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# Cunéiformes

## Five glosses in six manuscripts of one therapeutic prescription. A case-study.

András Bácskay\*

### Introduction

In 2018 I held a presentation about my on-going research on glosses and embedded variants attested in the therapeutic text corpus on 64<sup>th</sup> Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale.<sup>1</sup> That presentation aimed at introducing the corpus and I demonstrated the main formal and functional characteristics of the glosses and embedded variants attested in therapeutic prescriptions. It can be clearly observed that the majority of references can be attested on cuneiform tablets from the Neo-Assyrian period, especially on medical tablets from Assurbanipal's library. The present presentation on 65<sup>th</sup> Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale deals with a single prescription that is preserved on six manuscripts, including a therapeutic series tablet from the Assurbanipal's library. Five manuscripts are cuneiform tablets from different Assyrian and Babylonian scientific libraries, which have been kept in tablet collections of four different museums, like the British Museum, the Vorderasiatisches Museum, the Metropolitan Museum and the Royal Museums of Art and History in Brussels.<sup>2</sup> The sixth manuscript is preserved on the so-called Ryder amulet which is a modern forgery produced by using an ancient cuneiform tablet.

### The manuscripts

The provenance and date of the five tablets and the modern forgery are heterogeneous. Only a single tablet originates from Babylonia, BAM 385, which was excavated by Robert Koldewey in the archaeological site N13 (N13:102) in Babylon, which is not an archive, but a collection of 260 tablets scattered in the Merkes area.<sup>3</sup> Based on its paleography, BAM 385 was identified by Köcher as Middle Babylonian.<sup>4</sup> The tablet includes therapeutic prescriptions and incantations against 'ghost' and 'hand of a ghost,' which have several parallels in the first millennium medical text corpus.<sup>5</sup>

The remaining cuneiform tablets and the modern forgery can be connected to Assyria. The single-column tablet BAM 323 originates from the Kisir-Ashur library (N4 73) and the multi-column tablet BAM 221 was also excavated in Ashur but its exact archaeological context is unknown.<sup>6</sup> Both tablets include incantations, rituals, and prescriptions against sufferings caused by the 'ghost' or 'hand of a ghost' and many of them are parallel to further therapeutic texts from the Kisir-Ashur library and Ashurbanipal's library.<sup>7</sup> The four-column tablet BAM 471 comes from Ashurbanipal's library. This tablet includes a collection of recipes against

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<sup>1</sup> The presentation and this paper are preliminary results of my on-going project intended to elaborate glosses and embedded variants attested in therapeutic prescriptions. This research was supported by the Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst (57378441) and the Central Funds Program of the Pázmány Péter Catholic University.

<sup>2</sup> I would like to express my sincere thanks to Sarah Graff (associate curator in the Department of Ancient Near Eastern Art of Metropolitan Museum) and Hendrik Hameeuw (researcher in the Antiquity Department of Royal Museums of Art and History) who kindly sent me photos of the relevant tablets.

<sup>3</sup> This collection consists of Neo-Babylonian material including some older tablets (Pedersén 2005, 218).

<sup>4</sup> Köcher BAM IV xxvii note to this line.

<sup>5</sup> For the list of parallels of BAM 385, see Scurlock 2005, 714.

<sup>6</sup> F. Köcher provided the field number (Ass. 9610) of BAM 221 but this number was not mentioned by Pedersén among the cuneiform tablets found in libraries in Ashur.

<sup>7</sup> For the parallels of BAM 221, see Scurlock 2006, 710-711. For the parallels of BAM 323, see Scurlock 2006, 712-713.

‘hand of a ghost’ and it might be the first or the sixth tablet of the therapeutic series Neck.<sup>8</sup> It is important to mention that the discussed prescription is not the single parallel on these manuscripts.

The provenance of the fragment CTMMA 2, 33 is not known, it was purchased by the Rogers Fund in 1956. It is a fragment of an originally larger Assyrian medical tablet with Neo-Assyrian script which was trimmed to assume a rectangular form in the modern period and in the present state contains three fragmentary prescriptions. Based on its similarity in form and text Lambert suggested that this fragment served as a cast for the Ryder amulet, the modern forgery kept in a private collection.<sup>9</sup>

### The prescription

The six manuscripts of the discussed prescription are as follows:

A = K 2477+ (BAM 471) iii 17'-20'

B = MRAH O.0195 (BAM 221) iii 14'-18'

C = VAT 8242 (BAM 323) rev. 75-78

D1 = MMA 56.81.52 (CTMMA 2, 33) 5-9.

D2 = Ryder amulet (BiOr 39 598-599) 4-8

a = VAT 17580 (BAM 385) iv 4-10<sup>10</sup>

### Transliteration

A<sup>iii</sup> 17' DIŠ NA ŠU.GEDIM.MA DAB-*su-ma* <sup>lú</sup>MU<sub>7</sub>.MU<sub>7</sub> ZI-šú *la i-le-'i* <sup>ú</sup>[...]

B<sup>iii</sup> 14'-15' DIŠ NA ŠU.GEDIM.MA DAB-*su-ma* <sup>lú</sup>MAŠ.MAŠ ZI-šú *la i-le-i* / <sup>ú</sup>LÁL

C<sup>rev. 75</sup> DIŠ NA ŠU.GEDIM.MA DAB-*su* <sup>lú</sup>MAŠ.MAŠ ZI-šú *la i-le-'i* <sup>ú</sup>LÁL

D1<sub>5</sub> [... *la-az-z*]i ša <sup>lú</sup>MAŠ.MAŠ ZI-šú *la i-le-'i* [...]

D2<sub>4</sub> [... *la-az-z*]i<sup>11</sup> ša <sup>lú</sup>MAŠ.MAŠ ZI-šú *la i-le-'i* [...]

a<sup>iv</sup> 4-5 [...s]u-ma <sup>lú</sup>MU<sub>7</sub>.MU<sub>7</sub> ZI-šú / [...] <sup>ú</sup>LÁL

A<sup>iii</sup> 18' <sup>ú</sup>*an-ki-nu-ti* <sup>ú</sup>DILI <sup>ú</sup>AŠ.TÁL.TÁL <sup>ú</sup>ḪUR.SAG SIG<sub>7</sub> GURUN <sup>giš</sup>MAŠ.ḪU[Š ...]

B<sup>iii</sup> 15'-16' <sup>ú</sup>*an-ki-nu-te* <sup>ú</sup>DILI <sup>ú</sup>AŠ.TÁL.TÁL <sup>ú</sup>ḪUR.SAG SIG<sub>7</sub> / GURUN <sup>giš</sup>MAŠ.ḪUŠ<sup>12</sup>

NUNUZ <sup>giš</sup>DÌḪ NUNUZ <sup>giš</sup>KIŠI<sub>16</sub>

C<sup>rev. 75-76</sup> <sup>ú</sup>*an-ki-nu-te* / <sup>ú</sup>AŠ.TÁL.TÁL <sup>ú</sup>ḪUR.SAG SIG<sub>7</sub> GURUN <sup>giš</sup>MAŠ.ḪUŠ GURUN <sup>giš</sup>DÌḪ

D1<sub>6-7</sub> [...] <sup>ú</sup>AŠ.TÁL.TÁL <sup>ú</sup>ḪUR.SAG<sup>sar!</sup> SIG<sub>7</sub><sup>13</sup> [...] / [...] GURUN<sup>?</sup> <sup>giš</sup>*kal-ba-ni*

D2<sub>5-6a</sub> [...] <sup>ú</sup>AŠ.TÁL.TÁL <sup>ú</sup>ḪUR.SAG<sup>[sar!]</sup> SIG<sub>7</sub><sup>14</sup> [...] / [...] GURUN<sup>?</sup> <sup>giš</sup>*kal-ba-ni*

<sup>8</sup> Suggested by Panayotov 2018, 99. For the parallels of BAM 471, see Scurlock 2006, 716-718.

<sup>9</sup> Farber also identified the Ryder amulet as a modern forgery which was produced by using an ancient cuneiform tablet (Farber 1982, 598).

<sup>10</sup> On Köcher's hand-copy this prescription has different line numbers (lines 4-12) because Köcher also gave line numbers to interlinear glosses.

<sup>11</sup> The hypothetical reconstruction of the incipit ([*ana* KIN ŠU.GEDIM.MA *la-az-z*]i ša <sup>lú</sup>MAŠ.MAŠ ZI-šú *la i-le-'i*) has been suggested by Farber (Farber 1982, 599 note to this line) who argued that the incipit is the same as BAM 469 rev. 11 (a similar or the same incipit can be found in BAM 470 obv. 24': [x x x] ŠU GEDIM.MA *la-[az-zi ša* <sup>lú</sup>MAŠ.MAŠ ZI-šú] *la i-le-'i*) edited by Scurlock 2006, 555 and BAM 9 rev. 14: [*a-n*]a KIN ŠU.GEDIM.MA ZAL.ZAL ša <sup>lú</sup>MAŠ.MAŠ ZI-šú NU ZU-u *ana* ZI-šú). Scurlock's transliteration followed Farber's reconstruction (Scurlock 2006, 605) but Lambert restored the incipit only partially in his edition of CTMMA 2, 33 (Lambert 2005, 172) suggesting maybe that he rejected this reconstruction. Cf. an alternate reading of this part of the incipit in BAM 469 rev. 11 in BabMed corpora (*ana* KIN ŠU GIDIM-*ma* *la uš+ši<sub>2</sub> ša* <sup>lú</sup>MAŠ.MAŠ ZI-šú *la i-[...]*) and its tentatively parallel BAM 470 obv. 24' ([...] ŠU GIDIM-*ma* *la uš+ši<sub>2</sub> ša* <sup>lú</sup>MAŠ.MAŠ ZI-šú *la i-[...]*) but I do not find this transliteration convincing.

<sup>12</sup> (Text: BIR).

<sup>13</sup> (Text: <sup>ú</sup>ḪUR.SAG SIG<sub>7</sub> SAR).

<sup>14</sup> (Text: <sup>ú</sup>ḪUR.SAG SIG<sub>7</sub> S[AR]).

- aiv 5-7 **úan-ki-nu-t[e] / [ú?DILI? úAŠ.TÁ]L.TÁL úHUR.SAG SI[G<sub>7</sub>] / [... g<sup>is</sup>M]AŠ.HUŠ  
NUNUZ g<sup>is</sup>DĪH : NUNUZ g<sup>is</sup>KIŠI<sub>16</sub>**
- Aiii 19' [úa]r-zal-la útara-muš úel-kul-la NUMUN g<sup>is</sup>ŠINIG úrLÚ'.[U<sub>18</sub>?LU?]
- Biii 16'-17' úár-zal-la útara-muš / úel-kul-la NUMUN g<sup>is</sup>bi-ni úLÚ.U<sub>18</sub>.LU
- C<sub>rev.</sub> 76-77 úár-zal-la / útara-muš úel-kul<sup>l</sup>-la NUMUN g<sup>is</sup>ŠINIG GÌR.PAD.DU LÚ.U<sub>18</sub>.LU
- D1<sub>7-8</sub> úár-zal-la útara-mu[š] [...] / [..... g<sup>is</sup>b]i<sup>l</sup>-ni x GÌR.PAD.DU NAM.LÚ.U<sub>18</sub>.LU
- D2<sub>6-7</sub> úár-zal-la útara-m[uš] [...] / [..... g<sup>is</sup>]bi-ni x GÌR.PAD.DU NAM.LÚ.U<sub>18</sub>.LU
- aiv 7-9 úár-zal-[la] / [útara]-muš úel-kul-la NUMUN g<sup>is</sup>b[i-ni] / úLÚ.U<sub>18</sub>.LU
- Aiii 20' **[1<sup>niš</sup> SÚ]D ina Ì : [ina Ì g<sup>is</sup>EREN ŠÉŠ ina KUŠ DÙ.DÙ<sup>pi</sup> ina GÚ-šú GAR<sup>an</sup>**
- Biii 17'-18' **1<sup>niš</sup> SÚD ina Ì : ina Ì g<sup>is</sup>EREN' ŠÉŠ<sup>as</sup> / ina KUŠ DÙ.DÙ<sup>pi</sup> ina GÚ-šú GAR<sup>an</sup>**
- C<sub>rev.</sub> 77-78 **1<sup>niš</sup> ina Ì / ŠÉŠ-su-ma ina KUŠ DÙ.DÙ ina GÚ-šú GAR<sup>an</sup> TI<sup>uf</sup>**
- D1<sub>8-9</sub> **TÉŠ.[BI] [...] / [...] ŠÉŠ<sup>?</sup>-s]u ina KUŠ DÙ.DÙ<sup>pi</sup> ina GÚ-šú x GAR<sup>a[n]</sup>**
- D2<sub>7-8</sub> **TÉŠ.[BI] [...] / [...] ŠÉŠ<sup>?</sup>-s]u ina KUŠ DÙ.DÙ<sup>pi</sup> ina GÚ-šú 'x' GAR<sup>a[n]</sup>**
- aiv 9-10 **1<sup>niš</sup> SÚD ina Ì : Ì g<sup>is</sup>[EREN?] Š[ÉŠ ...] / ina KUŠ : KUŠ MAŠ.DÀ DÙ.DÙ ina GÚ-šú G[AR ...]**

### Translation

If a man has been seized by the 'hand of the ghost' and the incantation priest is not able to release (him) (var. For a persistent affliction of the 'hand of the ghost' which the incantation priest is not able to remove): *ašqulālu* plant, *ankinūtu* plant, *ēdu* plant,<sup>15</sup> *ardadillu* plant, fresh *azupīru* plant, fruit of *kalbānu* tree, fruit of *baltu*-thorn (var. sprout of *baltu*-thorn) : sprout of *ašāgu*-thorn (var. sprouts of *ašāgu*-thorn), *arzallu* plant, *taramuš* plant, *elkulla* plant, tamarisk seed, *amīlānu* plant (var. human bone). You pound<sup>16</sup> (them) in oil : in cedar oil<sup>17</sup> rub him and wrap (them) in leather : leather of gazelle<sup>18</sup> place (it) around his neck (var. place (it) around his neck and he will recover.)

The modern edition of the prescription was published by Scurlock in 2006 and later in 2014, using five manuscripts.<sup>19</sup> The single missing manuscript in Scurlock's editions is the fragment from the CTMMA 2, 33 which was published by Lambert in 2005.<sup>20</sup> The discussed prescription provides a healing treatment against sufferings 'caused by the hand of ghost, which the incantation priest is not able to remove'. The treatment consists of two consecutive steps: an ointment made of various plants mixed in oil or cedar oil and a leather bag supposedly filled with the same drugs and applied on the patient's neck. Based on the Middle-Babylonian tablet, the text tradition of this prescription goes back to the second millennium and in the Neo-Assyrian period the prescription was incorporated into the therapeutic series but different versions of the text coexisted together within the Neo-Assyrian medical corpus. No manuscript from the Neo- or Late Babylonian period is known, but this, by no means indicates that this text was unknown in that period. It is important to note that manuscripts of the discussed prescription are not duplicates and several orthographical and textual differences can be detected. The text tradition will be more complicated if we take into account the glosses preserved on three manuscripts.

<sup>15</sup> Omitted in Ms.C and probably broken in Ms.D1 and Ms.D2.

<sup>16</sup> Omitted in Ms.C and probably broken in Ms.D1 and Ms.D2.

<sup>17</sup> Gloss in Ms.A Ms.B and Ms.a. Scurlock referred to the gloss as 'variant' in her transliteration ('variant: Ì g<sup>is</sup>ERIN') and her translation ('*erēnu*-cedar oil') of BAM 323 (Scurlock 2014, 696 and 700).

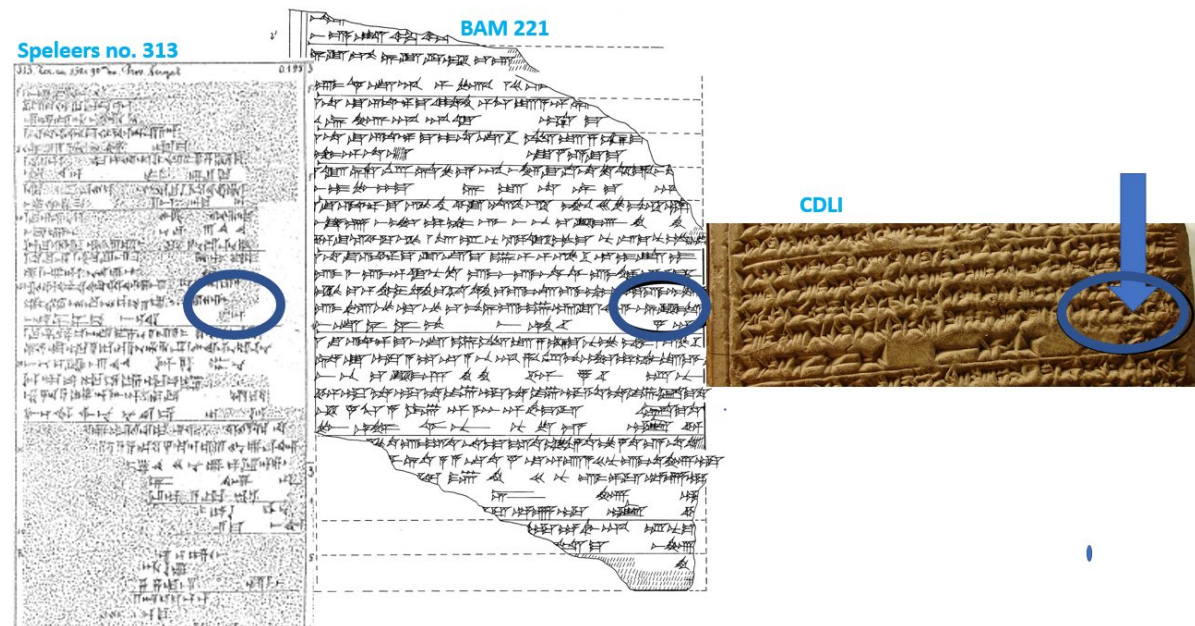
<sup>18</sup> Gloss in Ms.a.

<sup>19</sup> Scurlock 2006, 605-606, no. 289 and Scurlock 2014, 696 and 699-700) The German translation of the prescription in BAM 323 was recently published by Daniel Schwemer in TUAT (Schwemer 2010, 126).

<sup>20</sup> Lambert 2005, 172.

### The glosses

The MB BAM 385, and two multi-column NA tablets (BAM 471 and the BAM 221) contain five glosses altogether. Lines with glosses were written in bold in my transliteration. In the case of BAM 385 three glosses in three different lines can be attested. These glosses were already indicated on Köcher's hand-copy who provided them with separate line numbers suggesting that the glosses were written in blank lines. I do not have time now to discuss the problem of line numbering of glosses on various hand-copies of the BAM series but I would like to emphasize that interlinear glosses on further hand-copies in BAM were not always provided with separate line numbers.<sup>21</sup> The gloss on BAM 471 was already indicated on Thompson's (AMT 95, 2) and Köcher's hand-copies but the gloss on BAM 221 has a different story. The tablet was first published by Louis Speleers<sup>22</sup> but the relevant part of the tablet appears as fragmentary on Speleers's hand-copy which supposedly means that the salt crystals were not removed from the clay tablet at that time. Köcher published a new hand-copy of the tablet in 1964. Although Köcher did not mark the fragmentary condition on the relevant part of the text the gloss was not indicated on his hand-copy. Notably, in the prologue of the relevant volume of BAM Köcher mentioned that for making the hand-copy of BAM 221 he used photos made by Georges Dossin, which may suggest that glosses were not visible on Dossin's photos. All modern editions followed Köcher's hand-copy, and therefore this gloss did not appear before in any transliteration or translation of the tablet. Recently, a new photo of BAM 221 was uploaded on CDLI (P285308), with the gloss recognisable on it. I present the two hand-copies and CDLI photo below.



Let us take a closer look at the five glosses which were written in three different passages of the text. The first one can be found in the list of drugs, the second relates to the liquid used for the ointment and the third is connected to the material of the amulet bag. The table below shows the relevant part of the six manuscripts.

<sup>21</sup> For example, in the case of lines BAM 216 rev. 62' none of the interlinear glosses has a separate line number. Cf. in its first publication (KAR 182) Ebeling gave a line number and wrote next to the gloss 'kleinere Schrift'). Similarly, the gloss written in lines BAM 30 obv. 21' or BAM 403 obv. 9, didn't have separate line numbers on Köcher's hand-copy.

<sup>22</sup> Speleers 1925 no. 313 plate 38.

	BAM 385	BAM 221	BAM 471	BAM 323	CTMMA 2, 33	Ryder amulet
drug	<sup>gis</sup> DĪḪ : NUNUZ <sup>gis</sup> KIŠI <sub>16</sub>	<sup>gis</sup> DĪḪ NUNUZ <sup>gis</sup> KIŠI <sub>16</sub>	[...]	GURUN <sup>gis</sup> DĪḪ	[...]	[...]
liquid	<i>ina</i> Ī : Ī <sup>gis</sup> [EREN?]	<i>ina</i> Ī : <i>ina</i> Ī <sup>gis</sup> EREN xx?	<i>ina</i> Ī [: <i>ina</i> Ī <sup>gis</sup> EREN	<i>ina</i> Ī	[...]	[...]
material of the amulet bag	<i>ina</i> KUŠ : KUŠ MAŠ.DÀ DÙ.DÙ	<i>ina</i> KUŠ DÙ.DÙ- <i>pí</i>	<i>ina</i> KUŠ DÙ. DÙ- <i>pí</i>	<i>ina</i> KUŠ DÙ.DÙ	<i>ina</i> KUŠ DÙ.DÙ- <i>pí</i>	<i>ina</i> KUŠ DÙ.DÙ- <i>pí</i>

It can be observed that only a single manuscript includes three glosses and another two manuscripts contain only one gloss. On the other hand, the oil which served as a liquid to the ointment has glosses in all of the three manuscripts. The BAM 323 does not include any glosses on the other hand the relevant parts of the text are broken in CTMMA 2, 33 and in the Ryder amulet.

In the next part of this paper, I would like to examine the formal, the functional and the semantical aspects of the glosses. Concerning the formal aspect, the glosses in all manuscripts belong to the type of interlinear glosses introduced by *Glossenkeil*. The glosses were written in subscript which is the most widely attested type in our corpus. In the investigated manuscripts the glosses were written close to the glossed terms and they never anticipated the glossed terms. In the case of the discussed glosses, based on the parallels we can decide the formal position easily but I would like to emphasize that, in absence of any parallels, the position of the interlinear glosses cannot always be safely ascertained, therefore in several prescriptions we cannot be sure that the gloss was written in subscript or superscript. For example, in the first column of the therapeutic series tablet BAM 480+ the interlinear gloss between the lines ii 61 and 62 was interpreted by Martin Worthington as a superscript gloss related to the glossed term in line 62: *ina* U<sub>4</sub>-3-KÁM : U<sub>4</sub>-5-KÁM LÁL = ‘you bind (him) for three days (gloss) five days’.<sup>23</sup> Unfortunately, parallels to this prescription are not known, but based on the frequency of the subscript gloss in the corpus the possibility cannot be excluded that the gloss was written in subscript related to the similar terms in line 61: *ina* U<sub>4</sub>-15-KÁM : U<sub>4</sub>-5-KÁM LÁL = ‘you bind (him) for fifteen days (gloss) five days’. I would like to stress that one of the most relevant problems is the correct identification of the position of the interlinear glosses because the question of their position has a close connection with their interpretation and their semantical function.

According to the functional typology of Krecher, the discussed glosses can be categorized as ‘variant glosses’ which present textual variants related to the glossed text.<sup>24</sup> Following the categorisation of Eckart Frahm the variant glosses introduced by *Glossenkeil* indicate an alternate text variant originated from the different versions of the same text.<sup>25</sup> Following this logic at least 6 text variants can be individualized but it may also be possible that the three glosses in BAM 385 may represent three different text variants. Moreover, if we take into consideration the textual differences between the six manuscripts, the total number of the text variants is eight. Concerning the medical incipit of the manuscripts, two partially different versions can be observed. The medical incipit ‘If a man has been seized by the ‘hand of the ghost’ and the incantation priest is not able to release (him)’ can be found just in three manuscripts (BAM 471, BAM 221, BAM 323). Another version of the incipit is preserved on CTMMA 2, 33 and the Ryder amulet, but both of them are fragmentary and their reconstruction made by Farber and later Scurlock seems quite hypothetical to me. The

<sup>23</sup> Worthington 2005, 10 and 19.

<sup>24</sup> Krecher 1957-1971.

<sup>25</sup> Frahm 2011, 16.

medical incipit on BAM 385 is also fragmentary, but the preserved part of the text follows the first version. In the list of drugs, three sub-types of differences can be detected among the manuscripts. As usual in therapeutic texts, the different parts of the same plant were used in different text variants. In the discussed prescription the ‘sprout of *baltu*-thorn’ occurs at least in BAM 385, BAM 221 versus the ‘fruit of *baltu*-thorn’ at least in BAM 323. It does not appear in BAM 471, CTMMA 2, 33 and the Ryder amulet but this part of the text is broken in these texts. It is also well attested that sometimes the text variant omits drugs or provides an alternate drug. In the discussed prescription the ‘sprouts of *ašāgu*-thorn’ and the ‘*ēdu* plant’ were omitted for certain in BAM 323 and probably in CTMMA 2, 33 and in the Ryder amulet. The ingredient ‘sprout of *ašāgu*-thorn’ was written on BAM 385 in gloss which can also refer to a text variant without this plant. On the other hand, we also find an example for an alternate drug: the ‘*amīlānu* plant’ attested in BAM 385, BAM 471, BAM 221 was replaced by the ‘human bone’ in BAM 323, CTMMA 2, 33 and Ryder amulet. The glosses related to oil in three manuscripts (BAM 385, BAM 471, BAM 221) may also represent text variants. Two of them (BAM 471 and BAM 221) definitely mention ‘cedar oil’ and the fragmentary BAM 385 seemingly also refers to this type of oil. Finally, the gloss related to the ingredient of the amulet bag in BAM 385 also indicates an alternate text variant.

In the last part of this paper, I would like to discuss the semantic aspect of these glosses. The aim of this investigation is to identify the semantic connections between the gloss and its related glossed term. The study of the semantic connection between gloss and glossed term is crucial in answering the question whether the glosses linked to various drugs can be interpreted as an alternate text variant or whether they represent a substitute healing material which could probably be based on differing medical practice or various symbolic or lexicographical correlations between the gloss and the glossed term. Let us take the gloss ‘sprout of *ašāgu*-thorn’ connected to the term ‘sprout of *baltu*-thorn’ in BAM 385. As we have seen in the table above, this plant name is written as a part of the normal text in another manuscript which raises the possibility that the gloss represents a simple text variant. An alternate interpretation was suggested by Köcher who proposed that the gloss is a correction made by the scribe after checking the text. The so-called ‘correction glosses’ provide corrections or complementation of the relevant part of the text which was perhaps damaged or maybe incorrect in the original text but can be completed or corrected by its parallels. Besides the discussed prescription I provide two further references below.

## BAM 579 iv 15

1/5 GÍN <sup>šim</sup>GAM.MA ½ GÍN <sup>ú</sup>KUR.KUR 3 GÍN <sup>šim</sup>ŠE.LI : 2 GÍN <sup>ú</sup>ḪAR.ḪAR 2 GÍN <sup>šim</sup>GIG

## BAM 54 obv. 6-7

4 GÍN <sup>šim</sup>GAM.MA ½ GÍN <sup>ú</sup>KUR.KUR 2 GÍN <sup>šim</sup>ŠE.LI 2 GÍN <sup>ú</sup>ḪAR.ḪAR / ‘2’ GÍN <sup>šim</sup>GIG  
... one-fifth (var. four) shekel of *šumlalû* aromatic, half shekel of *kukru* plant, 3 (var. 2) shekels of *kikkirānu* aromatic : 2 shekels of *ḥašû* plant 2 shekels of *kanaktu* aromatic ...

## BAM 216 rev. 63’

[...] NAGA NUMUN <sup>giš</sup>MA.NU <sup>ú</sup>ka-zal-lum : NUMUN <sup>ú</sup>EME.UR.GI7 <sup>ú</sup>ḪAR.LUM.BA.ŠIR

## BAM 470 obv. 14’-15’

[...] NAGA NUMUN <sup>giš</sup>MA.NU / [...] <sup>ú</sup>EME.UR.GI7 [ <sup>ú</sup>Ḫ]AR.LUM.BA.ŠIR

... seed of *ēru*-tree, *kazallu*-plant : seed of “dog’s-tongue”-plant, *ḥarmunu*-plant ...

We can observe the same characteristics in each reference above: the text of the gloss occurs in the same place and is written with normal size signs in its parallel text. I would like to explain the phenomenon to the effect that the gloss is a correction made by the scribe who copied and checked the text of the prescription and inserted the missing part of the text into

it.<sup>26</sup> We also have to stress that the mentioned examples are more likely exceptions and the majority of the glosses attested in therapeutic texts cannot be identified in their parallels.

The next interpreted gloss is the ‘cedar oil’ which is linked to the term ‘oil’ in three manuscripts. First of all, I would like to say that several types of liquids have glosses including water, milk or animal urine, but most references are connected to various types of oil. In the discussed prescription the gloss provides a semantic variant of the liquid used for ointment. The semantical connection between oil and cedar oil is probably based on the interchangeability of the two types of oil in Mesopotamian medical praxis but in another therapeutic text, the cedar oil appears as an alternate for the ghee (BAM 494 ii 63: *ina Ì<sup>giš</sup>e-re-ni*: *ina Ì.NUN*). Unfortunately, further references for the compatibility of cedar oil and oil in therapeutic text corpus are not known to me.

The last discussed gloss is the ‘leather of gazelle’ related to the general term ‘(animal) leather’. The gloss provides a semantic variant of the material of an amulet bag. In this case, the gloss and the glossed term represent the same material (i.e. animal leather). In this case, the semantical connection between the gloss and glossed term is twofold: the gloss could be a longer version of the same term or it may be a correction or interpretation of the scribe. I provide another reference for the first option. In this reference the gloss could be an abbreviated form of the glossed term: *ina KUŠ ANŠE EDIN* : ‘KUŠ’ EDIN (BAM 403 Obv. 9). Notable, the term ‘leather of gazelle’ is also known as a drug (for example BAM 216 rev. 52 // BAM 469 obv. 44’ // AMT 33, 3 obv. 13 // BAM 197 rev. 33 // BAM 220 iii 2’ // AMT 84, 2 8’) but I do not know any further references for the interchangeability of ‘leather’ and ‘leather of gazelle’.

### Conclusions

As a summary, I would like to stress that writing glosses in the therapeutic prescriptions can be associated with the copying and editorial activity of the ancient scholars and scribes and the various functional types of the glosses can be connected to these scientific activities. Although I do not know of any further Middle-Babylonian or Middle-Assyrian therapeutic prescriptions that contain glosses, the presented Neo-Assyrian parallels with the same glosses raise the opportunity that one part of the glosses preserved on Neo-Assyrian therapeutic tablets has earlier forerunners. Moreover, the same gloss on tablets from Nineveh (*ina Ì<sup>giš</sup>EREN* BAM 471 iii 20’) and from Aššur (*ina Ì<sup>giš</sup>EREN x? x?’* BAM 221 iii 17’) is probably based on the same original tablets copied by Assyrian scholars in both libraries which may have their origins in Babylonia.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> It is important to note that the tablet which includes the prescription with the gloss and the tablet which preserved the parallel text come from different libraries in each mentioned example. A similar type of glosses was suggested by Schuster-Brandis (Schuster-Brandis 2008, note 390 to line iv 10).

<sup>27</sup> In her recent article Jeanette Fincke identified 78 tablets in Ashurbanipal’s library which were written in Babylonian ductus and contain ‘medical and magical treatments of sick people’ (Fincke 2017, 379). For the import of the Babylonian scholarly texts and Babylonian scholars into Nineveh, see recently Fincke 2017, 381-384 with references to the earlier literature.



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