

# BAM 7, 51: An Alternative Reading<sup>1</sup>

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In volume 7 of *Babylonisch-assyrische Medizin* Mark Geller 2005 included a bilingual Middle Babylonian exemplar of the acrographic lexical series Kagal, listing Sumerian words that begin with the sign A (BAM 7, 51 [P386385]).<sup>2</sup> The section of the list preserved in this tablet includes various names of diseases and related entries. Since late second millennium copies of Kagal are not particularly common, this is a very welcome addition to our knowledge of Kassite period lexicography. I worked on this text for inclusion in the Digital Corpus of Cuneiform Lexical Texts (DCCLT) and in the process identified some related entries elsewhere in the lexical tradition suggesting alternative readings and translations. The present article will build on Geller's contribution by providing a new edition (§2), preceded by a discussion of the date of the tablet (§1). Geller's copy is based on excavation photographs; some of the suggestions below will ultimately need confirmation by collation of the original.

## 1. The Dating of BAM 7, 51.

BAM 7, 51 was found during the German excavations at Babylon where it received excavation number Bab Excav. 47097; it was classified as Neo-Babylonian by Pedersén 2005, 226 (N13-255). Pedersén's group N13, however, is not a coherent archive but rather a residual category of texts that have no clear affiliation. There is no archaeological evidence that could be used for dating and paleography is not of much help either, although an Old Babylonian origin is excluded.

Textual considerations point at the Middle Babylonian period as the most likely date. Repetition of the same Akkadian translation is indicated by progressive numbers, as in:

a-gal-la-ti-la	<i>ma-li-a me-e</i> dropsy
a a <sub>2</sub> -ġal <sub>2</sub>	2
a hul-a	3

This convention is unknown in the first millennium, but is frequent in Middle Babylonian and Middle Assyrian lexical texts and appears occasionally in (late) Old Babylonian sources. This may be observed in the MA/MB sources of Nabnitu (see Finkel in MSL 16, 5-7 and CBS 13924 [P227749] in Veldhuis 2008, 29) and in Kassite exemplars of Ura = *hubullu* (for instance SLT 44 [P227759] = MSL 8/1 p.5 C and N 4005 [P228207] = MSL 7, 3 G). The same technique is used in the Kassite-period An Anum exercise recently published by Peterson 2007 (CBS 08731 [P263556]). The late Old Babylonian tablet BM 85983 [P247857] (Ura, leather and metal objects; partly bilingual) employs the same

<sup>1</sup> I wish to thank Mark Geller for his comments on an earlier version of this paper, which resulted in various improvements.

<sup>2</sup> P- and Q- numbers in the present article refer to the tablet ID numbers (assigned by the CDLI project [cdli.ucla.edu](http://cdli.ucla.edu)) and composition (composite text) numbers respectively. These numbers are used by all Cuneiform Digital Library projects ([cdl.museum.upenn.edu](http://cdl.museum.upenn.edu)), including the Digital Corpus of Cuneiform Lexical Texts (DCCLT). Editions and (occasionally) images of lexical texts referenced in this article may be found in DCCLT ([cdl.museum.upenn.edu/dcclt](http://cdl.museum.upenn.edu/dcclt)) by entering the P or Q number in the Cat(alog) search box and clicking on the Search button.

convention (the tablet is unprovenanced; a beautiful color photograph was recently made available in the BM collection database).

Another Kagal exemplar that uses progressive numbers is Ni 633, published in MSL 13, 228 as a late Old Babylonian copy of Kagal from Nippur. One may entertain the possibility that this text is, in fact, Kassite, because late Old Babylonian material from Nippur is rare. Barring collation however, the judgment of Miguel Civil, the editor of MSL 13, should be trusted.

A second consideration for dating this tablet to the Middle (rather than Neo) Babylonian period is the fact that Kagal is unknown in first millennium sources (see Civil in MSL 13, 227). This argument, however, carries less weight, because the late version of Izi seems to have incorporated much of the lexical material that traditionally belonged to Kagal.

BAM 7, 51 preserves part of the section A (that is, every Sumerian entry begins with the sign A). Although there are several Old and Middle Babylonian Kagal versions<sup>3</sup> that include (parts of the) section A and some duplicating entries may be identified, there are no instances of longer passages that run parallel to our text. In general, the other Kagal versions provide little help for the reading and understanding of BAM 7, 51.

## 2. Edition

For the sake of convenience, I provide a complete edition and translation of the tablet, even where this duplicates Mark Geller's. The present reading is based on Geller's hand copy and does not represent the result of collations.

### Obverse

1' [a-ĝar-ĝ]ar-ra	[ŠU( <i>agargaru</i> )]	droppings
2' [a-ĝar]-ĝar-ra	[ <i>piqannu</i> ]	droppings
3' [a-ĝar]-ĝar-ra	<i>bi-n</i> [ <i>i-tum</i> ]	roe
4' [a-ĝ]ar-ĝar-ra	<i>qu<sub>2</sub>-li</i> [ <i>p<sub>3</sub>-tum</i> ]	peeled?
5' [a ša]g <sub>4</sub> ĝar-ra	<i>es-lum</i>	constipated
6' a-gal-la-ti-la	<i>ka-ši im-tum</i>	dropsy
7' a-gal-la-ti-la	<i>ma-li-a me-e</i>	dropsy
8' a a <sub>2</sub> -ĝal <sub>2</sub>	2	dropsy
9' a hul-a	3	dropsy
10' a bar-ra	ŠIM- <i>tum</i>	
11' a bar-ra	<i>li</i> (TE)- <i>qu<sub>2</sub>-u<sub>2</sub>-tum</i>	adoptive child
12' a bar-ra	<i>tar-bi-tum</i>	rearing
13' a bar-ra	<i>ri-hu-tum a-hi-tum</i>	adopted offspring
14' a bar-ra	MIN( <i>rihûtum</i> ) <i>na-kar-tum</i>	hostile offspring
15' a bar-ra	MIN( <i>rihûtum</i> ) <i>pa-ra-su</i>	to block the semen
16' a bar-bar-ra	<i>nam-šu-u</i>	dew
17' a-bar bar-ra	<i>zu</i> !(SU)- <i>tum i-tag<sub>2</sub>-ru-ur-rum</i>	rolling sweat
18' a hal-hal	2	rolling sweat
19' a gir <sub>5</sub> -gir <sub>5</sub>	3	rolling sweat
20' a bar dug <sub>4</sub>	<i>pe<sub>2</sub>-hu-u<sub>2</sub></i>	to block (the water)

<sup>3</sup> The reconstructed text of OB Nippur Kagal is found on DCCLT as Q000048; the fragments of the bilingual version are found under Q002276; several of the texts published in Proust 2007 and Proust 2008 help in reconstructing the A section of Kagal. Other relevant versions include BM 54712 (Veldhuis 1998) [P349861]; Wilhelm 1989 and the Middle Assyrian version VAT 9592, published as Kagal B (MSL 13, 231-233; see now Digitale Keilschrift Bibliothek Groneberg, et al. 2006).

21' a-bar-dug <sub>4</sub>	<i>iz-bu-um</i>	malformed birth
22' a-bar-dug <sub>4</sub>	<i>ku-bu-um</i>	fetus
23' a-bar-d[ug <sub>4</sub> ]	<i>a-hu-um</i>	strange
24' a-bar [x]	[ <i>zu-tum i-tag<sub>2</sub>-ru</i> ]-ur-rum	rolling sweat
25' a-bar [x]	[...]-tum	
26' a-bar kur <sub>2</sub> -x	[...]-tum	
27' a-bar kur <sub>2</sub> -x	[...]	
28' a-bar ĝa <sub>2</sub> -x	[...]	

reverse.

1. a-ra-ah	ŠU( <i>arahhu</i> )	granary
2. a-ra-ah	<i>na-hal-lum</i>	wadi
3. a ra-ah	<i>šu-um-qu<sub>2</sub>-tum</i>	washed away
4. a-ra-ah	<i>ne-le<sup>1</sup>(TE)-eb-tum</i>	a cup
5. a-ra-ab	ŠU( <i>arabu</i> )	a cup
6. a-ra-ab	<i>ne-le<sup>1</sup>(TE)-eb-tum</i>	a cup
7. [a]-ra-ab	<i>ra-ab-bu-u<sub>2</sub></i>	a cup?
8. [a-r]a-zu	<i>su-up-pu-u<sub>2</sub></i>	prayer
9. [a-ra]-zu	<i>te-es<sub>3</sub>-li-tum</i>	supplication
10. [a-ra-z]u	<i>te-me-qum</i>	petition
11. [...]	A? <i>it-tu-ur-ī[e?]</i>	
12. [a-ra-an-ĝi <sub>4</sub> ]	[ <i>a-r</i> ]a!-an-gu	
13. [...]	[x]-a-an-mu	
14. [...]	[x]-a- [b[u?]	
15. line traces.		

### Commentary

4'. The reading *qu<sub>3</sub>-lī[p<sub>3</sub>-tum]* is Mark Geller's, who points out to me (personal communication) that Hh 24: 163a reads še ĝa<sub>2</sub>-ĝa<sub>2</sub>-la = *quliptu* (emended to še zil-zil-la in MSL 11, 83).

6'. The item a-gal-la-ti-la = *ka-šī im-tum* is to be compared to an entry in the list of diseases: a-gal-la-ti-la = *ra-ah im-tum* "pouring out of venom" (MSL 9, 93 64 and CAD R). The meaning of *ka-šī* eludes me. The translation "dropsy" is based on the Sumerian and its Akkadian rendering in the next line.

7-9'. These lines provide three alternative Sumerian entries translated by *maliā mē* ("filled with water;" dropsy). Sumerian a-gal-la-ti-la is the traditional equivalence; the other two are new: a a<sub>2</sub>-ĝal<sub>2</sub> (powerful water) and a hul-a (evil water).

10'. The entry a bar-ra = ŠIM-tum is problematic. Akkadian *šimtu* (mark) or *šimtu* (fate) do not fit the Sumerian entry. A reading *riq-tum* (< *rēqu* = distant) is quite difficult, too, but has the advantage of having a precedent (Aa I/6 197: bar = *ri-qa-a-tu*). Which feminine noun is thus qualified in our text, however, remains unclear.

11-14': Sumerian a bar-ra has various meanings including "adoptee," "sweat," and "water's edge" (see PSD A/1 50-51). In my reading, the entries 11'-13' provide Akkadian equivalencies for the meaning "adoptee." Mark Geller's translation assumes that in 13-14' *rihūtum* refers to body fluids or discharges. Since this is an acrographic list, there is no reason to expect any thematic unity here. Indeed, acrographic lists tend to play with

different possible interpretations of Sumerian sign sequences and it is thus possible that both our interpretations (or some mix of them) are right.

My reading of the Akkadian in 11' (*li'(TE)-qu<sub>2</sub>-u<sub>2</sub>-tu*) requires a small emendation. The difference between TE and LI is relatively slight: LI has two small horizontals crossing the vertical (see reverse line 9, where both appear in a single word). There are two other places in this text where the same emendation is required (reverse 4 and 6).

The meaning a bar-ra = "adoptee" is known from the late version of Ki-ulutinbiše (*ana ittišu*) 3, 210-214 [Q000108]:

lu <sub>2</sub> ba-an-d[a-ri-b]i	<i>le-qu-šu-ma</i>
dumu-meš 10-am <sub>3</sub>	DUMU.MEŠ <i>e-še-re-et</i>
he <sub>2</sub> -e[b-tu]ku-[a]	<i>li-ir-ši</i>
a bar-[ra-a-ni]	<i>le-qu-šu-ma</i>
še[š gal-am <sub>3</sub> ]	<i>a-hu GAL-u</i>

"Even if his adoptive father (*lēquū*) has ten sons, his adoptee (*lequū*) will be the elder brother."

Akkadian *lequū* (adoptee) is primarily known from lexical texts (see CAD L, 130); the form *liqūtu* (as in our text line 11') is slightly more common.

15'. The equation bar = *parāsu* (to stop, to cut off) is known from commentary texts (see CAD *parāsu*, lexical section); it derives from the expression ka-aš bar (to render a decision), translated *purussū parāsu*.

17-19' (and 24') This passage lists various Sumerian equivalents for *zūtu itagrurum* or "rolling sweat;" a parallel is found in CT 18, 49 ii 17: a-bar-bar-re = *i-tag<sub>2</sub>-ru-ur-rum*. Lines ii 8-11 of this same text (a group vocabulary) are paralleled below 21'-23' (as already noted by Geller). The condition "rolling sweat" is known from tablet 4 of the diagnostic omen series SA.GIG (TDP 38:65 and 67; see Heeβel 2000, 141). The full text of these lines is now available in SpTU 3, 88 obv. ii 11-13' quoted here from the online edition in CAMS by Philippe Clancier (<http://cdl.museum.upenn.edu/cams> [P348692]):

DIŠ SAG.KI-MIN-š<sub>u2</sub> TEŠ<sub>2</sub>.BI DU-ME u IR-su *it-ta-naq-ra-ar<sub>2</sub> u<sub>2</sub>-gaš ŠU<sup>d</sup>15 :: ŠU<sup>d</sup>20*

DIŠ SAG.KI-MIN-š<sub>u2</sub> *ki-lat-tan 1<sup>nis</sup> i-rad-da :: DU-MEŠ u IR-su it-ta-naq-ra-ar<sub>2</sub> U<sub>4</sub> 5-KAM<sub>2</sub> ŠU<sup>d</sup>15*

(If) his temples continually pulsate together and his sweat flows all the time (and) he vomits: hand of Ištar (or): hand of Šamaš.

(If) his both temples quake together (or): they pulsate and his sweat flows all the time (for) 5 days: hand of Ištar.

Rev. 3. Sumerian rah<sub>2</sub>(RA) or ra-ah means to hit or to kill; in the combination a[water] ra-ah it is equated here with *šumqutu* (to defeat; to strike; to wreck; see CAD M/1 249-251). The expression a – ra-(ra) appears a few times in Sumerian literary texts, where the translation "to drown" or "to wash away" may well be justified (SP 2.99; Curse of Agade 239; Gilgameš Enkidu and the Netherworld 31).

The entry is a typical example of the tendency in acrographic lists to re-analyze sign sequences by dividing them differently into words. Thus a-ra-ah "granary" (rev. 1) is a single noun, but a ra-ah in the present entry is a noun - verb combination.

Rev. 4-7. These entries are paralleled by Ura 10, 257-258 (Civil 1996, 146-147) <sup>dug</sup>a-ra-ab = ŠU(*arabu*) and <sup>dug</sup>a-ra-ab = *nēleptu* (a kind of cup). The Akkadian dictionaries do not list the word *arabu* in this meaning, but its existence has to be assumed. Akkadian *ra-ab-bu-u<sub>2</sub>* (line 7) probably represents another form of the same loan. The entry a-ra-ah = *nēleptu* is new and most likely wrong.

My reading of the lines 4 and 6 requires a small emendation (*ne-le<sup>l</sup>(TE)-eb-tum*); see the commentary to obverse 11'.

Rev. 12. The Sumerian word a-ra-an-gi<sub>4</sub> (meaning unknown) is attested in the same context in the Old Babylonian version of Kagal (Q000048 line 276). Its reconstruction here is very speculative.

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