

# Kettledrums in ancient Mesopotamia: Three lexicographical studies and the edition of a new Seleucid ritual text about the *lilissu*

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**Abstract:** This paper is organized as a group of four brief studies of the Mesopotamian *lilissu*-kettledrum. The first three discuss little-explored expressions about its accessories or physical aspect: *lit lilissi* ('stool of the *lilissu*'), <sup>(urudu)</sup>še n - ħ u r - s a ġ - ġ a <sub>2</sub> (a Sumerian translation of *lilissu*), and Ab-gal-gungunu (A b<sub>2</sub> - g a l - g u n<sub>3</sub> - g u n<sub>3</sub> - n u 'Large, Multicolored Cow'), the proper name of a *lilissu*. The fourth note is an edition of BM 32979, a previously unpublished Seleucid cuneiform fragment that describes a procession involving a *lilissu* passing by some gates of the Esaġil temple in Babylon.

**Keywords:** *lilissu*-kettledrum; stool; stand; Ab-gal-gungunu; multicolored aspect; processions.

To Anne Draffkorn Kilmer, in memory and appreciation

## INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

Among the various sound tools (musical instruments and others, such as noisemakers) that existed in ancient Mesopotamia, the kettledrum called in Akkadian *lilissu* (/lilis/ in Sumerian; spelled in multiple ways, see EPSD2) has been quite well studied (see, e.g., GABBAY 2018, 4-40; GABBAY 2014a, 118-139; SHEHATA 2014, 155-116; MIRELMAN 2010; KILMER 2003-2005, 370-371; CAD L, s.v. *lilissu* 'c'). However, many aspects of the sources already available for its study remain to be discussed. On the other hand, new texts describing the *lilissu* can be added to the available cuneiform corpus. The present article aims to contribute to both aspects with four brief studies, whose topics will be presented in the introduction of each study for the sake of clarity. In any case, there is a common methodological aspect to all of them: topics are approached philologically with some iconographic and comparative ideas.

## THE *LIT LILISSI* ('STOOL OF THE *LILISSU*'): IDENTIFICATION AND ROLE

### INTRODUCTION

TJAUB H 41 + YOS 13, 91 (Ammī-dītāna 33-06-05)<sup>1</sup> is a Late Old Babylonian legal text, which describes the assets of the dowry of Țāb-Esaġil, a *nadītu* priestess from Kiš devoted to the god Marduk (BARBERON 2014, 271, 273; SOMMERFELD 1982, 91). The most relevant passage reads:

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<sup>1</sup> Abbreviations follow the *Reallexikon der Assyriologie* plus CAL, EBL, ESAD, and LABASi (see Bibliography). Dates appear according to the sequence year-month-day, with two zeros and suspension dots for a non-written and a lost year/month/day, respectively. Sumerian words in texts dating before the 1<sup>st</sup> millennium BCE are transliterated as proposed by ATTINGER (2021, 57-104). Sumerian terms in 1<sup>st</sup>-millennium texts are transliterated as in EPSD2.

## Lower edge

1	1 <sup>g<sup>e</sup></sup> BEŠĒĜ ŠU.I	1 barber's reed basket.
2	1 <sup>g<sup>e</sup></sup> nu-us <sub>2</sub> -ĥu	1 reed <i>nushu</i> -container.
3	1 <sup>g<sup>e</sup></sup> li-it LI.LI.IS	1 reed stool of the <i>lilissu</i> .
4	1 [ <sup>g<sup>e</sup></sup> ] BEŠĒĜ ŠU.KAM*.MA*	1 reed basket of the pregnant woman.

After the reed determinative <sup>g<sup>e</sup></sup> in line 3, DALLEY (1980, 63) read *'te'-et-tu<sup>2</sup>-li-iz*, a sequence of signs of uncertain meaning. Later, WILCKE (1982, 459) transliterated and translated it as *li-it li-li-is*, '*Rohrhocker*' für die *Kesselpauke*'. Except ARCHIBAB T4961, those who have studied this text (MICHEL 2015, 316; BARBERON 2012, 188; LAFONT 2001, 311) have followed DALLEY without attempting to explain her *'te'-et-tu<sup>2</sup>-li-iz*. Philologically speaking, however, WILCKE's transliteration is more interesting for three reasons:

- *lit*, and not only *litti* (cf. *libbi* < *libbu* 'heart'), may be the construct state of *littu* (GAG §64e)<sup>2</sup>.
- *li-li-is*, a phonetic spelling of /lilis/, appears in another Old Babylonian text<sup>3</sup>: *Ĥammu-rāpi* 11 (= RIME 4, 3.6.11), 31: *'balaĝ' li-'li-is' zabar*.
- This may not be the only allusion to a *littu*-stool made of reed (<sup>g<sup>e</sup></sup>) instead of the wood normally used to make such an object (<sup>g<sup>e</sup>s</sup>; see CAD L, s.v. *littu*). The lexical texts CUSAS 12, 3.2.1: obv. i 7 (Old Babylonian), *RA* 28, 132: rev. i' 27' (Neo-Assyrian), and *Iraq* 6, 69: obv. iii 10' (Neo-Babylonian) refer to a <sup>g<sup>e</sup></sup> šu<sub>2</sub>-a, šu<sub>2</sub>-a being the Sumerian equivalent of *littu*.

WILCKE's reading also recalls other texts (see below) that relate the *nadītu* (lukur in Sumerian) to the *balaggu* (balaĝ in Sumerian), a term that could designate the same type of kettledrum as the word *lilissu* (GABBAY 2014b, 135-136)<sup>4</sup>. Furthermore, the *lilissu* had some tradition in Kiš, as King Mananā had made a *lilissu* for the god Šamaš in that city (*RA* 73, 130 57bis, rev. 4; *RA* 73, 132 58, rev. 13; *RA* 74, 114 63, rev. 5').

In any case, what is a *lit lilissi*? Why did a *nadītu* own such an object? None of the major studies on the *lilissu* (see above, in the Introductory Remarks) or on the musical life in Old Babylonian Kiš (SHEHATA 2009, 215-222) has ever discussed this *lit lilissi*. It appears only in TJAUB H 41+, but *littu* ('stool') and *lilissu* are well known, so this note will try to explore this expression in the hope of answering both questions.

<sup>2</sup> In addition to the examples on GAG §64e, there are other Old Babylonian cases: *kappu* 'wing' (construct *kap* in ARM 28, 43, rev. 6), *libbu* 'interior' (construct *lib* in ARM 28, 53, rev. 8), and *tuppu* 'tablet' (construct *tup* in CUSAS 36, 201, obv. 18). Remark owed to Michael Streck (personal communication).

<sup>3</sup> See also the Old Babylonian Sumerian texts Kisurra 14 (Unknown ruler 00-12-00), rev. 10 and *Warad-Sîn 1002* (= RIME 4, 2.13.1002), 18'. This spelling is also known from some Late Babylonian texts: *JCS* 43, 89-106, iv 28; *JCS* 63, 51-64, rev. 7; *Syllabary B*, II 258; SBH 23, rev. 14 (= GABBAY 2014a, 82 n. 1); TU 47, obv. 16. EBL also mentions BM 38395, obv. 2', BM 39416, obv. 5', and K.6642, obv. 9.

<sup>4</sup> Proof of this connection is the above-mentioned *Ĥammu-rāpi* 11 (= RIME 4, 3.6.11), 31, where /lilis/ would be written with <sup>balaĝ</sup> as a determinative.

IDENTIFYING *LIT LILISSI*

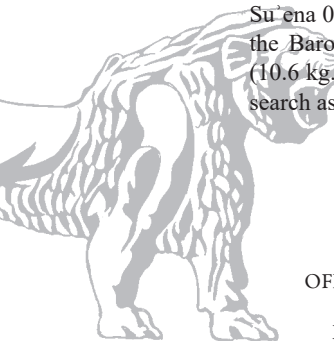
TJAUB H 41+ mentions the *lit lilissi* along with some terms for baskets. However, this does not mean that the present Akkadian expression also denotes a basket: the text simply groups together the objects made of reed (according to their determinative <sup>ge</sup>) in Tāb-Esaġil's dowry. The utensils listed in the preceding and following lines are also grouped according to the main material from which they were made. For example, the lines lower edge 5-rev. 6 group together beds (<sup>ges</sup>NA<sub>2</sub>), chairs (<sup>ges</sup>GU.ZA), tables (<sup>ges</sup>BANSUR), and containers for spindles (<sup>ges</sup>E<sub>2</sub> BALA.ĤI.A) in addition to other weaving tools (<sup>ges</sup>KA *da-bi-bu*; see ESAD D s.v. *dābibu*), all of them made of wood.

The Akkadian *littu* refers to a place where people sit (CAD L, s.v. *littu* B subsection 'b'). This helps to rule out three possible identifications for *lit lilissi*:

- A stool on which the drummer would sit to beat the *lilissu*. Mesopotamian iconography (Fig. 1) depicts the players of kettledrums identifiable as *lilissū* (according to GABBAY 2014a, 119) standing while playing. At most, an Old Babylonian terracotta plaque (Fig. 2) depicts a stool in front of a kettledrum that sets music during a boxing match. However, this stool is occupied by a female cymbalist and the kettledrum may not be a *lilissu*<sup>5</sup>.
- A chair occupied by a *kalû* during the recitation of Eme-sa1 prayers. These prayers, occasionally called *lilissū*, were recited exclusively while standing (GABBAY 2014a, 7, 84).
- A *lilissu* stand. Such an identification would contradict the nature of the *littu* as a place where people sit. Three additional points should also be considered. First, there is already a rich terminology for the *lilissu* stands (see below for the following study). Second, reeds are not strong enough to support a heavy object like the *lilissu* (KAMINSKI *et al.* 2016, 42-45), whose production requires 60 kilos of copper (ARM 24, 105, obv. 2)<sup>6</sup>. Third, plant-made stands, such as the wooden ones of

<sup>5</sup> The Old Babylonian Sumerian literary text *Ġardu's Marriage* (= ETCSL 1.7.1), 61-62 refers to a <sup>kuš</sup>a<sub>2</sub>-la<sub>2</sub> and a sem<sub>5</sub><sup>zabar</sup> playing in a wrestling match like the one depicted on BM 91906. In Old Babylonian texts, the sem<sub>5</sub> may refer to the cymbals (GABBAY 2014a, 86, 146-147). However, despite the 1<sup>st</sup>-millennium allusions to a<sub>2</sub>-la<sub>2</sub>, giant frame drums (the usual identification of a<sub>2</sub>-la<sub>2</sub>; MIRELMAN 2014) disappeared from the Mesopotamian iconography from the 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium BCE onwards (SHEHATA 2019, 161). Consequently, a<sub>2</sub>-la<sub>2</sub> may refer to something else thereafter. The words a<sub>2</sub>-la<sub>2</sub> and sem<sub>5</sub> may also mean 'large' and 'small percussion instruments' in general (MICHAŁOWSKI 2019, 454 n. 1). Additionally, there are Old Babylonian textual allusions to bronze *alû* drums (e.g., AEM 2 286, rev. 4'-20'), bronze being more suitable for a kettledrum than for a (giant) frame drum. Finally, the kettledrum in BM 91906 has a different size regarding those drums classifiable as *lilissū* (see Fig. 3 in the body text). Therefore, even if some scholars call the kettledrum depicted on BM 91906 a *lilissu* (GABBAY 2019, 117; COLLON 2014-2015, 142; VOLK 2006, 163), the drum on this plaque could be an a<sub>2</sub>-la<sub>2</sub>/*alû*.

<sup>6</sup> Wooden stands supported Baroque copper timpani, which weighed thirteen kilos at most (<https://www.lefima.de/en/concert/belted-and-screw-tuned-timpani/screw-tuned-baroque-timpani>). A wooden stand would only have supported an Ur III *lilissu*, whose fabrication required just 10 kilos of copper (*Textes économiques* 6055 - Amar-Su'ena 03-04-00-, obv. ii 9). Thanks to Kristin Thorrud and Lena Engquist for weighing, on September 13, 2023, the Baroque kettledrums AM.137111 (13 kg.; <https://digitaltmuseum.se/011024486429/puka>) and AM.137112 (10.6 kg.; <https://digitaltmuseum.se/011024486431/puka>) from the Army Museum (Stockholm) as part of the research associated to this article.



Early Modern European timpani, have a tripod-like shape. This contrasts with the depictions of *lilissū*, which sit on a stand shaped like a cup (Fig. 3).

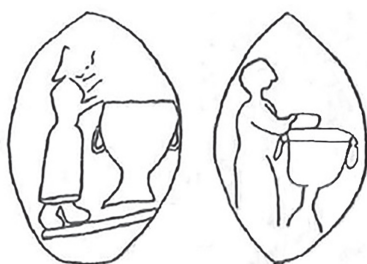


Fig. 1: Impressions of two Seleucid seals showing priests beating likely *lilissu* examples (WALLENFELS 1994, nos. 51-52).



Fig. 2: Old Babylonian terracotta plaque BM 91906. The stool is on the top right (RASHID 1984, 79, fig. 60).



Fig. 3: Comparison of an Early Modern European timpani ('Barock Riemenpauken' by Lefima shared under CC BY-SA 3.0 at <<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Riemenpauken.jpg>>) with a *lilissu* (TU 47 = GABBAY 2017, 47, fig. 1).



However, what could *lit lilissi* denote, if not a stand? According to SHEHATA (2017, 69), the Old Babylonian ritual text FM 3, 2 (obv. i 10'-11', 15'-16') would describe some *kalû* sitting before playing the Nin-igizibara *balaĝ* instrument<sup>7</sup>. Furthermore, the lexical list Ur<sub>5</sub>-ra = *hubullu* (IV, 138-139) refers to a stool (<sup>ĝ</sup>u<sub>2</sub>-a) for the *kalû* and the *kalamāhu*. Perhaps this was their stool when they sat (*ašābu*) at the *lilissu* (*ina lilissi*), according to the lines obv. 11' and 14' of the Late Babylonian ritual text UVB 15, 40-44, (= QUILIEN 2019, 87-89). Therefore, *lit lilissi* might allude to a stool on which the *lilissu* player sat when (s)he was not playing but still participating in an event. Be that as it may, did Ṭāb-Esaĝil ever play the *lilissu*? The next section will answer this question by discussing some sources about the *nadiātu*<sup>8</sup>.

#### THE *NADIĀTU* AS PERFORMERS

Various Late Babylonian texts show the *nadiātu* as performers. However, Late Babylonian mentions of the *nadiātu*, in general, are an exercise in antiquarianism rather than allusions to cultic personnel of the time, and the signs MUNUS.ME may be read *sinnišātu* ('women') rather than as LUKUR (*nadītu*) in these contexts (DEBOURSE 2022a, 364 and 2022b, 366). Moreover, some allusions to *nadītu/sinnišātu* as performers are particularly problematic.<sup>9</sup> *Iraq* 81, 87-105, obv. ii 12', rev. iv 2, 7-8 is ambiguous, for it mentions *nadītu/sinnišātu* in connection with *nigūtu*, a vocal technique used both for festive and liturgical contexts (DA RIVA 2021b, 110): do the *nadītu/sinnišātu* of *Iraq* 81, 87-105 and Ṭāb-Esaĝil perform on the same occasions or not? Other texts might not refer to any performative action. This is the case of *JCS* 43, 89-106, iii 15, which connects *alû* with *nadītu/sinništu*. DA RIVA (2019, 93) and MIRELMAN (2014, 164) translate this *alû* as a giant drum, but it is related to barley beer (*šikaru uṭṭati*). Therefore *alû* in this text could be a liquid container (*cf.* the Sumerian *a-la<sub>2</sub>*) and not a giant drum (see also DEBOURSE 2022b, 365).

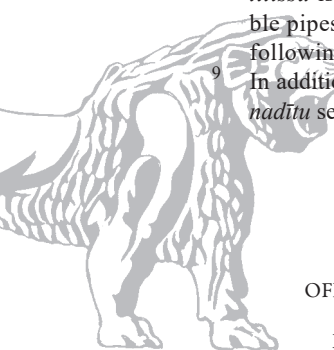
Late Babylonian allusions to the *nadītu/sinnišātu* do not answer the question of whether Ṭāb-Esaĝil ever played the *lilissu*. Fortunately, two allusions to a *lukur* with a *balaĝ* help with this:

- UTI 4, 2849 (Šū-Su'en 02-00-00), obv. 5: 2 *kuš u<sub>2</sub>-hab<sub>2</sub> 1/3 ma-na še-gin<sub>2</sub> balaĝ lukur gal si-ga*, "two dyed-red hides, one-third of a mina of glue: the covering of the *balaĝ* of the chief *lukur*".

<sup>7</sup> In any case, this *balaĝ* may be a lyre, rather than a drum (MIRELMAN 2021, 216; SHEHATA 2017).

<sup>8</sup> SAA 10, 341, obv. 8-11, an excerpt from a letter to Aššurbānīpal (GABBAY 2014c, 120), alludes to a *lilissu* in the royal palace. On the other hand, a Neo-Assyrian relief (= ALBENDA 1976, 61, fig. 9; see also BM 124920 = RASHID 1984, 131, fig. 147) depicts a musical ensemble playing for Aššurbānīpal and Aššur-šurrat. The ensemble includes a woman playing a small kettledrum. Perhaps this kettledrum is the *lilissu* of SAA 10, 341, obv. 8-11 and this relief supports the idea that Ṭāb-Esaĝil played the *lilissu*. Nevertheless, the *lilissu* is never played with the other instruments depicted on the aforementioned relief, namely lutes, double pipes, and harps. Therefore, ALBENDA 1976, 61, fig. 9 and SAA 10, 341, obv. 8-11 cannot be used in the following section.

<sup>9</sup> In addition to those commented on in the body text, the Late Babylonian text *JCS* 43, 89-106, rev. i 13 shows a *nadītu* seated during a ritual, but there is no *lilissu* in the nearby.



- BiMes 11, 307 (Rīm-Sîn 28-06-27), rev. 1-2: 250 sila<sub>3</sub> inda<sub>3</sub> ? 26 inda<sub>3</sub>-i<sub>3</sub> 70 utu<sub>2</sub> / 'balaĝ' lukur-ra, "250 sila<sub>3</sub> of bread, 26 of inda<sub>3</sub>-i<sub>3</sub>-bread and 70 of utu<sub>2</sub>-cereal: the balaĝ of the lukur".

SIGRIST (1984, 163) initially suggested that the lukur did not play the balaĝ<sup>10</sup>, and SHEHATA (2009, 99) was uncertain of whether these lukur played the balaĝ. However, scholars currently think that lukur did play it (HUBER VULLIET 2019, 283; HEIMPEL 2015, 619; SUCH GUTIÉRREZ 2012, 329 n. 15). This is, after all, the most literal/straightforward reading of the sources.

If the lukur/*nadītu* is documented using sound tools in other texts, the *nadītu* Ṭāb-Esaĝil may also have played the *lilissu*. If this reasoning is correct, she might sit on her *lit lilissi* during the breaks in her performances with the *lilissu*. However, before closing this first note, a final section will address some additional points of the relationship between Ṭāb-Esaĝil and the *lit lilissi*.

#### THE CIRCUMSTANCES IN WHICH ṬĀB-ESAĜIL RECEIVED HER *LIT LILISSI*

Dowries provide brides with goods for the new household, and the dowry of Ṭāb-Esaĝil was no exception. Among other things, she received lands (obv. 1-7), oil (obv. 16-18), and cattle (obv. 19-20) for subsistence. Some servants (obv. 8-9) would work her fields, and several utensils of stone (obv. 21-24) and wood (lo. ed. 5-rev. 4) would equip Ṭāb-Esaĝil's new household.

In any case, the assets found in Old Babylonian dowries also inform us about the activities and interests of the women, who were to be married (DALLEY 1980, 53). The keeping of cultic objects at home is also found in other ancient cultures. For example, most of the *sistra* (a cultic rattle) found in Roman Pompeii did not appear around the temple of Isis but were kept with other personal cultic objects in the bedroom (*cubicula*) of various *domūs* (MUNGARI 2018, 85)<sup>11</sup>.

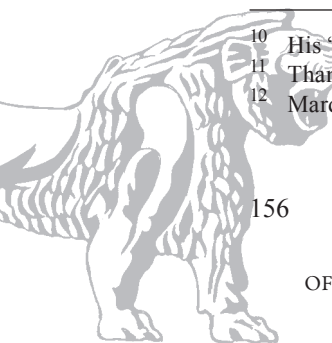
Two objects from Ṭāb-Esaĝil's dowry were probably tools for her work at the cella of Marduk in the temple of Zababa at Kiš<sup>12</sup> rather than elements of domestic furniture:

- The barber's basket (*pišan gallābi* = <sup>g</sup>eBEŠEĜ ŠU.I; lo. ed. 1) could have been used to assist the barbers working at the temple of Zababa. We only know of one barber of Anu and Ištar (ŠU.I AN <sup>d</sup>INANA) from Kiš, documented in YOS 13, 297 (Samsu-dīšana 05-03-23), rev. 6. However, barbers working for Marduk could exist in Kiš, as they did in other cities such as Sippar (CT 45, 85, 13; see BARBERON 2012, 123 for comments).
- The so-called 'basket of the pregnant woman' (*pišan erišti* = <sup>g</sup>eBEŠEĜ ŠU.KAM.MA; lo. ed. 4). Two things should be considered. First, the *nadiātu* devoted to Marduk could marry, but they had to remain childless (DE GRAEF 2019, 85; GADOTTI 2016, 71-72). Second, the *nadiātu* could occasionally assist women in childbirth (BARBERON 2012, 207-208). Thus, as already suggested by STOL (2000, 172-173), a

<sup>10</sup> His "harpe on [sic] lamentation (*chantée par*) des lukur", suggests that someone else played the balaĝ.

<sup>11</sup> Thanks to Dahlia Shehata for this reference.

<sup>12</sup> Marduk and Zababa were related in Old Babylonian times (SOMMERFELD 1982, 28, 39, 42).



*nadītu* like Ṭāb-Esaġil most likely used the (implements kept in) the *pišan erišti* to assist pregnant women in the temple of Zababa in Kiš. This may have been convenient if medical treatment was inaccessible in that temple<sup>13</sup>.

Another aspect to explore is the relationship of Marduk-muballiṭ, Ṭāb-Esaġil's *adoptive*<sup>14</sup> father, with this *lit lilissi*. Only temples owned *lilissū*, and only cultic figures, such as the *kalû*, could play them (SHEHATA 2014, 115-116). Therefore, Marduk-muballiṭ should have held a *kalû*-ship and transferred the *lit lilissi* to his daughter, since they were both cultic workers<sup>15</sup>. Nevertheless, this is a tentative statement: no currently available Old Babylonian text from Kiš mentions a *kalû* or a *kalamāḥu* named Marduk-muballiṭ (SHEHATA 2013, 72).

#### THE SUMERO-AKKADIAN TERMINOLOGY FOR THE STAND(S) OF THE *LILISSU*

The Sumerian <sup>(urudu)</sup>šen-ḥur-saġ-ġa<sub>2</sub> is a rare translation of the Akkadian *lilissu* found only in two texts: Mur-gu<sub>4</sub> = *imrû* = *ballu*, A II 192 and *Nebuchadnezzar I*, 9 (= RIMB 2, 4.9), 38-39. This last excerpt is shown here (with some previous lines) for the sake of clarity<sup>16</sup>:

34	[...] x z u <sub>2</sub> b i r <sub>9</sub> -b i r <sub>9</sub> -r a -b i i g i ṛ d u <sub>8</sub> g u <sub>4</sub> ṛ -u d ṽ A s a r -r i -k e <sub>4</sub>	[The gods of hea]ven and earth were looking, smiling, at Marduk, the warrior.
35	[DĠIR.MEŠ ša]-ṛ m a ṛ -m e u q a q -q a -r i š e -ḥ i -ṛ i š i -n a ṽ -ṭ a -l u ṽ A M A R . U T U q a r -d u	
36	[...] x ṛ z a <sub>3</sub> ṛ -m i n <sub>2</sub> a n -t i	[...] The praise of <i>his</i> heroism.
37	[...] ṛ t a ṽ -n i t -t u <sub>4</sub> q u r -d i	
38	[...] ṛ š e n ṽ -š e n -n a ṛ š e n (erasure) -ḥ u r - s a ḡ ṽ -ḡ a <sub>2</sub> a -l a <sub>2</sub> -e	[...] They will make brilliant the <i>lilissu</i> and the <i>alû</i> .
39	[...] u <sub>2</sub> -n a m -m a -r u a -ṛ l u ṽ -u <sub>2</sub> ṛ l i ṽ -l i -s i	

Only KILMER (2003-2005, 370) has commented on <sup>(urudu)</sup>šen-ḥur-saġ-ġa<sub>2</sub>, but this is an interesting expression, as it can be translated as a kettle (<sup>(urudu)</sup>šen) placed on a mountain (ḥur-saġ with locative {a})<sup>17</sup>, where the mountain would *poetically* denote the *lilissu*

<sup>13</sup> Thanks to an anonymous reviewer for this insight.

<sup>14</sup> The children of the *kalû* were mostly adopted (PELED 2016, 140-141).

<sup>15</sup> The matter would recall the case of Inana-manšum, *kalamāḥum* of Sippar. In addition to his son the *kalamāḥum* Ur-Utu, he had a daughter, Lamassani, who was a *nadītum* of Marduk (BARBERON 2014, 268).

<sup>16</sup> This is the translation of the Akkadian version. The Sumerian one reads: “[...] smiling, looking at the hero Asari (= Marduk) / [...] The praise of *his* heroism / [...] making pure (?) the šen-ḥur-saġ-ġa<sub>2</sub> and the a<sub>(2)</sub>-la<sub>2</sub>”. The terms <sup>(urudu)</sup>šen-ḥur-saġ-ġa<sub>2</sub>/*lilissu* and a<sub>(2)</sub>-la<sub>2</sub>/*alû* seem to form a bilingual chiasmus, a common literary resource in this text (BARAGLI 2022, 265, 271, 278).

<sup>17</sup> *A priori*, <sup>(urudu)</sup>šen-ḥur-saġ-ġa<sub>2</sub> may be parsed as a genitive chain (i.e., <sup>(urudu)</sup>šen ḥur.saġ + a(k)). The resultant meaning, ‘cauldron of the mountain’, might recall the sound tool <sup>urudu</sup>niġ<sub>2</sub>-kala-ga. In UH XII: 83, <sup>urudu</sup>niġ<sub>2</sub>-kala-ga is translated into Akkadian as *ruqqu*, which is rendered as ‘cauldron’ by GELLER (2015, 414). Moreover, some texts say that the <sup>urudu</sup>niġ<sub>2</sub>-kala-ga-sound tool was created in the mountains (*Compendium*, 1: 79, and 2: 1; Saġ-gig-ga-meš, A, incantation 2: 1) and there are modern identifications of <sup>urudu</sup>niġ<sub>2</sub>-kala-ga with a kettledrum (e.g., AHW, s.v. *niġkalagû*). However, <sup>(urudu)</sup>šen-ḥur-saġ-ġa<sub>2</sub> cannot be translated as ‘cauldron of the mountain’ or connected with <sup>urudu</sup>niġ<sub>2</sub>-kala-ga because *Šēp lemutti ma biṭ amēli*, 252-253 (= WIGGERMANN 1992, 16-17) mentions together an <sup>urudu</sup>niġ<sub>2</sub>.KALA.GA and a LILIS<sup>zabab</sup>. Therefore, <sup>(urudu)</sup>šen-ḥur-saġ-ġa<sub>2</sub> and <sup>urudu</sup>niġ<sub>2</sub>-kala-ga are two different sound tools, not two names

stand. The comparison of this stand with a mountain is logical: the stand had to raise the *lilissu* high enough so that the standing *kalû* could comfortably beat it with his hands. The seal impressions shown in Fig. 1 suggest that the *lilissu* stand could have been relatively big, as a sort of small mountain.

Thus, <sup>(urudu)</sup>š en-ḥ ur-sa ḡ-ḡ a<sub>2</sub> would contain the first documented Sumerian word for the stand of a kettledrum. Until now, we only knew three Akkadian words: *kandurû*, *kankannu*<sup>18</sup>, and *šuhḥu*<sup>19</sup>. Taking advantage of the opportunity provided by <sup>(urudu)</sup>š en-ḥ ur-sa ḡ-ḡ a<sub>2</sub>, this note will also revisit these Akkadian words for the *lilissu* stands. GABBAY (2014a, 119 n. 372, 164 n. 67, 171) shows that the *šuhḥu* was the stand of the *lilissu* on certain cultic occasions. This may indicate that *kandurû*, *kankannu*, and *šuhḥu* referred to stands used for different purposes. In any case, there is evidence suggesting that these stands also had different sizes. The words *kandurû* and *kankannu* mean ‘pot stand’<sup>20</sup> (AHw, s.v. *kankannu*; CAD G s.v. *gangannu* and K s.v. *kandurû*). However, if *kandurû* may be derived from ḡ<sup>es</sup> ḡ an(-nu)-tur, in allusion to a small (tur) object (SALLABERGER 1996, 112),<sup>21</sup> the *kandurû* would be smaller than the *kankannu* stands.

#### OBSERVATIONS ABOUT THE KETTLEDRUM NAMED AB-GAL-GUNGUNU

This third brief contribution examines BRM 4, 25, obv. 12'-16' (= manuscript A) and its duplicate SBH VII, obv. 2'-6' (= manuscript B):

A, obv. 12'	DIŠ <i>i-na</i> <sup>iti</sup> APIN U <sub>4</sub> .25.KAM <sup>v</sup> ša <sub>2</sub> <sup>d</sup> Za-ba <sub>4</sub> -ba <sub>4</sub> Kiš <sup>ki</sup>	If, during the 25 <sup>th</sup> day of
B, obv. 2'	[DIŠ <i>i-na</i> <sup>iti</sup> APIN U <sub>4</sub> ].24.KAM <sup>v</sup> ša <sub>2</sub> <sup>&lt;d&gt;</sup> A[MAR <sup>?</sup> .UTU <sup>?</sup> ]	Araḥsamnu of Zababa-of-Kiš <sup>22</sup> ,
A, obv. 13'	AB <sub>2</sub> -GAL-GUN <sub>3</sub> .GUN <sub>3</sub> .NU ša <sub>2</sub> <i>a-da-muk-ka-ša<sub>2</sub> bur-ru-mu</i>	Ab-gal-gungunu, whose covering is multicolor,
B, obv. 3'	[AB <sub>2</sub> ]- <sup>?</sup> GAL <sup>?</sup> -GUN <sub>3</sub> <sup>?</sup> .GUN <sub>3</sub> <sup>?</sup> .NU [ša <sub>2</sub> <i>a-da-muk-k</i> ]a <sup>?</sup> -ša <sub>2</sub> <i>bur-ru</i> [-mu]	
A, obv. 14'	<i>it-ti li-li-is-su</i> <sup>zabar</sup> <i>i-maḥ-ḥa-ṣu</i>	they beat <sup>23</sup> (it) alongside the
B, obv. 4'	[ <i>it-ti</i> L]L.LI.IS <sub>3</sub> <sup>za</sup> [ <sup>bar</sup> ] <i>im-maḥ-ḥa-aṣ-ma</i>	<i>lilissu</i> ,
A, obv. 15'	<i>a-di</i> LILIS <sup>zabar</sup> <i>i-te-eb-bu-u<sub>2</sub></i>	until the <i>lilissu</i> rises,
B, obv. 5'	<sup>EN</sup> L.LI.LI.IS <sub>3</sub> <sup>zabar</sup> <i>i-te-eb-bu-u<sub>2</sub></i>	

for the same object. The identification of <sup>urudu</sup>n i ḡ<sub>2</sub>-ka la-ga with a bell may be inferred from a comparative perspective. For instance, a video shows various bells hanging from the garment of a Siberian shaman (<[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hRgajXcsE\\_4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hRgajXcsE_4)> (accessed 19 September 2023); from 00:22 onwards; owed to Cáo Xún 曹珣). This person beats a giant frame drum comparable to the kuš-gu<sub>4</sub>-ga<sub>1</sub> mentioned alongside the <sup>urudu</sup>n i ḡ<sub>2</sub>-ka la-ga in texts such as the aforementioned *Šēp lemutti ina bīt amēli*, 252-253.

<sup>18</sup> BIN 1, 152 (Nabopolassar 10-05-18), obv. 3 and GCCI 2, 54 (Nabopolassar 10-01-07), obv. 5.

<sup>19</sup> LKU 51, obv. 25 (Neo-Babylonian, undated); TU 47, rev. 31' (Seleucid).

<sup>20</sup> Perhaps they did not look like those made of clay and found in the archaeological record (see e.g., OATES 1974, plates 28-29), since the *kandurû* and *kankannu* were made of wood with silver/iron coatings.

<sup>21</sup> It could also include du<sub>2</sub> ('to sit') as what the pot sits on (J. Colburn, personal communication).

<sup>22</sup> Thus Manuscript A. Manuscript B reads: "If, during the 24<sup>th</sup> day of Araḥsamnu of M[arduk?]"

<sup>23</sup> Manuscript B uses an N stem: "it is beaten".



A, obv. 16'	K1 <i>pa-ni-šu i-maḥ-ḥa-šu-šu-ma</i> IZI <i>ana</i> GUNNI SUB- <i>di</i>	they will beat it in front of him <sup>24</sup> , and a fire will be kindled in a brazier.
B, obv. 6'	[(x)] <i>it-ti pa-ni-ša<sub>2</sub> i-maḥ-ḥa-šu-ma</i> IZI <i>a-na</i> GUNNI <i>in-nam-di</i>	

This text refers to a *lilissu* playing alongside a sound tool called Ab-gal-gungunu (= Ab<sub>2</sub>-gal-gun<sub>3</sub>-gun<sub>3</sub>-nu, 'Large, Multicolored<sup>25</sup> Cow<sup>26</sup>'). Some scholars propose that Ab-gal-gungunu could be a balaḡ-instrument due to the connections between cows and balaḡs, but have refrained from any concrete organological identification (GABBAY 2014a, 110-111, 171)<sup>27</sup>. For others, it is a drum as it is mentioned with a *lilissu*, although they did not specify the type of drum (DA RIVA 2021b, 110; KILMER 2003-2005, 370; CAD E, s.v., *edamukku*).

SAA 3, 39, obv. 11 (AB<sub>2</sub>.BALAḡ<sup>li-li-su</sup> ŠA<sub>3</sub>-šu<sub>2</sub> 'his heart is a *lilissu*') has not been used in this debate, although it brings both positions together. This text reads AB<sub>2</sub>.BALAḡ (lit. 'cow-balaḡ') as *lilissu*. In that way, being related to cows and balaḡs, Ab-gal-gungunu could be a *lilissu*. If this proposal is accepted, BRM 4, 25, obv. 12'-16' // SBH VII, obv. 2'-6' would suggest a *lilissu* duet like the one described by JCS 43, 89-106, obv. i 5 (a *lilissu* for Bēl, and another for Bēltiya). However, the identification of the multicolored (*burrumu*) *a/edamukku* of Ab-gal-gungunu is still problematic:

- For COOPER (2002, 106 n. 109; preceded by CDA, s.v. *edamukku*)<sup>28</sup>, *a/edamukku* may mean 'drumhead' as a derivative of 'fetal membrane', although he does not indicate whether this drumhead could be multicolored.
- The association of *a/edamukku* with fetal membranes is uncertain for WORTHINGTON (2015, 320), although he does not comment on the possible (if any) relationship of *a/edamukku* with a drumhead.
- According to BORRELLI and ESCOBAR (2022, 64), the multicolored aspect could be achieved with the pegs attaching the drumhead to the kettle, insofar as these pegs would be made of different types of hardwood. Nevertheless, these authors speak only of the standard *lilissu*.

The Isin text BIN 9, 445 (Išbī-Er-ra 25-02-10)<sup>29</sup> may help to resolve this debate. Its lines obv. 1-5 describe a ḡeš balaḡ of a multicolored aspect due to the covering (si-g) of its wooden body with pieces of leather (= rawhide dressed in fats) dyed red and black. This text seems to speak of a lyre (SHEHATA 2021, 422), but it might suggest that, as a balaḡ,

<sup>24</sup> Manuscript B changes the gender: "in front of her".

<sup>25</sup> Lexical lists (Kisurra 215: b iii 25'-29'; LTBA 1, 36: rev. 5'-9'; Msk. 731079: rev. i 9'-13') mention cows described as gun<sub>3</sub> (""-a) along with those whose hide is only white (babbar), black (gege), reddish (su<sub>13</sub>), or yellowish (sig<sub>7</sub>). Thus, among the meanings for gun<sub>3</sub>/*barmu* (THAVAPALAN 2020, 79-89), 'multicolored' is here the most likely translation, as alluding to a cow whose hide has various colors.

<sup>26</sup> The writing ab<sub>2</sub>-gal normally stands for the name of a canal (<sup>17</sup>Ab<sub>2</sub>-gal) and a pseudo-syllabic spelling of abgal (NUN.ME) 'sage' (see EPSD2, s.v. ab<sub>2</sub>-gal). However, there are some instances of ab<sub>2</sub> gal as 'large cow': MAD 1, 60: obv. i 1 (Old Akkadian) in addition to the Old Babylonian texts KTT 76 (Ilī-illatī ...-...-...): obv. 1 and *Nanna D* (= ETCSL 4.13.4), 10. I could find nothing like a sage dressed in a multicolored garment (see THAVAPALAN 2020, 347 for some thoughts on *apkallū* and colors).

<sup>27</sup> See HEIMPEL (2015, 584, 608-610) for more recent considerations on the cow-balaḡ relationship.

<sup>28</sup> GANTZERT (2011, 98), which translates this word as 'belly skin'.

<sup>29</sup> See SHEHATA (2021, 425-426) for a recent edition of this text.

Ab-gal-gungunu should have a multicolor part made of skin. For a kettledrum, this can only denote a drumhead. Thus, *a/edamukku burrumu* would denote a multicolor drumhead, and Ab-gal-gungunu could be comparable to the Sámi shamanic drums, whose drumheads have depictions of cosmic meaning (KESKI-SÄNTTI *et al.* 2003, 122). This colorful aspect of Ab-gal-gungunu could be achieved by first dyeing the drumhead with one color of dye, and then putting pastes of other colors based on dyes or mordants over the drumhead (Suzanne T. Dekel, personal communication; see also CARDON 2007, 43-46).

## THE *LILISSU* IN THE CULTIC LIFE OF THE ESAĞIL COMPLEX: THE CONTRIBUTION OF BM 32979

### INTRODUCTION

BM 32979 = 1878, 0531.68 is a fragment of a cuneiform tablet purchased by the British Museum from the London-based antiquarian William D. Cutter (1847-1929). Its dimensions are 4.5 cm (width) × 3.6 cm (height) × 2.7 cm (thickness). In terms of paleography, the shape of some signs may suggest a Seleucid chronology for this object, and the writing on the obverse is neater than that on the reverse. Due to its fragmentation and small size, it is not possible to reconstruct the original measurements and/or determine the number of columns of the tablet.

Until now, this cuneiform tablet was known only from two short descriptions. One is from the British Museum website<sup>30</sup>, which states, among other things, that BM 32979 was baked. This baking (probably done to preserve the tablet) may explain why some vertical wedges are not straight (see especially obv. 3'-5'). Indeed, the loss of water during baking can cause the clay to contract, changing the shape of the signs (GÜTSCHOW 2012, 36-37, 42). The second description comes from a catalog by LEICHTY, FINKEL, WALKER (2019, 163, 165), which presents this tablet as coming from Babylonia, although no specific provenance is given for it.

Both descriptions suggest that BM 32979 bears an astronomical text, most likely on account of the allusion to Simānu (third month of the Babylonian calendar) in obv. 7'. However, a closer examination may suggest that the tablet does not bear an astronomical content, but rather a list of temple rituals performed during that month. The best preserved one would be a procession with the *lilissu* visiting some gates of the Esağil<sup>31</sup>, which is relevant for two reasons. First, as the table below shows, we knew that the *lilissu* was played inside the Esağil in several months of the Babylonian calendar, but we had no allusions to the month Simānu itself until now:

Nisannu (I)	JCS 70, 193-213, rev. iii 15
Ayyaru (II)	ADART I, no. -270: rev. 13'; JCS 43, 89-106, obv. i 4
Araḫsamnu (VIII)	BRM 4, 25, obv. 14'-15' // SBH VII, obv. 5'-6'
Kislīmu (IX)	JCS 43, 89-106, obv. i 18, ii 1, 6, rev. ii 3-4, 29
Nigallu (XII)	JCS 70, 193-213, obv. i 14' <sup>32</sup>

<sup>30</sup> Accessed 12 October 2023 via <[https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/W\\_1878-0531-68](https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/W_1878-0531-68)>.

<sup>31</sup> The tablet may belong to the library of the Esağil in Babylon, just as other tablets from the '1878, 0531' collection (see CLANCIER 2009, 413 about the numbers 40 and 56), but I cannot confirm this.

<sup>32</sup> As an accompanying sound tool for performing the *ba la ḡ* prayer *Ur u<sub>2</sub> ḫ u l - a - ke<sub>4</sub>*.

A second reason why the allusion to a procession with a *lilissu* inside the Esaġil during the month Simānu is interesting is that we knew that sound tools were used in rituals inside the Esaġil during that month, according to the Late Babylonian textual evidence (Fs. Lambert, 274-280, iii 3'-iv 8'; *Iraq* 81, 87-105, iv 2-8<sup>33</sup>). However, the *lilissu* had not yet been found among those sound tools. At most, the Neo-Assyrian text SAA 13, 12, rev. 9-14 presented Simānu as a favorable month for performing circumambulation rites around the temples with a *lilissu*.

Therefore, BM 32979 would fill a gap in the sources for the study of the *lilissu* and its uses inside the Esaġil and other (Babylonian) temples. To prove this new interpretation, this note provides the first official publication/study of BM 32979. This study includes a hand copy<sup>34</sup> (Fig. 4), a transliteration<sup>35</sup>, a translation, and some philological notes.

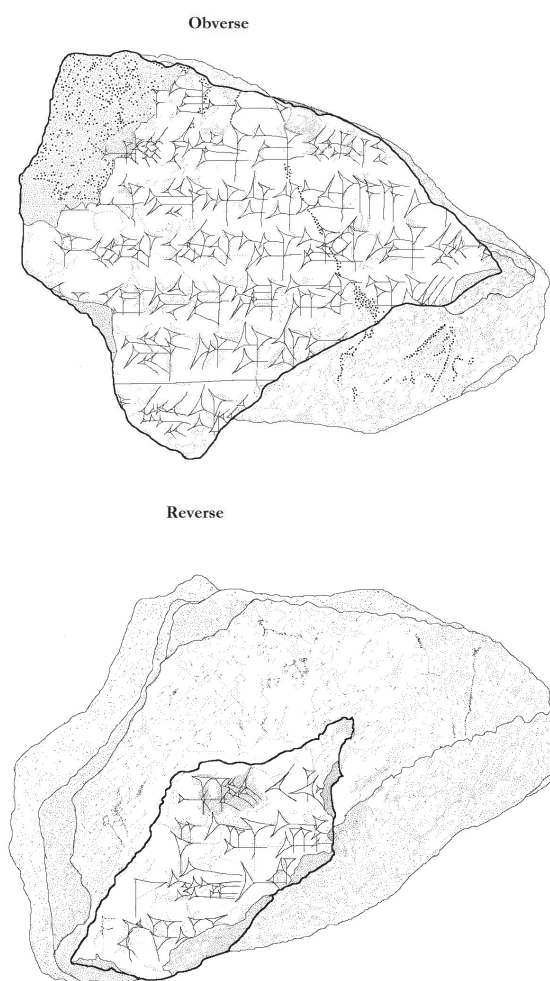


Fig. 4: Hand copy of BM 32979 (by the author, based on a photo taken by the EBL Team).

<sup>33</sup> DA RIVA (2019, 90, 93, 97) connected both texts.

<sup>34</sup> Based on a photograph of BM 32979 taken by Alberto Giannese (EBL). Thanks to Enrique Jiménez (and the rest of the EBL team) and to the Trustees of the British Museum for their permission.

<sup>35</sup> The transliteration has benefited from a collation of the tablet made by Uri Gabbay on my behalf on 10 November 2022.

## TRANSLITERATION AND TRANSLATION

## Obverse

1'	[x (x) K]A <sub>2</sub> .GAL 'x x' [...]	[... the K]agal gate ... [...]
2'	[...-n]am-dam-ma LIL[ <sup>?</sup> IS <sub>3</sub> <sup>?</sup> zabar <sup>?</sup> ...]	[... p]lace and [...] the <i>lil</i> [ <i>issu</i> ...]
3'	'i <sup>?</sup> -na' KA <sub>2</sub> - <sup>d</sup> UTU.E <sub>3</sub> .A a-n[a <sup>?</sup> ... EN]	From the Ka-Utu-e'a gate t[o ... un]til the <i>lilissu</i> begins to
4'	ša <sub>2</sub> LIL.LIS <sub>3</sub> it-te-bu-u[ <sup>?</sup> ...]	rise [...]
5'	'te'-ru-ub-ba at-ta 'SI <sup>?</sup> .MEŠ' [...]	She comes in (saying) "You are the horns <sup>?</sup> [...]"
6'	[...] KA <sub>2</sub> - <sup>d</sup> UTU.E <sub>3</sub> .A ...]	[...] Ka-Utu-e[ <sup>?</sup> a ...]
Ruling line		
7'	[x <sup>i1</sup> ] <sup>i</sup> SIG <sub>4</sub> U <sub>4</sub> .10 <sup>?</sup> .K[AM <sup>?</sup> ...]	[... Mon]th <i>Simānu</i> , the 10 <sup>?</sup> [ <sup>h</sup> ] day [...]

## Reverse

1'	[...]-'nam <sup>?</sup> (erased) <sup>?</sup> u IG[ <sup>?</sup> ...]	[...] ... and in fron[t of <sup>?</sup> ...]
2'	[...] ša <sub>2</sub> E <sub>2</sub> .SA[Ĝ <sup>!</sup> .IL <sub>2</sub> <sup>?</sup> ...]	[...] of the Esa[ĝil <sup>?</sup> ...]
3'	[...] 'x'-az na-[...]	Too fragmented for translation.
4'	[...]'x <sup>(traces)</sup> x' ša <sub>2</sub> r[e <sup>?</sup> ...]	

## PHILOLOGICAL NOTES

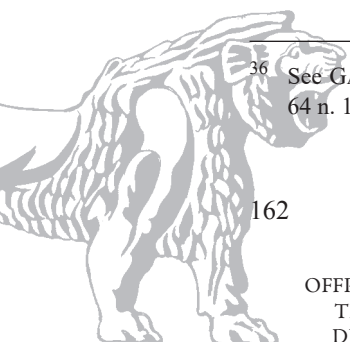
Obv. 1': Kagal (KA<sub>2</sub>.GAL, 'Great Gate') provided access to the room complex around the cella of Bēl/Marduk inside the Esaĝil (PEDERSÉN 2021, 152; GEORGE 1992, 87). Since it appears first in the text, the procession could enter the Esaĝil through this gate. It cannot be confirmed whether a ritual was performed over the surface of the doors of Kagal (*cf.* JCS 70, 213-222, rev. iv 16').

Obv. 2': As in BRM 4, 25, obv. 15'-16' // SBH VII, obv. 5-6 (see the previous micro-study for an edition), *nadû* could describe a rite preceding the procession with the *lilissu*. However, the nature of this rite cannot be determined due to the fragmentary nature of the edited tablet.

Obv. 3': Ka-Utu-e'a (KA<sub>2</sub>-<sup>d</sup>UTU.E<sub>3</sub>.A, 'Gate of the Sunrise') was the eastern gate of the main building inside the Esaĝil. It connected the inner chambers of the court of Bēl/Marduk with the Lower Court (DA RIVA 2021a, 182, 209; PEDERSÉN 2021, 152). The procession may have passed by Kagal (see above), and Ka-Utu-e'a appears again in line obv. 6'. Therefore, obv. 3' may suggest that the procession entered the court of Bēl/Marduk to leave it later. As with Kagal, some rites may have been performed over Ka-Utu-e'a (*cf.* JCS 70, 193-213, obv. ii 16' and, perhaps, SANER 27, 179-214, rev. 22). In any case, this cannot be confirmed from the content of the fragment.

Obv. 4': At least two texts (BM 73539, obv. 3' = GABBAY 2015, 14 and TU 47, obv. 16) mention an expression, *qātā ša lilissi* ('hands of the *lilissu*'), an appurtenance of the *lilissu* of disputed identification<sup>36</sup>. However, if this line denoted the action of taking these

<sup>36</sup> See GABBAY (2014a, 119-120 with previous literature), HELLE (2018, 233) and BORRELLI and ESCOBAR (2022, 64 n. 132) for suggestions. Sadly, their evaluation is beyond the scope of this paper.





‘hands’ out of the *lilissu*, one would not expect to find here the verb *tebû* (‘to rise’) since this verb typically refers to the lifting of the entire *lilissu* from its stand in the context of a procession, not to the lifting of a part of it (GABBAY 2014a, 171 to be completed now with the content of JCS 70, 189-227, rev. iii 15’). Other expressions with *ša lilissi* are less likely to be found here:

- Two sentences from the Achaemenid text YOS 7, 71: *ana muḫḫi šakānu ša lilissi* ‘on the placing of the *lilissu*’ (obv. 22) and *adi muḫḫi simānu ša dakê / ša lilissi* ‘on the appropriate moment for removing the *lilissu*’ (obv. 23-24).
- *alpū ša lilissi* (‘bulls of the *lilissu*’). The *lilissu* in the edited tablet seems to participate in the usual activities of a *lilissu* already covered with its drumhead. Therefore, the presence of these bulls here would be hardly explainable<sup>37</sup>.

Since *ša lilissi* does not fit with the expressions commented above, *ša* may be part of an expression introducing a subordinate clause starting in obv. 3’. Among the possibilities given by CAD (Š<sub>1</sub> s.v. *ša* b), *adi ša* ‘until’ might be the most suitable one in terms of epigraphy. Indeed, *adi* can be written with the Sumerogram EN. Following this economical principle, I have restored an EN in the transliteration of obv. 3’.

From a paleographic point of view, the form of the sign BU could suggest a Seleucid chronology for the tablet (*cf.* the samples collected by JURSA 2015, 191). The sign after BU is not certain due to the fragmentary preservation of the tablet, but an additional vowel is expected to explain the third radical of *tebû* (*t-b-’*). I have restored an aleph sign (*i.e.*, *i-te-eb-bu-u[’]*) because I see the heads of three horizontal wedges. This is the beginning of the aleph, a sign used in Late Babylonian Akkadian texts to note down long, final vowels (HACKL 2021, 1438). In any case, restoring U<sub>2</sub> is also possible. *Cf.* the parallel *a-di LILIS<sup>zabar</sup> i-te-eb-bu-u<sub>2</sub>* in (BRM 4, 25, obv. 15’) // ‘EN’ L.L.L.I.S<sub>3</sub><sup>zabar</sup> *i-te-eb-bu-u<sub>2</sub>* (SBH VII, obv. 5’) ‘until the *lilissu* rises’. Considering this parallel, I parse *it-te<sup>38</sup>-bu-u[’]* in the edited fragment as an N Durative with ingressive sense<sup>39</sup> (*ittebbû*, ‘it begins to rise’), not as a G Perfect (*ittebû*, ‘it has risen’)<sup>40</sup>. Whether N Durative or G Perfect, the analysis must include a subjunctive marker *-u*.

Finally, there is no determinative <sup>zabar</sup> (‘bronze’) after L.L.L.I.S<sub>3</sub>, so perhaps there was one after L.L.L.I.S<sub>3</sub> in the previous line and the scribe just avoided repeating it. *Cf.* BRM 4, 6, rev. 12 (L.L.L.I.S<sub>3</sub><sup>zabar</sup>) vs. 15 (L.L.L.I.S<sub>3</sub>), and BagM 2, 5, rev. 5 (a first L.L.L.I.S<sub>3</sub> with <sup>zabar</sup> and a second one without it) vs. 6 (L.L.L.I.S<sub>3</sub> without <sup>zabar</sup>). Here is the reason why I have restored

<sup>37</sup> GABBAY 2018, 6 (with previous literature) suggested that the two bulls mentioned by each of the texts containing this expression (see TARASEWICZ 2018, texts 36-38) were used to transport a *lilissu*, as this would be a rather heavy sound tool. In his opinion, there was no logic in feeding two bulls for getting hides, when the *lilissu* drumhead was made with the hide of a single bull. However, JCS 43, 89-106, obv. i 5 refers to one *lilissu* for Bēl, and another one for Bēltiya. The previous micro-study in this paper has also suggested the existence of another *lilissu* duet. Therefore, the hides of the bulls mentioned by the texts published by TARASEWICZ (2018, texts 36-38) could have been used to make the drumheads of two *lilissu*, and not to make the drumhead of a single *lilissu* or to transport one of these drums.

<sup>38</sup> This form of TE, similar to LA, is also known in *Astronomical Diaries* 1, no. -266, rev. 15’ (LABASi).

<sup>39</sup> Owed to Uri Gabbay, who recognized that this would be the first ingressive sense of *tebû*.

<sup>40</sup> Neither Gt Preterit. The Gt had fallen in disuse in Late Babylonian Akkadian (HACKL 2021, 1445).



LLL[<sup>?</sup>i<sup>?</sup>.IS<sub>3</sub><sup>?</sup>zabar<sup>?</sup>...] in obv. 2'. BRM 4, 25, obv. 14'-15' spells *lilissu* with <sup>zabar</sup> twice, but syllabically the first time (*li-li-is-su<sup>zabar</sup>*) and logographically the second one (LILIS<sup>zabar</sup>)<sup>41</sup>.

Obv. 5': What follows *'te'-ru-ub* could be a sign MA (*'te'-ru-ub-ma*), but the lower wedge is more slanted than the MA in obv. 2'. I read BA to explain this difference. The form *'te'-ru-ub-ba* would be unique, but it could stand for a G Durative with an unexpected reduplication of the third radical (i.e., *\*terrubba*), which is typical of Late Babylonian texts (DEBOURSE 2022b, 183-184). I parsed a 3sgf instead of a 2sgm due to a parallel: a *tērub* describing how the statue of the goddess Bēlet-Bābili entered the E-tur-kalamma after visiting the Esaġil (*Iraq* 81, 87-105, obv. i 13'-14'). After all, BM 32979 mentions the Kagal (obv. 1') and Ka-Utu-e'a gates of the Esaġil (obv. 3', 6'). Following this parallel, *'te'-ru-ub-ba* may allude to a female member of the cortege entering the court of Bēl/Marduk. The 2sgm pronoun *attā* would be, then, part of a sentence in direct speech (i.e., "You are...") of uncertain nature. The role of the *lilissu* in that speech is also uncertain, but there is more certainty with the person uttering these words. There are two options for this:

- Bēl/Marduk speaking to the one who comes to his court. At least the *Divine Love Lyrics* use *attā* as 2sgf instead of the expected *attī*. A clear example is BM 41005, obv. iii 9 (= LAMBERT 1975, 104): *at-ta um-me-e* <sup>d</sup>INANA-TIN.TIR<sup>ki</sup> *ana* <sup>ĝeš</sup>KIRI<sub>6</sub> *ra-mi-ki ki-i u<sub>2</sub>-[...]* "You, O Mother, are Bēlet-Bābili!" "When I' [...] to the garden of your lover". Here, *attā* and *ummu* ('mother', in its vocative form *ummē*) refer to Bēlet-Bābili.
- The one who comes to the court of Bēl/Marduk. That means, with the usual gender of *attā*.

The second option explains the *qarnū* (SI.MEŠ) mentioned after *attā* in the edited fragment<sup>42</sup>. Indeed, the statue of Bēl/Marduk in the Esaġil had a golden horned crown (*agû qarnû*; 5R, 33 = *Agum-kakrime's inscription*, obv. ii 50), which was restored by Alexander the Great in 325 BCE (ADRT 1, no. 324, rev. 23). If this second option for *attā* is accepted, this could mean that the one who entered the court of Bēl/Marduk would praise the horns of his host. Such a type of praise would not be uncommon. See, for example, the title *nāš qarnī* ('horn bearer') in the line obv. 3 of K. 9880, a tablet that preserves a hymn to Nergal (see EBL for a recent edition).

Obv. 6': This new mention of Ka-Utu-e'a may suggest that the procession left the court of Bēl/Marduk, passed through this gate again, and proceeded to an unfortunately lost destination.

Obv. 7': There are two possibilities for the ruling line. It could separate the cultic actions performed on two different days of Simānu (*JCS* 43, 89-106, obv. ii 9; Fs. Lambert, 274-280: iv 4', 9', 13'), or it could have acted as a colophon indicating the day on which the actions described by the previous lines were to take place, just as in BM 41005: obv. ii 22 (=

<sup>41</sup> But not SBH VII, obv. 4' ([L]LLLIS<sub>3</sub><sup>za[bar]</sup>) vs. obv. 5' (LLLIS<sub>3</sub><sup>zabar</sup>).

<sup>42</sup> The inner wedge is not horizontal, but vertical (cf. the horizontal sign above and the inclination of its head). This leads me to read SI, instead of, e.g., BA or KU.

LAMBERT 1975, 104). A separation between months is unlikely, as one might want to see a double ruling line, as in *JCS* 70, 193-213 after obv. ii 6', according to DA RIVA and GALETTI (2018, 196).

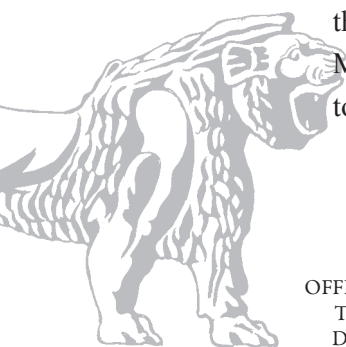
Stepping on the vertical wedge of UD (= U<sub>4</sub>), I find a *Winkelhaken*, which could be U (= 10) followed by three diagonal wedges. These wedges cannot stand for a number, but the ordinal KAM. Therefore, this could allude to the 10<sup>th</sup> day of Simānu.

Reverse: Because of the fragmentation and erasures, transliterations are only tentative and do not allow too much comment. However, I shall comment briefly on rev. 2'. Here, taking the wedges after the E<sub>2</sub> sign as the beginning of a sign SAG, suggesting an allusion to the Esaġil, fits with the allusions to two of the gates in the Esaġil on the obverse of the tablet. However, if SAG is the sign to be read here, it would exceptionally have two vertical wedges inside its head, and not one as usual. I could not find a better option for this sign.

#### CONCLUDING REMARKS

Each of the four notes presented in this article has made the following points:

- The expression *lit lilissi* refers to a stool on which Tāb-Esaġil, a *nadītu*, would sit during the breaks in her cultic performances with the *lilissu*. Since she received this stool as a part of her dowry, her father, Marduk-muballit, could hold a *kalû*-ship.
- The Sumerian <sup>(urudu)</sup>šen-ḥur-saġ-ġa<sub>2</sub> defines the *lilissu* as a kettle (šen) sitting on a mountain (ḥur-saġ), a *poetic* designation of the stand of this kettle-drum. So far, we knew some Akkadian terms for such a stand (*kandurû*, *kankannu*, *šuhhu*). This second note says that these words could denote stands of different sizes, and not only of different uses, as proposed in the previous research.
- Ab-gal-gungunu (Ab<sub>2</sub>-gal-gun<sub>3</sub>-gun<sub>3</sub>-nu 'Large, Multicolored Cow') would be the proper name of a *lilissu* given the associations of cows with the *lilissu* (cf. AB<sub>2</sub>.BALAĠ<sup>li-li-su</sup> in SAA 3, 39, obv. 11). This third note has also proposed that the expression *a/edamukku burrumu* ('multi-color covering') describing Ab-gal-gungunu alludes to its multicolored drumhead, which would be obtained through multiple dyeing and post-dyeing processes.
- BM 32979 (fourth note) does not bear an astronomical text as previously suggested by the brief descriptions of this fragment. On the contrary, it seems to describe some rituals taking place inside the Esaġil (probably mentioned in rev. 2'). The best-preserved ritual seems to be a procession passing by the Kagal (obv. 1') and Ka-Utu-e'a gates of this temple (obv. 3' and 6'). An important agent of this procession is the *lilissu*, which is risen (obv. 4) to accompany the people participating in the procession. This procession seems to be preceded by an uncertain rite (obv. 2'). Moreover, a speech (at least praising the horned crown of Bēl/Marduk) is attributed to a female figure (obv. 5').



#### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

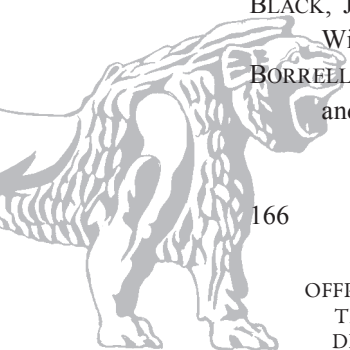
Uri Gabbay and Theo J.H. Krispijn commented on different drafts of the full text. Uri Gabbay also encouraged me to work on BM 32979, always with Enrique Jiménez's permission on behalf of the eBL Project. Stephanie L. Budin, Dahlia Shehata, and Michael P. Streck offered remarks to improve the first note, which also benefited from the feedback of Jerome Colburn and Sam Mirelman. Cáo Xún (曹珣) assisted with the second note, whereas Clement Hazan and Suzanne T. Dekel read the third one. Beatrice Baragli, Johannes Dams, Céline Debourse, Anne-Caroline Rendu Loisel, Zachary Rubin, Janet Safford, Nathan Wasserman, and Peter Zilberg helped to improve the edition and commentary of BM 32979. Jeffery Charest polished the English of this article before its submission to *Akkadica*. Two anonymous reviewers offered invaluable remarks to improve its content and style. Jerome Colburn checked the English of this text after its correction following the reviewers' suggestions. Finally, a Margarita Salas Postdoctoral Fellowship has covered the research and writing reflected in this article. Thanks for their help! I bear sole responsibility for the remaining errors and inaccuracies.

#### ABBREVIATIONS

ARCHIBAB	<i>Archives Babylonniennes (XX<sup>e</sup>-XVII<sup>e</sup> siècles av. J.-C.)</i> , <a href="http://www.archibab.fr/">http://www.archibab.fr/</a> .
CAD	ORIENTAL INSTITUTE, CHICAGO (Ed.), 1956-2010: <i>The Assyrian Dictionary of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago</i> , 21 volumes, Chicago (IL).
CAL	<i>Comprehensive Aramaic Lexicon</i> , <a href="https://cal.huc.edu/">https://cal.huc.edu/</a> .
EBL	<i>Electronic Babylonian Literature</i> , <a href="https://www.ebl.lmu.de/">https://www.ebl.lmu.de/</a> .
EPSD2	<i>Electronic Pennsylvania Sumerian Dictionary 2.0</i> , <a href="http://oracc.museum.upenn.edu/epsd2/index.html">http://oracc.museum.upenn.edu/epsd2/index.html</a> .
ESAD	<i>The Electronic Supplement to the Akkadian Dictionaries</i> , <a href="https://altorient.gko.uni-leipzig.de/etymd.html">https://altorient.gko.uni-leipzig.de/etymd.html</a> .
LABASI	<i>Late Babylonian Signs</i> , <a href="https://labasi.acdh.oeaw.ac.at/">https://labasi.acdh.oeaw.ac.at/</a> .

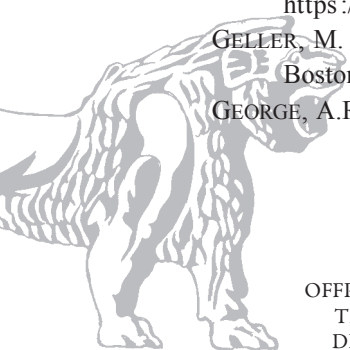
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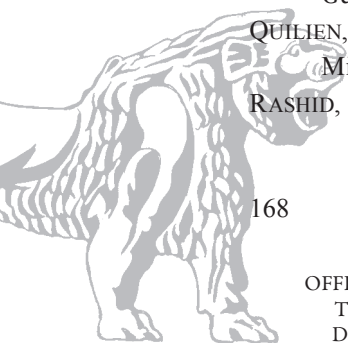




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