [x x x x tā-sū-nu-ti ba băng(kā)-ša-nu li-dīl
16’ [qa-ti-li-nu lu]-l[y]-bi(ma] li-ša30-li-šu-nu-ti
17’ [ina qa-bit lu-zi-ti-k]a rabīti(gal)9
18’ [ina qa-bit 4ē-a] šar₄ aps[i(abzu]
19’ [ina qa-bit 4arduk bēl(en)] āšipu(‘maš,maš)‐t[ī
20’ [ina qa-bit 4adad šaḫ ḫęngallī ina qa-bit 4nin-urta a-šā-śu-lū ḫa]ru[t]? 4tu₄, ln
21’ [ka.inim.ma šu.ii.la 4 . . . ke]₄

[Incantation. O DN, who . . . offerings, 3 [ . . . whose shelter] is sweet, 4 [I, an exorcist of Ea and] Asalluḫe, [hereby call you down from the heaven of Anu, 6 [arrange for you a] sacred ritual [apparatus.] 7 present before you [a pure offering, 8 pour for you a libation of sweet] wine worthy of your great divine personage. 9 [Accept, O . . . !] Eat the tasty food, drink the sweet drink! 10 Show [goodwill towards] this plot of farmland and 11 [expel them, the great dogs of Ninkilim. 12 [Locust, “devourer”]-pest, grub, μubattiru-bug, cricket, 13 [red-bug(?)]:] expel them

break
Fig. 3  Texts Nos. 6C, 8C, 9, 11 and 12. Drawn by Taniguchi
Fig. 4 Texts Nos. 13–16. Drawn by Taniguchi
[from the] plot of farmland that you love! 14 Place them in the charge of [Ninkilim, the lord of the animals], 15 [so he can . . . ] them, lock them up (lit. bolt their gate), 16 seize [them by the hand] and take them away! 17 [By command of] your great [divine personage], 18 by command of Ea, king of the Apsû, 19 [by command of Marduk, lord of] exorcism, 20 [by command of Adad, king of plenty, by command of Ninurta, foremost one of E]-kur! Incantation-spell.

[Incantation-formula: šuilla-prayer] to [the god . . . ]

Notes
3': Restored from No. 2: 10.
18–19'. Restored after similar exorcistic passages, e.g. in an incantation-prayer to propitiate an estranged god (Lambert 1974a: 274 ll. 17–18): 4'e-a šar apsu [u 4]iš-su-la-he bel a-si-pu-ti.
20'. See No. 8: 2–3.

No. 11 K 6945

This is a fragment from the middle of a tablet from Ashurbanipal’s library, containing ten lines of text that yield a passage similar to the Zu-burudabbada incantations but not yet placed in the series. Here another masculine-singular divine power is asked to have Ninkilim take its creatures to the netherworld and hand them over to the deities of Ereškigal’s infernal realm, who will ensure their death and eternal captivity.

1' [x x x x x] x x 'ušqi [ . . . ]
2' [šu-ša-nu-ti k]albi₃(ur gi₃)₄me₃(a)₅la-bu₇(i)(gal)₈me₅ ša₅ nin-kilim]
3' [e-re-bu] [a₁-ki-hum ša pi-i-ša-nu 'a₄][bu-bu me-hu-u]
4' [qat-su-nu s₃]a-bu₃[ma ša-re-ša-n[u-ti]
5' [a₄][n]in-kilim be[(en)] nam-maš-ti pi-qid-su-n[u-ti]
6' [ana en-se-tî] [li-se-ra-su-n[u-ti]
7' [mu₃(a)]₃e-reš-ki-ga₃ (u₃)₄li-s₃ak-s₃i-su₃[me-nu-ti]
8' [a₃][n]am-tar[? ]₃s₃ukkar₃illi₃(sukkal)₅lip₃-qid-su₃[me-nu-ti]
9' [x x x x x] x x 'u₅₄[ti₃-d₃uₙ . . . ]
10' [x x x x x] x x [ . . . ]

[ . . . 2’ Expel them, the] great dogs of [Ninkilim! 5 Locust,] “devourer”-pest, whose mouths are a [Deluge, a tempest;] 4 seize [them by the hand] and take them away! 5' Place them in the charge [of Ninkilim, the] lord of the animals, 6 so that he can send them down [to the netherworld,] 7 so that he can have them arrive [before Ereškigal(?),] 8 so that he can place them in the charge of the minister [Namtar(?),] 9 so that he can have] Bidu [bar his gate on them! (continuation lost)

Notes
2'–3'. Restored after Nos. 2: 17–18 and 10: 11’–12’, but note that No. 4: 15’ offers some other word instead of šiššânimitu.

No. 12 K 2629

K 2629 is from the top or bottom edge of a two-column tablet from Ashurbanipal’s library, near a left-hand corner but extending as far as the column-divider on the right. The preserved side is thus either col. i or col. iv. The fragment’s flat surface suggests the obverse rather than the reverse. It holds thirteen lines of an incantation-prayer to the Igigi gods. The content makes an attribution to Zu-burudabbada certain. Probably the column begins with the incantation’s incipit, a coincidence more likely on col. i than col. iv. Accordingly, this piece represents the beginning of a tablet other than II and III, which began with incantation-prayers to Ninurta and Ninkilim respectively.

The incantation-prayer to the Igigi is not composed according to the structure observed in the incantations to Adad, Ninurta and the winds (texts Nos. 2–8), but is in essence a running commentary on a magic ritual that aims to inhibit the reproduction of field pests by burning a
representative sample of pests. No doubt the incantation was employed as part of the ritual it
describes. It concludes with the usual invocation of selected divine authorities.

Notes
5. “Seeds and eggs”: locust eggs are laid enclosed in oval or cylindrical cases, like peas in a pod but more
closely packed. The terminology employed here is easily explicable: the locust’s “seeds” are the actual eggs,
while its “eggs” are the pod-like egg-cases. At Mari the word used for locusts’ egg-cases is kuppun, literally
“pod, bag” (Heimpel 1996: 104).
6. i-ban-nu-u is a defective spelling of the IV/1 ıbbannů, as becomes clear from l. 8, ib-ba-n[u-u]. That banů
“to create” could refer to spawning was the insight of Benno Landsberger in his discussion of baniu “fish
roe” in MSL VIII/2 (1962: 105: banů “obviously ‘to lay eggs’”).

No. 13 80-7-19, 189

This fragment is from the middle of the obverse of a two-column library tablet. It was excavated at
Nineveh by Hormuzd Rassam late in 1880. The tablet is pierced by drying holes in the margin
between the two columns, and the columns are defined by lines made with a cord instead of a
straight edge. It may be part of the same tablet as two other pieces found by Rassam the same
year: most probably the reverse fragment 81-2-4, 260 (No. 16), which is similarly pierced and
ruled by a cord, and possibly also the right-edge fragment 81-2-4, 319 (No. 15). What survives of
col. i is evidently part of an incantation-prayer intended for use against field pests; some of the
lines can be restored individually after parallels elsewhere in the corpus, but the results are very
provisional. Col. ii offers remains too meagre to permit any identification as prayer or ritual.

col. i

1’ ...]tî?!
2’ ... kalbi rabûti ša 4ni]n-kilim
3’ ...]a-nu
4’ [anâku āšipu ša Ea u Assalluḫe alsika] arad(īr)-ka
5’ ... m]4-šū-nu
6’ ...]pa-tu
7’ ...]x-ru
8’ [ina qīhitika rabiti ša la innen]n(ū)[(ba)]l
9’ [gāssanu šabatma šu-li-šu-n]u-tī

col. ii

1’ x[... ]
2’ x[... ]
3’ x[... ]
4’ ra-[... ]
5’ ina [... ]
10'  [sabat šinnašumu šabat lišānšumu šabat ṣakkī](tukul)yemmo-šu
11'  [ana DN ... pi-qiš-su-n]u-ti

break

i 2'  . . . the great dogs of] Ninkilim. 3'-4'  [. . . I, an exorcist of Ea and Asalluḫe, call on you] as
your slave! 5  [. . .] their [. . . 6-8] . . . By your great command that cannot be] revoked, 9  [seize
them by the hand and take] them [away! 10] Seize their teeth, seize their tongues, seize their
[weapons! 11] Give] them [into the charge of the god . . . ! (remainder lost)

Notes

4'. Restored after No. 2: 11, etc.
9'-11'. Cf. No. 14: 10'-12'.

No. 14  82-5-22, 532  Fig. 4

This is a flake from the right-hand column of the obverse of a two-column tablet from
Ashurbanipal’s library, deriving from Hormuzd Rassam’s work at Nineveh in 1882 and probably,
like much of the 82-5-22 collection, from the South-West Palace on Kuyunjik. The fragment holds
parts of thirteen lines, some of them almost complete. They give part of the text of an incantation-
prayer addressed to a plurality of deities. The desired outcome is once again the expulsion of the
Dogs of Ninkilim, so that the place of the fragment in Zu-buru-dabbeda is assured. The likely
divine groups to which the prayer is addressed are the Igigi of heaven, who are also invoked in
text No. 12, and the Anunnaki of the netherworld. As we restore it, the gods addressed are begged
to lead field pests into the care of the Anunnaki (l. 12'), i.e. to lock them up in the netherworld,
from whence they cannot return (cf. No. 11). If the restoration is correct, the Anunnaki cannot
also be the gods who are addressed in the prayer as a whole, so probably this is a prayer to the
Igigi. Although an incantation-prayer to the Igigi occurs elsewhere in the series, and is here edited
as text No. 12, the two are not mutually exclusive. The difference between the two is one of voice
and genre. In No. 12 the speaker describes the magic ritual he performs, and the prayer is most
appropriately spoken by an exorcist demonstrating his professional expertise. The present passage,
by contrast, is no magic spell but a supplicant’s prayer, in which the speaker identifies himself by
name. This last detail confirms what the content suggests, that the supplicant is not the exorcist
but his client, the farmer whose crops were judged to be in peril.

col. ii
1'  [........ -k]uš-mu-šišu ša-us-pi-ku-n[u-ti]
2'  [ana]-šišu 16 ananna(nanni) mār(a) annama(nanni) sissikta(tūg.sīg)-ku-nu
ašbat(dib)yemmo rišā(tuk)-nī rēma(arlušu)
3'  [d]-i-nī di-na a-lak-ti lim-da
4'  [ši-m]a-a qa-ba-a-a parussa(eš.bar)-a-a pur-sa
5'  [us]-li-a kalbi(ut.gir), yemmo rabūt(gal) yemmo ša¬ nin-ši-āl
6'  ṣakkī](tukul)yemmo-ku-nu ezzūtīš(u)šur)mēš e-li-ši-u nē-e-[u]-hā
7'  [me-la]m-me-ku-nu ezzūtīš(u)šur)mēš li-is-hu-pu-šu-nu-ti
8'  [ša-q]a-m-ma-tum ṣar-ba-ši[u]-eli(u)-g(u)-šu-nu tab-ka
9'  [su-uh-la ?] lī-ba-šu-nu muh-ḥa-šu-nu muh-ša
10'  [sab-ta šinna(zū)-ši-šu-sa]b-ta lišān(em)-e-ši-šu-nu šiḥ-ra ṣakkī(tukul)yemmo-šu-nu
11'  [gat-su-nu sab-ta-m]a ša-li-a-ši-nu-ti
12'  [ana ši-a-nu-nak]1 pīq-da-šū-nu-ti
13'  [li-mu-ši ti-de-eš ana eper(sahar) asakki(ttī.sāg)m]-u-na-ša-nu-ti
14'  [........ .-n]a?-[ši]-n[u-ti]

break

[Incantation. O Igigi gods, . . . 1] I hereby pray to] you, hereby beseech you! 2'  [I,] So-and-So
son of So-and-So, hereby grasp the fringe of your garment. Take pity on me! 3'  Hear my case,
learn my predicament! 4'  Listen to what I have to say, give me a verdict! 5'  [Uproot] the great
dogs of Ninkilim! 6'  Let fly your furious weapons against them! 7'  Let your fierce radiant auras
overwhelm them! 8'  Pour out on them [desolate] silence and shivers of fear! 9'  [Pierce] their hearts,
smite their skulls! [Seize their teeth,] seize their tongues, break their weapons! [Seize them by the hand] and take them away! Give them into the charge of the [Anunnaki gods! May they turn to clay!] Reckon them [as tabooed soil! them! (remainder lost)]

Notes
5. The imperative usḫa is restored after No. 16 iii 4.
6. The plural imperative written nē-e-ḫa is an archaic spelling of Standard Babylonian nēʾu “to turn aside”. The verb is rare in the meaning “to loosen, set loose” but occurs as a technical term in retuning a musical instrument by loosening its strings (see now Mirelman and Krispijn 2009). The image suggested by kakka nēʾu is thus the discharge of a bow by releasing the bowstring.
7–8. When used as a weapon the melammiṭ of a god leaves the victim insensible, like Gilgames on Huwawa’s mountain (A 67–8): ni.te.ni m[u].n[a].ra.an.lā ʾa/bi/ga.mes ... x ʾa/sa.gim ba.an.dab “He launched against him his (auras of) terror; Gilgames was overcome [with a stupor], as if asleep” (text after Edzard 1991: 190). Thus l. 8 is consequent upon l. 7.
10–11. Restored from No. 17 ii 17–18.

No. 15 81-2-4, 319 Fig. 4
This piece is a modest fragment from the right-hand edge of a Neo-Assyrian library tablet excavated at Nineveh by Hormuzd Rassam late in 1880. It may be part of the same tablet as Nos. 13 and 16. We are grateful to Werner Mayer for sharing it with us.

The obverse begins with four lines of ritual instructions for a procedure that takes place at dawn and includes an invocation to a deity. A rubric states that these lines conclude part of the series Zu-buru-dabbeda. The following lines thus start a new section, which begins with an address to the field pests themselves. The reverse contains only the very ends of nine lines, but enough is preserved to show that the topic is a magic ritual that involves setting up apparatus, and perhaps other objects, facing the four cardinal points of the compass. Presumably this takes place in the threatened or affected field after dawn.

obv.
1' ...-t[ u ina še-re-m x x x x ]
2' ... rab[â](([ga]1) šā il(it(ningir)mēš ra-bū[t(gal)mēš
3' ... ]x[mēš aš(ar(ki) 1-ni(q(u(siskur) 1-niš la ū-tū-[ū]-łu-u
4' ... mi-mu-su-n[u ki-i ša ma-h-r[u-ti-ma
5' ... ]ūš nis-[łu zū-buru,a dab.bē.da al.tīl
7' ... šumsīr[u?] arrabu(pēš.[ū]r.ra) pē[rīrītu(pēš.tu[r])
8' ... x ṣa-[a]-z̄-[x]

rev.
1' ... ]x [tar-kās’]
2' ... riks[a]... a(na i)m.kur.ra tar-kās
3' ... riks[a]... a(na im.kur.ra] tar-kās
4' ... riks[a]... a(na im.u18 .1]u tar-kās
5' ... riks[a] ... a(na im.si.]ā tar-kās
6' ... riks[a] ... a(na im.kur.r]ā tar-kās
7' ... riks[a] ... a(na im.mar.d]ū tar-kās
8' ... x tar-kās
9' ... tar-k]ās

break
The left-hand column (col. iv) contains in ll. 3–14 the remains of a Type c colophon of Ashurbanipal. Lines 1–2 contain the the slightest traces only, probably of the tablet’s catch-line and description. The latter is no doubt the end of the generic series name, [zu´ .buru], completed.

The right-hand column (col. iii) of 81-2-4, 260 contains the beginning of seventeen lines from an incantation-prayer that uses feminine-singular imperatives and is thus addressed to a goddess. Accordingly it is assumed here that the catch-line of 81-2-4, 260 is of some later tablet of the series, and its identification is left open.

You set up [a ritual apparatus . . . facing the] west.

You set up [a ritual apparatus . . . facing the] south.

You set up [a ritual apparatus . . . facing the] east.

You set up [a ritual apparatus . . . facing the] east.

You set up [a ritual apparatus . . . facing the] north.

You set up [a ritual apparatus . . . facing the] east.

You set up [a ritual apparatus . . . facing the] east.

You set up [a ritual apparatus . . . facing the] north.

Two similar lines follow, then the text breaks off.

No. 16 81-2-4, 260

This fragment is a flake from the reverse of a two-column library tablet from Ashurbanipal’s library, excavated at Nineveh by Hormuzd Rassam late in 1880. On physical grounds it very likely belongs to the same tablet as the obverse fragment 80-7-19, 189 (No. 13), which is also pierced and ruled with a cord; possibly 81-2-4, 319 (No. 15) makes up a third surviving fragment.

The right-hand column (col. iii) of 81-2-4, 260 contains the beginning of seventeen lines from an incantation-prayer that uses feminine-singular imperatives and is thus addressed to a goddess. Accordingly it is assumed here that the catch-line of 81-2-4, 260 is of some later tablet of the series, and its identification is left open.

col. iii

1' d[?]- . . .
2' ki-x[ . . .
3' ina qi-b[i]t . . . By command [of the god . . .
4' us-hi-[s]u-nu-ti . . . Uproot [them . . .
5' eli(ugu) eqel(a.šā) [ugārī(a.gār) . . . Upon [this] plot [of farmland . . .
6' šu-as-[i]-šu-mu-ti . . . Remove [them . . .
7' it-ti ʾṣ ur̄(mušen) [šamē . . . With the birds [of heaven . . .
8' it-ti nūn(ku₉) t[am-ti . . . With the fish of the [sea . . .
9' li-bi-[u . . . May they pass across [the ocean . . .
10' šār(imiš)-ši-nu a-n[a? . . . [Turn] their breath into [. . .
11' ina zumu(šu) eqlī(a.šā) [annī . . . [Expel them] from within [this] field!
12' ni-iš-ki kaba-[tu-ti ša šimšušu? purs[t] [Stop] the grievous biting of [their teeth(?)!]
13' ša-ti šīnu(zū)-ši-[nu . . . Seize their teeth [. . .
14' qaṭ-su-[nu šaštima šūšanūti] [Seize] them by the hand [and take them away!]
15' ina qi-b[i]t . . . By command [of the god . . .
16' ū [ . . . and [. . .
17' ḫ[na qi-bit . . . By [command of . . .

break

col. iv

1' [(catch-line) . . .]x
2' [dub.Š.kam.ma ēš.gār zū.buru₉ dab.bē.da.k]am

**Note** iii 11'. For zumru “body” in the sense of the interior of a space see also the expression zumur biti in an incantation from the series bit meserī, e.g.: mimma lem-nu ĥa ina zumur(su) biti(ê) a-ni-i bašî(gâl) “Everything evil that exists within this house” (Meier 1941–4: 146 l. 110, and similarly ll. 122, 124, 129).

**No. 17  K 2546**

K 2546 is a large fragment from the bottom right-hand corner of a two-column tablet from Ashurbanipal’s library. It holds traces of six lines from col. i and a run of thirty-two consecutive lines, some complete, in cols. ii and iii. The fragment was published long ago by A. H. Sayce, who misidentified it as an “historical legend” (1915: 195–7), although its contents had already been correctly recognized as incantation and ritual by Bezold (1891: 453). No doubt Sayce was encouraged in this error by George Smith’s pencil marking, M 25, which adorns the fragment’s bottom edge and signifies Smith’s generic alignment of the piece with texts of broadly mythological content. The text was identified more closely as related to K 5315, 8072 and 9210 by R. Borger (1957: 3–4, 11).

The traces of col. i convey ritual instructions. As the rubric at the top of col. iii reveals, the content of the immediately preceding part of col. ii is an incantation-prayer to Kusu (booked as Mayer 1976: 393 Ku-su 1). This deity was the chief purification priest (sânga.malh) of Enlil’s divine court (An I 324, ed. Litke 1998: 59; Krecher 1966: 133–4; Michalowski 1993: 158–9) and, according to a ritual commentary, symbolically manifest in the exorcist’s censer (Livingstone 1986: 172 l. 8: nignakku(ni nga) d ku`su`). In this role Kusu is male, as distinct from the goddess Kusu, whose gender is established by her role as wife of the divine breed-bull Indagar and syncretism with the cereal goddess Nissaba (e.g. An I 298; see in detail Krecher 1966: 133).

The invocation to Kusu is almost entirely lost (ii 1–3) but the exorcist’s self-identification and prayer are quite well preserved (ii 4–iii 1). The prayer asks that Kusu lie in wait for the pests for a full watch and drive them off should they appear. On this occasion the hope is not that they are roasted alive in the zenith (Nos. 6–7), nor consigned to the netherworld (Nos. 11, 14), but carried so far away on the wind that they can never find their way back again. The incantation’s rubric (iii 2) is followed by two rituals (iii 3–12). The first ritual is well preserved and noteworthy for the requirement that the men working in the field where the ritual is performed are all to be given shares of the ritual food-offering.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>col. i</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1’</td>
<td></td>
<td>.  .  .  .  x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>space for 5 lines</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7’</td>
<td></td>
<td>.  .  .  .  tanakkis?(kud) you cut(?)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8’</td>
<td></td>
<td>.  .  .  .  tanaddi(sub) di you set in place</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9’</td>
<td></td>
<td>.  .  .  .  x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10’</td>
<td></td>
<td>.  .  .  .  x-ri</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11’</td>
<td></td>
<td>.  .  .  .  -n</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>long gap</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>col. ii</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1’</td>
<td></td>
<td>.  .  .  .  x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2’</td>
<td></td>
<td>.  .  .  .  [i-ziz-] a-am-ma be-lum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3’</td>
<td></td>
<td>.  .  .  .  [i-i-š] libba(sâ) k</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4’</td>
<td></td>
<td>.  .  .  .  [mûr(dumu)] š[pi-ri šâ d’-ı’-a] [u d`asal-li-he an-a-k]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5’</td>
<td></td>
<td>.  .  .  .  d’-çe-a u d`asal-li-he</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6’</td>
<td></td>
<td>.  .  .  .  u-kan-ni-ka al-s[i-ka ina kussi . . .]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7’</td>
<td></td>
<td>.  .  .  .  u-še-sib-ka 1 maššarat(en.nun) [mûšî(gi)? ti-šab-ma?]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8’</td>
<td></td>
<td>.  .  .  .  aš-šû kalbi(ur.gi)-miš ra-bûti(gal) miš [ša d`nin-kilim]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9’</td>
<td></td>
<td>.  .  .  .  1 maššarat(en.nun)-ka ti-šab-ma i’i [taq-qi-šu-nu-si]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10’</td>
<td></td>
<td>.  .  .  .  ar-ka-su-nu sa-bat-ma ru-kub-šu-nu-t[i]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11’</td>
<td></td>
<td>.  .  .  .  šu-ru-su-nu-ti-ma kušud(kur)-su-nu-t[i]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
so the craftsman and labourers

Incantation.

Seize them by the hand and take them away!

their road and cut o

skulls, turn them back!

(and) call [on you,]

I seat you [on a throne of . . . Sit there for one watch of the night(?!)]

Seize their backsides and mount them!

With regard to the great dogs [of Ninkilim]

I am a] messenger of Ea [and Asalluh

Be ] present, O lord Kusu, [. . . 3] let your heart rejoice

I hereby honour you (and) call [on you.]

I seat you [on a throne of . . . Sit there] for one watch [of the night(?)!]

You pour a libation

Smite their skulls, turn them back!

May they not return by the way they go, 14 may they not come back by the road they take! 15 May they move with the wind, may they travel with the storm! 16 Seize their road and cut off their path! 17 Seize their teeth, seize their tongues, seize their weapons! 18 Seize them by the hand and take them away! 19 By command of Ea, lord of wisdom, 20 by command of Śamaš, lord of the zenith, iii 1 [by] command of Asalluhe, lord of exorcism!

Incantation. O Kusu, . . . ii 2 Be ] present, O lord Kusu, [. . . 3] let your heart rejoice [. . . ! 4 I am a] messenger of Ea [and Asalluhē.] 5 6 I hereby honour you (and) call [on you.]

I seat you [on a throne of . . . Sit there] for one watch [of the night(?)!]

Seize their backsides and mount them!

Drive them off and chase them away! 12 Smite their skulls, turn them back!

May they not return by the way they go, 14 may they not come back by the road they take! 15 May they move with the wind, may they travel with the storm! 16 Seize their road and cut off their path! 17 Seize their teeth, seize their tongues, seize their weapons! 18 Seize them by the hand and take them away! 19 By command of Ea, lord of wisdom, 20 by command of Śamaš, lord of the zenith, iii 1 [by] command of Asalluhē, lord of exorcism!

Incantation.

2 [When] you have recited this three times before the god Kusu:

3 You heat up that [. . .] and place it on a tray. 4 You set up [a censer of ] juniper and sprinkle salt.

5 [Three times(?) you say [the incantation] “O Adad, king of plenty!” 6 You pour a libation of [. . . ] wine and emmer beer and you prostrate yourself. 7 You do not clear away [the tray], so the craftsman and labourers 8 [who were present in] that [field(?)] can divide and eat.

9 [When] you have done [this;]

10 [. . .] rituals [. . . 11 . . .] of the [farmer(?)] . . . (remainder lost)

Notes

ii 9: For the restoration compare the voluntative version of the verbs in the Old Babylonian lovers' dialogue (Held 1961: 8 iv 5): hu-te-ep-ti “I will sit and wait”.

ii 10: The masculine singular imperative of rukūbu “to mount” is normally rukab, but a variant form rukub underlies the feminine singular rukhi in a Lamashtu incantation (IV R2 56 iii 48, ed. Myhrman 1920: 162 l. 28: sā-da-ki nu-ak-bi “ride off to your mountain”).

ii 11: The logogram kur = kašādu “to reach, conquer” could perhaps be read instead in the II/1 stem, kaššid, for this stem is well known to have the meaning “chase away”. However, there are other instances
Fig. 5 Text No. 17. Drawn by Taniguchi
of kaššu 1/1 in the company of taššu that seem to demand a translation “chase away” rather than “capture”: (a) in an incantation to the fire-god Nuska as the effective power wielded by the nightwatchman’s torch, whose light does not capture evil but banishes it to the shadows (KAR 58 obv. 44, ed. Mayer 1976: 485): tu-ru-ud u-tuk-ku kaššu(kur)” lem-nu “drive away the utukku-demon, chase off the wicked!”; and (b) in the names of two canine magic figurines that keep evil at bay like real guard dogs (KAR 298 rev. 19, ed. Wiggermann 1992: 14–15 ll. 200–1): tu-rid asukh(tā.ság) ... ka-šid a-a-bi “Demon-Pursuer and Foe-Chaser”.

ii 15. The verb nāšu (a) “to quiver, shake loose” is here one of more extended motion, as in the synonym-list An IX 52: nu-a-šu = a-la-a-ku “go to”. The Chicago Assyrian Dictionary translates it in the present passage as “recede” (CAD 2/2: 114).

ii 17. In this line and similar passages we read šimmu(zu)” “tooth” rather than pū(ka)” “mouth” because (a) zū-buru-ṣu / šimni erebi “locust tooth” is a figurative expression for damage to crops in the bilingual Farmer’s Instructions and other Sumerian texts (Civil 1994: 43 l. 966, PSD B 208), and (b) the title of the series, zū-buru-ṣ-dab-bē-da “to seize the locust tooth”, substantiates the phrase “seizing teeth” as an image conveying the arrest of the locusts’ jaws by magic means (see further George 1999: 295; sabātu “to seize” was much used of parts of the body in the meaning “chase away”, especially in magic contexts).

iii 5. The incantation-prayer Adad šar ḫengallī is partly extant as texts Nos. 3–4.

III. The concluding tablet of Zu-buru-dabbeda (Text No. 18)

No. 18 K 2596 Figs. 6–7

The major part of a two-column library tablet survives in this large fragment from Ashurbanipal’s library at Nineveh. The obverse is poorly preserved: almost nothing survives of col. i and, while parts of thirty lines are extant in col. ii, very little connected text can be reconstructed from them. The reverse is in better shape, especially the latter part of col. iii, where many lines are nearly complete. It is surprising that such a large piece as K 2596 is published here for the first time, but many passages of the text have been quoted in the Chicago Assyrian Dictionary.

The content of col. i is unknown. Col. ii begins with an incantation-prayer to a goddess (ii 1–14), for it includes feminine-singular imperatives and ends with the standard promise dalilīki ḫudul “I will sing your (fem. sing.) praises!” (ii 14). Line 3 speaks of “Ereškigal, the mistress of the populous netherworld”, but this is not the prayer’s incipit and so it is unlikely that the incantation is addressed to her. Instead the context is probably the citation of the authority of the queen of the netherworld in seeking the removal of the pests to her realm. The following passage corroborates this reading, for it contains a plea for the goddess addressed to hand the pests over (ii 4 [piqdišumūti, 2 f.sg) to a plurality of gods, with the intention that they should conduct them down somewhere (ii 6 [lišer]dašumūti, 3 pl.), presumably to the netherworld. As the divine residents of the netherworld, the Anunnaki gods would be best able to do this and can be restored as the subjects of the plural verb. It is then significant that the prayer to the goddess is followed by a ritual in which the same netherworld gods are involved, presumably partaking of the offering (ii 15–18). The ritual takes places at dusk, which in Babylonian magic procedure was considered an opportune moment to dispose of malignant forces, by sending them down to the netherworld with the setting sun. Perhaps the incantation was addressed to the goddess Ištar as the evening star, which follows the sun to the western horizon.

The prayer to the goddess and accompanying ritual involving the gods of the netherworld are followed by a suspension of activity that lasts for seven days (ii 19–20). Then follows a ritual in which a bonfire is prepared on purified ground next to a watercourse, a lamb slaughtered, aromatics burned on the fire, and flasks filled with seven different liquids (ii 21 ff.). All this is an offering to a god, the traces of whose name suggest Adad (ii 21’). The rest of the ritual is lost.

When the text resumes near the top of col. iii it is night. The beginning of the ritual is very damaged. As we restore it, the exorcist purifies the ritual location, identifies himself to some plural beings and calls on them to obey the divine command (iii 2–6). These plural beings must be the field pests. The farmer probably places more aromatics on the bonfire and makes a libation of the seven liquids (iii 7–10). The exorcist repeats incantations that he has previously recited and then takes down the flasks and other ritual apparatus (iii 11’). An instruction follows not to throw away the remains of the bonfire, for they need special treatment. Someone, probably the farmer,
covers the ashes with soil, no doubt to contain or neutralize their magic (iii 12’–13’). The section 
ends with a statement that the problem under treatment will not return (iii 14’–15’), a prediction 
that reminds us of the conclusions of Babylonian medical recipes stating that the patient will 
get better.

To the rubric announcing that the preceding section concludes the series proper (iii 16’) the text 
appends two highly interesting additions. First is a colophonic passage that records the text’s 
attribution to a scholar of Babylon, Papsukkal-ša-îqbu-ul-inni, and gives stern warnings to the 
would-be user in regard to guarding the ritual purity of his person, identifying propitious timing 
through celestial observation, and restricting access to the text to those with appropriate knowledge 
and skills (iii 17’–30’). Papsukkal-ša-îqbu-ul-inni is a person otherwise known from a bilingual 
list of scribes and ancestors (see the note on iii 18’–20’). Evidently he was one of those men, like 
Esangil-kin-apli, who were credited with the work of establishing the texts of the scribal tradition. 
The second addition is a long list of equipment and materials that are needed to conduct the 
rituals (iii 31’–iv 21’). Both additions were traditionally attached to the series, for they are followed 
by its catch-line (iv 22’). The text concludes with the tablet’s formal series rubric and a standard 
Type e colophon of Ashurbanipal (iv 23’–8’).

col. i
1’...]šú
2’...]mi
short gap

col. ii
1’...]šú
2’...]mi
15’[dù.dù.bi... ...ina muḫḫi a-k]i-lu ta-ra-a-a[k]
16’...]su-[tu-ti]
17’[an-ni-ti la-am] erek šamsi 
18’[ul-tu.ta eqš(a.sš) a-n a-muš an archi(egir)-ka la ta[mm(n)arkig]]
19’[kina(gim) nē-pe]-ši an-nu-ti tēteššu(dù)6 lā l1 teppuš(dù)1
20’[7 u₄-m]e ta qa-a kima(gim) 7 u₄-me in-ta-[u-á]
21’[ina tē]h(dù)5 nāri(id) qaqqara(ki) tašabbir(sar) mē(a) ellūti(kù) tašallah(sud) 1 ab-ru 
an a[a[dad(iškur)]
22’[lù-w]-e šar-bat te-še-en puḫaša(udu,sš增)1 pesā(babbar)1 tan[aqqi(bal)8]
23’[sa-d]š-q[i riqq(sù)6] rabūti(gal)9 aq murra(šim[sš.sš]) 1 qa gēma(zid)]
24’[šš]ū zikara(nita) i-te-nu ina muḫḫi(uugu) ab-ši tašakkan(gar)10
25’[q]i-dagku-ki-lu šiṣba(ga)1 šikara(kaš.sš) karāma(geštin)1 uššmna(uššin) dišpa(lāl)
ḥimētu(i.nun)
26’[šammat(i)š] labira(sumun) tumalla(sa₄) ma b[i ... ...]
27’[mu-hur]6 u₄-adad(iškur) šār ḫengalli(ḫē gāl) ḫelu(en) rabū(gal)9]
Fig. 6 Texts Nos. 18 obv., 19 and 20. Drawn by Taniguchi
Fig. 7 Texts Nos. 18 rev., 26 and 27. Drawn by Taniguchi
Incantation. O goddess... By command[?] of the Anunnaki... so that they... then... keep pursuing them,... like lambs[?],... like
taking[?] them down into the netherworld,... then... leave the field,... not looking behind you. When the seventh day has passed,... you sweep the ground... a watercourse. You sprinkle holy water. A bonfire for the god [Adad]... You wait... may come back."

At night[...]

The charred remains of the bonfire that you made he (or you) must not discard, [with]... locust, grub, “devourer”-pest, mubattiru-[bug, dormouse, rat].
adopted a simpler solution.

17 Reliable rituals and readings that 20 were accurately [recorded] 17 according [to a tablet of ] Papsukkal-ša-iqṣū-ul-inni, scribe [of] 19 Babylon, cup-bearer of Nabû [and Nanay(?)] 20 paššu-priest of the temples E-sangil and E-zida. 21 When [you are engaged(?)] to perform these rituals, 22 make yourself pure and clean and be [on your guard!] 23 Be attentive, be careful, do not be negligent, do not ignore [ . . . ! 24 Observe the rising of the sun and stars and [plan accordingly!] 25 Secrets of the sage, reserved lore of the [exorcist’s craft!] 26–27 A scholar (who is) a sage, knowledgeable and learned, may disclose (it) to [the learned,] wise and knowledgeable. An ignorant scholar, 28 who does not know the wise arts and is not skilled in wisdom, must not see (it)! 29 (Under) the taboo of Anu, Enlil, Adad, Belet-ilî, Nissaba, 30 Ea, Šamaš and Assalluḫe, the great gods.

31 If (you proceed, the following is) the necessary equipment for these rituals, 32 to the last item, that you must procure.

33 One copper figurine, seventeen inches (lit. “fingers”) high.

34 A crown, a clay lid (or chamber pot), a bonfire [ . . .]

iv 2 . . . of iron, 3 . . . of gold.

4 . . . n reed altars, 5 . . . a tray of tamarisk wood, 6 . . . of cedar, 7 . . . of cedar.

8 . . . garden fruits of every kind.


22 . . . field-mouse, dormouse.

23 Tablet n, series Zu-bure]-dabbage.

Notes

ii 7i: I/3 fem. sing. imperative: ritečki-šunûti; but other solutions are possible.

ii 14: For the use of the closing formula dullikâ/i ludîl in incantation-prayers see Mayer 1976: 310–23.

ii 25: Restored from iii 9i.

ii 27: See No. 4; 11i.

12i. The redundant ina may result from a false dittography of the opening two syllables of the verb, somewhere in the text’s transmission; so if, the verb will be third person (inaddû) rather than second person (tanaddû), and the task of clearing up the bonfire will be the farmer’s, not the exorcist’s. Such seems more likely in any case.

iii 18–20i. These lines are quoted by Irving Finkel (1988: 149 fn. 57), where what follows the personal name in l. 18 is read u sınıf-mat . . . , because of the parallels (a) in the noble titles of Esangil-kin-apli listed in a colophon that reports his editorial work on the diagnostic omen series (ibid. 148 B 21i): um-mat 430 šu-apli u šar-nâ-a bûr-sipû-i reš-ti-i “ummatu of Sin, Lisi and Nanay, leading citizen of Borsippa”, and (b) in the titles of Nebuchadnezzar I in his literary bilingual (Lambert 1974b: 436 l. 12): um-mat “adad u šu-la . . . pir-i ni-ip-pu-ra “ummatu of Adad and Gula . . . , scion of Nippur”. The problem with reading ummatu in the present, quite well-spaced line is that so little room remains in the break for (a) the god or gods whom the ummatu might have served and (b) a further noun to connect the personal name to Babylon (šu-an-nââ) in l. 19. A restoration um-mat li(i/dingir) ša-an-nââ “ummatu [of the god(s) of Babylon” would provide a solution but seems improbable when ummatu as a title is elsewhere followed by proper nouns. We have adopted a simpler solution.

As Finkel notes, Papsukkal-ša-iqṣū-ul-inni is the name of a scholar famous enough to have an entry in the bilingual list of scribes and ancestors (V R 44 iii 51, ed. Lambert 1957: 13): šinšub.dug, nu bal bal = šu-pap-šukkal-ša-ip-ša-ul-ini. The use of ša as a determinative before a masculine personal name, instead of tiš, is learned archaizing deriving ultimately from the mid-third millennium, when the numeral sign LAK-820 was so employed (Krecher 1974: 161). This old usage was acknowledged in the later lexical lists as šum-ša = a-mi-li “man” (Lu 1 17), and would also have been known to first-millennium scribes through paleographic study.

iii 23i. Quoted by Maul 1994: 40, in the context of the exorcist’s ritual purity. Similar injunctions to would-be users of prescriptive scholarly texts occur in (a) the colophon about Esangil-kin-apli (Finkel 1988: 148 B 26–7i): it-id “pit(qad) nig.zi]u tu še nam ba še bi da = it-id pitqad ana ibzi ka là teggi “pay attention, be careful, do not neglect your knowledge!”; (b) the diviner’s manual (Oppenheim 1974: 200 l. 71): it-i id la te-eg-gi “pay attention, do not be negligent!” and (c) a namburbi to counter the ill omen of a broken chariot.
IV. Texts related to Zu-buru-dabbeda (Texts Nos. 19–24)
Notes

1 4–5: The plants and insects used in this ritual are all listed as prerequisites for performing rituals in Zu-buru-dabbeda (No. 18 iv 16’–20’).


8, 10 Which . . . (remainder lost)

No. 20

This is a fragment from the middle of a tablet excavated by Hormuzd Rassam at Nineveh in 1878. We are grateful to Werner Mayer for communicating to us his knowledge of it. Only one surface survives, inscribed in a fine early Neo-Babylonian script with a text divided by rulings into short sections. No. 21 may be another piece of the same tablet. On this fragment parts of nine lines are extant. Some of them can be restored by comparison with text No. 8 above (Zu-buru-dabbeda II G). The content is incantations and rituals to expel the Dogs of Ninkilim from a field. The first three sections compare closely with Zu-buru-dabbeda II G, concluding in a ritual in which the farmer places figs in the corners of his field and waits for nightfall. In No. 8 the ritual is followed by an incantation-prayer to Ninkilim. Here the ritual leads to a very similar address to Ninkilim, and then the exorcist recites an incantation addressed to Alulu; it is very similar to that quoted among rituals in text No. 24 ii 21–7 and given in isolation in No. 25, q.v.
Notes
1–2. Compare No. 8: 6–8.
3–5. The ritual abbreviates No. 8: 9–17, whence the emendation from mu-ra-a to bîrā.
6. // No. 8: 18–19.
7. Restored from No. 24 i 35 and ii 21.

No. 21 K 2775 Fig. 8

This is a fragment from the right edge, towards the bottom, of a tablet from Nineveh that, like No. 20, is inscribed in a fine early Neo-Babylonian script. The text is divided by rulings into short sections and the content is similar to No. 20. It seems likely that they are surviving parts of a single tablet. In this piece there are successive ritual offerings and short addresses to Ninkilim, Šara, Adad, the northern circumpolar Wagon constellation (Ursa major) and Ninurta, the last curiously using a mixture of masculine and feminine forms. Invocations to Ninkilim, Adad and Ninurta occur in Zu-buru-dabbeda because of these gods’ connections with pests, winds and fields. The warrior Šara, here addressed as the son and beloved of Istar, may be called on because his name evoked the idea of wind (sāru), and winds were instrumental in carrying airborne insects away (George 1999: 299). A Babylonian god-list seems to make the same connection in glossing the storm god Adad as ša-ra, and placing him in the company of Šara (CT 29 46 iii 18–20, on which see further Schwemer 2001: 87).

A central piece of apparatus in the ritual that intervenes in this text between the addresses to Ninkilim and Šara is a “house of “kū-bu”. It also occurs in a ritual in text No. 24 (i 8–12). In the first millennium the deity written 4kū-bu is normally identified as the divine kūbu, a demonic force inherent in a stillborn baby or miscarried foetus, which was held to be malevolent and in need of propitiation (Römer 1973, Lambert 1981, Scurlock 1991: 151–3, Stol 2000: 28–32). Probably the same demon was believed to inhabit the afterbirth (ipi, siliitu), which as a baby’s dead twin or double posed a danger similar to a dead foetus, and which, together with the ritual birth-brick, was subject to a magic procedure to neutralize its threat to the living (Scurlock 1991: 153). This post-partum ritual, involving the brick and afterbirth, might then help to explain why Kūbu had to be appeased in the rituals that attended the production of glazed bricks (Oppenheim 1970: 32–3, Kilmer 1987). Other rituals, known from texts excavated in the Hittite capital, address Kūbu firmly in the context of magic responses to miscarriage and locate his “house” in the netherworld (Schwemer 1998: 55–7). A Babylonian incantation against witchcraft cites burial of images “under Kūbu” and “in Kūbu’s house” as magic practices intended to do harm (Lambert 1957–8: 292 ll. 30, 33, 38). The underlying principle was that symbolic propinquity to the dead Kūbu would place the witch’s victim in harm’s way (Schwemer 2007a: 98). A house-building ritual prescribes offerings to Kūbu, probably to placate him for any intrusion into the netherworld (Ambos 2004: 132–3 ll. 5–6). In short, rituals involving Kūbu have to do either with the dangers of birth and miscarriage or with his chthonic power to transmit ill.

The present rituals against field pests, this and No. 24, have no evident connection with the matters that concern Kūbu in the passages just reported. For this reason we have elected to read 4kū-bu in the field-pest rituals as 4kū-su₂₃. This is an old-fashioned spelling of 4kū-su, whose masculine manifestation has already appeared as the object of ritual attention in the series Zu-buru-dabbeda (text No. 17 ii–iii). 4kū-su₂₃(bu) is a routine spelling down to the Old
Babylonian period (Michalowski 1993: 158), but is unusual in the first millennium. However, Late Babylonian copies of the Weidner god-list note both spellings of this divine name, in the company of Indagar, husband of the female Kusu (Cavigneaux 1981: 94 ll. 170–2): 4kù-su₁₃, 4ku-su, 4indagar/(nimdi x GUD).⁷

In the context of rituals conducted on farmland, the “house of Kusu” is inherently unlikely to be a permanent structure, and a wider enquiry confirms this. A “house of Kusu” occurs as the scene of ritual actions in the other Babylonian rites of exorcism, including the rituals for bathing the king (bit rimki) (Zimmern 1901: 126 and pl. 51. no. 26 iii 27), and the rituals for consecrating divine statues (mis pi) (Walker and Dick 2001: 38 l. 23, 71 l. 15). In the latter the phrase “house of Kusu” seems to designate a temporary hut of reed (šutukku) erected in the temple garden (ibid. 37 ll. 11–12). In the field-pest rituals it is no doubt a small symbolic structure set up for the purposes of the ritual.

obv.

1’ . . . [ . . ] di [ . . ]
2’ . . . [saman(i.giš) er[oni(eren)] x [ x x x ]
3’ ili(dingir)⁶[abātīr(gal)⁶aši]

4’ . . . ana 4d x) 4iši-ni₃-kilim bēl(³)⁶[u]gāri(a.gār) 4bēl(³)⁶[en]⁶[egli.(a.sā)]
5’ . . . [x labira(suman) tasarraq(dub) nīg.AN. ra (= mandaš?) miris(ninda.i.dē.a)

6’ dišpi(lā) žëmēti(i.nn.[na])
7’ [sa-bat šima(zu)-ši₃-nu sa-bat lišān(em[e]-ši₃-nu) ša-bat kak-ki-ši₃-nu]

8’ . . . ana 4ni₃-sa₃-kilim bēl(³) ur-a-ši₃-tā [a] ši₃-ku₃ (siskur) teppuš(du₃)⁶ gal?²₃-me?²₃-er

9’ . . . tar[ammuk(tu₃)] ina mu₃ḥi(ugu) bi(t(é) 4kù-su₃₃ erēn[a(eren) tu-rat-tu₄

10’ . . . tu₄ṣabšal(ṣe₄g₄) i-na u₄r(ºr) bi(t(é) 4kù-su₃₃ ta₄šakkan(gar)⁶ kām(₄₃.gim)

11’ . . . ] lil-li-lu

12’ . . . x a-na 4ša₃-ra mār(dumu) 4iš₃-g₃-tār u 4adad(iškur) gu₄-gal šamē(³) u erseti(³)ki

13’ . . . ] kām(₄₃.gim) ta₄qabb(₄₃.ga) 4ša₃-ra na-ram 4iš₃-tār ki₃-₃₃-na 4iš₃-tār i-ra₄₃-nu ka

14’ . . . ] x x x x

15’ . . . ana 4adad(iškur) g₄u₄-gal šamē(³) u erseti(³)ki kām ta₄qabb(ì)

16’ . . . ] x ina li₃₃-bi 4eql(i.a.sā)³ x [ . . ] gap

rev.

1’ . . . ] 1d 4nin-ur[tu . . ]
2’ . . . ] (vacat) . .

3’ . . . ] (vacat) . .

4’ . . . [u]₃₃[a₄ni(ṣi.sā)] 4b₄[erēqq(u)(mar.gid.da) ha₄-a⁻¹⁻‘i-tu₄ 4b₄[mar¹.gid.da šamē(³)(an)]³]

5’ . . . ] x x x

6’ . . . mu₃-š₃[im ši₃-ma-a₃-tu₃₃ bēl(³)(en) mātāt(ì)(kur.kur) bēl(³)(en) ili(dingir)⁶[abātīr(gal)⁶aši a-bi ili(dingir)⁶ ki₃-i₃₃-ma? x x]¹

⁷ Another instance of ⁴kù-nu in a first-millennium ritual context is ₄BR 68 edge 2, where the exorcist is instructed to sing a song of praise to the deity (Römer 1973: 314). This may also be Kusu, rather than Kùbu. Similarly, the six cult-stations of ⁴kù-nu in Babylon listed in Tuti₃ V 87 (George 1992: 68–9) could also belong to Kusu, not Kùbu as previously supposed. On the other hand, ⁴kù-su₃₃ paired with the divine sorceress Ningirin in a nunbübü ritual from Nineveh is certainly Kusu not Kùbu (contra Caplice 1967: 19 rev. 12: 4Kù-bu₃₃).
... qibitka rabit(gal)-tu kimâ(gim) šadi(kur) mu-niš-šâ a-ir-ši a-na nin-urta i̇kam
\( \text{taqabbī}(dug,\text{ga}) \)

... belīti(gašan) rabitī(gal)\(^{\text{im}} \)

... uku-bu-at-ta-a liš-kun-ma

\( \text{nissaba ta-ha-am-na i̇t-ti min-de-e teleqeq(ti)}\)

... mashaṭa(zi.mad.gä) ta-lam-mâm!

... x.ba šâ ina muḫḫi(uugi) tu-še-ši-bu a-na maškani(ki.ud) tu-še-el-lu

... ut-mišam-ma tattanaddi(sub.sub)\(^{\text{b6}} \)

... si-hšir-ti ta-ḥab tum lu ḫar? I maṣṣarta(en.nun) ka-la te-zi-liḇ!

... ki-x[ x x x] break

... x[ x x x x]

Notes

obv. 5’ The correct logogram for \text{mundu} is niĝ.ār.ra.

obv. 7’ // No. 17 ii 17’.

rev. 4’. The Wagon constellation is likewise called “wagon of the skies” in an incantation-prayer to induce a dream included in a Standard Babylonian fortune-teller’s manual (\text{STT} 73: 61 // UET VII 118 obv. 8: \( \text{eb} \) mar.gi̇.da.‘an.na\( \text{l} \) [\( \text{im} \)ma]r.gi̇.da ša-μa-mi, ed. Butler 1998: 355).

No. 22 K 9611 Fig. 8

This is a fragment from near the left edge of the reverse, to judge by the curvature, with part of the tablet’s bottom edge preserved at its top. The piece comes from Nineveh. Parts of fourteen lines are preserved, written in a fine early Neo-Babylonian script similar to that displayed by Nos. 20 and 21, but not identical with it. The first twelve lines are the remains of a ritual that mentions rodents, continues with a standard sequence of ritual actions and culminates with an offering to the rodent-god Ninkilim, who is then addressed in an incantation-prayer. Field-mouse and dormouse (l. 6) occur together in the same order in the catch-line of the last tablet of the series.
Fig. 8  Texts Nos. 21–2. Drawn by George
23. S.U. 52/214 = SUL 243

Fig. 9  Text No. 23. Drawn by George
Zu-buru-dabbeda, from which it appears that the field-pest series was followed by a composition concerning rodents, no doubt incantations and rituals directed against vermin that depleted the granaries. This fragment might be assigned to such material.

... [x-tu-nu te-etu-[...  
2 ... in[a ĭa idē(zu) mim-ma sa-ab-ri t[u-  
3 ... lissu[zi] ina ap-pi (sup. ras.) ĭi-x[...  
4 ... e][i(ugu) bitāti(ē)meš ĭu ĭuri(ūr)meš ta-ša-[a-a? ...  
5 ... tukān(yub)w erepi(saħar) bitāti(ē)meš ana qaran(si) labr[ī(ūš) x x x]  
6 ... ĭarr[i(ē.zu) ĭarrabi(pēš.giš.ūr.ra) x x x]  
7 ... salma(giš) ana maḥ[a]r(igi) ĭin-ni-lim bēl(en) namma[Hti(a.zu.lu.lu) x x x]  
8 ... šulipi(zi.lum.ma) ĭin-sa]qat(ēša) tasarrag(dub) mīris(ninda.1.dē.a) dēšpr(lāl)  
9 ĭinêr[ī(i.nun.na) tašakkan(gar)w]  
10 [nignak(nig.na) ĭin-busuš(īl) tašakkan(gar)] ĭim udu[nigā(siskur) tanaqqi(bal)wij ṭu?] [x (x) x]  
11 ... tašakkan(gar)w ĭe kaspa(kū.babbar) șe! ṭaraṣṣa(kū.sīg.ī) [x (x) x]  
12 ... t]u-tam-mar ĭ [x x x]  
13 ... an[a ĭin-nilim kām(uru.5.Gim) ]taqabbi(dug.4.ga)]

13 [ën ĭin-nilim bēl(en) nammaš[i](a.zu.lu.lu) bēl(en) bu-lim bēl(en) šik-n[a-at napiš[i]
14 ...] (vacat) [ ...]  
15 ...] 'bal ār-ra-[bu? ...  
break

2 ... unwittingly, something bad you [ ... 3 ... let x time] pass(?), from the tip of [ ... 4 ...] over the rooms and roofs you string a thread[?] [ ... 5 ...] you fix in position. House dust on a ewe’s horn [ ... 6 ...] field-mouse, dormouse [ ... 7 ...] a black [ ...] before Ninkilim, lord of the animals [ ...] 8 You strew [dates and sasqar]-flour. Date-cake made of syrup and ghee [you set in place. 9 You set up [a censer of juniper.] You sacrifice a sheep [ ... 10 ...] you set] in place. A grain of silver, a grain(!) of gold [ ... 11 ...] you bury [ ... 12 ...] to Ninkilim [you say] as follows: 13 Incantation. O Ninkilim, lord of the animals, lord of livestock, lord of living [creatures, 15 ...] dormouse(?)] [ ... (remainder lost)

Note

8–9. Restored after the many other instances of this sequence of ritual acts, e.g. in the mis pī ritual (Walker and Dick 2001: 58 ll. 73–5). Often libation of beer replaces the spilling of lamb’s blood, e.g. in No. 23 obv. 6; see Stefan Maul’s discussion of this ritual sequence in the nambarbi rituals (Maul 1994: 51–2).

No. 23  

S.U. 52/214 = STT 243  

Fig. 9  

This is the lower one-third of a single-column tablet with twenty-nine lines of Neo-Assyrian script remaining. It was excavated in 1952 at Sultantepe, near Urfa in south-east Turkey, among the remains of a seventh-century scholar’s library and published by O. R. Gurney in 1964 as STT 243 (Gurney and Hulin 1964 pl. 203). A brief synopsis of its contents was given by Erica Reiner in her review of that volume (Reiner and Civil 1967: 189–90), and again by George in the first part of the present study (1999: 295–6).

In the latter article the tablet was understood to hold an abbreviated version of the rituals of the incantation series Zu-buru-dabbeda, as known from contemporaneous tablets from Ashurbanipal’s library at Nineveh (George 1999: 295). Further study of the text, especially in the light of a previously unpublished Late Babylonian manuscript of field-pest rituals that is a partial duplicate (No. 24), suggests that the relationship between the two sets of material is not so simple.

The extant text opens with a rubric mentioning locusts (obv. 2). A ritual follows (3’–7’), which combines sympathetic magic (the destruction of tallow models and living representatives of the problem) and inducement (currying divine favour by offering incense and libations). The beginning of the ritual is similar to text No. 24 i 23–4, after which we have restored it. In both rituals effigies are burned in the four corners of the field. In the present text the exorcist skins a locust on each
occasion. Then he sets up ritual apparatus to attract the gods’ attention and says an unidentified incantation or prayer three times. The Late Babylonian text prescribes a more elaborate ritual that ends with the recitation of four incantations, which are there identified by four different incipits (No. 24 i 29–31).

The text next gives an incantation-prayer addressed first to a divine shepherd whose name is damaged, and then to a series of deities, asking that they accept the offering: Marduk, Ninurta, Adad, [south wind,] north wind, east wind and [west wind] (8′–15′). This sequence of deities matches those addressed in consecutive incantation-prayers extant in the Nineveh edition of Zu-buru-dabbeda, as determined above on formal grounds and first observed by W. G. Lambert (1990: 126): Marduk, Ninurta, Adad and the four winds in their traditional order, south, north, east and west (the surviving passages are texts Nos. 1–8).

The Sultantepe text continues with (a) a brief ritual in which the exorcist burns seven wax images of locusts and the client buries them in the affected field (rev. 3–5), (b) the mixed-language incantation beginning Tutu-anna hursangake and its rubric (6–10), and (c) its accompanying ritual, to be performed in the affected field at a “dais of Ninkilim” (11–14). The text is then interrupted by the break in the tablet. The incantation Tutu-anna hursangake and its ritual occur in almost identical form in the Late Babylonian tablet (No. 24 iii 8′–23′). The Nineveh edition, by contrast, moves straight from the incantation to the west wind to the incantation Tutu-anna hursangake, follows it with a ritual that involves the “dais of Ninkilim” but is worded differently from the corresponding ritual of the Sultantepe and Late Babylonian tablets, and continues with an incantation to Ninkilim (texts Nos. 8–9). The two bodies of material are thus similar, but not sufficiently closely related for the Sultantepe text to be viewed as a “digest” of the Nineveh series. More exactly, it is a briefer account of a version of a field-pest ritual similar to one elaborated in Zu-buru-dabbeda. Note that the imperative clauses šabat šinnašunu, liššanšunu, kakkīšanu so characteristic of Zu-buru-dabbeda are absent from texts Nos. 23 and 24. This is a formal indication that the two corpora were probably of separate origin.
7 ú 7 paṭiri(gi.du₄)mēš ₄nasḫati(zì.mad.⟨gā⟩) tašakkan(⟨gar⟩) ₄₇ṣalmi(nu)mēš a-ri-ba
₄₄ṣa iššīri(⟨ub.lā⟩) teppu(⟨du⟩)₅₅ina iššī(⟨izi⟩) ta-gal-ba
₅šipta(ent) an-ni-tum ₇ṣa tamannu(⟨ṣid⟩)₇mēš ṣa ₄nin-kilim
₆ṇu tu.an.ṇa hur.sag.gā,ke₄
gā.e.a.dan.ni₄nin.kilim,ke₄
₈kalbū(⟨ur.gi⟩)mēš rabūtu(⟨gal⟩)mēš ṣa ⁴nin-kilim
₉qe-e-sat-ku-nu muḫ-ra-tu-nu at-la-a
₁₀ka.inim.ma mu-na ṣa eqli(a.ṣā) šu-li-i
₱dū,dū.bi parak(bara)⁴nin-kilim ina qabal(murub₂₄)eqli(a.ṣā) tanaddi(ṣub)₄ⁱ
₁₂⁽⁷⁾ qa(sila) qēma(zid.da) a-na ka-ma-na-a-ti tanaddi(ṣub)₄ⁱ
₁³⁽⁰.⁰.¹₁ suhpi(tū.ğun.ma) hi-im-ṣa-ta nini(⟨ku⟩)mēš
₁⁴⁽¹⁾ akala(ninda)¹⁾[¹]qa mersa(ninda.i.de.a) ina muḫ-ḫi tašakkan(⟨gar⟩)₇mēš
break

Notes

obv. ¹’ (illegible traces of the last line of an incantation)
²’ [Incantation-formula to . . . ] . . . locusts of a field.
³’ [Its ritual:] you make [twenty-eight] effigies . . . out of tallow, ⁴’ you burn [them in the four corners?] of the field. Wherever you burn one, ⁵’ [you . . . and within] the field you peel the skin from a locust, ⁶’ [ . . . ] you set up a censer of juniper, you pour a libation of beer, ⁷’ three times you say “[. . . ]” and you do not look behind you. Incantation [formula.]
⁸’ [Incantation. O . . . , shepherd of the Lord of the Lands, accept your food-offering!] ⁹’ Expel [the bite of] locusts’ tooth from the field! ¹⁰’-¹¹’ Expel from within the field grub, “devourer”-pest, mubattiru-bug, locust, cricket, red-bug and field-weenil! Accept, O great lord Marduk! ˡ⁻¹²’ [Accept, O Ninurta,] foremost one of E-kur! Accept, O Adad, king of plenty! ˡ⁻¹³’ [Accept, O South Wind, that] piles up (grain in) the arable land! Accept, O North Wind, that keeps the camp in good order! ˡ⁻¹⁴’ [Accept, O East Wind, that] averts storm-damage! ˡ⁻¹⁵’ [Accept, O West Wind, . . . ] . . . !
rev. ₁⁻²’ Incantation-formula to expel locust, grub, “devourer”-pest, mubattiru-bug, cricket, red-bug and field-weenil from within a field.
³⁻⁴’ Twice seven portable altars you provide with coarse flour. You make seven wax figurines of locusts. You burn them in fire. ⁵’ You recite this incantation seven times. He buries (the remains) at the top of the field.
⁵’ Incantation. Tutu-anna of the mountain range, ⁷’ I am the adanni of Ninkilim. ⁸’ O great dogs of Ninkilim, ⁹’ you have received your fodder! Be gone!
¹⁰’ Incantation-formula for expelling grubs from a field.
¹¹’ Its ritual: you set up a plinth for Ninkilim in the middle of the field. ¹²’ You put there seven litres of flour for bread-cakes. ¹³⁻¹⁴’ You place on top ten litres of dates, chopped fish, [one] loaf of bread, [one] litre of date-cake [. . . ] (remaining lost)
rev. 6–7. We are undecided as to the linguistic affiliation of tu.tu and a.da.an.ni. The former may be a phonetic spelling of ḫūg.ta, a name of Ninkilim (An V 37, ed. Litke 1998: 37; CT 25 11: 33). The latter looks Akkadian, adanni “deadline”, but with what sense as a complement to Sumerian ĝa.e “I”? In this uncertainty we leave them untranslated.

13. “Chopped fish” is a provisional translation. ḫimmat nüni is to be compared with ḫi-im-sa-at ḫi-gimmari “chopped palm”, which is explained in a cultic-calendrical commentary as worn like the “crown of Anu” (SBH VIII ii 26, ed. Çağırgan 1976: 173–4) and translated by von Soden as “abgeknickte Palmzweigen” (AHw 346). ḫimmāt is cognate with ḫamāštā, a verb in the semantic field of cutting whose exact meaning remains unclear.

No. 24  
BM 45686 + 55561  
Figs. 10–13

This is the major part of a large two-column tablet, some 4.7 cm thick, comprising two joining fragments inscribed in Late Babylonian script. The central part of the tablet is BM 45686 (81-7-6, 91), part of a consignment of Babylonian tablets bought from a Baghdad dealer, probably Joseph Shenontob, by the British Museum in 1879 but not accessioned until two years later (Reade 1986: xv). The top left-hand corner is BM 55561 (82-7-4, 151), purchased from Spartali and Co. by Hormuzd Rassam on the museum’s behalf in 1882 (Reade, loc. cit.). The join was made with typical genius by I. L. Finkel, who spotted George reading BM 45686, matched it in his memory by Hormuzd Rassam on the museum’s behalf in 1882 (Reade, loc. cit.). The join was made with typical genius by I. L. Finkel, who spotted George reading BM 45686, matched it in his memory with BM 55561, and speedily reunited the pair after their century-long separation. The 81-7-6 and 82-7-4 collections consist overwhelmingly of Late Babylonian tablets from Babylon, which flooded on to the Baghdad antiquities’ market in the late 1870s, so Babylon is almost certainly the provenance of BM 45686+.

A short colophon declares that the tablet was copied from an exemplar from the town of Dēr, in north-eastern Babylonia (iv 30’t). This is a rare attribution, to be added to only six Late Babylonian colophons so far known that document scribal activity in Dēr (Oelsner 1995). The previously known colophones state either that they were written at Dēr and deposited in the great temple there,8 or that their writer or owner was from Dēr. Two tablets bearing such colophons were excavated in the library of a fourth-century exorcist’s house at Uruk, and Oelsner argues that at least one other, and probably all six, derive from the same location. These colophons speak for an intellectual interaction between the scribes of Uruk and their counterparts at Dēr. The present addition to the corpus is briefer than any other but is enough to demonstrate that scholars of Babylon, as well as Uruk, benefited from knowledge guarded by the scribal families of Dēr.

The condition of BM 45686 is particularly poor, but most of the text is decipherable. The text opens with a ritual in which, on a day determined as favourable, no doubt before dawn, the exorcist sets up his holy-water vessel and lays out a ritual apparatus to three gods: Ea, Šamaš and Asalluhē (Marduk) (i 1–2). Many Babylonian incantation-prayers are addressed jointly to this trio (catalogued by Mayer 1976: 382–4). Some of them were used in apotropaic or prophylactic contexts, but the commonest was best suited by content to ritual purification and deployed to that purpose in the consecration of divine statues at dawn on the second day of the mis pē ritual (Walker and Dick 2001: 131–5 ll. 6–41; Shibata 2008: 193–5). Ea and Asalluhē work magic; Šamaš, the rising sun, brings the purity of night-expelling light and banishes evil. Here the task of these great powers is evidently to lead the divine forces who will be enlisted to free the field of pests, or the threat of pests.

Having engaged the attention of Ea, Šamaš and Asalluhē, the exorcist makes an offering to the gods who hold sway over the field, including sixteen who are named (2–7). These sixteen make an interesting group. The group begins with the trio Ea, Šamaš and Asalluhē. Nine of the remaining thirteen – in itself a number of mystic power – have strong associations with agriculture (documented in the textual notes). Enbilulu is a divine irrigator; Ningirsu, accompanied by his

8Specifically in the temple’s library, reading é im./gù.la1 where Lambert (1971: 346 l. 35) and Oelsner (1995: 266–7) read bit(e) /‘im(s.i.sil). The resulting statement, in the colophons of Uruk IV 185 (von Weiner 1993: 202) and the Converse Tablet (Lambert 1971: 343), is ina gergúukkī [tišu] é.dim.gal.kalam.ma bit bēlātšu aškin “he deposited it in the library of E-dimgal-kalamma, the temple of his majesty”. Compare in colophons of tablets of Ashurbanipal from Nineveh the like statement ina gergúukkī(ka) in.gù.la1 bit Nabû [var. é.zi.da] . . . aškin (Hunger 1968: 102–6 nos. 327: 15, 328: 17–18, 338: 12–14, 339: 2).
consort, Bau, is a ploughman and husbandman; Alala is a primeval deity whose name is homophonous with the farmhands’ worksong; Uraš, also accompanied by his consort, was equated with the farmer Ninurta and, as a god of the earth itself, had special power to act against crawling things; Lā-gamāl and Ipte-bit belong to Uraš’s household; _ATTEnnugi is another god of irrigation.

The storm god Adad, listed with his spouse Sˇala, was an ambiguous figure. His violent downpours were as much a threat to crops as field pests were. His river-borne flood was a double-edged sword: a threat to the harvest but also an event recognized as necessary for the land’s fertility. The many epithets that report Adad’s provision of _hengallu “abundance” acknowledge him as a positive force in the production of food. There is less obvious justification for claiming the remaining two deities as “lords of the field”.

This part of the ritual ends, if we have restored it correctly, with dicenda, an injunction to get rid of the pests, presumably addressed to those gods who have just been treated to offerings. Having appeased the field’s divine controllers, the exorcist then sets up a “house of _d̄ku’-su”, buries food at its corners, censes it with juniper-incense, and before it makes offerings of beer and flour to the antediluvian king Alulu (i 8–11). As in text No. 21, the god’s name is read _d̄ku’-su13; Kusu is a divine exorcist in Enlil’s court whose help in ridding a field of pests is invoked in Zu-buru-dabbeda (No. 17 ii–iii).

A second ritual follows, introduced by किमर, which probably signifies that it is to be performed in the same circumstances as the previous ritual, i.e. in the middle of the field. The second ritual is badly damaged, but enough is preserved to show that it involved the manufacture of four model grubs for Kusu, the placing of foodstuffs in various locations by night, and the burying of something, perhaps tablets inscribed with an ultimatum, at the four corners of the field (i 13–22).

The next ritual begins with a short illegible passage that may prescribe a standard act, the strewing of dates and flour. It continues by directing the exorcist to manufacture twenty-eight tallow figurines and melt them in fire to the accompaniment of the recitation of an incantation (i 23–5). Because twenty-eight is four times seven, and seven was a commonly used number in magic and ritual, we suppose that the figurines are burnt in four batches, facing north, south, east and west. This presumption is supported by the unusual fourfold repetition of the word _tammannu “you recite”. The incantation so recited is _Isˇgum nēšu kalab Isˇtar “Roared the Lion, Hound of Isˇtar”, which is suspected of opening the series Zu-buru-dabbeda and providing its incipit. It probably invoked Istar’s “hound” as a supernatural ally in the field pests’ destruction. The burning is followed by the preparation and deployment of a magic concoction (i 26–7).

A second ritual for the same eventuality follows, but without a ruling, which suggests that it is an alternative to the prescriptions in i 23–7. This alternative ritual prescribes the preparation of a concoction of different ingredients, the purification of the field with smoke and flame, and the recitation of four spells: (a) the first incantation of Alulu, (b) an incantation whose incipit is broken away, (c) the incantation about Istar’s lion, and (d) the second incantation of Alulu (i 27–31). Probably these four incantations are to be recited facing the four points of the compass, as was explicitly prescribed in the first version of the ritual.

A new section of ritual starts, which can be taken as the continuation of the two alternative rituals set out in the preceding section. The text prescribes offerings of food and beer and the fashioning of a symbolic object, perhaps a sun-disk, and concludes, after a break, with an injunction that the exorcist must not look back (i 32–4). This final instruction suggests that the ritual is over and the exorcist now leaves the field, and we have restored accordingly.

The next section gives the text of the first incantation to Alulu (i 35 ff.). The spell begins by addressing Alulu but damage sets in and the text is interrupted by a gap of more than fifteen lines. It seems that the incantation is still in progress when the text resumes in col. ii. The incantation now calls on natural forces to destroy the field pests, the four winds to blow them
away, and on the triad of senior gods, Anu, Enlil and Ea, and also the sun-god Šamaš, to revoke the orders on which the pests act (ii 10–18). Anu, Enlil and Ea between them control the three levels of the Babylonian cosmos, and the sun travels everywhere, so these four deities are well suited to countermanding the pests’ offensives across the entire universe.

The ritual that accompanies the first incantation of Alulu is a brief variant of the more elaborate ritual already set out in two versions in i 23–34. It prescribes the modelling in tallow of a single cricket, which is burned to the accompaniment of the incantation (ii 19–20).

Next is another incantation of Alulu (ii 21–7), presumably that which the text has already referred to as the second such spell (i 31). The incantation is more fully preserved on text No. 25, q.v. for commentary.

The text concludes with an incantation addressed to the shepherd of Bēl-mātāti, a title of first Enlil and then Marduk (ii 28–37). A version of the same incantation occurs on the Sultantepe tablet (No. 23 obv. 8′–15′). Unfortunately the shepherd’s name is damaged in both sources. He is asked to remove the pests, who are enumerated. The incantation continues with requests that each deity, in turn, accept the offering made to him, but damage means that little is legible. The deities include Ninurta and Adad, and probably occur in the same sequence as that found on text No. 23. The latter part of the incantation is mostly lost in the gap, probably of ten lines or more, between the end of col. ii and the beginning of col. iii.

Col. iii opens with the very end of an incantation (iii 1′–2′), about which nothing can be said except that this is probably the conclusion of the incantation that started in ii 28. The accompanying ritual is very damaged: something is buried, something else wrapped in linen (iii 3′–7′). From the parallel we learn that wax effigies of locusts were burned and their remains buried in the field (No. 23 rev. 3–5); probably the same occurred here, though the number of effigies is not specified and the wording clearly differs. There follows the short mixed-language incantation Tutu-anna hursangake (iii 8′–10′). This can be restored from the Sultantepe tablet (No. 23 rev. 6–9), where it is perfectly preserved, and later in the present tablet, where it recurs (iii 25′–6′). As in the Sultantepe tablet, the incantation Tutu-anna is accompanied by a ritual in which the exorcist makes a little shrine to Ninkilim in the middle of the field, and equips it with precisely measured quantities of foodstuffs (iii 11′–13′). Here both texts are true duplicates, as far as each is preserved.

The present text concludes where the Sultantepe tablet is broken, stipulating that the exorcist will then bury the food at the corners of Ninkilim’s shrine, enclose the shrine with a magic circle of flour and present further offerings of food (iii 11′–20′). We also learn that the farmer participates in the ritual (iii 20′–1′). The ritual concludes with someone reciting the standard short injunction to Ninkilim, to accept the food and call off his dogs, that is, take away the field pests (iii 22′–3′). Because the next prescription refers specifically to the exorcist, who is forbidden to eat foodstuffs that will render him impure (iii 24′), we can be sure that it denotes a change of subject and that the person who is required to address Ninkilim is the farmer; the formula he must speak is suitably simple. The column ends with a repetition of the incantation Tutu-anna (iii 25′–6′).

Col. iv begins, after a break of perhaps fifteen lines, with the end of what may be a third instance of the incantation Tutu-anna, or with an incantation that closes similarly (iv 1′–2′). What follows is a bilingual incantation to the god Ennugi (iv 3′–23′). It follows the pattern of the Marduk-Ea type of incantations, which employ a standard historiola: a problem arises, Asalluḫe sees it, reports it to his father, Enki, and Enki tells him the ritual with which to counter the problem (see further the textual note on iv 10). In the present instance the problem is that pests are eating the crops and, if one follows the Akkadian lines, the historiola begins with Ennugi creating them; the Sumerian differs and may be partly corrupt. Enki’s remedy is to mix clay from the field with soil and water from hallowed ground, make tablets from it, inscribe them with an incantation and bury them in the four corners of the field, so effecting the pests’ departure.

The incantation’s accompanying ritual follows (iv 24′–6′). Unsurprisingly, it prescribes the same response as that handed to Asalluḫe by Enki in the historiola. The ritual closes with a prediction of success.

The text concludes with a short ritual that prescribes the erection in the field of a magic enclosure marked out by thirteen standards (urigallu), with an opening in the direction of the sunrise; these actions are concluded by a short prayer (iv 27′–9′).
24. BM 45686+55561 ii

Fig. 11  Text No. 24 col. ii. Drawn by George
ina ummi(ud) magrishe(ga) əυγ egubbā(a.gūb .(gub).ba) tukan(gub)╚ rmkṣa(kē) [ana] ɐu(idm) əsamsa(utu)]
2 u əasal-łu-he ter-kas ki-i qātar(shu) me-ka la-lâ[x (x) ana pān(igi)]
3 ɐu(idm) əsamsa(utu) u əasal-łu-he əšin(30) əen-bi-[lu-łu]
4 əm-gir-su əbāhù(kā) əa-la-la əurās ən[in.uru]
5 əadad(ʾiskur) u əsa-la əla-ga-mil əip-ti-[bit(e)]
6 əen-ma-ri bēl(ən) ikīt(e) pālīq(πa₄) lugal-edin-na mut-tal-l[ik sērī(edin)]
7 u ilī(ʿingir) əm(βēl(ən)) ʿeq̃(a.šā) sīr-qa tasaaraq(dub) mi-il-hi tanaqqi(ball) ən m[n[a šu-la-?]

ina gabal(murub₄) eq̃(a.šā) bit(e) əkū-su₁₃ tanaddi(šub) əṭi 4 ka-man-na-a-t[u]
9 ša zid.nu.sū.mu tanaddi(šub) əṭi ina tubgāt(ub) əm(βī) bit(e) əkū-su₁₃ [u-tam-mar?]
10 nīgank(nīg.na) hurāši(li) ana pān(igi) əsamsa(utu) tašakkan(gar) əm mi-il-hi tanaqqi(ball) əṭi[ ana pān(igi) bit(e)]
11 əkū-su₁₃ nīgank(nīg.na) hurāši(li) ana a-lu-lu ta-sār-raq [ṣikara(kaš) tanaqqi(ball)] əṭi
12 ēn a-lu-lu mahru(igi) əm(βā) tammanna(šid) əm[lu-nu i-tel]-l[ī]

Kimīn 4 mu-na x x ˈteppus(du) əm-na? ana [əkū-su₁₃]
tu-ṭañ-he ina ˈmusefi [x x x x x x x x x x x] u-ū
éni əx[...] əm(se) telqaqe(ti) əṭi
x[...] əm[...] x ka-man tanaddi(šub) əṭi
13 [e-nu-mu mu₄x x x] īppuṭa(kur) əm ka-man tašakkan(gar) əm
[x x x x x] ša gaqqad(sag) əṭi epinni(apin) ka-man-na
14 [x x x x x] ušēmn(ušēmn) itē[ūš.su.gub] eq̃(a.šā)
15 [iškara(engar) inaqqil(ball) əṭi] m[ka kur-ban arki(egir)-šu ta-na-as-suk-ma
[x x x x x x] ša qaṣṣid(šag) əṭi epinni(apin) ka-man-na
16 [x x x x x x x x] ša qaṣṣid(šag) əṭi epinni(apin) ka-man-na
17 [iškara(engar) inaqqil(ball) əṭi] m[ka kur-ban arki(egir)-šu ta-na-as-suk-ma
[x x x x x x] ša qaṣṣid(šag) əṭi epinni(apin) ka-man-na
18 [iškara(engar) inaqqil(ball) əṭi] m[ka kur-ban arki(egir)-šu ta-na-as-suk-ma
[x x x x x x] ša qaṣṣid(šag) əṭi epinni(apin) ka-man-na
19 [iškara(engar) inaqqil(ball) əṭi] m[ka kur-ban arki(egir)-šu ta-na-as-suk-ma
[x x x x x x] ša qaṣṣid(šag) əṭi epinni(apin) ka-man-na
20 [iškara(engar) inaqqil(ball) əṭi] m[ka kur-ban arki(egir)-šu ta-na-as-suk-ma
[x x x x x x] ša qaṣṣid(šag) əṭi epinni(apin) ka-man-na
21 [iškara(engar) inaqqil(ball) əṭi] m[ka kur-ban arki(egir)-šu ta-na-as-suk-ma
[x x x x x x] ša qaṣṣid(šag) əṭi epinni(apin) ka-man-na
22 [iškara(engar) inaqqil(ball) əṭi] m[ka kur-ban arki(egir)-šu ta-na-as-suk-ma
[x x x x x x] ša qaṣṣid(šag) əṭi epinni(apin) ka-man-na
23 [iškara(engar) inaqqil(ball) əṭi] m[ka kur-ban arki(egir)-šu ta-na-as-suk-ma
[x x x x x x] ša qaṣṣid(šag) əṭi epinni(apin) ka-man-na
24 [iškara(engar) inaqqil(ball) əṭi] m[ka kur-ban arki(egir)-šu ta-na-as-suk-ma
[x x x x x x] ša qaṣṣid(šag) əṭi epinni(apin) ka-man-na
25 [iškara(engar) inaqqil(ball) əṭi] m[ka kur-ban arki(egir)-šu ta-na-as-suk-ma
[x x x x x x] ša qaṣṣid(šag) əṭi epinni(apin) ka-man-na
26 [iškara(engar) inaqqil(ball) əṭi] m[ka kur-ban arki(egir)-šu ta-na-as-suk-ma
[x x x x x x] ša qaṣṣid(šag) əṭi epinni(apin) ka-man-na
27 [iškara(engar) inaqqil(ball) əṭi] m[ka kur-ban arki(egir)-šu ta-na-as-suk-ma
[x x x x x x] ša qaṣṣid(šag) əṭi epinni(apin) ka-man-na
28 [iškara(engar) inaqqil(ball) əṭi] m[ka kur-ban arki(egir)-šu ta-na-as-suk-ma
[x x x x x x] ša qaṣṣid(šag) əṭi epinni(apin) ka-man-na
29 [iškara(engar) inaqqil(ball) əṭi] m[ka kur-ban arki(egir)-šu ta-na-as-suk-ma
[x x x x x x] ša qaṣṣid(šag) əṭi epinni(apin) ka-man-na
30 [iškara(engar) inaqqil(ball) əṭi] m[ka kur-ban arki(egir)-šu ta-na-as-suk-ma
[x x x x x x] ša qaṣṣid(šag) əṭi epinni(apin) ka-man-na
31 [iškara(engar) inaqqil(ball) əṭi] m[ka kur-ban arki(egir)-šu ta-na-as-suk-ma
[x x x x x x] ša qaṣṣid(šag) əṭi epinni(apin) ka-man-na
32 [iškara(engar) inaqqil(ball) əṭi] m[ka kur-ban arki(egir)-šu ta-na-as-suk-ma
[x x x x x x] ša qaṣṣid(šag) əṭi epinni(apin) ka-man-na
33 [iškara(engar) inaqqil(ball) əṭi] m[ka kur-ban arki(egir)-šu ta-na-as-suk-ma
[x x x x x x] ša qaṣṣid(šag) əṭi epinni(apin) ka-man-na
34 [iškara(engar) inaqqil(ball) əṭi] m[ka kur-ban arki(egir)-šu ta-na-as-suk-ma
[x x x x x x] ša qaṣṣid(šag) əṭi epinni(apin) ka-man-na
35 [iškara(engar) inaqqil(ball) əṭi] m[ka kur-ban arki(egir)-šu ta-na-as-suk-ma
[x x x x x x] ša qaṣṣid(šag) əṭi epinni(apin) ka-man-na
36 [iškara(engar) inaqqil(ball) əṭi] m[ka kur-ban arki(egir)-šu ta-na-as-suk-ma
[x x x x x x] ša qaṣṣid(šag) əṭi epinni(apin) ka-man-na
37 [iškara(engar) inaqqil(ball) əṭi] m[ka kur-ban arki(egir)-šu ta-na-as-suk-ma
[x x x x x x] ša qaṣṣid(šag) əṭi epinni(apin) ka-man-na
38 [iškara(engar) inaqqil(ball) əṭi] m[ka kur-ban arki(egir)-šu ta-na-as-suk-ma
[x x x x x x] ša qaṣṣid(šag) əṭi epinni(apin) ka-man-na
39 [iškara(engar) inaqqil(ball) əṭi] m[ka kur-ban arki(egir)-šu ta-na-as-suk-ma
[break]

col. ii
1–9 missing
10 ḫa-lu-ū x x[...
11 lig-tup-ku-nu-si a-bu-bu...
12 lig-tup-ku-nu-si šur-ru-up-p[u-ud...]
13 li-zi-ga-am-ma at-tnu la [a ta-tiq-ga-ni]?
14 li-zi-ga-am-ma at-tnu la [ta-tiq-ga-ni]?
15 li-zi-ga-am-ma at-tnu la [a-tiq-ga-ni]?
16 li-zi-ga-am-ma at-tnu la [a-tiq-ga-ni]?
17 a-num 4-en-lil u 4-e(idim) ši-pir-tu4 [mu-us-š-š-er]
18 šamaš(utu) ši-pir-tan mu-us-š-š-er

dü.dü.bi šašara(burur4 za.pa.āg) ša līpī(š1.udu) teppuš(dü)[i ina išāti(izi)]
20 tanadditu(sub)[šiptu(ēn) an-nit tamannu(sīd)em] erēbu(burur4 i-[tel-li]

21 én a-.lu-šašar(lugal) ša la-mu a-bu-bu a-kil šiž[ba(ga) ḫımētiti(i.nun-na)]
22 u ḫi-i-ga ša a[nīssabaš] šarratu(gašan) ik-kib-šu mu-na [aka-la]
23 mu-bat-ti-ru-ū ša [i-na] ḫať-tu ‘e4-ri at-ṭa [a- lu-ša šar mah-ra?]
24 tim-tab ši at-ta ā-šu-li x ša a(lugal-edīna)
25 zēra(še.numun) ana a[n īr]gal(īg1.duš) še-rīm kalbā(ūr.gi,)[em] rabūtu(gal)meš
26 ša 4in-kilim ki-is-sat-ku nu m[a-h-ra-tu-ма]
27 kalbi(ūr.gi,)[em] ki-[k]u nu i-siš-ša [d[up-pi-ra-ša

28 én [4x] x ē-re-‘s ša 4b[e(ī)]ni-māti(kur.kur) niinda(bā(nīda)-kā)
29 m[u-Šu 4] lē-šē1-ik šini(mi) e[rebi(burur4)] ina mukhē(uug) eqē(t.ašā) ša-li-mu-mu
30 a-ki-l][a mu-bat-ti-[ru a-ri-bu ša-ši-r]a
31 s[a-m]a-nu [kal][i-mat eqē ... mu-Šu]
32 4bēlu=en(Še) rabū(gal) bē(ēn) x[...4n]ar-duk(amar.ūtu) mu-Šu 4in-ar-ta
33 a-Ša-re4-ē[1][kur mu-Šu 4adad(īškur) šar šengall(i-ge.gal) bē(ēn) rabū(gal)]
34 edin/ma-šu [x[...]
35 ḫe-gal? ... 36 m[u-Šu] ... 37 x[...]
38 break

col. iii 1 x[...]
2 gox[x...

3 kid.kid.bi e[rebi(burur4)]4 ša iškūri(duḫ.lāl) teppuš(dū)em...
4 ina 4 muqēl(uug)-ša-nu ti-e[s-sīr ... ina tubqēt erbetti]
5 eqēl(ašā) tu-tam1-mar1 x[...]
6 qimma(īm.sāhar.gē,... kur.ra) gaša(m.im.babbar1) i[m...
7 ina 106kitē(gada) tar-kas es-1[0-la-ku...]

8 én tu1/3.an.na šur.sag[g.gā.ka4 gā e a.da.an.ni]
9 4in-kilim kalbē(ūr.gē,)[em] rabēatu(gal)meš ša 4in-kilim
10 ki-is-sat-ku nu màh-ra2-tu-nu [ar-la-š]

11 dü.dü.bi parak(bāra) 4in-kilim [ina qabal eqēl ūnaddi sebet qa]
12 Ḫem(a.zid.da) ana ka-man-na-a-tu ūnaddi(šub)[0.0.1 suluppi ḫimmāt nūn]
13 1 akalat(ninda) 1 qa mersa(ninda.i.de.ām) ina m[uḫ-ḫi tašakkān ina tubqāt(ub)]meš?
14 p(parak bāra) 4in-kilim te-te-[mir ... urigallī itē parak]
15 4in-kilim ta-zā-qā p ... zisarrā parak]
16 4in-kilim tanamlī(niqmī)[em] x[...]
17 tu tar-ra ta-ra-sā-an [...]
18 ina muqēl(uug) tašakkān(gar)-ma a-na Sar(īm) erbetti ... 19 mersa(īninda.i.de.ām) u ka-man-na [...]

THE DOGS OF NINKILIM, PART TWO: BABYLONIAN RITUALS TO COUNTER FIELD PESTS
24. BM 45686+55561 iv

Fig. 12  Text No. 24 col. iv. Drawn by George
24. BM 45686+55561 iii

Fig. 13  Text No. 24 col. iii. Drawn by George
On a propitious day you set up a holy-water basin and arrange a ritual apparatus [for Ea, Šamaš and Asalluh. After?] your hands are [...] you strew a strewn-offering before Ea, Šamaš and Asalluh, Sin, Enbilulu, Ningirsu, Bau, Alala, Uraš, Ninuru, Adad and Šala, Lā-gamāl, Ipte-[bit] Ennugi, lord of dike and ditch, Lugaledinna, who roams [the steppe] and
the gods who own the field. You make a libation of mihlu-beer, (saying:) “[Expel()] the grubst!”

8–9 In the middle of the field you place a “house of Kusu”. You set down four bread-cakes of zidnušummu-flour. You [bury them] at the corners of Kusu’s house. 10–11 You set up a censer of juniper facing the sun, make a libation of mihlu-beer, sprinkle (incense) [before] Kusu’s [house] on the censer of juniper for Alulu, [make a libation of beer and] 12 recite the first incantation of Alulu. The [grubs will go] away.

13–14 Ditto. [You make()] four grubs . . . , and present them [to] Kusu. In the night [ . . . 15 You recite] the incantation “O god [. . . ]” you take [. . . 16 . . . ] you set down a bread-cake. 17 [After the constellation . . . ] rises you set down a bread-cake 18 [. . . ] of the top part of a plough, a bread-cake 19–20 [. . . The farmer pours libations of ] emmer-beer around the field and you throw clods of earth after him, 21 saying “O loving [. . . ]” “Two days at the field!” 22 you write [on four] tablets, you bury (them) at the four corners of the field.

23–4 You strew(?) [dates(?) and sasqī-flour(?),] make twenty-eight effigies from tallow and burn (them) in [the four] cardinal directions. When you burn them, the incantation “Roared the lion!” 25 [you recite,] you recite, you recite, you recite. 26 You crush [. . . [. . .] fennel (and) alum. 27 You set down [. . .]. 9 ditto: alluḫarā-dye, wolf-turd 28 [. . . with] these [herbs] you exorcize the field (by) censer and torch. 29 [. . .] the incantation “O Alulu, king from before the Deluge”, 29 [first (version), the incantation . . . . . . the incantation “Roared the lion, 31 [hound of Ɛstur!],” the incantation “O Alulu”, second (version), you recite.

32 [After] you have finished [this,] you arrange a bread-cake facing the sun. 33 [You strew a strewn-offering,] make a libation of mihlu-beer, make a white(?) sun-disk(?), 34 [and] leave [the field(?),] not looking behind you.

35 [Incantation. O Alulu, king from] before the Deluge, who consumes milk, ghee, 36 [ . . . “devourer”-pests(?) and . . . 37 [. . .] the great dogs 38 of Ninkilim . . .]

ii 10 May [. . .] burn [. . . . . . . . . 11 May the Deluge pick you (masc. pl.) off! [. . .] 12 may the frost pick you off! [. . .] 13 may it blow so [that you cannot blow back!] 14 May it blow so that [you can] not [blow back]! 15 May it blow so that you cannot [blow back!] 16 May it blow so that you cannot [blow back!] 17 O Anu, Enlil and Ea, [cancel the (field pests’)] mission! 18 O Ɛ̄mašt, cancel the mission!

19–20 Its ritual. You make a cricket out of tallow, throw [it into fire and] recite this incantation. The locusts will [go away.]

21 Incantation. O Alulu, king from before the Deluge, who consumes milk, [ghee] 22–4 and hīgu-beer, to whom the queen Nissaba is an abomination! Grub, [“devourer”-pest and] mubattiru-bug, with(!) a wand of cornel wood you, [Alulu, a king of old(?),] have brought into being! Do you (now) take them away! O . . . of [Lugaledinma,] 25 clear the ploughland of weeds for Nergal! O [great] dogs 26 of Ninkilim, you [have received] your fodder! 27 Take your dogs and be [off with you!]

28–9 Incantation. [O . . .] shepherd of the Lord [of the Lands,] accept [your food-portion, take away from this field the] bite of [locust]-tooth! [Grub,] 30 “devourer”-pest and mubattiru-bug, locust, cricket. 31 “red bug”, field-weenil . . . . . . . . [Accept,] 32 O great lord, lord of [ . . . , Marduk! Accept, O Ninurta,] 33 foremost one of E-[kur! Accept, O great lord Adad, king of plenty!] 36 Accept [ . . .]

iii 3’ Its ritual. [You make] locusts [of wax, . . .] 4 on them you draw [ . . . and in the four corners] 5 of the field you bury [them . . .] 6 black dye, whitewash, [. . .] 7 you tie in a linen cloth. Wherever he [goes . . .]

8 Incantation. Tutu-anna of the mountain [range, I am the adamm of] 9 Ninkilim. O great dogs of [Ninkilim,] 10 you have received your fodder, [now be gone!]

11–14 Its ritual. [You place] a plinth for Ninkilim [in the middle of the field.] You place [there seven litres] of flour for bread-cakes. [You put] on top [ten litres of dates, chopped fish,] one bread-loaf (and) one litre of date-cake, you [bury it at the corners of] Ninkilim’s plinth. You plant [x standards around] 15 Ninkilim’s [plinth . . .] 16 you surround Ninkilim’s [plinth with a flour-circle . . .] 17 and again you steep [. . .] 18 you put [. . .] on top and in [the four] cardinal directions [you . . .] 19 date-cake and bread-cake, [. . .] 20 you surround and strew a strewn-offering. The man [will . . .] with/in a loop [. . .] 21 he will squash (a bit of) the dike flat and
linger [. . .] 22–23 He will say as follows: “O Ninkilim, you have received [your fodder.] summon your dogs and [be gone!]”
24 The exorcist must not dine. [He must not eat] garlic and sabli-[spice.]
25 Incantation. Tutu-anma of the mountain range, [I am the adamm of Ninkilim.] 26 O great dogs of [Ninkilim, you have received your fodder, (now) be gone! . . .]
26 . . . 2 You [have received your fodder, (now) be gone!]

Sum. 3 [Incantation.] Ennugi, lord of field (and) of ploughmen(!), 5 created(!) teeming, [soil]-prowling [flesh.] 7 Grubs were eating [the crops] en masse, 8 [grubs] were eating the green shoots of the field.

Akk. 4 Ennugi, owner of the field, 6 created “flesh” (i.e. fleshy creatures) in the soil, all of them, 9 the creatures began eating the green shoots of the field.
10 Asallüh noticed, (went inside to his father Enki and said: “Ennugi etc.” He said it a second time, adding “I do not know what to do, how should I respond?” His father answered him, “My son, what don’t you know? What can I add? Asallüh, what don’t you know? What can I add?) What I (know, you also know!) Come, my son! 11–12 Take well-[water] of the gods (Akk. house of the gods), 13–14 take dust of the house of the gods, 15–16 take clay of the field, 17–18 make [tablets.] inscribe an incantation of Eridu (on them), 19–20 bury [them in the four] corners of the field and 21–2 bury [the grubs] eating the field’s [green shoots] should go away.” Incantation-spell.

Incantation to make all [grubs(?)] pass on by.
24–6 Its ritual. You mix dust from his (the client’s) god’s house [and clay] of the field with well-water from his god’s house and [make] tablets with it. You write this incantation on them, and bury them in the four corners of the field, and it will be well.
27 You [stand] thirteen standards in the middle of the field, surround [them with flour.] 28 open their gate to the sunrise and [say] this: 29 “By weevils(?) teeth [may] my barley [be unharmed(?)]”
30 According to the wording of a tablet, a copy from Der.

Notes
i 2. The phrase ki qašika might alternatively mean “in your own way”; compare ki-i qa-at pa-ni-ma “in the same way as before” in a glass-making recipe (Oppenheim 1970: 48 §18: 14; Nineveh manuscript). The sign read la is written over an erasure.

i 3. Enbilulu’s function in agriculture is as an irrigator, a role noted in the god-list An in Ameli 110 (ed. Litke 1998: 237), where he is Marduk ša pa-ta-ti “of canals”, but given fullest expression in Enmum ekil VII 57–69.

i 4. As a manifestation of Ninurta, Ningirsu is too well-known a husbandman to need more documentation than his epithet bēl me-reṣ-ti “master-ploughman” (Surpu IV 101, ed. Reiner 1958: 29, Borger 2000: 72). Primeval Alala became identified with the farmer’s worksong (see text No. 2: 8). Uraš is explicitly associated with agricultural work in the god-lists Anu 110 (ed. Litke 1998: 233), in which he and the divine ploughman ša₂ u₃₄uru₂, alternate as Ninurta ša₂ al₂ “of the mattock”. The goddess Ninuru (or Belet-ili “Mistress of the City”) is restored to make a pair with her consort, Uraš (An V 44, ed. Litke 1998: 172). On this goddess see further Cavigneaux and Krebernik 2001b. Uraš and his family follow Ninkilim directly in the god-list An V 42, an order which probably demonstrates a connection among them and adds resonance to the present passage.

i 5. La-gamal “Merciles” is a variant of the usual Lā-gamal “No Mercy” (on whom see Lambert 1983). Lā-gamal and Ipte-bit are respectively the son and minister of Uraš (An V 45–6, ed. Litke 1998: 172).

i 6. In this line the gods have epithets that explain their characters. Ennugi is the chamberlain (guzalû) of Enlil’s court at Nippur (Lambert and Millard 1969: 147–8) but, importantly for his presence in this line as a “god of the field”, and in the text’s final incantation as “lord of the field” (iv 3–4), he is also a deity with agricultural expertise, being also bēl(u) ikt(ê) u palq(ê)₂ “lord of dike and ditch” in Surpu IV 103 (ed. Reiner 1958: 29, Borger 2000: 72).

Lugaledinna is a deity of wild asses and other quadrupeds that graze the steppe, one of the seven (or nine) manifestations of the Asakku-demon and also a name of Nergal (see Lambert 1987). In one list the Asakku-demons are summed up as ki-ṣti₄ nin-orta ša šu-bat-su-nu a-ḫat ilit(ur[u]) “conquered by Ninurta, whose dwellings are outside the city” (George 1992: 154–7 §13a). Their place of residence is explicit in Lugaledinna’s name, “Lord of the Steppe”, and his epithet in this line is restored accordingly; space for [edin] is short, but the scribe may have run on to the margin between the columns, as he does in l 24. Lugaledinna occurs in the context of field pests’ destruction in the second incantation to Alulu (l 24//No. 25: 7).

i 8. On bit kō-sṭel₃ in exorcistic rituals see the introduction to text No. 21.

i 9. The Sumerian expression zid.nu.šum.mu literally means “undistributed flour”, i.e. a special flour kept in reserve?
14. *tu-tah-he* is a common late spelling of the present tense, *tutelhe*.
25. Alternately after *tanaqqil* (bal): *ki.* ʿutu igi utu teppu “you perform a kiʾutu facing the sun”, but the passage may be corrupt (D. Schwemer 1998: 99 ll. 183–5) and KAL 2 33 rev. 2′–4′ (ed. Schwemer 2007b: 85–7). In the present instance of the formula the names of the four winds are expected but inexplicably absent.
26. For the restoration of *telli* see i 12.
27. See No. 25.
28. 36–38. See No. 23 obv. 8′–15′.
29. 38. Restored from the parallel, No. 23 rev. 3′–4′: 7 šalmi āribi ša ʾiškūri teppuš.
30. 8′–9′. // iii 25′–6′ // No. 23 rev. 6′–9′.
31. 11′–13′. // No. 23 rev. 11′–14′, from which the text is completed.
32. 19′-maḫ-ḫu-ra-a-tiṭ a late spelling of Standard Babylonian *maḫrāta*.
34. Prohibitions that ban ritual participants from eating noxious foods like garlic and *saḥlī*-spice (cress seed?) are a matter of ritual purity; see Maul 1994: 39. A fuller list of foodstu.
36. Falkenstein called the “Marduk-Ea-Typ” in his study of the literary structures of Sumerian incantations. Ea and report of trouble are omitted entirely, (c) *niš-ga-e* stands for *niš-ga-e iš-za-um a-gi* za-um. (standards of bundled reed) in making magic enclosures see Wiggermann urigallu 1973: 513 rev. 10: // *kurru 17137*.
37. “¶ (If ) a man setting out for the shrine of his god eats leek, cress-seed(?), garlic, onion, beef or pork, he will be unclean”.
38. Our translation has in mind nigin *salāru “to go around”, although the ancient scholar decided on nigin = napharas. The end of the Sumerian line appears to be corrupt; dib bè-da.ke₄ recurs in the rubric, where it belongs (iv 23′), but here intrudes in place of a finite verb. The plural suffix -e-ne (the source of the Akkadian possessive *šumu*) is misconceived and probably derives in part from the lost verb’s prefix chain. The good sense of the Akkadian translation *ibtani* then encourages us to propose as the Sumerian line’s original conclusion the word bi.in.dim “he created”.
39. “What I know you also know”. This abbreviation is conventional in first-millennium copies. In addition, ginmu in the present example is an error for gin.*na “come!”
40. Apparently not *zū* [buru₄₃ aššur 141]. For *tupa epešu* as a technical term see iv 25 below (partly restored), Nabnippa VII 123, and an Old Babylonian school text in which a teacher gives instructions on how to make a tablet, first in Akkadian and then in Sumerian (Civil 1998: 1 ll. 8′ ′/ 17′); in both bilingual passages the Sumerian counterpart of *epēšu* is dim, however.
41. On the use of *urigallu* (standards of bundled reed) in making magic enclosures see Wiggermann 1992: 71. The verb *tuzqqap* is usually spelled syllabically, but note *aššur* gal . . . *gub-ap* in the bit rinkš ritual BBR 26 iii 24–5. ed. Zimmern 1901: 126 and pl. 41. The enclosing of a ritual space in a circle, *zisurru*, was standard practice in Babylonian exorcism; the exact formulation restored here, *gēnu talammi*, also occurs in a *nambarri* performed when preparing to dig a new well and appended to *Summa ālu XVII* (Caplice 1971: 150 l. 28′ // 1973: 513 rev. 10′: *zid.da nigna-um*).
42. Apparently not zū [buru₄₃ aššur 141]. For *tupa epešu* as a technical term see iv 25 below (partly restored), Nabnippa VII 123, and an Old Babylonian school text in which a teacher gives instructions on how to make a tablet, first in Akkadian and then in Sumerian (Civil 1998: 1 ll. 8′ ′/ 17′); in both bilingual passages the Sumerian counterpart of *epēšu* is dim, however.
43. On the use of urigallu (standards of bundled reed) in making magic enclosures see Wiggermann 1992: 71. The verb *tuzqqap* is usually spelled syllabically, but note *aššur* gal . . . *gub-ap* in the bit rinkš ritual BBR 26 iii 24–5. ed. Zimmern 1901: 126 and pl. 41. The enclosing of a ritual space in a circle, *zisurru*, was standard practice in Babylonian exorcism; the exact formulation restored here, *gēnu talammi*, also occurs in a *nambarri* performed when preparing to dig a new well and appended to *Summa ālu XVII* (Caplice 1971: 150 l. 28′ // 1973: 513 rev. 10′: *zid.da nigna-um*).
44. Apparently not zū [buru₄₃ aššur 141]. For *tupa epešu* as a technical term see iv 25 below (partly restored), Nabnippa VII 123, and an Old Babylonian school text in which a teacher gives instructions on how to make a tablet, first in Akkadian and then in Sumerian (Civil 1998: 1 ll. 8′ ′/ 17′); in both bilingual passages the Sumerian counterpart of *epēšu* is dim, however.
No. 25 A 33250 (1 NT 25)

This piece, excavated at Nippur in 1948 and now in the Oriental Institute Museum, Chicago, is a small tablet in landscape format, damaged on the right edge and lacking both its lower corners. It was inscribed with eleven lines of Neo-Babylonian cuneiform, parts of all of which survive. The text was published by Daniel Weisberg as OIP 122 no. 168 (2003: 187 and pl. 67), but not recognized there as more than a “literary text”. Eckart Frahm subsequently identified it as a duplicate of incantations addressed to Alulu in BM 45686, which he knew from Lambert and Millard’s quotation of their incipits (Frahm 2009: 141).

Now that BM 45686 is published, as part of our text No. 24, it can be seen that the incantation written on A 33250 is the shorter and second of two incantations to Alulu deployed in the fight against field pests. In this edition of the field-pest rituals the incantation occurs in No. 24 ii 21–7, and probably also in the very fragmentary passage No. 20: 7–10; from these parallels the text of the present tablet can be almost completely restored. The tablet’s small size and landscape format suggest that it was created specifically to hold only this single incantation, either as a scribal training exercise or for use in the field.

This second incantation to Alulu begins in the same way as the first, by addressing Alulu as a king of the antediluvian age who enjoys liquids like milk, ghee and a certain kind of beer but finds barley (“Queen Nissaba”) odious. The incantation then asks Alulu, as one who created the pests with the wave of a magic wand, to remove them and kill them, a process imaginatively described as “weeding” the field for the lord of the netherworld. The incantation continues by appealing directly to the pests with the observation that they have been ritually fed, implying that they should therefore take no more interest in the field and its crops. This appeal occurs in other incantations against field pests, and usually ends simply, atla “now be gone!” Here another command intrudes, “take your (masc. pl.) dogs”, which should be addressed to Ninkilim but instead presupposes a plural agent who, in the context, can only be the pests themselves.

According to the incantation Alulu cannot himself abide the cereals on which the pests feed, but prefers a liquid diet. We suspect there is a reversal here, in which the food that Alulu finds repulsive is what his creatures love. Conversely one can propose that the liquids he enjoys should be repugnant to the pests. Thus we may conclude that when libations of these liquids occur in the rituals against field pests it is as offensive weaponry, unlike solid foodstuffs, which are used to buy the pests off. This strategy may have a basis in nature. Many insects and grubs are disabled by contact with liquids, especially sticky varieties.

The incantation’s addressee is a rare figure and needs some explanation. Alulu is the Babylonian form of Alulim (a.lu.lim), king of Eridu and the first of the antediluvian kings in the Sumero-Babylonian traditions of early human history (Lambert and Millard 1969: 27, Frahm 2009: 141). As such he appears not only in the antediluvian king-lists and in Berossus’s Babyloniaca (as Aloros), but also in the Ballad of Early Rulers, a wisdom text that observes how even the mightiest heroes of old have vanished from the face of the earth:

[me.a a.lu.lim lu]gal.e mu 36,000 âm in. ak
me-e "a-lu-lu m[. . . ]
[a-l]e-e "a-lu-lu [sa ešret šar šanātī šarrūta ḫuṣā]

Where is Alulu, who was king for ten myriad years?

Alulu’s extraordinary length of reign was referred to as proverbial by the seventh-century Babylonian astrologer Ašarēdu, who in a letter to the Assyrian king called for the gods of Babylon to bless him with the “years of Alulu” (SAA X 158: 4: šanātī(mu)post ša "a-lu-[lu], see Frahm 2009: 141).

Alulu has a twofold association with magic and exorcism: (a) he was king of Eridu, the city of Ea, the god of those arts, and (b) he received pristine wisdom and know-how from the sage Adapa, sent by Ea to civilize mankind. The latter connection is elaborated in the apocryphal message of Adapa to Alulu embedded in a sequence of incantations (STT 176: 14–21’ + 185 rev. 1’–4’, see Veldhuis 1990: 40 sub 3.4). But the reason for Alulu’s particular appearance in field-pest incantations is that, according to the better-preserved of the two incantations that invoke
him, he was himself blamed for the creation of field pests and so also had the power to get rid of them. Other agents were also held responsible for the pests’ existence, specifically the gods Ninkilim (passim) and Ennugi (No. 24 iv 3–6), but it is not clear to us why Alulu should have been added to their number.

The transliteration that follows has benefited from a collation of Weisberg’s copy with photographs of A 33250 kindly provided by Walter Farber, Curator of the Oriental Institute Museum’s cuneiform tablets, with the assistance of Andrew Dix, Tablet Room assistant.

Text of No. 27 K 5905

V. Other texts (Texts Nos. 26–8)

No. 26 K 13301

K 13301 is a small flake from a Neo-Assyrian library tablet, with meagre parts of seven lines preserved. The content is ritual and Ninkilim is mentioned in l. 6.

No. 27 K 5905

K 5905 is a fragment from the middle of a Neo-Assyrian library tablet, on which parts of ten lines are preserved. The content of the first few lines is a Sumerian incantation or exorcistic
formula in which Ninkilim is mentioned (l. 4' ). After a rubric occurs a bad omen from Šumma ālu in which a king or nobleman cuts his head in a driving accident ( // CT 40 35: 1–4, ed. Nötscher 1930: 19). The quotation of such an omen determines that K 5905 is a fragment of a collection of apotropaic and prophylactic rituals (nambarbi), a genre of which Zu-buru-dabbeda is a subset. However, the rubric in l. 6' makes a reference to protection from malign forces in a court of law, not a field, so it may be that the preceding text has nothing to do with field pests, despite the presence of Ninkilim.

1' ...] x x 'da1 x[...
2' ...] x 'la.nita1 tūg.'sig.mu1 [ ] (interlinear gloss: mi-mi or gi₇,gi₈)
3' ...] x ud.da.bi ḫē.e[b? .dib ...
4' ...] x 'nin.kilim iɡi.ni.šē x[...
5' ...] x.bi ti x[...

6' [ka.inim.ma ... in]a dini(di) là [ṭelēṭ(ṭe)']

7' [šumma šarru u lá rubā narkabta īrk]ab(u₅) -ma ana initti(zag) -šā imquṭ(ṣub)-ma ma-gar imir[t(zag) u lá]
8' [sissā ša initti qaqqassu ʾissīma dāmu usṣ]ā(ē) ṣāṭ(šu) ḫamaṣ(utu) u '1d[iṭ₅-tār]
9' [Šamaš u Ištar ʾisḥabbatū]-šu me-si-ru da-nu ʾiṣḥabṭar(dib)-su-m[a ina μuṛṣīṣu imār?]....
10' (vacat)
11' illegible traces, then broken

... 2' ...] male, the fringe of my garment [ ... 3' ... ] may its evil consequences [be averted ... 4' ... ] Ninkilim before him [ ... ]
6' [Incantation-formula so that a bad portent(?)] has no [effect] on a law-case.
7' [If the king or a noble goes] driving and falls out to his right and the right-hand wheel [or 8' right-hand horse cuts his head and blood comes] out: it is the Hand of Šamaš and [Ištar. 9' Šamaš and Ištar will seize] him. Big trouble will afflict him and [he will die(?) of his sickness.]
( Remainder lost)

No. 28
Sm 1277

This is a fragment of ten lines from the middle of a library tablet in Neo-Assyrian script, found at Nineveh by George Smith in 1874. The left break is straight and probably follows the course of a column ruling. The piece was published by Heinrich Zimmern in his book of sources for Babylonian religion, BBR 40 (1901: 146 and pl. 49) and again, after a century’s interval, in an improved transliteration by Daniel Schwemer (2001: 683 fn. 5612). As Schwemer notes, the fragment is no close relation to any known part of the series Zu-buru-dabbeda, but its content and vocabulary are such that it could well belong to the genre of magic against field pests. The matter at hand is a ritual in which an exorcist calls on Adad, as a god with special responsibility for the client’s field, to accept what he has been offered (cf. Nos. 4: 11', 23 obv. 12'), next strips his client, wraps a red cloth around his head, and performs various magic acts on a figurine. The god Kusu figures in the ritual, as in texts Nos. 17, 21 and 24, but in an uncertain capacity.

It is unnecessary to repeat Schwemer’s transliteration here, and the text is presented in translation only.

1' ...] you knot. Each time you make a knot, [you say] this [three(?) times]: 2' “Accept, O great lord Adad, lord of [this] plot of [farmland!]” 3' You strip his body and [you ... ] Kusu. 4' [You wrap] his head with a sash of red wool, [ ... ] 5' you twist strands of white, red and blue wool, [ ... ] 6' you stand him on a fine linth. [You ... ] seven pegs of cedar wood [ ... ] 7' you place before him, facing west. [You perform] the mouth-cleansing ritual, 8' [you set up] two reed altars
after dusk is indeed a beacon of summer in the northern hemisphere. If the verb the period the coming of dusk would find it already risen, and Vega's presence high in the sky to take place progressively earlier every night, from just before dawn to just after dusk. Later in late Blahoslav Hrusˇka (1990: 108–9), the ancient Mesopotamian barley season extended from the east coincided with the months when the main field crops were growing. As tabulated by the crossing the eastern horizon nightly. 

practicable during those months in the first part of the period, when it could still be observed interpreted strictly, rituals that directed participants to await the Goat-star's rise were only 
crossing the eastern horizon at dawn) occurred on 15 Arah

mul

52–5). The Goat-star signifies the constellation Lyra, often more specifically Lyra

\( \star \)

5, probably also 24 i 17). The Goat-star (\( \text{\textit{mul\_en\_zu}} \), strictly speaking “nanny-goat-star”) was identified with the goddess Gula and regularly appears in rituals in which healing ingredients were exposed to the star’s influence at night, a standard process of Babylonian magic that the late Erica Reiner called “stellar irradiation” (Reiner 1995: 52–5). The Goat-star signifies the constellation Lyra, often more specifically Lyra \( \infty \) = Vega, the fifth brightest star in the sky, which is omnipresent as a circumpolar star in the northern sky but sets for increasingly long periods the further south the observer’s latitude.

Field-pest rituals and the Babylonian agricultural year

As observed in the first part of this study (George 1999: 292), the Sumerian Farmer’s Instructions specifically recommend that field-pest rituals be performed early in the growing season, when the first green shoots appear (Civil 1994: 30–1 I I. 64–6). From this it seems that in that early period, around the beginning of the second millennium when the Farmer’s Instructions were composed, routine performances of field-pest rituals were customarily taken as prophylactic measures at a set time of year. The first-millennium texts add more on the subject of when exorcists deployed their magic armoury against locusts and other pests.

The only extant text on which the beginning of a field-pest ritual survives is a Late Babylonian ritual (text No. 24 above), which merely specifies that the exorcist choose a propitious day on which to start. This suggests that the field-pest rituals could be conducted as and when needed, i.e. whenever any crop was attacked or threatened by pests, provided only that the ritual began on a suitable day. However, there is other evidence to consider. An event that punctuates some of the rituals published above is the rising of the Goat-star, which the exorcist must await before proceeding with the ritual (texts Nos. 8: 15, 20: 5', probably also 24 i 17). The Goat-star (\( \text{\textit{mul\_en\_zu}} \), strictly speaking “nanny-goat-star”) was identified with the goddess Gula and regularly appears in rituals in which healing ingredients were exposed to the star’s influence at night, a standard process of Babylonian magic that the late Erica Reiner called “stellar irradiation” (Reiner 1995: 52–5). The Goat-star signifies the constellation Lyra, often more specifically Lyra \( \infty \) = Vega, the fifth brightest star in the sky, which is omnipresent as a circumpolar star in the northern sky but sets for increasingly long periods the further south the observer’s latitude.

In latitudes where it is not a circumpolar star, Vega rises at the same time every solar year, and the Babylonians themselves very helpfully report this. According to the astronomical treatise \( \text{\textit{mul\_Apin I}} \) (ed. Hunger and Pingree 1989: 18–69), the Goat-star’s heliacal rising (i.e. first visibility above the eastern horizon at dawn) occurred on 15 Arah\( \text{s\_mna} \) (VIII) in the ideal Babylonian year (iii 4, iv 26). At dawn on 5 Abu (V), when the Bow-star rose (ii 44), the Goat-star was visible setting in the west for the first time in its cycle (iii 19). This period stretches roughly from early November to late July in the modern calendar. During the first half of the period, the event cited by the rituals, i.e. the Goat-star’s rising above the eastern horizon (\( \text{\textit{nap\_a\_hu}} \)), could be observed to take place progressively earlier every night, from just before dawn to just after dusk. Later in the period the coming of dusk would find it already risen, and Vega’s presence high in the sky after dusk is indeed a beacon of summer in the northern hemisphere. If the verb nap\( \_a\_hu \) is interpreted strictly, rituals that directed participants to await the Goat-star’s rise were only practicable during those months in the first part of the period, when it could still be observed crossing the eastern horizon nightly.

It is no accident that the time in its annual cycle when the Goat-star could be seen to rise in the east coincided with the months when the main field crops were growing. As tabulated by the late Blahoslav Hruška (1990: 108–9), the ancient Mesopotamian barley season extended from sowing in Arah\( \_s\_mna \) (VIII, October–November), to the emergence of green shoots in S\( \_b\_a\_t\_u \) (XI, January–February), to harvest in Ayyaru (II, April–May). The crop was especially vulnerable to pests while green, i.e. in S\( \_b\_a\_t\_u \), Addaru and Nisannu (XI–I, January–March). The Goat-star’s rising was a prominent nocturnal event at exactly this time. The timing of field-pest rituals by this very event suggests to us that the early practice documented in the Farmer’s Instructions, of conducting rituals against field pests as a matter of precaution when the green shoots of barley broke the surface, continued to be customary in much later periods.
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M. J. Geller’s copies of VAS XXIV 46 + 47, 48 + 51, 50 and 45 + 52 + 61

Appended hereto are M. J. Geller’s copies of rejoined fragments of two Old Babylonian collective tablets now in Berlin, which include Sumerian incantations against field pests, uh gu.7 a, among other incantations (Figs. 14–18). Joins made by George among the fragments of one tablet were reported in a review of VAS XXIV (George 1989: 379–81: VAS XXIV 46 + 47 (+) 48 + 51 (+) 50). Geller subsequently made further joins among fragments of another tablet (VAS XXIV 45 + 52 + 61), as now recorded in Olof Pedersen’s catalogue of the tablets found by Koldewey (Pedersen 2005: 24 no. 53). Regrettably other commitments prevented Geller from writing up the results for the present volume. See the comments of Cavigneaux and Al-Rawi 2002: 8–9, 42.

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\begin{quote}


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\end{quote}
Fig. 14 VAT 17131+17152+17397 obv. Drawn by M. J. Geller
Fig. 15  VAS XXIV 45 + 52 + 61 rev. Drawn by M. J. Geller
Fig. 16 VAT XXIV 46 + 47 (+) 48 + 51 obv. Drawn by M. J. Geller
VAT 17137+17231 (+) 17180+17404 rev.

Fig. 17  VAS XXIV 46+47 (+) 48+51 rev. Drawn by M. J. Geller
Fig. 18  VAT XXIV 50. Drawn by M. J. Geller