

## Fragments of the Nineveh Medical Composition IGI join UGU

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The year 2015 saw a French translation and commentary of the Nineveh medical composition on Sick Eyes (IGI). Notably, this work was prepared by the practicing Parisian ophthalmologist Annia Attia, and not by a conventional cuneiformist. Importantly, Attia has mastered cuneiform medical texts, and has worked on the publication for years (Attia 2015: 1).

Attia's work incrementally advances our understandings not only of Cuneiform Medicine, but also of Ancient Medicine, since it seriously questions the retrospective diagnosis of ancient terms (Attia 2015: 4). Retrospective diagnosis concerning diseases of the eye is deeply rooted in the works of such prominent scholars as Stol 1989, Fincke 2000 and Scurlock and Anderson 2005 (Attia 2015: 1), and Scurlock 2014. But, as Attia has stressed the ancient terms are too vague for a modern doctor, and more importantly the ancient terms suggest a too wide range of diagnosis. In other words, modern and ancient taxonomies are different. Once a scholar has realized this, there is no need to struggle for an exact retrospective diagnosis or exact identification of an ancient term, since such an approach can be misleading. The same applies in large extent to drug's names (Besnier et al. 2015: esp. 120f.). We can summarize the difference in ancient and modern taxonomies as following: *an ancient term could be explained by many modern terms, but never identified as the only one.*

Attia states that the IGI composition is the “la troisième sous-série du grand traité thérapeutique compilé sous Assurbanipal trouvé dans la bibliothèque de ce roi à Ninive” (Attia 2015: 2). But, we do not have a prove for this, since there is no relevant catch line from Nineveh. Also, the Ashur Medical Catalogue testifies medical compositions quite similar to the known Nineveh compositions, and IGI is the second medical composition on the Ashur Medical Catalogue (Panayotov, forthcoming). This arrangement was suspected by Köcher (1980: ix note 10), and does not come as a surprise, since IGI and UGU<sup>1</sup> share many common topics, and sick eyes' treatments are an important part of UGU 1<sup>2</sup>, especially in the first column, and occasionally of UGU 2<sup>3</sup>. This similarity led to a misplacement of UGU fragments into IGI.

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<sup>1</sup> The UGU medical composition deals with sick and feverish head. I stress that with UGU, I designate only the first Medical composition from Nineveh: BAM 480 [tablet 1] with a catch-line to BAM 482 [tablet 2], which has a catch-line to AMT 102-105, 1 [tablet 3] (the eclectic copy of AMT 102-105 is built up from many duplicates, belonging to different manuscripts), which has a catch-line, presumably leading to CT 23, 50 [tablet 4], which has a catch-line to the not yet certain fifth tablet [could it be BAM 494?]. All together there are five tablets in the first series (see already CT 23, p. 5). Furthermore, with the term UGU, I do not refer to the whole Nineveh medical encyclopedia (from head to toe), or to later traditions from Babylon, Uruk or Sippar.

<sup>2</sup> BAM 480 is edited by Worthington 2005 with parallels, and reedited alone by Scurlock 2014: 306ff.

<sup>3</sup> BAM 482 is edited with parallels by Attia and Buisson 2003, 2007.

Let us take a look at the beginning of IGI tablet one. It has been proposed that K 10428(BAM 488) + K 16451(AMT 3/4), and presumably also K 14698<sup>4</sup> might belong to K 2573+(BAM 510) (Geller 1984: 293; Attia and Buisson 2007: 48; Attia 2015: 5). The script, the ductus, the horizontal dividing lines, the vertical dividing rulings (both done with twisted thread), all resemble those of BAM 510. Note, however, that K 10428(BAM 488) shows round holes into the middle dividing ruling. On the contrary BAM 510 does not show round holes there. Furthermore, the phraseology of K 10428(BAM 488) + 16451(AMT 3/4) fits perfectly the eye disease context. Therefore, Attia included the fragment K 10428(BAM 488) + 16451(AMT 3/4) on p. 6: §a-g and p. 11f.: §h-n. But, the phraseology of K 10428(BAM 488) + 16451(AMT 3/4) fits also the context of the Nineveh UGU, and in fact, the fragment, K 10428(BAM 488) + K 16451(AMT 3/4) joins K 2354+(BAM 480), see pic. 1.<sup>5</sup> Thus, the fragment fills more text into the middle parts of K 2354+ i and ii.



Pic. 1 = K 2354+(BAM 480) ... + K 10428(BAM 488) + K 16451(AMT 3/4)

<sup>4</sup> K 14698 does not belong to K 10428 (BAM 488) + K 16451 [AMT 3/4], but rather parallels UGU 3, see K 4023 iii 20ff.' (eclectic copy on AMT 102-105, CDLI P395359), Thompson 1937: 32, and add BAM 486 iii 6ff.'. Additional parallels of the incantation én íd-da-ta (used alone without én ur-sag<sup>d</sup>asal-lú-hi) are the Late Babylonian tablets BAM 386 iii 7ff.', and SPTU 4 129 vi 30ff.'

<sup>5</sup> There is no need of a copy from good preserved Nineveh fragments, but photos. For the sake of convenience, relevant photos will be uploaded on the author's Academia webpage.

*First Column*

- 28 [.....] you knead (it), ditto (=he should recover).  
 28 [.....] *talâš ašar šanîmma*<sup>6</sup>  
 i 28 [.....] SI]LA<sub>11</sub>-aš 'KIMIN'
- 

- 29 You pound *kalgukku*-red paste [.....], (and) daub (his eyes).  
 29 *kalgukku* [.....] *tasâk teqqi*  
 i 29 <sup>im</sup>KA[L.GUG.....] SÚ]D<sup>!</sup> *te-qí*
- 

- 30 [You dry<sup>7</sup>] one third litre of fig leaf(s) [.....] you knead (them) in the sap of a  
*kasû*-plant,  
 30 *šuššān qa arti titti* [..... *tubbal*<sup>7</sup> .....] *ina mē kasî talâš*  
 i 30 1/3 SÌLA PA <sup>giš</sup>PÈ[Š<sup>7</sup> .... HÁD.A? ..... *in]a A GAZI*<sup>sar</sup> SILA<sub>11</sub>-aš
- 31 You again dry, crush [(and) sift ... you shave (his head)], you bandage (his head)  
 and ditto (= and daub his eyes).  
 31 *itârma tubbal tahaššal* [*tanappi* ..... *tugallab*] *tašammidma ašar šanîmma*  
 i 31 GUR-ma HÁD.A G[AZ SIM ..... SAR-a]b LAL-ma KIMIN
- 

- 32 [You ...] one third litre of *būšānu*-plant, one third litre of x [.....] and ditto  
 (= and daub his eyes).  
 32 *šuššān qa būšānu šuššān qa x* [.....] -ma ašar šanîmma  
 i 32 1/3 SÌLA <sup>ú</sup>HAB 1/3 SÌLA x [.....]-ma KIMIN'
- 

- 33 [You ...] horned *uhūlu*-alkali, [.....] you daub (his eyes).

<sup>6</sup> In accordance with Köcher's suggestion (1971: xxxii, BAM 417), modified without argumentation by Böck 2003: 170 etc., as *ašar šanîm*.

<sup>7</sup> It is possible also to read PA <sup>giš</sup>MA.NU for *arti ēri* 'leaf(s) of ēru-tree'.

- 33      *uhūla qarnānâ* [.....] *teqqi*  
 i 33      NAGA.S[I ..... *t]e-<sup>q</sup>i-*
- 

- 34      [You ...] one third [.....] and ditto.  
 34      *šuššān* [.....] *ašar šanîmma*  
 i 34      1[/3 .....] x *'KIMIN'*
- 

- 35      [.....] you daub (his eyes).  
 35      [.....] *teqqi<sup>?</sup>*  
 i 35      [.....] *te-q]i*  
  
 i 36      [.....] x  
  
 i 37      [.....] x  
  
 i 38      completely broken  
  
 i 39      completely broken

- 40      [.....] you pound (and) daub (his eyes).  
 40      [.....] *tasâk teqqi*  
 i 40      [.....] *'SÚD' te-[qi]*
- 

*Second Column*

- 27      ... [.....] you pound [...] and heat (it) into a copper *tangussu*-kettle.  
 [You ...] his head [...].  
 27      ... [.....] *tasâk ina tangussi tubahhar qaqqassu* [.....]  
 ii 27      x [.....] S]ÚD *ina uruduŠEN.TUR tu-ba-har SAG.DU-su* [.....]
-

- 28 [.....] you boil [...] ... (and) ghee over charcoal [.....]  
 28 [.....] ... *himēta ina pēmti tušabšal* [.....]  
 ii 28 [.....] x Ì.NUN.NA *ina NE<sup>8</sup> ŠEG<sub>6</sub>-šal* [.....]
- 

- 29 You boil [...] *kukru*-aromatic [...] *ballukku*-aromatic, myrrh, ‘mud beer’ (and) ghee over charcoal (and) [...].  
 29 [...] *kukra* [...] *ballukka murra šikar tīdi himēta ina pēmti tušabšal* [.....]  
 ii 29 [... ſimGÚ]R. ḡGÚR ḿ[im/ú ... ſ]imMUG ḿsimSES KAŠ ti-ti Ì.NUN.NA *ina NE ŠEG<sub>6</sub>-š[al<sup>?</sup> ...]*
- 

- 30 <sup>31</sup>*You mix together* <sup>30</sup>*one* ‘bread’-capacity gypsum, [*multi-coloured*?] horned *uhūlu*-alkali, *kibrītu*-sulphur, human bone, bone, ... [...],  
 30 *ištēn<sup>?</sup> akal gaṣṣa uhūla qarnānā* [*barma<sup>?</sup>*] *kibrīt(a)* *eṣemti amēlūti eṣemta* ...  
 ii 30 <sup>‘1?</sup> NINDA<sup>?</sup> IM.BABBAR NA[GA.SI IN.GÙN<sup>?</sup> ki]b-rit<sup>9</sup> GÌR.PAD.DU<sup>?</sup>  
 LÚ.U<sub>18</sub>.LU GÌR.PAD.DU <sup>‘kib</sup> <sup>10</sup>-r[*it/tú<sup>?</sup>* ...]
- 31 naphtha (and) fish oil. [(...) *You fumigate*?] his head over acacia charcoal (with the mixture).  
 31 *napṭa šaman nūni ištēniš taballal* [...] *ina pēmti ašāgi qaqqassu* [*tuqattar*?]  
 ii 31 Ì.HUL Ì KU<sub>6</sub> 1-niš H[E<sup>?</sup>.HE (...) i]na NE <sup>giš</sup>KIŠI<sub>16</sub> SAG.DU-su [*tu-qat-tar*?]
- 

<sup>8</sup> See the discussion in Farber: 2014: 207.

<sup>9</sup> The spelling *kib-rit* will be interpreted as an accusative and not as a status constructus, see Worthington 2005: 9: 74'; 17: 74', and Scurlock 2014: 310: 10; 322; for an interpretation of this spelling as an accusative see also Farber 2014: II 33. See also K 2354+(BAM 480) ii 10 [DIŠ NA<sup>?</sup> UG]U<sup>?-šú</sup> KÚM.KUM-em IM.BABBAR NAGA.SI IN.GÙN *kib-rit* GÌR.PAD.DA NAGA.SI Ì.HUL Ì.KU<sub>6</sub>. Accordingly, we might tentatively restore IN.GÙN in the break after NAGA.SI. On the contrary, Worthington 2005: 9: 74', and Scurlock 2014: 310: 10 read NAGA.SI IN.DAR.

<sup>10</sup> ANŠE<sup>?</sup> in Worthington 2005: 10: 94' and Scurlock 2014: 312: 30 is rather uncertain since the sign begins with two horizontal wedges [b2], presumably followed by two *Winkelhaken*'s [c2], and ending on two verticals above each other [a2]. The parameters of the sign would fit the sign KIB [a2b2c2], and not ANŠE. In addition, the shape of the sign is the same as *kib-rit* on K 2354+(BAM 480) ii 10. For the ‘parameters’ see Gottstein and Panayotov 2015.

- 32 Incantation: may the temple (of the head) restore his temple (to health), may the eye  
[restore] his eye (to health)!

- ii 32            én sag-ki-ni sag-[ki hé-en-gi-g]i i-NE<sup>11</sup>-ni i-NE hé-e[n .....?]  
 (A)<sup>12</sup> iii 11'    én sag-ki-ni sag-ki 'hé-en-gi<sub>4</sub>'-gi<sub>4</sub> i-NE-ni i-NE hé-en-g[i<sub>4</sub>?-gi<sub>4</sub>?]  
 (B) ii 1'        'én sag'-k[i .....]

- 33 May the middle (of the head) restore his middle (to health)!

- (A) iii 12' mu-ru-ub-bi-ni mu-ru-u[b-bi] b-é-en-gi<sup>1</sup> [gi<sup>2</sup>]

- (B) ii 2'      'mu'-ru-ub-bi-'ni' m[u- .....]

- 34 Let he be radiant; let he be radiant! [Incantation spell.]

- ii 34 hé-en-da-a-na-m[ul-la hé-en-d]a-<sup>ˊ</sup>a-na<sup>ˊ</sup>-mul-la [(tu<sub>6.</sub>)en]

- (A) iii 12'      hé-bi-da-a-<sup>na</sup>-mul-la hé-en-d[a? .....]

- 35 Incantation (for the case): ..... his [*head?*] stings him [...]

- 35      *ka 'inimma* [.....] *uzaggassu* [...]

- ii 35 KA.JNIM.MA [ ..... ] x-šú-ú-zaa-qat-[su ...]

- 36 Its ritual: you parch snake skin [...] you recite [...] (and) [you ..... his] cranium?

- 36      *kidkidbû qulénti sérî turrar* [.....] *tamannu muhha?* [...]

<sup>11</sup> An Emesal reading i-bí has no place here, thus i-NE is a pun of the Akkadian *īnu* ‘eye’.

<sup>12</sup> The round brackets around the Manuscript's siglum designate that the text is a parallel, and no duplicate.

ii 36 KÌD.KÌD.BI BAR MUŠ *tur-á[r .....*] x ŠID-*nu* UGU [...]

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The following lines have parallels in BAM 489+, as noted by Attia 2015: p. 12, §m. There are, however new joins on CDLI P393804, see also Attia and Buisson 2007: 48. BAM 489 + = C (The exact placement of the fragmentary lines is uncertain).

37 Incantation: the pure ‘divine order’ is distant [...] ... the pure ‘divine order’ is a [...],

ii 37 ÉN me kù-ga ba-da-r[a .....] x-uh me kù-ga [...]

(C) i' 9f.' ÉN me kù-ga ba-d[a- .....] / me kù-ga iz-zi

38 the ‘divine order’ is removed, the ‘divine order’ is ..., [...] *angry* [...]. Restore (to health)  
[Incantation spell.]

ii 38 me zi-zi<sup>13</sup> me še-<sup>14</sup> ra<sup>14</sup> š[e? .....]-h]a' gi<sub>4</sub>-gi<sub>4</sub> [(tu<sub>6</sub>.)en]

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(C) i' 10f.' [.....] / hu-luh-ha<sup>15</sup> [.....]

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39 Incantation: his mouth? is like a mouth? ... [.....] *like* his mouth ... [...]

39 šiptu pûšu kîma pî lâ [.....] kî]ma pîšu ... [...]

ii 39 ÉN KA-šu GIN<sub>7</sub> KA LA [.....] GI]N<sub>7</sub><sup>2</sup> KA-šú NE x [...] x [...]

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(C) i' 12' ÉN KA-šu GIN<sub>7</sub> K[A .....]<sup>16</sup>

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...

<sup>13</sup> If the parallels are rightly placed there is a word play between iz-zi and zi-zi.

<sup>14</sup> Pace the copy of BAM 488, there is a clear RA on the tablet. Also, še-ra might stay for še-ri.

<sup>15</sup> Note that hu-luh-ha appears together with iz-zi ‘wave’ (lexical section in CAD A/1, under *agû* B, and CAD G under *galtu* ‘angry’), iz-zi is also mentioned in the previous line.

<sup>16</sup> Similar rubric as on C might have also been preserved on UGU 1.

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Abbreviations:

<http://www.rla.badw.de/>

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