

**‘You write (this incantation) on a cylindrical amulet, place (it) around his neck
and he will get well!’
Clay Cylindrical Amulets Inscribed with Incantations, Tools for Medical-Magical Rituals.**

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ABSTRACT

Our study discusses a specific group of Mesopotamian medical-magical amulets. These are cylindrical clay objects inscribed with incantations that often mention the names of their owners. Our paper aims to collect all such objects to classify and analyse them based on their origins and archaeological contexts and the texts written on them; furthermore, we discuss medical-magical rituals mentioning the use of these amulets. These texts can be divided into three groups: Ḫulbazizi incantations, Lamaštu and Ḫulbazizi incantations, and incantations against fever.

Keywords: amulet, cylinder seal, Ḫulbazizi, Incantation, Kalḫu (Nimrud), Lamaštu, Nineveh, Ninurta, Nippur, ritual, Sirius, Ugarit.

1. INTRODUCTION

Based on the cuneiform texts describing Mesopotamian medical-magical rituals, we can identify the use of three different types of amulets with similar functions.¹ The first group consists of chain amulets (*takṣīru* or *ṭurru*) containing strings of beads made of various stones and metals, while the second group includes leather bags (*mēlu*) hung round the neck, whose contents are mainly plants, and in smaller quantities animal and inorganic materials. The third group consists of cylindrical amulets made of clay (^{na4}KIŠIB), which are the focus of this paper.² The preparation and application of the three types of amulets were part of the activity

* The present paper was developed within the framework of the MTA–ELTE Momentum Neo-Assyrian and Neo-Babylonian Cylinder Seals and Divine World Research Group, Budapest (LP2020-6) research project. Among the objects included here, A. Bácskay directly studied six cylindrical clay amulets (**Nimrud 1 and 3, Nineveh 1 and 3–4**) (Table 1, Figure 1) and the flask-shaped chalcedony amulet pendant BM 89904 (Table 2: 4), as well as ritual tablets (BM 43359+ and BM 49141+ see subsection 3.3.3, BM 35512 see subsection 3.3.2, BM 55516+ see subsection 3.3.1) in the British Museum (April 2022). Z. Niederreiter examined cylinder seal BLMJ 2844 – LBAF 428 (Table 2: 6 and Figure 3) in the Bible Lands Museum Jerusalem (August 2022). In connection with the present study, A. Bácskay gave a lecture entitled ‘Medical-magical cylinder amulets’ at the 66th Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale (July 2022). Abbreviations are those of the *Reallexikon der Assyriologie*. We would like to express our sincere thanks to Irving L. Finkel (British Museum), Markham J. Geller (University College London), Cale Johnson (Freie Universität Berlin) and Ulrike Steinert (Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz) for their suggestions on this paper. Needless to say, we bear responsibility for any remaining errors.

¹ Besides the three groups mentioned above, further amulets inscribed with incantations can be connected to medical-magical rituals. These are amulet-shaped clay tablets (Heeßel 2014; Panayotov 2018) as well as inscribed stone amulets (Bácskay/Niederreiter 2023); the most significant group are Lamaštu amulets, on the inscribed versions of which incantations were usually written to ward off the demon’s attack or to protect against the diseases caused by it (Wiggermann 2000a; Götting 2011; Götting 2018).

² For the amulet stones, see Schuster-Brandis 2008.

The leather bags and the cylindrical clay amulets have not yet been published comprehensively but two recent papers mention them (Berlejung 2015: 108-110 and Steinert 2020: 51-52). Certain diseases addressed in rituals that mention the use of amulets are discussed in the following publications:

- Fincke 2000, p. 304-306 (amulets against eye diseases);
- Scurlock 2006, p. 59-62 (amulets against diseases caused by the ghosts of dead);
- Bácskay 2018a, p. 115-141 (amulets against fever);
- Abusch/Schwemer/Luukko/van Buylaere 2020, p. 129-133 (amulets against harmful spells).

of the incantation priests performing healing and apotropaic rituals.³ During the procedures, incantations selected by these specialists reinforced the healing effect of the amulets. In the rituals treating the same disease, the three types of procedures associated with the respective amulets can be mentioned consecutively. We can observe obvious similarities between the three groups of objects (chain amulets, poultices, and cylindrical clay amulets), and due to their shared function, these objects could have complemented each other. However, it is important to emphasize that only the cylindrical clay amulets were inscribed with incantations.⁴

2.1. CYLINDRICAL AMULETS MADE OF CLAY

The amulets studied here are of primary importance because the incantations written on them can be linked to the medical-magical rituals, and in this way we can gain insight into the context in which these objects were used.

Incantation formula. ‘If a man has been seized by heat.’ You write (this incantation) on a cylindrical amulet, place (it) around his neck and [he will get well].

Healing ritual against fever from a Late Babylonian medical tablet (BM 35512 rev. 18).⁵

Similar to the procedure mentioned above, amulets made of clay containing healing incantations were used as medical-magical tools. The rituals describing the making of amulets usually contain instructions written with logograms supplemented by phonetic complements: ^{na4}KIŠIB DÙ-uš ÉN *annīta* SAR-ar (‘You make a cylindrical amulet, write this incantation on it’). When choosing the raw material, amulet makers may specify the clay types (‘potter’s clay’, ‘canal clay’ or ‘clay from the river bank’) and the source of water (‘river water’ or ‘canal water’) to work with.⁶ The rite descriptions also sometimes mention the baking (*ṣarāpu*) of the clay amulets, and from them we can also learn that the patients usually wore the amulet around their neck.

Since no comprehensive study has been published on the cylindrical clay amulets,⁷ our primary goal is to collect all these objects (Table 1) and classify and analyse them based on their inscriptions. In addition, we aim to identify rituals that mention the use of these amulets. We examine diseases and incantations based on the medical-magical rituals and the incantations written on cylindrical clay amulets. In addition to the collection and philological analysis of spells, we would like to analyse the functions of the selected object group in medical-magical rituals and to shed light on hitherto unexplored aspects of Mesopotamian amulets.

³ In relation to the making of chain amulets, line 26 of the Exorcist’s Manual mentions ‘strings and pendants(?)’ (*takšīri u mālali*); edited by Geller 2018, p. 300.

⁴ Regarding amulets whose inscriptions name the diseases they protected against, see for example, neck stones used to cure migraine (*sagkidabbū* disease) that were found in the sarcophagus hiding the body of Atalia, consort of Sargon II (721–705 BCE), which was placed in Tomb II in the Northwest Palace at Kalḫu (Al-Rawi 2008, p. 131-134 no. 9-12 and figs. 151n-q; Niederreiter 2018, p. 69-70; Bácskay 2019). Another amulet, an inscribed chalcedony neck stone (MS 2880) from the Schøyen Collection, was used to ward off the personified ban or curse (*māmītu*) that causes physical suffering to the patient (George 2016, p. 18, 53 no. 68 and pl. CXLI; Stadhouders 2016).

⁵ For edition of the text, see Bácskay 2018b, p. 105 and 109.

⁶ Finkel 2018, p. 261-262; Stadhouders 2018, p. 164-166.

⁷ In his study published in 1976 about two Old Babylonian amulets containing incantations, Lambert already pointed out the importance of a comprehensive study of them (Lambert 1976, p. 60-61).

In the following subsections, we first review the research history on cylindrical amulets made of clay, starting with their first occurrence in Assyriological research; then, we collect data on the origin of the objects, their archaeological context, and their owners (if known). After that, we analyse the characteristics of their form and manufacture, and examine their relationship with cylinder seals and other amulets. Finally, we present the rituals that mention the making and use of the cylindrical clay amulets in subsection 3, which collects the incantations written on the amulets and the rituals mentioning these objects. We present the stone amulets with Ḫulbazizi incantations, which are relevant to our topic, in our Appendix, where we focus on the differences and similarities between the two groups.

The table below lists in alphabetical order the cylindrical clay amulets examined here:

Table 1: Cylindrical amulets made of clay.⁸

	Museum number	Origin (reg. number)	Dimensions length/width (mm)	N.L. ⁹	Incantation	Owner's name
Ligabue 1 ¹⁰	–	unknown	19 / 10	9	Ḫulbazizi 18	... (for a man without name)
Nimrud 1 ¹¹	BM 131981 – 1954-11-15, 30	Governor's Palace (room K) (ND 280)	25 / 11 [12]	9	<i>idem</i>	So-and-so, son of So-and-so
Nimrud 2 ¹²	IM –	Fort Shalmaneser (room S10) (ND 7096)	24 / 8	9	<i>idem</i>	So-and-so, son of <i>ditto</i> (=So-and-so)
Nimrud 3 ¹³	BM 131980 – 1954-11-15, 29	Governor's Palace (ND 1103)	16 / 10 [7]	8	Ḫulbazizi 19	–
Nineveh 1 ¹⁴	1885-04-08, 1	Kuyunjik	30 / 9	10	Ḫulbazizi 18	Šamaš-killanni, son of his god
Nineveh 2 ¹⁵	IM –	'Sennacherib's building', Kuyunjik (TM –) ¹⁶	32 / 11	10	<i>idem</i>	... (for a man without name)

⁸ In addition to the 18 items listed in Table 1, we are aware of five more inscribed cylindrical clay amulets, which have different properties:

– TA 1800 (Tell Taya), barrel-shaped amulet dated to the Akkadian period (height: 35 mm, width: unknown), originates from the floor of a building; the 7-line inscription contains an invocation of deities (Reade 1971, p. 87-100);

– A.30103 (Nippur) (Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago), barrel-shaped amulet originating from Kassite layer, pierced in the middle (height: 32 mm, width: 18 mm); the object and its inscription are unpublished (<https://oi-idb.uchicago.edu/id/3acc54da-6b79-4a51-9a50-3fcad67800a2>);

– CBS 4559 (Nippur) (Pennsylvania Museum), object mentioned by Finkel with reference to Hilprecht: 'A small clay cylinder, half-baked, repaired; Neo-Babylonian period; Exorcism: 9 lines of inscription': Finkel 2018, p. 238, the object is currently not identifiable in the museum's collection.

For the two amulets from Assur, see footnote 54.

⁹ N.L.: number of lines

¹⁰ Collezione Ligabue – Fales 1989, p. 251 no. 84 (photo, transliteration and translation); Fales/Del Fabbro 2017, p. 178 no. 128 (photo).

¹¹ Wiseman 1950, p. 197 (transliteration and translation); Finkel 1976, p. 162 (transliteration).

¹² We are indebted to S. Dalley and J. Taylor, who made available to us the catalogue entry of ND 7096 discovered during the Nimrud excavation. The catalogue entry, kept in the British Museum, includes the transcription of the inscription, presumably made by D. Wiseman.

¹³ Wiseman 1952, p. 63 (transliteration and translation) and pl. XXII (copy); Finkel 1976, pl. 44 (copy, ms. G).

¹⁴ Finkel 1976, pl. 42 (copy, ms. F).

¹⁵ Campbell Thompson 1940, p. 109-110 no. 38 and fig. 5: 38 (copy, transliteration and translation).

¹⁶ According to Finkel, the object originates from Nimrud: Finkel 2018, p. 235 no. 4; but George identifies it as an object from Nineveh: George 2016, p. 92.

Nineveh 3 ¹⁷	BM 134604 – 1932-12-12, 599	‘Sennacherib’s building’, Kuyunjik (TM 1931-32, 27)	31 / 11.4	10	<i>idem</i>	ᵐPAP-ERIM, son of his god
Nineveh 4 ¹⁸	BM 103058 – 1910-04-12, 2	acquired in 1910	7 / 8	12	<i>idem</i>	Šušannu, daughter of his gods
Nippur 1 ¹⁹	CBS 5559	second excavation (1889–1890)	18 [19] / 11	9	Fever text	Bābu-ētirat, daughter of Bānātā
Nippur 2 ²⁰	CBS 3992	third excavation (1893–1896)	17.5 [19] / 11	7	<i>idem</i>	<i>idem</i>
Nippur 3 ²¹	CBS 3993	<i>idem</i>	18 - 10	6	<i>idem</i>	owner’s name is broken
Nippur 4 ²²	CBS 3994+3996	<i>idem</i>	17.8 / 7	9	<i>idem</i>	Bābu-ētirat, daughter of Bānātā
Nippur 5 ²³	CBS 3995	<i>idem</i>	18 / 7	2+	<i>idem</i>	owner’s name is broken
Scheil 1 ²⁴	–	unknown	15 / 8	12	Ḫulbazizi 18	Itti-Nabû- balātu, son of Nabû-bāni-aḫi
Scheil 2 ²⁵	–	<i>idem</i>	smaller than Scheil 1	12	<i>idem</i>	Šūbītum, daughter of my wife
Schøyen 1 ²⁶	MS 3272/1	<i>idem</i>	20 / 10	8	<i>idem</i>	So-and-so, son of So-and-so
Schøyen 2 ²⁷	MS 3272/2	<i>idem</i>	10 / 7	12	<i>idem</i>	So-and-so
Ugarit 1 ²⁸	R.S. 25457	Old Persian tomb	36 / 21	6	Fever text	–

¹⁷ Campbell Thompson 1940, p. 109-110 no. 38a and fig. 5: 38a (the copy provides only those cuneiform signs that differ from the **Nineveh 2** copy).

¹⁸ Finkel 1976, pl. 43 (copy, ms. HH).

¹⁹ Legrain 1925, p. 365 no. 1088 (copy, transliteration and translation); Finkel 2018, p. 237, 239-241 (photo, copy, transliteration, and translation); Abusch/Schwemer/Luukko/van Buylaere 2020, p. 133 (transliteration and translation).

²⁰ Legrain 1925, p. 366 no. 1089 (copy, transliteration and translation); Finkel 2018, p. 237, 245 (photo, copy, transliteration, and translation); Abusch/Schwemer/Luukko/van Buylaere 2020, p. 133 (transliteration and translation).

²¹ Legrain 1925, p. 366 no. 1091 (copy, description); Finkel 2018, p. 237, 244-245 (copy, transliteration and translation).

²² Legrain 1925, p. 366 no. 1093+1090 (copy, description); Finkel 2018, p. 237, 242-243 (photo, copy, transliteration, and translation); Abusch/Schwemer/Luukko/van Buylaere 2020, p. 133 (transliteration and translation).

²³ Legrain 1925, p. 366 no. 1092 (copy, description); Finkel 2018, p. 246-247 (copy, transliteration and translation).

²⁴ Scheil 1898, p. 201 no. 39.1 (copy without the lines 2-4).

²⁵ Scheil 1898, p. 201 no. 39.2 (copy provides only those signs that differ from the **Scheil 1** copy).

²⁶ George 2016, p. 92-93 no. 69 and pl. CXLI (copy, transliteration and translation).

²⁷ George 2016, p. 92-93 no. 70 and pl. CXLI (copy, transliteration and translation).

²⁸ Nougayrol 1969, p. 404 (transliteration and translation); Arnaud 2007, p. 207, no. 69 and pl. 30 (copy, transliteration and translation); Farber 2014, p. 273, 300-301 (transliteration and translation); Bácskay 2018a, p. 155 (mention).

2.2. RESEARCH ON CYLINDRICAL CLAY AMULETS

King first mentions a cylindrical clay amulet (**Nineveh 1**) in the British Museum's catalogue (1896) dealing with the ancient Near Eastern objects. He identifies the find from Nineveh as a personal amulet inscribed with an incantation, which he categorizes as a 'cylinder of clay'.²⁹ Scheil published two additional clay cylinder amulets (**Scheil 1–2**) in 1898. He introduces the subsection presenting the two objects with the title 'La plus petite inscription cunéiforme connue' and identifies them as 'cylindres-talismans' that he mentions are made of clay; one (**Scheil 1**) is 15 mm long and 8 mm in diameter, while the other (**Scheil 2**) is even smaller. These objects contain a longitudinal perforation suitable for inserting a string for attaching them to the body, and each of them has a different version of a 12-line inscription written on it. Scheil provides a partial copy, transcription, and translation of one (**Scheil 1**), but in the case of the other (**Scheil 2**) he only mentions the differences compared to the first. According to his interpretation, this incantation invokes Sirius against evil forces. We do not have any more information about the two objects; their present whereabouts are unknown.

The cylindrical clay amulets appear again in text editions related to incantations published in the 1920s, as well as in publications that report objects from excavations or objects kept in museums. Among the inscriptions inscribed on cylindrical clay amulets, research identified first the incantations invoking Sirius (**Scheil 1–2**), which were later also detected on clay tablets preserving rituals.³⁰ Weidner (1922) first connected the incantations written on amulets to those on cuneiform tablets, pointing out that the two amulets reported by Scheil prove the practical application of the incantations known from cuneiform tablets.³¹ Legrain (1923 and 1925) published copies of five objects (**Nippur 1–5**) from the excavations at Nippur, but provides his transcription and translation of only two (**Nippur 1–2**).³² In the following period, Campbell Thompson (1940) reported two findings from the excavation of Nineveh (**Nineveh 2–3**); then, Wiseman (1950 and 1952) described two objects (**Nimrud 1** and **Nimrud 3**) found during the excavations of Nimrud;³³ both authors called these pieces 'cylinder(s) of clay' or 'clay cylinder(s)'. In addition to them, Nougayrol published a copy of a cylindrical clay amulet (**Ugarit 1**) discovered during the excavation of Ugarit in a sarcophagus dated to the Old Persian period.³⁴

Incantations identical or similar to those of our amulets were also written on other amulets and on cylinder seals that were also used as amulets. In his work published in 1873, Lenormant made a copy of a flask-shaped chalcedony amulet pendant (Table 2: 4), without a transcription of its inscription.³⁵ The monographs dealing with cylinder seals have already made it clear that some of these objects were also carried by their owners as amulets,³⁶ but these works do not mention the cylindrical clay amulets studied here. Due to the difficulty and

²⁹ King 1896, p. xxiv footnote 1. The same object, under the name 'clay amulet in the form of cylinder seal', is reported again by Budge in the catalogue of the ancient Mesopotamian material in the British Museum (Budge 1908, p. 81 and no. 3).

³⁰ Ebeling first published the copy of the tablet (KAR 76), then the edition of the text (Ebeling 1920, p. 179-180). The part in question is mentioned in lines 14-19.

³¹ Weidner 1922, p. 295-296.

³² The most recent work dealing with these objects is Abusch/Schwemer/Luukko/van Buylaere 2020, p. 133. The authors raise the possibility that the fragment (**Nippur 5**) which preserves only the closing formula of the incantation and was interpreted as a separate object by Legrain and Finkel, actually belongs to **Nippur 4**. These data are included in the CDLI online database (CDLI P260310).

³³ For the hitherto unpublished **Nimrud 2**, see subsection 3.1.1.

³⁴ Nougayrol 1969, p. 404.

³⁵ Lenormant 1873, p. 90 no. 27.

³⁶ Menant 1883, p. 196-200; Ward 1910, p. 14, 216 and 227.

often fragmentary state of the seal legends, written usually in Sumerian, the researchers of that period were unable to read them. The early research on the incantations dealing with Sirius (Hulbazizi 18 and Hulbazizi 19) or with fever illustrates all of this, but these researchers already recognized the importance of these objects. The first monumental catalogue of cylinder seals was made of the De Clercq collection (1888), in which an object relevant to us (Table 2: 7) is included in the chapter dealing with the seal legends called 'Les invocations', the pieces of which deserve special attention due to their inscriptions. According to De Clercq and Menant, 'ce sont de véritables invocations ou des formules talismaniques; la rédaction en est dès lors très obscure'; at the same time they remind us of the difficulties encountered in deciphering the paleographic and Sumerian inscriptions, and then add: 'il faut attendre que nous ayons rencontré des traductions assyriennes^{sic} de formules analogues dans les nombreuses inscriptions bilingues [Akkadian-Sumerian], encore inédites, du Musée Britannique' (De Clercq/Menant 1888, vol. 1, 148).³⁷

In 1948, Porada published the cylinder and stamp seals housed in the Morgan Library & Museum. Among the Middle Babylonian cylinder seals, there are three inscribed objects (Table 2: 1, 8-9),³⁸ the legends of which were examined by Oppenheim, who published only transcriptions of them, without translation.³⁹ In his commentary, Oppenheim only draws attention to their connection with the above-mentioned flask-shaped chalcedony amulet pendant and the De Clercq seal cylinder, and also mentions that inscriptions written on them are quoted from literary texts, based on the Sumerian formula ÉN.É.NU.RU, which often introduces incantations.

Publications dealing with cylinder seals⁴⁰ and amulets⁴¹ made of stone do not mention their clay cylindrical counterparts. However, Reiner mentions the object group studied here in her 1960 paper dealing with amulets against diseases and pestilence caused by epidemics (so-called 'Plague Amulets' or 'House Blessings'), although she only devotes a footnote to it; she discusses the KAR 76 tablet⁴² summarizing the inscriptions to be written on cylinder seals used as amulets. Concerning this tablet, she lists the clay amulets (**Nimrud 1**, **Nimrud 3** and **Nineveh 1-4**) linked to the incantations on it, and also mentions the cylinder seal invoking Sirius (Hulbazizi 19) kept in the Louvre (Table 2: 5).⁴³ In addition, Reiner made it clear in a later study that Mesopotamian magical objects are amulets, and cannot be interpreted as talismans.⁴⁴ Referring to the KAR 76 tablet, containing incantations, Limet (1971) mentions the Louvre seal, which he identifies as an amulet, in his catalogue collecting Middle Babylonian inscribed cylinder seals.⁴⁵

Finkel's doctoral dissertation (1976) on the collection of Hulbazizi incantations is an important milestone in the research on the objects examined in our study. In this work, besides the relevant cuneiform tablets, Finkel also collects cylinder seals and amulets made of stone and clay containing Hulbazizi incantations. Among the latter, Finkel already lists eight

³⁷ Oppert, the most important Sumerian philologist of the period, who attempted to transliterate and translate the piece 253 above-mentioned, only states the following: 'Cette traduction n'est, bien entendu, qu'un essai qui pourra mettre sur la voie de l'interprétation exacte de tous les détails du texte.' (De Clercq/Menant 1888, p. 148 no. 253).

³⁸ Porada 1948, p. 65, 178 nos. 581, 583, 587 and pls. LXXX-LXXXI.

³⁹ Porada 1948, p. 178.

⁴⁰ Frankfort 1939.

⁴¹ Van Buren 1945; Goff 1956, p. 23-37; Goff 1963, p. 195-211.

⁴² See footnote 30.

⁴³ Reiner 1960, p. 154-155 and footnote 11.

⁴⁴ Reiner 1987, p. 27-28.

⁴⁵ Limet 1971, p. 112 no. 10.1.

pieces (**Nimrud 1**, **Nimrud 3**, **Nineveh 1–4**, **Scheil 1–2**),⁴⁶ for which he provides the transcription and translation and also identifies their place in the Hulbazizi incantation series. The doctoral dissertation remains unpublished, which may certainly be one of the main reasons why cylindrical clay amulets and their inscriptions have been little known to researchers ever since. The role of cylindrical clay amulets in research and their relationship with stone amulets and seal cylinders is well demonstrated in Gelb's paper (1977), in which he makes a classification of Mesopotamian cylinder seal inscriptions. Based on his classification, the cylindrical clay amulets (he mentions two of them: **Nippur 1–2**) belong to the group of 'Amulets'. This group contains only seven objects, which can be related, based on the incantations written on them. The diversity of the objects is shown by the fact that, in addition to **Nippur 1–2**, there are four-cylinder seals (plate 2: 2, 7-9), as well as a flask-shaped chalcedony amulet pendant (plate 2: 4) included.⁴⁷

Since Gelb's publication (1977), three further cylindrical clay amulets (**Ligabue 1**⁴⁸ and **Schøyen 1–2**⁴⁹) have appeared in the catalogues of the Ligabue and the Schøyen collections, in 1989 and 2016, respectively. Furthermore, the investigated object type is mentioned in the publications dealing with incantation series. In addition to the aforementioned Hulbazizi texts examined by Finkel, Farber's 1989 monograph deals with these amulets when publishing texts describing magical and healing rituals protecting children. These ritual descriptions also mention the making of these objects and the incantations to be written on them.⁵⁰ Besides this, in the Lamaštu incantation series published in 2014, Farber examines the incantation on a cylindrical clay amulet from Ugarit (**Ugarit 1**), pointing out that a part of it is related to rituals protecting children.⁵¹ After Legrain's *editio princeps* on the pieces (**Nippur 1–5**) kept in the Pennsylvania Museum, Finkel published (2018) these objects again, together with philological commentaries. Here, Finkel also provides the most up-to-date list of cylindrical clay amulets containing Hulbazizi incantations, which already includes objects from the Schøyen collection (**Schøyen 1–2**). In addition to the 10 pieces mentioned here (**Nimrud 1**, **Nimrud 3**, **Nineveh 1–4**, **Scheil 1–2**, and **Schøyen 1–2**),⁵² two more are known (**Ligabue 1** and **Nimrud 2**), making a total of 12 cylindrical clay amulets with Hulbazizi incantations. Beside them, six cylindrical clay amulets (**Nippur 1–5** and **Ugarit 1**) contain a text related to fever.⁵³ Recent research therefore examines these together with the rituals describing their making and use, the number of which, according to our current knowledge, is 18 (Table 1). Prior research made it clear that we can consider these objects as magical tools used during rituals against individual diseases or specific harmful demonic forces.

2.3. ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONTEXT OF CYLINDRICAL CLAY AMULETS

Of the 18 cylindrical clay amulets collected in our paper (Table 1), 12 originate from excavations. Despite their relatively large number, due to the lack of adequate documentation we unfortunately do not have enough information about the archaeological context of the finds, of which three are from Kalḫu (**Nimrud 1–3**), three from Nineveh (**Nineveh 1–3**), five

⁴⁶ Finkel 1976, p. 79.

⁴⁷ Gelb 1977, p. 109-110 nos. 1-7.

⁴⁸ Fales 1989, p. 251 no. 84.

⁴⁹ George 2016, p. 32 nos. 69-70 and pl. CXLI.

⁵⁰ Farber 1989, p. 116-117 § 41.

⁵¹ Farber 2014, p. 199.

⁵² Finkel 2018, p. 234-235.

⁵³ For a recent publication dealing with the incantations written on these objects from Nippur, see Abusch/Schwemer/Luukko/van Buylaere 2020, p. 130-133.

from Nippur (**Nippur 1–5**) and one from Ugarit (**Ugarit 1**).⁵⁴ Based on these sites, the examined amulet type is known from the Assyrian core area and from Nippur, and one find comes from the Levant region. We have the following archaeological data on these finds:

– **Nimrud 1–3**: Of the three objects, **Nimrud 1** and **Nimrud 3** come from the Governor's Palace.⁵⁵ The former was found during the first excavation season (1949) of M.E.L. Mallowan and the latter during Mallowan's third (1951) excavation season.⁵⁶ **Nimrud 1** was found in room K together with numerous cuneiform tablets containing legal-administrative texts from the 8th century BCE.⁵⁷ Although most of the administrative texts stored here are associated with Bēl-issēya,⁵⁸ the village chief and eunuch of Bēl-tarši-ilumma, governor of Kalḫu, it cannot be said with certainty that the amulet belonged to them.⁵⁹ **Nimrud 3** was found in a trench in the south courtyard of the Governor's Palace.⁶⁰ **Nimrud 2** is presumably from room S10 or the corridor leading to that room in Fort Shalmaneser. In the room, mostly legal-administrative texts were discovered; they can be linked to members connected to the queen(s) household.⁶¹

– **Nineveh 1–3** (and **Nineveh 4**): According to the catalogue of the British Museum, **Nineveh 1** (1885-04-08, 1) was found on the Kuyunjik, but no further information is known about its origin.⁶² **Nineveh 2** and **Nineveh 3** were discovered during the 1931–1932 excavations by Campbell-Thompson and Mallowan in the so-called 'Sennacherib's House' (Kuyunjik).⁶³ According to Finkel, **Nineveh 4** also comes from Nineveh,⁶⁴ and the catalogue of the British Museum informs us that **Nineveh 4** was purchased by the British Museum presumably from M. Garakian, an Armenian antiquities dealer in 1910.

– **Nippur 1–5**: These five objects were found during the excavations of the University of Pennsylvania at Nippur, in the second, 1889–1890 (**Nippur 1**), and third, 1893–1896 (**Nippur 2–5**), excavation seasons.⁶⁵ The finds can be linked to Late Babylonian layers.

– **Ugarit 1**: RS 25.457 was found in a sarcophagus dated to the Old Persian period excavated at Ugarit, which contained the remains of a woman and a child, but neither the text written on

⁵⁴ Regarding the origin of the cylindrical clay amulets, Fales also mentions Assur (Fales 1989, p. 251 no. 84; Fales/Del Fabbro 2017, p. 178-179 no. 128), but does not provide a single example. We know of a cylindrical amulet (VA 5920) made of clay containing an incantation from Assur; however, based on its dimensions (height: 154 mm, diameter: 72 mm), this object, which originally contained an 18-line inscription and has no longitudinal perforation, cannot be classified as one of the cylindrical clay amulets studied in this paper. For the publication of the object, see Freydank 1983; Pedersén 1997, p. 208. Pedersén also mentions another inscribed clay cylinder (Ass 10921), each line of which has the cuneiform signs DIŠ and BAD repeating one after the other: Pedersén 1997, p. 207. These signs can perhaps be interpreted as pseudo-inscriptions replacing the incantations, similar to those appearing on Bronze Age Lamaštu amulets: Wiggermann 2000a, p. 222.

⁵⁵ Postgate 1973, p. 258 and 263.

⁵⁶ Postgate 1973, p. 254.

⁵⁷ Wiseman 1950, p. 184 (according to Wiseman the collection contains 76 clay tablets).

⁵⁸ Postgate 1973, p. 12; Perroudon 1999, p. 317: Bēl-issēya 2.

⁵⁹ For this archive, see Postgate 1973, p. 12-13.

⁶⁰ Square E.3, 'on the surface' (Wiseman 1952, p. 63); '0.30 m below surface' (Postgate 1973, p. 263).

⁶¹ Dalley/Postgate 1984, p. 9-10 and 263. It is questionable whether the tablets were originally kept in this room, or whether they fell from the upstairs room above room S10 during the burning of the building.

⁶² Budge 1908, p. 81 no. 3; Budge 1922, p. 209 no. 3. J. Taylor informed us that he did not find any record mentioning the arrival of this object in the collection's archives at that time; it is the only Mesopotamian item in the collection 1895-04-08.

⁶³ Campbell Thompson 1940, p. 85; Lambert/Millard 1968, p. 80; George 2016, p. 92.

⁶⁴ Finkel 2018, p. 235 no. 6.

⁶⁵ According to Legrain, the finds were discovered in the second excavation season (Legrain 1925, p. 75), however, according to the online catalogue of the Pennsylvania Museum, **Nippur 1** was found in the second excavation season (1889–1890), while **Nippur 2–5** were found in the third (1893–1896).

the amulet nor the archaeological context can determine which of them the object belonged to.⁶⁶

In addition to the above pieces originating from excavations, the following objects are known from private collections:

- **Scheil 1–2**: The provenance of the two amulets reported in 1898 are unknown.
- **Ligabue 1**: This object kept in the Venetian collection first appears in Fales's 1989 publication (we have no information on the object's provenance).
- **Schøyen 1–2**: We do not have information about the provenance of the two objects, published in 2016 and kept in a Norwegian private collection.

Although we do not have any record of their origin, it is important to mention that among them **Scheil 1–2** and **Schøyen 1–2** can be verified as having belonged together based on their inscriptions, similarly to **Nippur 2–5** (for the interpretation of the inscriptions, see subsection 2.5).

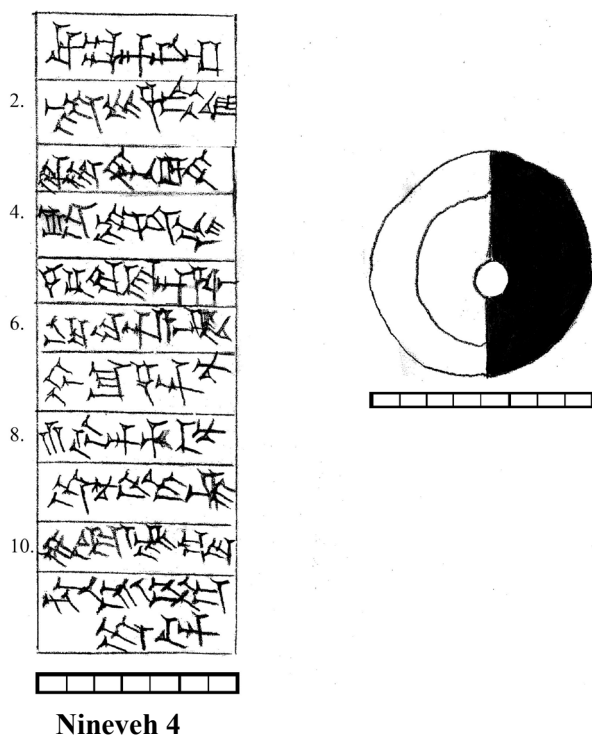
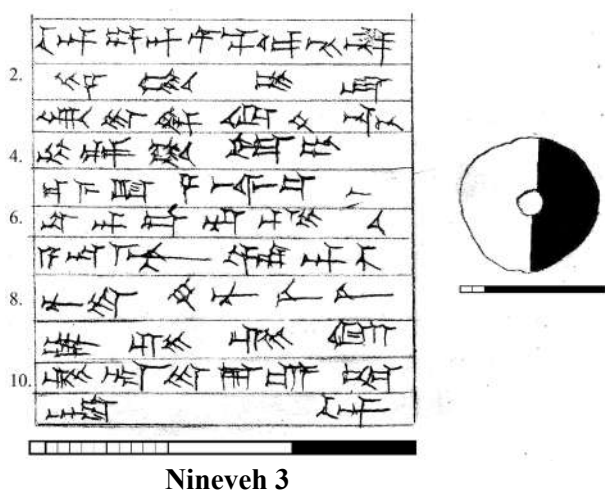
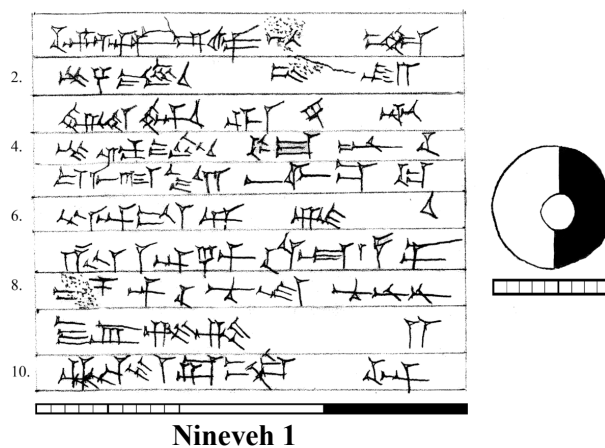
2.4. NAME OF THE CYLINDRICAL CLAY AMULETS AND THEIR CHARACTERISTICS IN VIEW OF THEIR MANUFACTURE AND SHAPES

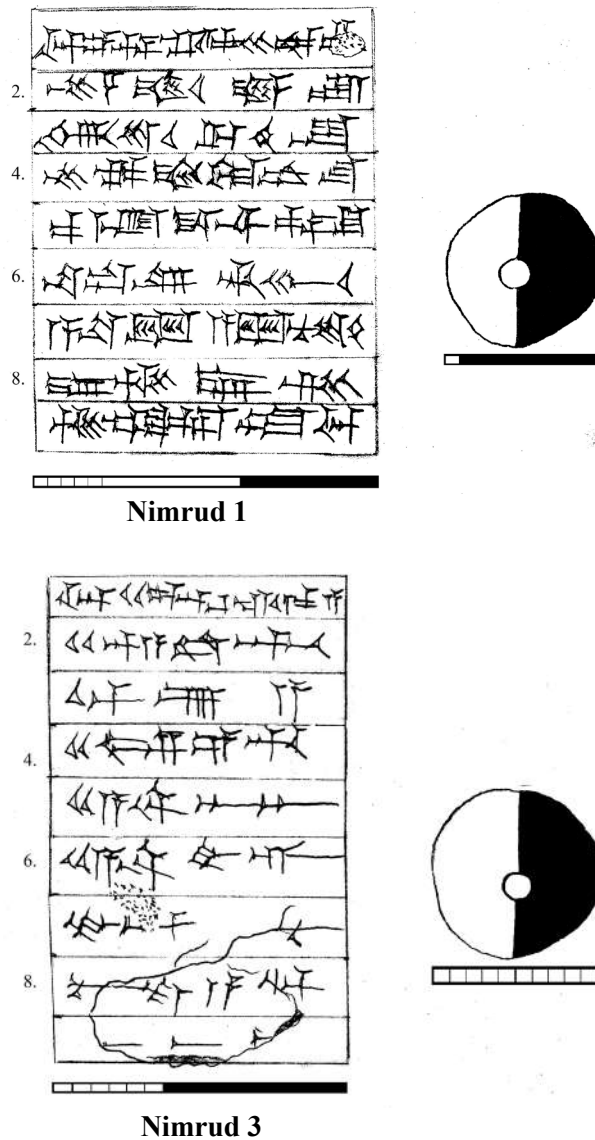
None of the legends written on cylindrical clay amulets identify the object itself, but some rituals belonging to medical-magical texts not only contain incantations written on the amulets but also report on the making of them. These rituals refer to the amulets as ^{na4}KIŠIB, and we can learn that they are made of clay. The designation ^{na4}KIŠIB (Akkadian *kunukku*) was primarily used for cylinder seals, which, with a few exceptions, were made of various types of stone.⁶⁷ In contrast to these, the cylindrical clay amulets were not used for sealing, there is no pictorial representation or motif on them, and the handwritten text on them can be read directly from the object. Despite all this, their connection with the cylinder seals is clear, since the objects are also roughly cylindrical in shape and there is a perforation on their longitudinal axis, which made them suitable for their owner to wear on a string or hang around their neck. The same type of incantation can be found engraved on both stone cylinder seals and cylindrical clay amulets (Subsection 3.1). In this case, the former were primarily worn by their owners as amulets.⁶⁸ It is important to emphasize that the cylinder seals also had magical significance for their bearers due to their raw material, colour, and the images engraved on them. In addition to the shape and the way of wearing them, the objects belonging to the two groups can be compared primarily based on their role as amulets. Figure 1 contains copies of the cylindrical clay amulets that we examined directly.

⁶⁶ Olmo Lete 2014, p. 37-37.

⁶⁷ No relationship can be assumed between the little-studied cylinder seals made of clay (Al-Gailani Werr 1988) and the cylindrical clay amulets discussed in our work.

⁶⁸ Finkel 2018, p. 261-262; Stadhouders 2018, p. 164-166.





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Figure 1: Cylindrical clay amulets bearing Hulbazizi 18 (**Nineveh 1, 3, 4** and **Nimrud 1**) and Hulbazizi 19 incantations (**Nimrud 3**) (the copies of the cylindrical clay amulets are published here by kind permission of the Trustees of the British Museum).

Regarding the physical properties of the cylindrical clay amulets, the following can be mentioned based on the data in the descriptions and the directly examined pieces (Table 1, Figure 1). To make the objects, the makers probably formed and rolled the leather-hard clay in their palms. Some of the cylindrical object widen in the middle (barrel-shaped), but some of them are prism-like, which presumably helped the scribe to prepare the texts (since in this case the lines were written on the flat sides of the prism-like object). In some cases, however, the object was made shorter than usual, so they have a rather squat shape, such as **Nineveh 4** and **Schøyen 2**, which look more like roundish stone beads. Regarding the size of the pieces – taking length and width (diameter) into account – we can state that the largest of them is **Ugarit 1**, which is 36 mm long and 21 mm in width, while the smallest is **Nineveh 4**, which is 7 mm long and 8 mm in width. In the cases of several pieces, the colour of the clay is strikingly dark grey (e.g. **Nimrud 1** and **Nineveh 1**) or reddish-brown (e.g. **Nineveh 3–4**).

The cuneiform texts were written on the leather-hard clay before firing. The lines run horizontally on the mantle of the cylindrical body, one below the other (Figure 1). The texts contain an average of 9-10 lines, the shortest with 6 lines (**Nippur 3** and **Ugarit 1**), the longest with 12 (**Nineveh 4**, **Scheil 1–2** and **Schøyen 2**). Considering the small size of the objects, the large number of lines that make up the incantations is striking. The extremely small size of the cuneiform signs attests to the competence of the scribes. The texts can be classified into different groups based on their content (Table 1, subsections 2.6 and 3). The pieces from the Neo-Assyrian sites were written with Neo-Assyrian signs (hereafter **Schøyen 1–2**), while the objects from Nippur (**Nippur 1–5**), **Scheil 1–2**, **Ligabue 1**, and **Ugarit 1** were written with Neo-Babylonian signs. The rulings between the lines observed on some objects follow the practice of the texts on clay tablets. In some cases, however, due to a lack of space, the syllables of the words at the end of the lines continue at the beginning of the next line.⁶⁹ Being made of clay, these objects are probably the work of *āšipu* or scribe (in contrast to the legends on stone cylinder seals and amulets, which were mostly copies made by engravers based on patterns).

In accordance with the rituals mentioning the making of amulets,⁷⁰ these objects were made of clay and carried around the neck, and according to some ritual descriptions, they were hung at the head of a patient's bed. All of this is supported by the longitudinal perforation found on all of our items. Amulets were the personal property of their wearers, which is why they often include the owner's name (see subsection 2.5), providing an opportunity to identify the bearers of the objects. At the same time, in some cases, these were single-use objects made by the incantation priest for the purpose of some specific ritual (for example, amulets against the attack of harmful demons). Presumably, in most cases, the cylindrical clay amulets lost their importance over time, so their owners no longer used them. The amulets used against fever may be examples of this, as the patient no longer needed them after recovery, but there is also an amulet (**Ugarit 1**) that was found in a grave containing two corpses.

2.5. PERSONAL NAMES ON CYLINDRICAL CLAY AMULETS

The personal character of these amulets is reflected in the fact that the inscriptions on several amulets (**Nineveh 1**, **Nineveh 3–4**, **Nippur 1–2**, **Nippur 4** and **Scheil 1–2**) include personal names referring to the owners of the objects. However, inscriptions on two further amulets leave a blank place instead of the personal name, writing only a male or female determinative as a reference to the owner's gender (**Ligabue 1** and **Nineveh 2**). Instead of personal names, three amulets mention the formula 'to So-and-so, son of So-and-so' (**Nimrud 1–2** and **Schøyen 1**) or simply 'to So-and-so' (**Schøyen 2**). The inscriptions on two amulets (**Nimrud 3** and **Ugarit 1**) do not refer to the owner. Due to the lack of precise archaeological context or any further information about the persons mentioned in the inscriptions, exact identification of the owners of the amulets is not possible. On the other hand, the content of the incantation written on these objects, or their provenance, provides important information about the connections among specific amulets. For instance, the inscription of **Scheil 1** and **Scheil 2** mentioned a male and a female name, and the two amulets were seemingly produced for members of the same family, more precisely for a man (probably the male head of household) and his wife's daughter. According to their inscription, the owner of **Scheil 1** is 'Itti-Nabû-balātu, son of Nabû-bāni-aḫi' and the owner of **Scheil 2** is 'Šūbītum (or Šūpītum), my

⁶⁹ For example, in lines 3-4, 9-10, and 10-11 in **Nineveh 4** and lines 4-5 in **Ligabue 1**.

⁷⁰ For example, see 'Healing ritual against fever from a Late Babylonian medical tablet' (footnote 5).

spouse's daughter' (biological or adoptive). The personal name Itti-Nabû-balātu, son of Nabû-bāni-aḫi on **Scheil 1** is of Babylonian origin, and its Babylonian provenience is confirmed by the use of Neo-Babylonian ductus on the amulet.⁷¹ With this name and filiation, only one person can be identified from the corpus of Neo-Babylonian personal names known to us: 'Itti-Nabû-balātu, son of Nabû-bāni-aḫi, a descendant of Dabibi', who was mentioned in an administrative text excavated in a private archive from Borsippa.⁷² The inscription of the amulet with a female name (**Scheil 2**) is also written in Neo-Babylonian ductus but the owner's name Šūbītum (or Šūpītum) is known to us from only a single administrative document.⁷³

Three amulets from Nineveh (**Nineveh 1** and **3–4**) also mention owners' names; among them, the owner of **Nineveh 4** was a woman. The name of the owner is not followed by his or her filiation in any of the three inscriptions, but rather the term 'son/daughter of the god' (*i.e.*, patron deity). Of the five amulets (**Nippur 1–5**) containing incantations against fever found in Nippur, three (**Nippur 1–2** and **Nippur 4**) bear the name of the owner—the owner of all three pieces being Bābu-ēṭirat, daughter of Bānâtâ (possibly Bānītâ). In the Babylonian prosopographical database, the female personal name Bābu-ēṭirat can be linked to several different persons, however, in the absence of an affiliation, none of these occurrences can be linked with absolute certainty to the owner of the amulet. The owner of **Nineveh 1** is Šamaš-killanni, whose name can be identified in the corpus of personal names of the Neo-Assyrian period; six people are known with this name in the Neo-Assyrian text corpus, four of them linked to the reign of Ashurbanipal.⁷⁴ According to the catalogue of the British Museum, this amulet originates from Kuyunjik; therefore, it might have belonged to one of these four persons. The reading of the personal name preserved on **Nineveh 3** is uncertain. This male personal name consists of two signs after the determinative for gender: ^mPAP-ERIM;⁷⁵ but their correct reading remains obscure to us. The female name Šušannu on **Nineveh 4** means 'from the city of Susa', and it is identifiable among personal names from the Neo- and Late Babylonian periods, however, we do not know of any references from the Neo-Assyrian period.⁷⁶

Among five amulets (**Nippur 1–5**) inscribed with incantations against fever discovered in Nippur, three (**Nippur 1–2** and **Nippur 4**) bear the name of the owner, who is 'Bābu-ēṭirat',⁷⁷

⁷¹ In his publication, Scheil copied the text in Neo-Assyrian lapidary script but mentioned that the text was inscribed originally in Babylonian cursive script ('ordinaire babylonienne'). Weidner also remarked that the script on these objects is Babylonian (Weidner 1922, p. 296).

⁷² The date of BM 103574 has not been preserved, but it originates from the archive of the Ilia family, known from Borsippa, and dates back to the second half of the 6th century BCE. For the tablet, see <https://prosobab.leidenuniv.nl/tablet/t5877> (suggested to us by M. Jursa).

⁷³ McEwan 1984, p. 123 no. 400 line 14.: ^fšū(SU¹)-bit-tu₄ AL.TI ^mTUKU-ši-DINGIR = Šūbītum, consort of Rāšili (courtesy of C. Wunsch). M. Jursa raised the possibility that Scheil had misinterpreted the signs of the personal name in line 7: ^fšū-u-pi-tu₄ = 'Sūpitum' (Scheil 1898, p. 201), and he suggested an alternate reading: ^fbar¹-sip¹-pi-tu₄ = Barsipītū; this personal name can be found in the Neo-Babylonian prosopographical database (<https://prosobab.leidenuniv.nl/individual.php?pid=8845>).

⁷⁴ Gentili 2011, p. 1204.

⁷⁵ The reading of the name as ^mKur-šab suggested by Campbell Thompson seems implausible, but we do not have any alternate suggestions (Campbell Thompson, 1940, p. 110 footnote 15).

⁷⁶ This personal name cannot be found in the Neo-Assyrian sources, but it can be attested in the Neo- and Late Babylonian cuneiform texts; for the references, see <https://prosobab.leidenuniv.nl/individual.php?pid=27430>.

⁷⁷ Finkel uses the form Bāba-ēṭerat in his text edition: Finkel 2018, p. 238; in our translation we followed the Babylonian form of the name, which is also attested in the latest publication of this text (Abusch/Schwemer/Luukko/van Buylaere 2020, p. 130).

daughter of Bānâtâ (or Bānītâ)'.⁷⁸ The female name Bābu-ēṭirat can be linked to several different persons in the Neo-Babylonian prosopographical database; however, due to the lack of her patronym, none of them can be securely suggested as an owner of this amulet. In these inscriptions, the filiation of Bānâtâ includes her matronym, which differs from the praxis of administrative texts. Irving Finkel, the publisher of these amulets, explained the use of the matronym: the effective functioning of the amulet required an exact identification of the owner (Roman law: *Mater certa, pater incertus*); and he parallels the maternal lineage on the amulet with the cases known from administrative texts when the identity of the father could not be determined with certainty (for example in the case of adopted children, children from an illicit relationship, or children born as a result of sexual violence).⁷⁹ In this context, T. Abusch and D. Schwemer draw attention to the fact that the matronym is also mentioned in a ritual for protecting a pregnant woman.⁸⁰

2.6. CLASSIFICATION OF CYLINDRICAL CLAY AMULETS BASED ON THEIR INSCRIPTIONS

The inscriptions on the collected cylindrical amulets made of clay can be divided into three main topics.⁸¹

– Group I: Ḫulbazizi incantations addressed to Sirius (subsection 3.1). The incantations Ḫulbazizi 18 (**Ligabue 1, Nimrud 1–2, Nineveh 1–4, Scheil 1–2 and Schøyen 1–2**) and Ḫulbazizi 19 (**Nimrud 3**), from the Ḫulbazizi incantation series, occur on most amulets. This group is complemented with further small amulets (Table 2 in the Appendix) also inscribed with a Ḫulbazizi incantation, but they are made of different materials and have a different shape. It must be noted that the cuneiform tablets belonging to the Ḫulbazizi incantation series do not include any rituals which describe producing and applying cylindrical clay amulets.

– Group II: Lamaštu and Ḫulbazizi incantations protecting children (subsection 3.2). The second group consists of rituals protecting infants, which describe producing and applying cylindrical clay amulets inscribed with Lamaštu incantations or Ḫulbazizi incantations. The first tablet of the canonical Lamaštu incantation series includes a ritual producing a cylindrical clay amulet inscribed with the first incantation of the series.⁸² Among medical-magical tablets containing rituals for protecting children against diseases or harmful demons, two procedures are known to us which describe making such an amulet; one of them is inscribed with a Lamaštu incantation, another with two Ḫulbazizi incantations; however, no amulets inscribed with these Lamaštu or Ḫulbazizi incantations are known in the archaeological material.

– Group III: Incantations against fever (subsection 3.3). In the third group, we collected cylindrical amulets against fever, made of clay, as well as rituals describing the use of these amulets. Based on rituals preserved on cuneiform tablets, these cylindrical amulets made of clay were inscribed with Non-Canonical Lamaštu incantations. The description of these rituals is preserved on several Neo-Assyrian and Neo-Babylonian medical tablets; however, only a single amulet (**Ugarit 1**) carrying this incantation is known to us. Further cylindrical clay amulets against fever bear incantations addressed to the underworld deities (Nergal,

⁷⁸ Finkel gives the form Bānitay (Finkel 2018, p. 238), but our work follows the nomenclature presented in the recent publication of this text in Abusch/Schwemer/Luukko/van Buylaere 2020, p. 130.

⁷⁹ It should be noted that in the relevant part of the ritual texts we can find the usual filiation formula: 'So-and-so, son of So-and-so' (NENNI A NENNI). This information was earlier mentioned in Finkel 2018, p. 238.

⁸⁰ Abusch/Schwemer/Luukko/van Buylaere 2020, p. 130 Text 5.9 line 7.

⁸¹ Cylindrical clay amulets inscribed with incantations different from the above-mentioned three groups are also known. Some of them are certainly dated earlier than our amulets, while other pieces may be contemporary with them. With our current knowledge, the incantations preserved on these objects cannot be linked to any known incantation series. (Cf. footnotes 8 and 54.)

⁸² Farber 2014, p. 145-146.

Ereškigal and Namtar) as well as to Ea (**Nippur 1–5**). In addition, we know of a fragmentary ritual that mentions producing a cylindrical amulet made of clay, but the incantation is not preserved.

The next part of our work provides transliteration and translation of all incantations inscribed on amulets, and we also publish relevant rituals preserved on medical tablets.

3. MEDICAL-MAGICAL RITUALS WITH CYLINDRICAL CLAY AMULETS

3.1. RITUALS AND AMULETS WITH 𒄩ULBAZIZI INCANTATIONS

The first Sumerian and Akkadian 𒄩ulbazizi-incantations are known from the second half of the second millennium, and the incantation series against 𒄩ulbazizi dated to the first millennium consists of at least 65 incantations.⁸³ 𒄩ulbazizi incantations were grouped into another incantation series like Muššu'u or Lamaštu.⁸⁴ Specific 𒄩ulbazizi incantations are preserved on different types of amulets (Table 2) which testify to the popularity of the 𒄩ulbazizi incantations among Mesopotamians. Below, we present cylindrical clay amulets inscribed with 𒄩ulbazizi incantations, as well as rituals describing procedures for preparing these amulets.

The vast majority of the investigated amulets (12 in total) were inscribed with spells belonging to the 𒄩ulbazizi series. The incantation 𒄩ulbazizi 18 is preserved on eleven amulets (Table 1: **Scheil 1–2**, **Nineveh 1–4**, **Nimrud 1–2**, **Schøyen 1–2**, **Ligabue 1**); its text focuses on Sirius, an astral representation of Ninurta. The incantation 𒄩ulbazizi 19 is attested in a further cylindrical clay amulet (Table 1: **Nimrud 3**), mentioning not only Sirius but also members of the Mesopotamian triad of deities (Anu, Enlil and Ea) as well as gods of the personified rivers (Euphrates and Tigris).

3.1.1. CYLINDRICAL CLAY AMULETS INSCRIBED WITH THE INCANTATION 𒄩ULBAZIZI 18

Manuscripts: **Scheil 1–2**, **Nineveh 1–4** (Figure 1), **Nimrud 1–2** (Figure 1), **Schøyen 1–2**, **Ligabue 1**

Transliteration and translation

Nineveh 1₁	ÉN ^{mul} KAK.SI.SÁ M[U].NA
Nineveh 2₁	ÉN ^{mul} KAK.SI.SÁ MU.NE
Nineveh 3₁	ÉN ^{mul} KAK.SI.SÁ MU.NE
Nineveh 4_{1-2a}	ÉN ^{mul} KAK.SI.SÁ / MU-šú
Nimrud 1₁	ÉN ^{mul} KAK.SI.SÁ MU.E.NE ¹ (text: MU.NE.E)
Nimrud 2₁	ÉN ^{niš} ^{mul} KAK.SI.SÁ MU
Ligabue 1_{1-2a}	ÉN ⁸⁵ ^{mul} KAK.SI.SÁ / MU.NE
Scheil 1₁	ÉN ^{mul} KAK.SI.SÁ [šumšu]
Scheil 2₁	idem of Scheil 1₁
Schøyen 1₁	ÉN ^{mul} KAK.SI.SÁ MU.E.[NE]
Schøyen 2₁₋₂	ÉN ^{mul} x / x x x

⁸³ For the 𒄩ulbazizi incantations from the second millennium, see Zomer 2018, p. 186-190; for the edition of the 𒄩ulbazizi incantation series from the first millennium, see Finkel 1976, p. 74-137.

⁸⁴ Finkel 1991, p. 97; Böck 2007, p. 24; Farber 2014, p. 54, 58, 61.

⁸⁵ In the *editio princeps* of the object, Fales transliterated this as EN₆ but on the image made of the object the sign is clearly ÉN. The EN₆ (the cuneiform sign IN) as a logogram for 'incantation' appears only in the rubric of Middle Babylonian incantations from Hattuša. For the discussion of this rubric, see Zomer 2018, p. 28.

Nineveh 1₂	<i>mu-šá-lil qab-li</i>
Nineveh 2₂	<i>mu-šá-lil qab-li</i>
Nineveh 3₂	<i>mu-šá-lil qab-li</i>
Nineveh 4_{2b}	<i>mu-šá-lil <qab>-li</i>
Nimrud 1₂	<i>mu-šá-lil qab-li</i>
Nimrud 2₂	<i>mu-šá-lil [qab]-^ˁli^ˁ</i>
Ligabue 1_{2b-3a}	<i>mu-šá-lil / ^{giš}MURUB₄</i>
Scheil 1₂	unknown
Scheil 2₂	idem of Scheil 1₂
Schøyen 1_{2a}	<i>[m]u-šá-lil EDIN</i>
Schøyen 2₃	<i>mu-šá-lil</i>
Nineveh 1₃	<i>muš-^ˁte-^ˁ-^ˁ-u ur-<i>hi</i>-ti</i>
Nineveh 2₃	<i>muš-te-^ˁ-u ur-<i>hi</i>-tú</i>
Nineveh 3₃	<i>muš-te-^ˁ-u ur-<i>hi</i>-tú</i>
Nineveh 4_{3-4a}	<i>^ˁmuš-te-^ˁ-u ur-<i>he</i>/-e-tú</i>
Nimrud 1₃	<i>muš-te-u ur-<i>hi</i>-tu</i>
Nimrud 2₃	<i>muš-te-^ˁ-u ur-<i>hi</i>-^ˁtu^ˁ</i>
Ligabue 1_{3b-4a}	<i>mu-uš-te-u / ur-<i>hi</i>-tu[?]</i>
Scheil 1₃	unknown
Scheil 2₃	idem of Scheil 1₃
Schøyen 1_{2b-3}	<i>muš-te-^ˁ / ur-<i>he</i>-e-ti</i>
Schøyen 2₄₋₅	<i>kin x x / ur-^ˁ<i>hi</i>-tú^ˁ</i>
Nineveh 1₄	<i>mu-šak-lil mim-ma šum-šú</i>
Nineveh 2₄	<i>mu-šak-lil mim-ma šum-šú</i>
Nineveh 3₄	<i>mu-šak-lil mim-ma šum-šú</i>
Nineveh 4_{4b-5a}	<i>mu-šak-lil / NÍG.NAM⁸⁶</i>
Nimrud 1₄	<i>mu-šak-lil mim-ma šum-šu</i>
Nimrud 2	—
Ligabue 1_{4b-5a}	<i>mu-š[ak²]- / -^ˁli^ˁ? mim-ma šum-šú</i>
Scheil 1₄	unknown
Scheil 2₄	idem of Scheil 1₄
Schøyen 1₄	<i>mu-šak-lil mim-ma šum-šú</i>
Schøyen 2_{6-7a}	<i>mu-x x x x / šum-šú</i>
Nineveh 1₅	<i>^{giš}me-<i>tu</i> ša ina IGI ^{giš}TUKUL</i>
Nineveh 2₅	<i>^{giš}me-<i>tu</i> šá ina IGI ^{giš}TUKUL</i>
Nineveh 3₅	<i>^{giš}me-<i>tu</i> šá ina IGI ^{giš}TUKUL</i>
Nineveh 4_{5b-6a}	<i>^{giš}TUKUL.DINGIR šá IGI / ^ˁkak[?]-ki[?]</i>
Nimrud 1₅	<i>^{giš}me-<i>tu</i> ša ina IGI ^{giš}kak-ki</i>
Nimrud 2₄	<i>^{giš}^ˁTUKUL^ˁ.DINGIR šá IGI ^{giš}^ˁTUKUL^ˁ</i>
Ligabue 1₆	<i>^{giš}me-<i>tu</i> ša ina IGI ^ˁ^{giš}TUKUL^ˁ</i>
Scheil 1₅	<i>^{giš}TUKUL.DINGIR šá ina IGI ^{giš}TUKUL(text MAŠ)</i>
Scheil 2₅	idem of Scheil 1₅
Schøyen 1₅	<i>^{giš}TUKUL.DINGIR šá ina IGI ^{giš}TUKUL</i>
Schøyen 2_{7b-8a}	<i>^{giš}me-<i>tu</i> šá / ana ^{giš}TUKUL[!]</i>

⁸⁶ NÍG.NAM = *mimma šumšu* (see lexical part in CAD M/2 p. 73 *mimma* in this text).

Nineveh 1₆ *na-an-du-ru* ZI-*u*
Nineveh 2₆ *na-an-dúr* ZI-*u*
Nineveh 3₆ *na-an-du-ru* ZI-*u*
Nineveh 4_{6b} *na-an-duru₅* ZI-*u*
Nimrud 1₆ *na-du-ru ti-bu-u*
Nimrud 2₅ *na-an-du-ru* ZI-*u*
Ligabue 1₇ *na-an-^rdúr[?]* ^rZI^r
Scheil 1₆ *na-an-du-ru* ZI-*ú*
Scheil 2₆ idem of **Scheil 1₆**
Schøyen 1₆ [*n*]*a-an-du-ru te-bu-^rú⁸⁷*
Schøyen 2_{8b-9a} *na-an-du-ru* / ZI-*u*

Nineveh 1₇ *a-na* ^{Id}šá-maš-kil-la-a-ni
Nineveh 2_{7a} *a-na* ^lblank DIŠ
Nineveh 3_{7a} *a-na* ^lPAP(or KÚR)-ERIM
Nineveh 4₇ ^{f?}šu-šá-an-nu
Nimrud 1_{7a} *a-na* NENNI
Nimrud 2_{6a} *a-na* NENNI
Ligabue 1_{8a} *a-na* ^lblank⁸⁸
Scheil 1₇ *ana* ^mKI^l-^dAG-DIN
Scheil 2₇ *ana* ^fbar-sip-pi-tu₄
Schøyen 1_{7a} *a-na* NENNI
Schøyen 2_{9b} *a-na* NENNI

Nineveh 1_{8a} DUMU DINGIR-šú
Nineveh 2_{7b} A DINGIR-šú
Nineveh 3_{7b} DUMU DINGIR-šú
Nineveh 4_{8a} DUMU.MUNUS[?] DINGIR.MEŠ-šú
Nimrud 1_{7b} A NENNI
Nimrud 2_{6b} A MIN GAR-šú GAR.GAR⁸⁹
Ligabue 1_{8b} ^rDUMU DINGIR^r-šú
Scheil 1₈ A-šú šá ^{md}AG-DÜ-ŠEŠ
Scheil 2₈ DUMU.MUNUS šá MUNUS-ia
Schøyen 1_{7b} A NENNI
Schøyen 2 —

Nineveh 1_{8b} NU TE NU DIM₄
Nineveh 2₈ NU TE-*hi* NU DIM₄
Nineveh 3₈ NU TE-*hi* NU DIM₄
Nineveh 4_{8b-9a} NU / TE NU DIM₄
Nimrud 1_{7c} *la* TE-*u*
Nimrud 2₇ NU TE-*a* NU DIM₄.MÀ⁹⁰

⁸⁷ George also identifies the remains of a possibly erased sign before the last sign of the line (*te-bu*-{x}-*ú*).

⁸⁸ Fales probably transliterated the signs in this line correctly (*a-na* ^lDUMU il^r-šú^r); however, the content of the line makes sense if there is a blank place between the personal identifier and the sign DUMU. This line is not visible on the published photo; therefore, our suggestion is hypothetical. In our edition we reconstruct the transcription of this line based on the relevant part of **Nineveh 1**.

⁸⁹ Based on the transcription available to us (see footnote 11) ‘NÍG-šú GAR.GAR’ was written in this line after ‘A MIN (= A NENNI)’. We would suggest that ‘NÍG-šú’ can be read as ‘šakin(GAR)-šú’ (= its bearer) which refers to the owner of the amulet. However, the meaning of ‘GAR.GAR’ after *šakinšu* remains obscure to us.

Ligabue 1₉ *la TE-^{hi} la* ¹DIM₄¹
Scheil 1₉ NU TE NU DIM₄
Scheil 2₉ idem of **Scheil 1₉**
Schøyen 1 *scribe omitted this line*
Schøyen 2_{10a} NU TE-*a*?

Nineveh 1₉ lú-zi-zi MIN
Nineveh 2_{9a} lú-zi-zi KIMIN
Nineveh 3_{9a} lú-zi-zi KIMIN
Nineveh 4_{9b-10a} lú-z[i- /z]i ¹KIMIN¹
Nimrud 1₈ lú-zi lú-zi
Nimrud 2₈ lú-zi-zi MIN
Scheil 1₁₀ lú-zi lú-zi
Scheil 2₁₀ lú-zi MIN
Schøyen 1_{7c} l[ú-zi]-¹zi¹
Schøyen 2_{10b} lú[?]-zi[?]-a

Nineveh 1_{10a} nam-ba-te-gá-dè
Nineveh 2_{9b} nam-ba-te-gá-dè
Nineveh 3_{9b} nam-ba-te-gá-e-dè
Nineveh 4_{10b-11} ¹nam[?]-ba-t[e] / -gá-e-dè
Nimrud 1_{9a} nam-ba-te-gá
Nimrud 2_{9a} nam-ba-te-gá-dè
Scheil 1₁₁ nam-ba-te-gá-e-dè
Scheil 2₁₁ idem of **Scheil 1₁₁**
Schøyen 1₈ nam-ba-te-gá-e-d[è]
Schøyen 2₁₁ *a-a x x-a*?

Nineveh 1_{10b} ÉN
Nineveh 2₁₀ TU₆ ÉN
Nineveh 3₁₀ TU₆ ÉN
Nineveh 4₁₂ *te* ÉN
Nimrud 1_{9b} TU₆ ÉN
Nimrud 2_{9b} ÉN
Scheil 1₁₂ TU₆ ÉN
Scheil 2₁₂ idem of **Scheil 1₁₂**
Schøyen 1 *closing formula is omitted*
Schøyen 2₁₂ en[?]-nu-ru(text: e)

Incantation: Sirius is his name,
 who utters the battle cry in battle,
 who shows the way,
 who brings everything to perfection.
 He is the divine mace,
 that is raised from the furious weapons.
 (O, Evil One) do not approach, do not come near
 Šamaš-killanni,

⁹⁰ The form DIM₄.MÀ is not attested in the corpus of similar texts known to us.

son of his god!
 Attacker, attacker,
 do not come near! *Incantation-formula.*

(The translation follows the text of **Nineveh 1.**)

3.1.2. CYLINDRICAL CLAY AMULETS INSCRIBED WITH THE INCANTATION **HULBAZIZI 19**
 Manuscripts: **Nimrud 3** (Figure 1), AO 1167 (A.602)⁹¹

Transliteration and translation

Nimrud 3₁ ÉN *niš*^{mul} KAK.SI.SÁ-*e*
Louvre 1 ÉN *niš*^{mul} KAK.[SI.SÁ]

Nimrud 3₂ *niš*^d a-nim^d BAD
Louvre 2a *niš*^d a-nim^d BAD

Nimrud 3₃ *u*^d é-a
Louvre 2b [Ea]

Nimrud 3₄ *niš* réme-né-*e*^d ŠÚ
Louvre 3 *niš* réme-né^d [Marduk]

Nimrud 3₅ *niš*^{id} HAL.HAL
Louvre 4 *niš*^{id} HAL.HAL

Nimrud 3₆ *u*^{id} pu-rat
Louvre 4a *u* p[u-rat[?]-tú[?]]

Nimrud 3₇ pu-tu[r lem]-nu[!]
Louvre 5a mim-ma lem-nu

Nimrud 3₈ NU[!] TE-a ÉN
Louvre 5b-6 [...] / ÉN šá^r dMAŠ^r [...]

Nimrud 3₉ DILI DILI DILI⁹²
Louvre 6 [...]

Incantation: by Sirius,
 by Anu, Enlil,
 and Ea
 by merciful Marduk,
 by the river of Tigris and Euphrates
 clear off outside! O, Any Evil
 do not approach (him)!⁹³ *Incantation-formula.*

⁹¹ For the data of this object, see Table 2: 5.

⁹² These signs were intended to fill the uninscribed space at the end of the text. No similar use of three horizontal signs written on amulets is known to us.

⁹³ The translation of lines 5b-6a in AO 1167 (A.602) is as follows: 'No evil shall approach him!'

Commentary

The incipits of the incantations discussed above mention Sirius, an astral representation of Ninurta which can be identified with the brightest star in the constellation Canis Maior. The Sumerian and Akkadian sources refer to Sirius representing Ninurta with the term ‘Arrow’ (Sumerian ^{mul}kak-si-sá Akkadian *šukūdu* or *šiltāhu*) and the depiction of this object as a representation of the deity, often appears on the *kudurrus* from the Kassite period. Among the mythological scenes depicted on cylinder seals, we find the image of Ninurta as an archer, chasing Anzû. We suppose that the bow and the arrow held in Ninurta’s hand refer to the astral role of these weapons, since the bow bordered by a row of stars forms a constellation with the arrow (Figure 2).



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Figure 2: Armed Ninurta riding the deluge monster (*abūbu*).
Detail from a seal image depicting Ninurta pursuing Anzû.⁹⁴

Ninurta, who triumphs over harmful demons, also plays an important role in Mesopotamian medical-magical rituals. This tradition is based on the defeat of the demon Asakku (Sumerian Azag), whose character is closely connected to certain diseases affecting people. Ninurta as a healing god is also manifested in the Gula hymn written by Bulussa-rabi, mentioning Ninurta as Gula’s consort. The Arrow, an astral representation of Ninurta, is not only the name of a star representing the god but also the name of the divine weapon of the warrior god who confronts the harmful demon; moreover, Ninurta is invoked as a weapon in one of his hymns.⁹⁵ The close relationship of Sirius and Ninurta with healing is confirmed by a ritual against *zikurrudû*-witchcraft, which was accompanied by an offering and praying for Ninurta before the star Sirius.⁹⁶

⁹⁴ For the publication of cylinder seal BM WA 129560, see Collon 2001, p. 152 no. 292, pls. XXIV and XXXV.

⁹⁵ For the edition of the relevant line 8 of the hymn, see Mayer 2005, p. 52 and 54. For discussion of this topic, see Annus 2002, p. 134.

⁹⁶ For the edition of the text ‘Prayer and ritual before Sirius’ (esp. lines 1-36), see Reiner 1995, p. 102-103, Abusch/Schwemer 2016, p. 371-384.

A ritual text describing the production and use of a cylindrical clay amulet inscribed with a *Ḫulbazizi* incantation can be identified without doubt on a single clay tablet (subsection 3.2). However, two further rituals preserved on fragmentary tablets also describe a similar procedure.

According to the ritual preserved on a Late Babylonian tablet from Uruk, the amulet was inscribed with two *Ḫulbazizi* incantations (*Ḫulbazizi* 50 and 51). Although the description of the production of the amulet is broken in this text, the context suggests that a cylindrical clay amulet could have been the object bearing the incantations. This suggestion is confirmed by the fact that we can read a similar procedure in another ritual, for protecting young children (subsection 3.2). The text of that ritual is as follows.

Incantation. Ninazu, Ninazu, mighty Ninazu! Ninazu, [the foremost one, Ninazu, the leader deity,⁹⁷] Ninazu, the rising one! Ninazu, the firstborn of Sîn! Ninazu's clay, which belongs to the temple of Ninazu! Ninazu's cylinder seal that has no equal. *Incantation.* I am the king of the poplar, I am the king of the Euphrates river! Let him (= the Evil One) disappear! The Evil One, do not approach (him)!

Incantation that the evil that keeps rising (against the patient) does not approach (him)!

Its ritual. You take clay from canal, mix (it) with ash of *elpetu*-plant. [You make a cylindrical amulet and] write [this incantation] on it (and) hang (it) at the head of (his) bed!

Ḫulbazizi incantation and ritual (SpTU 3, 83 obv. 19-25).⁹⁸

Ninazu, invoked in this incantation, is a chthonic deity invoked in spells against snakebites⁹⁹ and in incantations against diseases caused by ghost as well as in spells against fever.¹⁰⁰ In addition to the ritual mentioned above, a further fragmentary text originating from Assurbanipal's library which also describes the making of a cylindrical clay amulet was presumably inscribed with the incantation *Ḫulbazizi* 18. Unfortunately, only the end of the incantation is preserved on this fragment, though the formula that appears here can also be attested in another incantation. The text of the fragmented ritual is as follows.

1' [...] 'x x'

2' [... nam-ba-te-g]á-dè TU₆.ÉN

3' [...] 'x'-tu *mu-tu* TU.RA

4' [...] *ana* LU₂ NU TE-*e*

5' [DÙ.DÙ.BI ...IM?] TI-*qé'* ^{na4}KIŠIB DÙ-*uš*

6' [... *šipta annīta lū*] *ina* UGU ^{na4}KIŠIB *lu ina* UGU

7' [... *tašatṭar* ...] 'x x x' 'di'-*'i-i*

8' [...] ^{na4}KIŠIB

9' [...] x NA₄.MEŠ

10' [...] *mu-tu*

11' [TU.RA *ana* L]U₂ NU TE

⁹⁷ The translation of the alternate reading of the cuneiform signs here is ^dPALIL = the god Palil, Finkel 1976, p. 118-119; but we prefer the reading *ilu*(DINGIR) *ālik pāni*(IGI.DU), following Weiher's edition (Weiher 1983, p. 110 and 113). It is important to note that Krebernik's recent study on Palil does not mention this text among cuneiform sources invoking the deity (Krebernik 2003–2005).

⁹⁸ For the edition of this text, see von Weiher 1983, p. 110-115.

⁹⁹ Scurlock 2006, p. 431-433 no. 169.

¹⁰⁰ Bácskay 2018a, p. 151 and 154 no. 51 lines 59-61. For the goddess Ninazu, see Wiggermann 2000b.

[... do not co]me near! *Incantation-formula.*

[(*list of diseases and demons*)] death, disease, [...] do not approach the man!

[Its ritual]: You take [clay, (*the broken part of this line probably lists additional materials needed to make an amulet*)], make a cylindrical clay amulet (and) [write this incantation] on the cylindrical amulet or on the [...], ... *di'u*-disease, [...] cylindrical amulet, [...] x (pcs.) of stone, [(*the broken part supposedly lists further diseases or demons' names*)], death, [diseases? ...] do not approach the man!

Incantation and ritual against various diseases and death (AMT 71, 2+ i' lines 1'-11').¹⁰¹

3.2. CYLINDRICAL CLAY AMULETS INSCRIBED WITH INCANTATIONS FOR PROTECTING YOUNG CHILDREN

Cylindrical amulets made of clay for the protection of children are only known from ritual texts preserved on clay tablets. We suggest that the amulet **Ugarit 1**, previously classified by Farber as a part of this group of amulets, actually belongs to the group of amulets against fever, because parallels of the incantation preserved on **Ugarit 1** are identifiable among the Non-Canonical Lamaštu incantations against fever (subsection 3.1).

3.2.1. CYLINDRICAL CLAY AMULETS INSCRIBED WITH A LAMAŠTU INCANTATION FOR PROTECTING YOUNG CHILDREN

Manuscript: BM 134780 obv. 6'-7'¹⁰²

Transliteration and translation

6' [^dLamaštu *ana*] LÚ.TUR NU TE-*e* ^{na4}KIŠIB I[M *teppuš*]

7' [ÉN ^dkamad-me dum]u an-na MU šá 1-*en ana* UGU S[AR-*ma ina* GÚ-šú GAR]

In order that Lamaštu does not approach a small child: [you make] a cylindrical clay amulet, write the [incantation 'Lamaštu, daugh]ter of Anu is her first name' on it and place it around his neck!

3.2.2. CYLINDRICAL CLAY AMULETS INSCRIBED WITH HULBAZIZI INCANTATION FOR PROTECTING YOUNG CHILDREN

Manuscript: K 3628 + 4009 + Sm 1315 obv. 27 - rev. 12¹⁰³

Transliteration and translation

obv. 27 [ÉN é ba-an-ge]-*e* ba-an-šú

28 [i-bi-za-<la>-a]ḫ i-bi-za-<la>-aḫ¹⁰⁴

¹⁰¹ For the transcription of the text, see BabMed Amulettsteinlisten K 13573 + K 13343 (+) K 5176 + Sm 1107: https://www.geschkult.fu-berlin.de/e/babmed/Corpora/Amulettsteinlisten/K_13573___K_13343___K_5176___Sm_1107/index.html

¹⁰² Farber 1989, p. 116-117 §41 sigla j and pl. 10 (transliteration and translation); Farber 2014, p. 144 and notes to line 10. on p. 199 (copy, transliteration and translation).

¹⁰³ Finkel 1976, pls. 25-26 (copy, ms.P) rev. 3-12 (Hulbazizi 18), obv. 27'-rev. 2 (Hulbazizi 59) (transliteration and translation); Farber 1989, p. 128-129 §46, sigla u (transliteration and translation); Scurlock 2014, p. 623 (transliteration and translation).

¹⁰⁴ [bi.za.aḫ a]n-né bi.za.aḫ (Farber 1989, 128; Scurlock follows the same transliteration, Scurlock 2014, 623). Our suggestion for reconstruction of this line is based on variants of the incipit of the incantation: ÉN za-la-aḫ za-la-[aḫ ...] (AMT 66, 4 i' 10 – the ritual related to this incantation too broken but it seems more likely an ointment), ÉN za-la-aḫ iz-za-la-aḫ za-la-aḫ AL.TI.LA TU₆ ÉN (BAM 248 iv 10 // AMT 67 iv 3 – an incantation used in rituals aimed to remove childbirth complications). Farber transliterated the first fragmentary sign in this line as AN but based on the photo of the tablet (CDLI – P395132), this sign can also be interpreted as the end of the sign Aḫ (only the end of the last horizontal wedge is visible on the tablet). All these texts will be published

29. [dingir-re-e-ne-ke₄ a-šà]-ga ba-an-ú[s]?
- rev. 1 ^da-nu ina AN-e i[g-ru-uš]
2. u er-še-tu₄ ina ra-ma-ni-šá'-ma ig-ru-uš [TU₆.ÉN]
3. ÉN ^{mul}KAK.SI.SÁ mu-ne mu-šá-lil [qabli]
4. muš-te-'-u ur-še-ti' mu-šak-lil m[im-ma šumšu]
5. ^{giš}TUKUL.DINGIR šá ina pa-an ^{giš}TUKUL' na-an-du-ru t[e-ḫu-u]
6. ana NENNI A NENNI NU TE-ḫe NU [...]
7. lú-zi-zi lú zi-zi nam-ba-te-gá-e-è[d-e TU₆.ÉN]
8. 2 KA.INIM.MA LÚ.TUR A.LÁ ḪUL ŠÚ.[ŠÚ-šú]
9. DÙ.DÙ.BI ^{na4}KIŠIB [I]M kul-la-ti [teppušma]
10. ÉN an-ni-tú ina U[GU] SA[R...]
11. ina IN.BUBBU ta-šar'-rap šum₄-ma ina GÚ-šú 'GAR-an'?
12. šum₄-ma ina SAG ^{giš}NÁ tal-lal-ma mim-ma lem-nu 'NU TE'

[Incantation: the house is fi]xed (and) covered,
[ibizala]ḫ ibizalaḫ (gibberish Sumerian-like words).

The gods were driven overland.¹⁰⁵

Anu moved forward to the Heaven,

The Earth moved forward by itself. [Incantation formula].

Incantation. Sirius is its name, who utters the battle cry in battle,
who shows the way, who brings everything to perfection.

He is the divine mace, that is raised from the furious weapons.

(The Evil One), do not approach, do not come near!

Attacker, attacker, do not come near! [Incantation-formula].

Two incantations against evil Alû-demon overwhelming a small child.

Its ritual. [You make] cylindrical seal of potter's clay and write this incantation on it, [then]
bake (it) in straw fire. If you (either) place (it) around his neck (or) hang (it) at the head of
(his) bed, no evil (demon) can approach (him).

Commentary

The cylindrical amulet made of clay mentioned in the first ritual (subsection 3.2.1) may refer to a specific procedure preserved in the text of the canonical Lamaštu series (Tablet I. lines 1-10). According to this ritual, the nine names of Lamaštu must be written on a cylindrical clay amulet that is then hung around the neck of the patient.¹⁰⁶ The second ritual text (3.2.2) mentions two Ḫulbazizi incantations (Ḫulbazizi 18 and 59), however, it is questionable whether both incantations were inscribed on the same amulet, as cylindrical clay amulets known to us always bear only a single incantation. However, it should be noted that the above-mentioned flask-shaped chalcedony amulet pendant (Table 2: 4) has the incantation Ḫulbazizi 9 on the one side and Ḫulbazizi 38 on the other side. Moreover, the incantations Ḫulbazizi 33 and 38 were inscribed on a cylinder seal dated to the Middle Babylonian period (Table 2: 6).

in Steinert's book on women's health care. Steinert interprets zalaḫ as "to slip (through and opening)" addressing the baby in the womb.

¹⁰⁵ Our translation follows Scurlock's edition, but the exact meaning of this line remains obscure to us.

¹⁰⁶ Farber 2014, p. 68-70 and 144-145.

3.3. CYLINDRICAL CLAY AMULETS INSCRIBED WITH INCANTATIONS AGAINST FEVER

The medical-magical rituals against fever mention the use of cylindrical clay amulets, and this type of amulet can also be identified in the archaeological record. Amulets used against fever bear different incantations. Some ritual descriptions preserved on clay tablets as well as the legend of a single amulet (**Ugarit 1**) contain Lamaštu incantations. Currently, two ritual texts are known to us that describe producing cylindrical clay amulets inscribed with Lamaštu incantations. Both incantations in these rituals belong to the group of Non-Canonical Lamaštu incantations. The association between Lamaštu and fever can be attested not only in these rituals; canonical and Non-Canonical Lamaštu incantations were also recited in some therapeutic procedures (ointments) and phylacteries against fever.¹⁰⁷ Other cylindrical clay amulets against fever (**Nippur 1–5**) were inscribed with incantations invoking various underworld deities (like Nergal, Ereshkigal, or Namtar) and the god Ea.¹⁰⁸

3.3.1. CYLINDRICAL CLAY AMULETS INSCRIBED WITH LAMAŠTU INCANTATIONS AGAINST FEVER
Manuscripts: **Ugarit 1**; BAM 148 obv. 34-40,¹⁰⁹ STT 144 rev. 19'-22',¹¹⁰ CTN 4, 150 rev. 1-6,¹¹¹ BM 55516+ obv. 4'-8',¹¹²

Transliteration and translation

BM 55516+obv. 4'	'DIŠ' NA KÚM U ₄ 1-KAM DAB-su U ₄ 1-KAM BAR-š[ú IM PA ₅ TI-qi ina A.PA ₅ HI.HI]
BAM 148obv. 34-35	[...] U ₄ -1-'KÁM DAB-su' MIN U ₄ -1-KÁM BAR-šú IM P[A ₅] / [ina]'A.PA ₅ ' HI.HI
CTN 4, 150rev. 1	[DIŠ] NA' KÚM U ₄ 1-KAM DAB-su-ma U ₄ 1-KAM BAR-šu 'IM' PA ₅ TI-'qi' ina A.P[A ₅ HI.HI]
BM 55516+obv. 5'	SU LÚ.'GIG' tu-kap-par záp-pi ANŠE šá [15 záp-pi ANŠE šá šumēlu]
BAM 148obv. 35	záp-pi MUNUS.ANŠE šá '15' záp-pi MUNUS.ANŠE šá šumēlu
CTN 4, 150rev. 2	'záp'-pi ANŠE 15 záp-pi ANŠE.MUNUS GÚB šá 150
BM 55516+obv. 6'	'KI' IM šú-a-tú HI.HI na ⁴ KIŠIB DÙ-uš ÍB.T[AK ₄] záp-p[i ...]
BAM 148obv. 36-37	[... š]u-a-tu ₄ HI.[HI] na ⁴ KIŠIB 'DÙ'-uš ÍB.T[AK ₄ ...] / [... ana] UGU na ⁴ KIŠIB MÚNŠ[UB ...]
CTN 4, 150rev. 2-3	KI IM šu-a-tu ₄ HI.[HI] / [n] ^{a4} KIŠIB 'DÙ'-uš ÍB.TAK ₄ záp-p[i š]u-a-tum ana] UGU na ⁴ KIŠIB MÚN[ŠUB ...]
BM 55516+obv. 7'	ÉN ^d kamad-me dumu an-na mu pà-da dingir-re-e-n[e-ke ₄ ki-sikil líl-lá dumu]
BAM 148obv. 38-39	[ÉN ^d kam]ad-me dumu 'd'an'-na mu pà-da dingir-'re'-[ne-ke ₄] / [ki-sikil líl-lá dumu a-r]á du ₁₀ -ga dumu
CTN 4, 150rev. 4-6	'ÉN ^d kamad'-me dumu an-na 'mu' pà-da dingir-re-'e-ne'-[ke ₄ ...] / 'nin?' ki-sikil' ^d en-líl-le nam-tar ša du ₁₀ -ga / dumu

¹⁰⁷ For Lamaštu as a demon causing fever, see Farber 2007, p. 139-142.

¹⁰⁸ The *editio princeps* of these amulets was published recently by Finkel in 2018.

¹⁰⁹ Bácskay 2018a, p. 148-149 and 153 (transliteration and translation).

¹¹⁰ Farber 2014, p. 273 and 300-301 (transliteration and translation); Bácskay 2018a, p. 155 (mention); Bácskay 2018b (transliteration and translation).

¹¹¹ Bácskay 2023, p. 155-158 (transliteration and translation).

¹¹² Bácskay 2023 (copy, photo, transliteration, and translation).

CTN 4, 119 _{rev. 19-21}	ÉN ^d kamad-me 'dumu' an-na / mu pà-da dingir-re-e-ne-ke ₄ / ki-sikil líl-lá dumu
STT 144 _{rev. 19-21}	ÉN ^d kamad-me 'dumu' an-na / mu pà-da dingir-re-e-ne-ke ₄ / ki-sikil líl-lá dumu mu pà-da
Ugarit 1 ₁₋₄	ÉN ^d kamad'-me' dumu ^d a-nim / mu pad-da dingir-ra-ne-ke ₄ / nin ki-sikil ^d en-lil-le / dumu
BM 55516 _{+obv. 8'}	a-rá du ₁₀ -ga MIN <i>te</i> ÉN ÉN <i>an-ni-ta ina muḫ-ḫi</i> ^{na4} KIŠ[IB <i>tašaṭṭar...</i>]
BAM 148 _{obv. 39-40}	'a'-r[á du ₁₀ -ga ...] / [... ÉN] É.[NU.RU ...]
CTN 4 150 _{rev. 6}	a-ra du ₁₀ -ga TU ₆ É.NU.RU
STT 144 _{rev. 21-22}	a-rá du ₁₀ -ga / dumu a-rá du ₁₀ -ga ÉN É.'NU.RU'
Ugarit 1 ₄₋₆	a-rá du ₁₀ -ga / dumu a-rá du ₁₀ -ga / <i>te'</i> ÉN

If one day the fever seized him (and) on another day left him. You mix canal clay in canal water, (and) wipe the ill man's body. (Take) hair from the right (part) of a donkey (var. a female donkey), hair from the left (leg) of a donkey (var. a female donkey), mix (them) in that clay (and) make a cylindrical amulet. [You put?] the remaining animal hair on the amulet. The hair [...].

Incantation. Lamaštu, daughter of Anu, who was named (her) name by the gods, Ardat-Lilî,¹¹³ child of good behaviour, ditto (= children of good behaviour).¹¹⁴ *Incantation formula.* [You write] this incantation on it [and place it around his neck?].

Commentary

This Non-Canonical Lamaštu incantation inscribed on the amulet against fever is also attested in a ritual text describing the use of a cylindrical clay amulet for protecting small children (for the edition of these texts, see subsection 3.2); however, the ritual text gives only the incipit of the incantation, and does not contain the whole text. Only a single amulet (**Ugarit 1**) inscribed with this incantation is known to us, and our suggestion that this amulet belongs to the fever amulets is justified by its legend which is parallel with the incantation text preserved on clay tablets, containing incantations and rituals against Lamaštu.¹¹⁵ In the ritual presented above, a hair from the leg of a donkey had to be added to the clay, an action supposedly based on the association of Lamaštu with a male donkey. The iconographic equivalent of this idea is the figure of Lamaštu standing on a donkey's back, alongside paraphernalia depicting a donkey's leg, on the Lamaštu plaques.

¹¹³ One of the manuscripts provides an alternate version: 'Ardat-lili, servant of Enlil'. The text variant 'Mistress, servant of Enlil' preserved on a cylindrical clay amulet does not appear elsewhere among the Lamaštu incantations; however, in one incantation from the canonical series of Lamaštu incantations Enlil was characterized as 'her father' (Tablet 2, lines 92-93 Farber 2014, p. 108-109).

¹¹⁴ The text variant in CTN 4, 150 is as follows: Lamaštu, daughter of Anu, who was named (by her) name by the gods, the mistress, whose fate (was declared) good by Enlil.

¹¹⁵ The ritual is preserved on the following medical tablets, two Neo-Assyrian (BAM 148 and CTN 4, 150) and one Neo- or Late Babylonian (BM 55516+); all of them contain prescriptions against fever. The Neo-Assyrian tablet STT 144 includes a collection of Non-Canonical Lamaštu incantations without rituals.

3.3.2. CYLINDRICAL CLAY AMULETS INSCRIBED WITH A LAMAŠTU INCANTATIONS AGAINST FEVER MENTIONING HENDURSAG

Manuscripts: BM 35512 rev. 16-18;¹¹⁶ BAM 149 3'-9';¹¹⁷ STT 144 rev. 23'-29'.¹¹⁸

Transliteration and translation

BM 35512 _{rev.16}	én ¹ kamad-me dumu an-na ² hendur-sag-gá <nam> tar-tar-dir-e ¹¹⁹ : dingir gíd-gíd-a-ni ³ sa ⁴ -ur-ra ⁵ [hendur-sag-gá tar-tar nam-zu]
BAM 149 _{3'-4'}	[én ¹ kamad-me dumu an-na ²]a : hendur-sag-gá [...] / [dingir gíd-gíd-a-ni sa-ur ⁴]r-ra ⁵ hendur-sag-g[á tar-tar nam-zu]
STT 144 _{rev. 23'-26'}	én ¹ kamad-me [du]mu an-na / hendur-sag-gá <nam> tar-tar-e-d[è] / [dingir g]íd-gíd-a-ni ³ sa-ur-ra / [hendur-s]ag-gá tar-tar ⁶ nam ⁷ -zu
BM 35512 _{rev. 17}	a ze-eb huš nam hé-éb-bé ⁸ hendur-sag-gá ⁹ en-líl ¹⁰ en-me-šár-ra ku ⁴ x x ¹¹ [...]
BAM 149 _{5'-7'}	[a ze-eb huš] nam h[é-éb-bé] / [hendur-sag-gá ⁹ en-líl-lá ¹⁰ en-me-šár-ra] / [...] x ¹¹ ti x x ¹² [...]
STT 144 _{rev. 27'-29'}	[a ze-eb hu]š nam h[é-éb]-bé / [hendur-sag-g]á ⁹ en-líl ¹⁰ [en-m]e-šár-ra / [...] x tu-x ¹¹ [x] x tu ⁶ -én
BM 35512 _{rev. 18}	KA.INIM.MA DIŠ NA KÚM DAB-su ina ^{na4} KIŠIB SAR-ár ina GÚ-šú GAR-an-ma [...]
BAM 149 _{8'-9'}	[... K]ÚM DAB-su ina ^{na4} [...] / [...]-ma [...]

Incantation. Lamaštu, daughter of Anu, Hendursag, who determines (the fate), the god who drags the šēšū-net, [Hendursag who determined wisdom]. ... indeed, you determine (lit. say) the fate. Hendursag, Enlil (and) Enmešarra ... [...].

^{18'}*Incantation formula.* 'If a man has been seized by heat.' You write (this incantation) on a cylindrical amulet, place (it) around his neck and [he will get well].

Commentary

The incantation belongs to the group of Non-Canonical Lamaštu incantations and is known only from the three clay tablets mentioned above. Hendursag is the divine night watchman, who is the 'supervisor of the roads' and who keeps harmful demons away from the night travellers. In our sources, his figure often appears together with fire, which provides light and magical protection for people during the night, and with the god Išum, who is identified with the torch.¹²⁰ His figure or his battle-net are invoked against harmful demons by Asalluḫi in the canonical series *Utukkū lemnūtu* (tablet 11. lines 108-109).¹²¹ The figures of Hendursag and Lamaštu are not mentioned together in our sources, nor do other sources related to Hendursag refer to any relationship between the god and fever. The appearance of the god in the context of fever might be, on the one hand, due to his general exorcistic character and, on the other, due to the association of Išum with the fire illuminating the night, likely because the term 'fire' (Sumerian *izi*, Akkadian *išātu*) is a metaphor for 'fever'.¹²²

¹¹⁶ Bácskay 2018b, p. 18-19 and 108-109 sigla a (copy, photo, transliteration and translation).

¹¹⁷ Bácskay 2018b, p. 18-19 and 108-109 sigla E (transliteration and translation).

¹¹⁸ Farber 2014, p. 273 and 300-301 (transliteration and translation); Bácskay 2018b, p. 18-19 and 108-109 sigla K (transliteration and translation).

¹¹⁹ We interpreted tar-tar-dir-e as a corrupted form of tar-rat-re-dè.

¹²⁰ For the recent discussion of Hendursag and Išum, see George 2015.

¹²¹ For the edition of this text, see Geller 2016, p. 387.

¹²² Bácskay 2018b, p. 110 and footnote no. 27. For discussion of the correlation between fire and fever, see Stol 2007, p. 1-3; Bácskay 2018a, p. 7-8.

3.3.3 CYLINDRICAL CLAY AMULETS (NIPPUR 1–5) INSCRIBED WITH INCANTATIONS INVOKING UNDERWORLD DEITIES AND THE GOD EA

Manuscripts: **Nippur 1**; BM 43359+ rev. 9'-11'.¹²³

Transliteration and translation

Nippur 1₁ ÉN ^dMAŠ SAG.KAL DINGIR.MEŠ
BM 43359+_{rev.9'} ÉN ^d[MAŠ SA]G.KAL DINGIR.MEŠ

Nippur 1₂ ŠEŠ.MEŠ-šú ^{fd}KÁ-*e-tè-rat*
BM 43359+_{rev.9'} ŠEŠ.MEŠ-šú NENNI

Nippur 1₃ [DU]MU.MUNUS šá ^fDÙ-*ta-a*
BM 43359+_{rev.9'} A NENNI

Nippur 1₄ šá KÚM *šab-tu-ši-ma*
BM 43359+_{rev.10'} šá KÚM [*šab*]-*tu-ši-ma*

Nippur 1₅ NINDA.ĦI.A ú-*maṭ-tu-ú*
BM 43359+_{rev.10'} NINDA.ĦI.A ú-^r*maṭ-tu-ú*

Nippur 1₆ KÚM *u lu-ba-tu*
BM 43359+_{rev.10'} KÚM ù *lu-ba-tu*

Nippur 1₇ *ina* SU-šú ú-*suḥ-ma*
BM 43359+_{rev.11'} ^r*ina* SU-šú [^u-*s*]*uḥ-ma*

Nippur 1₈ *i-lik-ku lil-lik*
BM 43359+_{rev.11'} *i-lik-ki lil-lik*

Nippur 1₉ *te* ÉN
BM 43359+_{rev.11'} *te* ÉN

Incantation. Ninurta, foremost of the gods, his brothers! (Regarding) Bābu-ēṭirat, daughter of Bānâtâ (var. So-and-so, son of So-and-so), whom fever has attacked, and reduced her (appetite for) food, drive out fever and *lubāṭu*-disease from her body! May it be on its way!
*Incantation formula.*¹²⁴

Manuscripts: **Nippur 2**; BM 43359+ rev. 2'-8';¹²⁵ BM 49141+ obv. 17-18¹²⁶

Transliteration and translation

Nippur 2₁₋₄ ÉN ^dé-*a* LUGAL ABZU EN NUN.KI
BM 43359+_{rev. 2'} [...] ^r
BM 49141+_{obv. 17} [ÉN ^dé]-^r*a* LUGAL ABZU EN *eri₄-du₁₀*

Nippur 2₂ ^{fd}KÁ-*e-tè-rat* DUMU.MUNUS šá
BM 43359+_{rev. 2'} [...]

¹²³ Finkel 2018, p. 249-256 (copy, transliteration and translation).

¹²⁴ We followed the translation of I. Finkel.

¹²⁵ Finkel 2018, p. 249-256 (copy, transliteration and translation).

¹²⁶ Finkel 2018, p. 249-256 (copy, transliteration and translation); Abusch/Schwemer/Luukko/van Buylaere 2020, p. 131-132 Text 6.2 (transliteration and translation).

BM 49141+obv. 17 [KI NENNI]

Nippur 2₃ ^fDÙ-ta-a šá KÚM šab-tu-ši-ma

BM 43359+rev. 2'-3' [...] KÚM / šab-t[u ...]

BM 49141+obv. 17 šá KÚM šab-tu-ši-ma

Nippur 2₄ ú-šam-sa-qú zu-mur-šú

BM 43359+rev. 3' [...]

BM 49141+obv. 17 ú-šam-za-qí SU-šú

Nippur 2₅ ina te-e-ku KÙ lip-pa-ṭir-ma

BM 43359+rev. 3'-4' [ina te-e-k]u KÙ-tim / lip-[pa]-ṭir'-[ma]

BM 49141+obv. 18 [ina te-e-ku KÙ-ti]m ṭip'-pa-ṭir-ma

Nippur 2₆ a-ḫi-tam-ma lil-lik¹

BM 43359+rev. 4' [...]

BM 49141+obv. 18 a-ḫ[i-tam-m]a lil-lik rasur

Nippur 2₇ [t]e ÉN¹

BM 43359+rev. 4' te ÉN

BM 49141+obv. 18 te ÉN

BM 43359+rev. 5' DÙ.DÙ.[BI I]M ka-a-ṭir² IM² [...] TI-qí^{im}KIŠ]IB DÙ-uš

BM 43359+rev. 6' ÉN a[n-ni]ta ina muḫ-ḫi ta-ša[t-ṭar ina DUR GADA t]a-šak-kak

BM 43359+rev. 7' ú³x³ [x³] ú³el-kul-la ṭ³IGI-lim ú³ [AŠ].ṭÁL.ṭÁL³

BM 43359+rev. 8' ina [...]] 5-šú ta-rak-kas-ma KÚM ina SU-šú DU₈-ṭir³

Incantation. Ea, king of the Apsû, lord of Eridu! (Regarding) Bābu-ēṭirat, daughter of Bānâtâ (var. So-and-so, son of So-and-so) whom fever has seized, and whose body (the fever) is tormenting, (by the command of) your pure spell let it be removed, let it go elsewhere!
Incantation formula.

Its ritual. Take clay from a quay, clay [from ...] (and) make a cylindrical amulet, write this incantation on it. You string it on thread of flax [(together with stone beads)]; (Take) [...]-plant, *elkulla*-plant, *imhur-līm*-plant; you knot it on [his body?]¹²⁷ five times and fever be driven from her body.¹²⁸

Manuscripts: **Nippur 3**; BM 43359+ obv. 18-rev. 1';¹²⁹ BM 49141+ obv. 14-16¹³⁰

Transliteration and translation

Nippur 3₁₋₃ ÉN ṭ^dereš'-k[i-gal ...] / [...] KÚM? ú-kal / ina IGI-ki [...] ṭ^x ID²

BM 43359+obv. 18-19 ÉN ṭ^dereš-ki-gal ṭ³GAŠAN KI-t[im ... MUNUS.U]Š₁₁.ZU /

[ina I]GI-ka ṭ³ip'-q[i-du]

BM 49141+obv. 14 [É]N ṭ^dereš-ki-gal GAŠAN KI-tim DAGAL-tim NENNI šá MUNUS.UŠ₁₁.ZU

ina IGI-ka ip-qí-du-ma KÚM šab-tuš

¹²⁷ Finkel suggests that the amulet must be tied onto the patient's right hand (Finkel 2018, p. 253 and 255).

¹²⁸ We followed the translation of Abusch/Schwemer/Luukko/van Buylaere 2020, p. 132 with minimal correction.

¹²⁹ Finkel 2018, p. 249-256 (copy, transliteration and translation).

¹³⁰ Finkel 2018, p. 249-256 (copy, transliteration and translation); Abusch/Schwemer/Luukko/van Buylaere 2020, p. 131-132 Text 6.2 (transliteration and translation).

Nippur 34-6 'x x x' [...] 'x' / [...] 'x' / TU₆ ÉN

BM 43359⁺obv. 19-20 [muḥḥi ma]ḥ-ṣu / [x x] 'x' [...]

BM 49141⁺obv. 15 [mu]ḥ-ḥi maḥ-ṣu ṣer-ri GIG lib-luṭ N[ENNI?] 'bal'-tu lit-ta-'-id
DINGIR-ut-ka te ÉN

BM 43359⁺ rev. 1' [... GAR]- 'an'

BM 49141⁺obv. 16 [DÙ.DÙ.BI i]^mKIŠIB DÙ-uš ÉN an-nita ina UG[U] S[AR GI]Š? 'BÚR'?
[Z]Ú AM.SI MUN eme-sal-lim 'IGI-lim ina 'KUŠ DÙ.DÙ' ina 'GÚ-šú
GAR-an'

Incantation. Ereškigal, mistress of the wide netherworld, may So-and-so, whom a witch entrusted (to the netherworld) in your presence, and (whom) then fever seized, (whose) [he]ad was struck (and whose) back is sick, live! May So-and-[so], alive, praise your divinity!
Incantation formula.

Its ritual. You make a cylindrical clay amulet (and) write this incantation on (it). You wrap ['wo]od-of-release', [iv]ory, emesallu-salt, imhur-līm-plant in (a) leather (pouch); you place (it) around his neck.¹³¹

Manuscripts: **Nippur 4**; BM 43359⁺ obv. 10-17;¹³² BM 49141⁺ obv. 10-13.¹³³

Transliteration and translation

Nippur 41-3 ÉN ^dnam-[tar ...] / ^{fd}KÁ-e-tè-[-rat ...] / ip-qí-du-ma KÚM ṣa[b-tu-ši (...)]

BM 43359⁺obv. 10-11 ÉN ^d'[...]KI]-tim 'NENNI' šá MUNUS.UŠ₁₁.ZU ina IGI-ka /

ip-qí-[du-ma li]-'?'-ba KUR-i im-'qu'-tú UGU-šú

BM 49141⁺obv. 10 [ÉN] ^dnam-tar SUKKAL KI-tim NENNI šá MUNUS.UŠ₁₁.ZU ina IGI-ka
ip-qí-du-ma li-['bi šadî im]-qu-tú U[GU-šú]

Nippur 44-7 'x x x' / 'tu-šá'-an-nu-ú DIMMA-šú KÚM / tu-šá-aš-bit-su-ma
tu-šah-ḥa-ḥa UZU.MEŠ-šú

BM 43359⁺obv. 12-13 muḥ-[ḥi-tam]-ma 'tu-šá'-an-nu-ú tē-en-šú / KÚM tu-[šá-aš-bit-s]u-ma
'tu-šá'-ḥa-ḥa UZU.MEŠ-šú

BM 49141⁺obv. 11 muḥ-ḥi-tam ḥa-as-su-ma tu-šá-an-nu-ú tē-en-šú KÚM tu-šá-aš-bit-s[u]-
m[a tu-šá-ḥ]a-ḥa UZU.MEŠ-šú

Nippur 47-gap tu-kàs-su-ú SA.MEŠ-šú / [...]

BM 43359⁺obv. 14-15 tu-kà[s-su-ú S]A.MEŠ-šú NINDA [ḤI].A u A.MEŠ te-ki-mu TA KA-šú /
ina qí-bit ^dasal'-lú-ḥi EN a-ši-p[u]-tu pu-tur 'at'-lak te 'ÉN'

BM 49141⁺obv. 12 tu-kàs-su-ú SA.MEŠ-šú NINDA.ḤI.A u A.MEŠ te-ki-mu TA KA-šú
ina qí-'bit' ^dasal-lú-ḥi EN ÉN-ú-tu pu-tur at-lak te ÉN

BM 43359⁺obv. 16-17 DÙ.DÙ.BI ^{im}KIŠIB DÙ-uš ÉN a[n-nit]a ina muḥ-ḥi 'ta'-šaṭ-ṭar / ina DUR
GADA ^{na4}ZA.GÌN ^{na4}GUG [Á ana] 'Á' UD.DU [ina G]Ú-šú GAR-an

BM 49141⁺obv. 13 DÙ.DÙ.BI ^{im}KIŠIB DÙ-uš ÉN an-nita ina UGU SAR ina DUR GADA
^{na4}ZA.GÌN ^{na4}GUG Á ana Á UD.DU-ak ina GÚ-šú GAR-an

¹³¹ We followed the translation of Abusch/Schwemer/Luukko/van Buylaere.

¹³² Finkel 2018, p. 249-256 (copy, transliteration and translation).

¹³³ Finkel 2018, p. 249-256 (copy, transliteration and translation); Abusch/Schwemer/Luukko/van Buylaere 2020, p. 131-132 Text 6.2 (transliteration and translation).

Incantation. Namtar, vizier of the netherworld! Bābu-ēṭirat, [daughter of Bānâtâ] (var. So-and-so), whom a witch handed over (to the netherworld) in your presence, and (who) then was seized by fever (var. [was aff]licted by li['bu-fever]), 'whom you hit on the head and whose mind you disturbed, whom you had seized by fever, [making] his body waste away, whose sinews you bound, whose food and drink you took away from his mouth — at the com[ma]nd of Asalluḫi, lord of exorcism, release (her), go away! *Incantation formula.*

Its ritual. You make a cylindrical clay amulet (and) write this incantation on (it). You string lapis lazuli and carnelian on a cord of flax on both sides (of the cylinder seal). You place (it) around his neck.¹³⁴

Manuscripts: **Nippur 5**; BM 43359+ obv. 5-9;¹³⁵ BM 49141+ obv. 7-9¹³⁶

Transliteration and translation

Nippur 5 broken

BM 43359+obv. 5-6a [...] / [...]

BM 49141+obv. 7 [ÉN] 'dU.GUR' *kaš-kaš* DINGIR.MEŠ *la-biš* ^{sig}ĤÉ.ME.DA SAG.K[AL DINGIR.MEŠ ŠEŠ.MEŠ-šú (...)]

Nippur 5₁₋₃ [...] / 'nar'-bi-ku 'lu'-šá-pi dà-lí-lí-<ku> / 'lu'-ud'(text: lid)-lul

BM 43359+obv. 6b-7 [...] / [...li]b-luṭ na[r-bi²-ka² ...]

BM 49141+obv. 8 [NENNI] šá KÚM *šab-tu-uš ú-suḫ* KÚM u lu-ba-tu ina SU-šú 'lib-luṭ' [...]

BM 43359+obv. 8-9 [...] ĤI.ĤI ^{im}KIŠIB DÙ [...] / [...] UD.DU-ak ina GÚ-'šú GAR'

BM 49141+obv. 9 [DÚ.D]Ū.BI IM PA₅ TI-*qí* ina A.MEŠ PA₅ ĤI.ĤI ^{im}KIŠIB DÙ-uš ÉN *an-nita* ina UG[U SAR...]

Incantation. Nergal, most powerful of the gods, clad in red wool, fore[most of the gods, his brothers, ...]! [So-and-so], whom fever has seized — remove the fever and the *lubātu*-disease from his body, (then) [he will proclaim] yo[ur] greatness, (and) praise your glory! [*Incantation formula*].

Its ritual. You take clay from a canal, mix (it) with canal water. You make a cylinder seal (and) w[rite]

this incantation on (it). You string (it) [(...) on a cord of flax²]. You place (it) around his neck.¹³⁷

Commentary

These five incantations discussed above are currently known only from Late Babylonian tablets; however, healing procedures for fever and *lubātu*-disease (**Nippur 1** and **Nippur 5**) can already be identified in medical texts from the Neo-Assyrian period.¹³⁸ Based on ritual texts preserved on clay tablets, the amulet **Nippur 4** was strung next to magical stones (lapis

¹³⁴ We followed the translation of Abusch/Schwemer/Luukko/van Buylaere 2020, p. 132 with minimal corrections.

¹³⁵ Finkel 2018, p. 249-256 (copy, transliteration and translation).

¹³⁶ Finkel 2018, p. 249-256 (copy, transliteration and translation); Abusch/Schwemer/Luukko/van Buylaere 2020, p. 131-132 Text 6.2 (transliteration and translation).

¹³⁷ We followed the translation of Abusch/Schwemer/Luukko/van Buylaere 2020, p. 132 with minimal corrections.

¹³⁸ Procedures known to us are as follows: BAM 151 obv. 33'- rev. 3 and rev. 12-16; Labat/Tournay 1945-1946 pl. 116 obv. 1-3; Scurlock 2006, p. 339-347 no. 115; BAM 578 ii 9-10 and 13 (edited by Scurlock 2014, p. 510 and 521); Abusch/Schwemer/Luukko/van Buylaere 2020, p. 11-14 Text 3.11.

lazuli and carnelian), and the amulets **Nippur 2** and **Nippur 3** had to be used together with other healing substances, like herbs, salt, and ivory. The incantation **Nippur 5** invokes Nergal. Although the terms ‘hand of Nergal’ or ‘wrath of Nergal’ appear as causers of diseases in diagnostic and medical texts, the invocation of Nergal cannot be detected in further medical incantations or medical-magical rituals.¹³⁹ However, it is important to emphasize that Nergal is often invoked in other types of amulets and Nergal is also listed many times among the addressed deities in the canonical incantation series *Utukkū lemnūtu*.¹⁴⁰

The frequent occurrence of Nergal in exorcistic incantations can be explained by recalling that Nergal (together with Ninurta, Šamaš, and Sîn) was considered a patron deity of the incantation priests performing exorcisms or apotropaic rituals.¹⁴¹ The incantation on **Nippur 3** invokes Ereškigal, Nergal’s consort, and **Nippur 4** is addressed to Namtar, Nergal’s vizier. It is noteworthy to mention that Namtar, who usually represents one of the disease-causer demons in medical texts, is invoked together with Nergal, Ereškigal, and Namtar’s wife, Hušbiša, in an incantation preserved on a tablet-shaped stone amulet.¹⁴² Furthermore, the figure of Namtar appears together with the demon Asakku in an incantation preserved in a healing ritual against fever; this ritual describes the making and use of a substitute figure of Namtar.¹⁴³ One fever amulet (**Nippur 2**) is addressed to ‘Ea, king of Abzu, lord of Eridu’; as is known, Ea is the god of wisdom, a master of the exorcist’s ritual knowledge, including medical incantations. The god is also the patron deity of incantation priests; his figure is often mentioned in medical incantations (often together with Asalluḫi).¹⁴⁴

3.3.4 CYLINDRICAL CLAY AMULET AGAINST FEVER INSCRIBED WITH UNIDENTIFIED INCANTATION

Manuscript: BM 55516+ rev. 1’-2’¹⁴⁵

Transliteration and translation

1’ [...] ‘x’ [...] ‘x’ [...]

2’ [...] ^{na4}KIŠIB *i-ba-‘áš-ši’ ana UGU* ^{na4}KIŠIB S[AR? ...]

[...] cylindrical amulet ... You write (this incantation) on the amulet [...]

Commentary

The discussion of this text among the amulets against fever can be explained by noting that all preserved procedures on this tablet contain medical-magical prescriptions against fever.

¹³⁹ The logogram ^dGIR mentioned in a healing procedure against eye problems (Nineveh Medical Encyclopedia, series Eyes, first tablet, line 93’) was interpreted to mean Nergal in an earlier publication (Collins 1999, p. 204); however, in the recent edition of the same text the logogram is identified with the god Šakkan (Geller/Panayotov 2020, p. 81-82).

¹⁴⁰ For example, Nergal appears together with Šamaš and Ninurta in the canonical incantation series *Utukkū lemnūtu*, tablet 3 line 109 (Geller 2016, p. 111).

¹⁴¹ Geller 2016, p. 9.

¹⁴² Lambert 1976, p. 58-61; Bácskay/Niederreiter 2023.

¹⁴³ KUB 29, 58+59 + KUB 37, 84 col. i lines 1- col. ii. 8 (the text is edited in Bácskay 2018a, no. 55 lines 1-45).

¹⁴⁴ For example, in an incantation against bile preserved in the third tablet of the therapeutic series ‘Stomach’ (BAM 578 ii 29-38, edited in Scurlock 2014, p. 511 and 522).

¹⁴⁵ Bácskay 2018b (copy, photo, transliteration, and translation).

4. CONCLUSIONS

The cylindrical clay amulets discussed in our work are among the standard tools of Mesopotamian healing rituals. These amulets were mentioned in ritual texts and can also be identified in the archaeological materials. We can reconstruct the practice of making and applying these amulets from the perspective of the healing rituals; thereby, we can gain insight into the professional activities of the incantation priests. Furthermore, we can examine the cylindrical clay amulets together with cylinder seals made of stones and other stone amulets containing the same or similar type of incantations. Our work primarily aims to collect all cylindrical clay amulets known from previous publications and all information related to them, including unpublished objects. In addition, we identified an unpublished Late Babylonian tablet which contains rituals describing the use of cylindrical clay amulets against fever.

The present paper has summarized the research history and archaeological context of the cylindrical clay amulets; furthermore, we discussed the formal characteristics of their production as well as personal names mentioned in their inscriptions. After the classification of these amulets and analysis of data related to them, incantations written on them were discussed according to their content.

Based on the analysis of the research history, we can testify that references to these objects and their inscriptions appear in the literature from the 1880s. After that, the philological examination of their inscriptions began, and the first comparisons of their inscriptions with the contemporary incantation texts were published. However, decades have passed since their relationship with incantations preserved on amulets made of stone or on cylinder seals was identified. The detailed comparison of incantations and their carriers as well as the typology of the amulets were not carried out in early works focusing on Mesopotamian glyptic or magic amulets; instead, the early publications related to the incantations, in the fields of philology and history of religion, focused primarily on the reconstruction of the texts of incantation series or rituals (like the *Hulbazizi* series or the collection of incantations for protecting children), and only some of these amulets were mentioned, merely as parallels to the texts preserved on clay tablets. The comprehensive analysis of these amulets has not been carried out, due to the lack of systematic investigations of medical-magical rituals related to these objects; in addition, the difficulties with the transliteration and translation of the incantation texts inscribed on the amulets, as well as the fragmentary condition of their texts, hindered the interpretation of these texts and of their role during the healing rituals.

Based on the examination of the archaeological context of the cylindrical clay amulets, it can be established that some of them come from documented archaeological excavations from Assyrian (Nineveh and Nimrud) or Babylonian (Nippur) cities, as well as from Ugarit. In general, we have limited information about their exact archaeological context, but we can conclude that certain objects can be associated with the Assyrian elites, while the amulet from Ugarit comes from a tomb. Based on the examination of their production and their formal characteristics, three types of cylindrical clay amulets with different shapes can be distinguished: amulets shaped like stone beads, barrel-shaped amulets, and prism-like amulets. The different forms of the amulets do not signify a difference in content or functionality. The important role of the amulets is indicated by the fact that the incantation priest who made each object wrote the inscription on the amulet himself, whereas inscriptions on stone amulets and cylinder seals were made by seal-cutters. In this regard, it is worth noting that the clay amulets examined here are not only unusually small in size compared to

other amulets, their inscriptions are also relatively long, while their cuneiform signs are the smallest among the cuneiform texts written on clay.

The inscriptions on some cylindrical clay amulets also contain the names of their owners. However, these male and female names cannot yet be clearly identified with the personal names attested in other cuneiform texts. On some amulets, instead of the owner's name, the general formula ('So-and-so, son/successor of So-and-so') known in ritual texts is written. In addition, on two amulets the place for the owner's name is left blank, with only a male determinative referring to the owner's gender written on them. The presence of the general formula in place of the owner's name or the use of a blank place may indicate that these amulets were made in large numbers by the incantation priests. Furthermore, one owner may have used multiple amulets (**Nippur 1–2** and **Nippur 4**). There are even examples of 'amulet pairs' whose owners were relatives (**Scheil 1–2** and **Schøyen 1–2**).

Based on the types of incantations written on them, we classified the amulets into three groups: amulets inscribed with Hulbazizi incantations, amulets with incantations for protecting children, amulets with incantations against fever, and there are amulets with unidentifiable incantations. We presented the inscriptions of the amulets together with the relevant ritual texts preserved on clay tablets. In addition, in the commentaries of the inscriptions, we analysed the connections between the individual incantations and the related rituals.

The essence of our interpretation is the study of the role of the chosen objects in the medical-magical ritual context. In our work, the role of the discussed amulets and the incantations inscribed on them was examined within the context of the medical-magical rituals and as a specific medical-magical tool prepared by a specialist – the incantation priest – for specific healing rituals and for unique patients.

5. Appendix: Ḫulbazizi amulets made of stone

In addition to the 12 cylindrical clay amulets (subsection 3.1), the stone amulets collected below (Table 2) also contain Ḫulbazizi incantations.

incantation no.	museum no.	object type	material	date	lines
1. Ḫulbazizi 2	Morgan 581 ¹⁴⁶	cylinder seal	flint	Middle Babylonian	7
2. <i>ibid.</i>	unknown ¹⁴⁷	<i>ibid.</i>	unknown	<i>ibid.</i>	6
3. <i>ibid.</i>	MS 3001 ¹⁴⁸	bead (neck stone)	chalcedony	Neo-Assyrian	6 and 2
4. Ḫulbazizi 9 and 38	BM 89904 ¹⁴⁹ (83-01-01, 14)	flask-shaped amulet pendant	<i>ibid.</i>	Late Babylonian [?]	6 and 7
5. Ḫulbazizi 19	AO 1167 (A.602) ¹⁵⁰	cylinder seal	agate	Middle Babylonian	6
6. Ḫulbazizi 33 and 38	BLMJ 2844 ¹⁵¹ and BLMJ Seal 428	<i>ibid.</i>	obsidian or glass	<i>ibid.</i>	5
7. Ḫulbazizi 38	AO 22328 ¹⁵² De Clercq 253	<i>ibid.</i>	jasper	<i>ibid.</i>	8
8. <i>ibid.</i>	Morgan 583 ¹⁵³	<i>ibid.</i>	pink marble	<i>ibid.</i>	4

¹⁴⁶ Morgan 581 (Morgan Library & Museum; preserved height: 20 mm [lower third is broken off], diameter: 15 mm); Porada 1948, p. 65, 178 no. 581 and pl. LXXX; Finkel 1976, p. 82-83 ms. V and pl. 57; Matthews 1990, p. 138 no. 143; Stiehler-Alegria Delgado 1996, p. 214 no. 268 and pl. XXIX. Next to the 7-line inscription there is a fish-man (*apkallu*) who holds the crook of Ea in one raised hand.

¹⁴⁷ In his dissertation, Finkel provides only a description of the cylinder seal, from which we can learn that he only knows its modern impression, owned by Lambert. The description includes a copy of the 6-line seal inscription and also mentions that a fish-man (*apkallu*) is depicted on it: Finkel 1976, p. 140 ms. W.

¹⁴⁸ MS 3001 (Schøyen Collection): George 2016, p. 53 and 91-92 no. 67 and pl. CXL; Niederreiter 2018, p. 72-73. The 8-line inscription is on the upper, rounded side of the object.

¹⁴⁹ BM 89904 – 83-01-01, 14 (British Museum; height: 45 mm, width: 32 mm, thickness: 11 mm): Lenormant 1873, p. 90, no. 27 (copy); Langdon 1908, p. 11-12; Budge 1922, p. 167: II.29; Finkel 1976, p. 86-89 and 112-113 ms. R and pl. 56 (copy); Gelb 1977, p. 110: Type XXVIII: 6. The first 6 lines of the 13-line inscription are on the one side of the flask-shaped object, and the next 7 lines are on its back.

¹⁵⁰ AO 1167 – A.602 (Louvre; acquired in 1884, height: 31 mm [lower quart is broken off], diameter: 22 mm): Delaporte 1923, p. 157 no. A.602 and pl. 85: 3 (photo, transliteration and translation); Weidner 1927, p. 80; Van Buren 1954, p. 18 and 34; Goff 1956, p. 34; Reiner 1960, p. 154-155 no. 11; Limet 1971, p. 112 no. 10.1 (transliteration and translation); Lambert 1975, p. 223: 10.1 (for the correction of line 3); Finkel 1976, p. 94-95 no. X and pl. 59; Gelb 1977, p. 110: Type XXVIII: 3; Matthews 1990, p. 87 no. O4; Stiehler-Alegria Delgado 1996, p. 225 no. 357 and pl. XL. Next to the 6-line inscription, in the preserved seal image, there is a stylus (symbol of Nabû) in the upper field, and below it the upper body of a kneeling prayer figure appears. The part behind them is also missing.

¹⁵¹ BLMJ 2844 – BLMJ Seal 428 (Bible Lands Museum Jerusalem; preserved height: 31,9 mm [lower third is broken off], diameter: 15,2 mm): Finkel 1976, p. 110-113 ms. Y and pl. 59 (copy); Matthews 1990, p. 138 no. 144; Stiehler-Alegria Delgado 1996, p. 214 no. 266 and pl. XXIX; Goodnick Westenholz 2004, p. 58 no. 12. This cylinder seal will be published by Yigal Bloch: “Three Kassite Seals in the Bible Lands Museum Jerusalem,” in: B. Sass and L. Battini (eds.), *Mortals, Deities and Divine Symbols: Rethinking Ancient Imagery from Levant to Mesopotamia*, Studies Offered to Tallay Ornan (Oxford: Archaeopress, fc.). Next to the 5-line inscription, a fish-man (*apkallu*) facing a taller, larger divine figure holds a situla used for rituals. Above them in the middle is a Kassite cross, and furthermore two rhombs appear above the fish-man.

¹⁵² AO 22328 (Musée du Louvre; formerly kept in the De Clercq Collection; acquired in Baghdad in 1863, height: 36 mm, diameter: 13 mm): Menant 1883, p. vol. 1, 196-197 fig. 129; De Clercq/Menant 1888, p. 148 no. 253 and pl. 25; Langdon 1908, p. 112 (transliteration and translation); Frank 1941, p. 8; Finkel 1976, p. 112-113 and 199 (commentary to the incantation no. 38) ms.Z and pl. 57; Gelb 1977, p. 110: Type XXVIII: 7; Stiehler-Alegria Delgado 1996, p. 209 no. 239 and pl. XXVI; Matthews 1990, p. 137 no. 70. Below the 8-line inscription, there is a rhomb between two Kassite crosses.

<https://collections.louvre.fr/ark:/53355/cl010147057?fbclid=IwAR11bwmZg-oUSWbbJVu-dK6y2UQcSsdc4-qpuQbGzwGRaPKGDRlByDp92E> (accessed 11/01/2023).

9. <i>ibid.</i>	Morgan 587 ¹⁵⁴	<i>ibid.</i>	black-and-red jasper	<i>ibid.</i>	4
10. <i>ibid.</i>	unknown ¹⁵⁵	bead (neck stone)	unknown	unknown	4

Table 2: Various shaped stone objects and cylinder seals used as amulets, inscribed with Ḫulbazizi incantations.

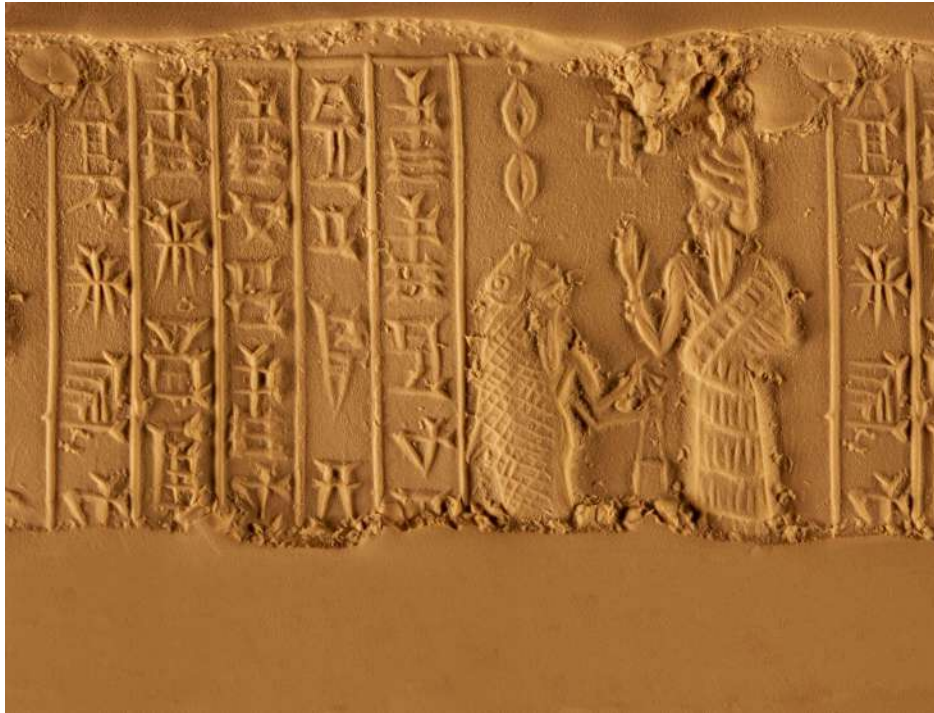


Figure 3: Modern impression of the BLMJ 2844 cylinder seal (Table 2: 6). Courtesy of the Bible Lands Museum Jerusalem

In the case of the Ḫulbazizi incantations, stone amulets of various shapes and cylinder seals show similar features with cylindrical clay amulets (subsection 3.1.2). These objects provide new data for us based on their dates, materials, shapes, and the depictions on them. Ḫulbazizi incantations are already attested on Middle Babylonian cylinder seals, centuries earlier than the cylindrical clay amulets we know from the 1st millennium BCE.¹⁵⁶ Ḫulbazizi 2 is preserved on two Middle Babylonian cylinder seals (Plate 2: 1-2). In addition to these, this incantation is known from a Neo-Assyrian chalcedony bead (Plate 2: 3), which is significant for us because the inscription in Akkadian (lines 7-8) after the Ḫulbazizi incantation (lines 1-6) reveals the owner of the object and the purpose of its making:

¹⁵³ Morgan 583 (Morgan Library & Museum; height: 20 mm. diameter: 12 mm): Frank 1941, p. 8-9; Porada, 1948, p. 65 no. 583 and pl. LXXX (the transliteration was made by Oppenheim on page 178); Limet 1971, p. 112 no. 10.2 (transliteration and translation); Finkel 1976, p. 112-113 ms. AA and pl. 58; Gelb 1977, p. 110: Type XXVIII: 4; Stiehler-Alegria Delgado 1996, p. 176-177 no. 17 and pl. II; Matthews 1990, p. 137 no. 65. Next to the 4-line inscription, a worshipper faces a Kassite cross above and a rhomb and an ear of grain below.

¹⁵⁴ Morgan 587 (Morgan Library & Museum; height: 25.5 mm. diameter: 11.5 mm): Porada 1948, p. 66, 178 no. 587 and pl. LXXXI; Limet 1971, p. 112-113 no. 10.3 (transliteration and translation); Finkel 1976, 112-113 ms. BB and pl. 58; Gelb 1977, p. 110: Type XXVIII: 5; Stiehler-Alegria Delgado 1996, p. 223 no. 342 and pl. XXVIII; Matthews 1990, p. 138 no. 168. Next to the 4-line inscription, there is a small tree between two rampant wild goats facing each other, and three rhombs are above them.

¹⁵⁵ Krušina/Černý 1950, p. 303 and pl. 14: 26; Finkel 1976, p. 112-113 ms. U and pl. 54.

¹⁵⁶ For the second millennium amulets containing Ḫulbazizi incantations, see Zomer 2018, p. 187-189.

Belonging to Šamši-ilu (*šam-ši-lu*). So that the wrath of god and king does not affect Šamši-ilu (^d*šamši*[UTU]-*lu*).

Schøyen Collection: MS 3001 (lines 7-8) (translation of George 2016, 92 no. 67).

Presumably, this amulet belonged to Šamši-ilu, the most significant dignitary of his time, the military commander-in-chief (*turtānu*). The inscription engraved on the object provided its bearer with protection against divine and royal wrath. Šamši-ilu's activity can be dated to the period 780–752 BCE, during which he served three Assyrian kings: Shalmaneser IV (782–773 BCE), Aššur-dān III (772–755 BCE) and Aššur-nērārī V (754–745 BCE).¹⁵⁷ This bead belongs to the group of neck stones. Its most notable characteristic is its shape, resembling a loaf. Its shape is slightly elongated, flat at the bottom but rounded at the top, and the short, straight sides are slightly rounded. The object is drilled on its central horizontal axis on both sides, so that it can be strung on a string and worn by its owner on a necklace, perhaps as the central element of a string of beads.¹⁵⁸ There is another neck stone of a similar shape, on which incantation Ḫulbazizi 38 is engraved (Table 2: 10). A flask-shaped amulet pendant made of chalcedony (Plate 2: 4) bears the incantation Ḫulbazizi 9 on one side and Ḫulbazizi 38 on the other. The incantation Ḫulbazizi 38 is also found on three Middle Babylonian cylinder seals (Plate 2: 7-9), while on a fourth, in addition, there is also Ḫulbazizi 33 (Plate 2: 6 and Figure 3). Of the objects inscribed with incantations from the Ḫulbazizi series, the cylinder seal (Plate 2: 5) kept in the Louvre is certainly the most important for us, since Ḫulbazizi 19 is engraved on it, which is identical to the inscription on one of our amulets, **Nimrud 3** (for the inscription see subsection 3.1.2).

In the images on the cylinder seals, it is worth noting that there are a relatively large number of fish-men (*apkallu*), who played an important role in cults and rituals (Table 2: 1-2, 6 and Figure 3).¹⁵⁹ These mythical creatures were cultural heroes for the Mesopotamians, and due to their roles, they can be linked to Mesopotamian priests and sages. Finally, it is worth mentioning that a relatively large proportion of cylinder seals inscribed with Ḫulbazizi from the Middle Babylonian period were broken, and it can be observed that it is always the bottom part of the object that is missing (Table 1: 1, 5 and 6). However, our finding is based on a small sample size, and it can be concluded that the proportion of broken objects in the entire corpus of Middle Babylonian cylinder seals is much smaller. This phenomenon might be explained if the objects were made for temporary use and for a special purpose and were then intentionally destroyed.

¹⁵⁷ Mattila 2000, p. 110-111 and especially Mattila 2011, p. 1226: Šamši-ilu 1.

¹⁵⁸ Neck stones of a similar shape which were part of strings of beads worn as necklaces were found in graves excavated in Assur and Uruk (Niederreiter 2018, p. 72).

¹⁵⁹ For the descriptions of these seal images, see footnotes 146-147, and 151.

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