

1.91

A 12' BE MUNUS MAŠ.TAB.BA Û.TU-m[a ina TI-šú-nu DIB.D]IB [KUR] šá 1-en i-be-lu-š[i] <2 i-be-lu-ši>  
 M 7' [BE MUN]US MAŠ.TAB.BA Û.TU<sup>1</sup>-ma ina TI-šú-nu DIB.D[IB  
 [If a wom]an gives birth to twins for a second time and they are join[ed] at their rib(s), the country that one ruled  
 will be ruled by two].

1.92

A 13' BE MUNUS MAŠ.TAB.BA Û.TU-ma i[na TI-šú-nu DIB.DIB-ma šá 1]5 [ŠU-su š]á  
 15 [NU G]ÁL KÚR ina GIŠ.TUKUL GAZ-an-ni-ma  
 M 8' [BE MUNU]S MAŠ.TAB.BA Û.TU<sup>1</sup>-ma ina TI-šú-nu DIB.DIB-m[a  
 [If a wom]an gives birth to twins and they are joined at their rib(s), an[d the right one has no right hand, an enemy  
 will defeat me in battle and]

A 14' KUR TUR ú-la-lu-ta<sub>5</sub> ú<sup>1</sup>-[šá-al-lak BAD<sub>5</sub>.BA]D<sub>5</sub> [ÉRIN-i]a<sub>5</sub> i-dak

M 9' <sup>1</sup>KUR<sup>1</sup> TUR ú-la-lu-ta<sub>5</sub> ú-šá-a[l-lak

diminish the country; he will mak[e] it helpless; [he will defeat my army].

1.93

A 15' BE MUNUS KI.MIN-ma ina TI-šú-nu DIB.[DIB-ma šá 150 ŠU-su š]á 150 NU [GÁL ina G]IŠ.TUKUL  
 KÚR GAZ-šú-ma GABA.RI

M 10' [BE MUNUS K]I.MIN-ma ina T[I-šú-nu

[If a woman dit]to, and they [are joined] at [their] ri[b(s)], and the left one has no left hand, he will defeat the enemy  
 in battle and the same (i.e. he will diminish the country; he will make it helpless)].

1.94

A 16' BE MUNUS KI.MIN-ma ina TI-šú-nu DIB.[DIB-ma šá 15 Š]U-šú-nu NU GÁL.ME[Š ZI]-bu BURU<sub>14</sub>  
 KUR KÚR GU<sub>7</sub>

M 11' [BE MUNUS K]I.<sup>1</sup>MIN-ma<sup>1</sup> [

[If a woman dit]to, and [they have no hands, an attack; the enemy will consume the harvest of the country].

M (remainder is missing)

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**122) Explanatory texts related to the extispicy series *Bārātu*: BM 131658 joins K 10877 (Koch 2005, 412-428 no. 65 ms. B)**<sup>1)</sup> — The unpublished tablet BM 131658 documents part of an explanatory text (Koch 2005, 412-428 no. 65) related to the extispicy series *Bārātu*.<sup>2)</sup> BM 131658, which is written in Neo-Assyrian ductus, cites individual signs related to *ubān ḥašī qablītu* “the Middle Finger of the lungs,”<sup>3)</sup> *kaskasu* “the Xiphoid,” *tal libbi* “the Diaphragm,” and *tirānū* “the Coils of the Colon,” and describes their effect in the context of a favourable or unfavourable extispicy. The omens are introduced by the phrase BE MIN (= UR<sub>5</sub>.ÚŠ DÙ)-ma ina SILIM-ti “If you perform an extispicy and in a favourable extispicy,” followed by the description of the sign. BM 131658 joins K 10877, which is ms. B in Koch’s edition. K 10877 contains entries 60-65 of the text reconstructed by Koch (B r. 1’-8’). BM 131658 joins K 10877 at the level of entries 64 and 65:

**K 10877 + BM 131658**

7'. (64) [BE MIN-ma ina SILIM-ti ŠU]!<sup>1</sup>SI<sup>1</sup>MUR<sup>1</sup>MURUB<sub>4</sub> ana 15 u 150 TI-at ik <sup>1</sup>x<sup>1</sup> [...NU SILIM-at ina NU SILIM-ti SILIM-át]

8'. (65) [BE MIN-ma ina SILIM-ti S]AG ŠU!<sup>1</sup>SI<sup>1</sup>MUR<sup>1</sup>MURUB<sub>4</sub> BAR-ma DU<sub>8</sub> ŠIG-{erasure}-i<sub>5</sub> ŠUB-ut ÉRIN-ni S[UD-sa GUR-ra ina TAG-ti SILIM-át]

“[If ditto (= you perform an extispicy) and in a favourable extispicy] the Middle [Fin]ger of the lungs is lacking(?)<sup>4)</sup> towards the right and left side... [...it is unfavourable. In an unfavourable extispicy it is favourable].”

“[If ditto (= you perform an extispicy) and in a favourable extispicy the to]p of the Middle Finger of the lungs is split in the middle (and) flattened – repeated defeat of my army, [it will return] emp[ty]-handed. In an unfavourable extispicy it is favourable].”

The broken sections are restored from K 59+ (Koch 2005, 412-428 no. 65 ms. A; CDLI: P393734), which is Koch's main source for this explanatory text. The rest of BM 131658 duplicates K 59+ r. 21-35 and helps fill some of the breaks in that manuscript:

- 9'. (66) [BE MIN-*ma ina SILIM*]-<sup>r</sup>ti<sup>1</sup> ŠU.SI MUR MURUB<sub>4</sub> 15 u 150 *šat-qat* GABA.UŠ NU 'SILIM<sup>1</sup>-<sup>r</sup>át<sup>1</sup> [*ina NU SILIM-ti SILIM-át*]
- 10'. (67) [BE MIN-*ma ina SILIM*]-<sup>r</sup>ti<sup>1</sup> ŠU.SI MUR MURUB<sub>4</sub> *nu-ku-rat* NU SILIM-*at ina NU SILIM-ti* 'SILIM<sup>1</sup>-<sup>r</sup>át<sup>1</sup>]
- 11'. (68) [BE MIN-*ma ina SILIM*]-<sup>r</sup>ti<sup>1</sup> ŠU.SI MUR MURUB<sub>4</sub> *hal-qat* NIN-*tu*<sub>4</sub> ÚŠ NU SILIM-*at ina NU SILIM-ti* 'SILIM<sup>1</sup>-<sup>r</sup>át<sup>1</sup>]
- 12'. (69) [BE MIN-*ma ina SILIM-ti*] 'KAK<sup>1</sup>.ZAG.GA 15 u 150 *na-pár-qud* GABA.UŠ KÚR NU IGI-*mar* [KI.MIN]
- 13'. (70) [BE MIN-*ma ina SILIM-ti* KAK.Z]AG.GA 15 DU<sub>8</sub> ÉRIN-*ka* KAR-*ta*<sub>5</sub> DU-*ak* [KI.MIN]
- 14'. (71) [BE MIN-*ma ina SILIM-ti* KAK.Z]AG.GA 150 DU<sub>8</sub> ÉRIN KÚR KAR-*ta*<sub>5</sub> DU-*ak ina TAG-ti* BA[R-*tu*<sub>4</sub>]
- 15'. (72) [BE MIN-*ma ina SILIM-ti* KAK.ZAG.GA] *šà* 15 u 150 GE<sub>6</sub> GABA.UŠ *ina NU SILIM-ti* BAD<sub>5</sub>.BAD<sub>5</sub>-<sup>r</sup>tu<sub>4</sub>]
- 16'. (73) [BE MIN-*ma ina SILIM-ti* *tal*] ŠÀ<sup>1</sup> 15 u 150 SA<sub>5</sub> *pa-ri-ik* GABA.UŠ NU SILIM-*at ina NU SILIM-ti* SILIM-<sup>r</sup>át<sup>1</sup>]
- 17'. (74) [BE MIN-*ma ina SILIM-ti* ŠÀ].<sup>r</sup>NIGIN<sup>1</sup> 15 IZI.GAR SILIM-*tú* NU TAG.MEŠ TAG.MEŠ NU SILIM.MEŠ *šá* ĤUL.MEŠ-*šá i-šu* SILIM-<sup>r</sup>át<sup>1</sup>]
- 18'. (75) [BE MIN-*ma ina SILIM-ti* ŠÀ.NIGIN] BAL.MEŠ NUN KUR-*su* BAL-*su* NU SILIM-<sup>r</sup>át<sup>1</sup> *ina NU SILIM-ti* SILIM-<sup>r</sup>át<sup>1</sup>]
- 19'. (76) [BE MIN-*ma ina SILIM-ti* ŠÀ.NIGIN *a*]na 2 BAR.MEŠ KUR-*ka ana* 2 BAR.MEŠ NU SILIM-<sup>r</sup>át<sup>1</sup> *ina NU SILIM-ti* SILIM-<sup>r</sup>át<sup>1</sup>]
- 20'. (77) [BE MIN-*ma ina SILIM-ti* ŠÀ.NIGIN] 10 GÛ-*mu ana* ÉRIN-*ni* ŠUB-*ut* KI.MI[N]
- 21'. (78) [BE MIN-*ma ina SILIM-ti* ŠÀ.NIGIN 20 IZI].GAR ÉRIN AŠ.TE KUR KÚR *šá-niš* DUMU LUGAL AD-*šú i-bar* AŠ.TE DAB-*bat* KI.MI[N]
- 22'. (79) [BE MIN-*ma ina SILIM-ti* ŠÀ.NIGIN IGI.MEŠ] *u* BAR.MEŠ GABA.UŠ [KI.MIN]
- 23'. (80) [BE MIN-*ma ina SILIM-ti* ŠÀ.NIGIN *ina* ŠID-*šú*]-*nu nar*-[*pa*]-*šá-a ub-lu*-[*ni*...]
- 24'. [...] <sup>r</sup>x<sup>1</sup> [...]
- (break)

### Commentary

10'. Koch's source for this entry, K 59+ (A) r. 22, has a break between *nu-ku-rat* and *NU SILIM-at*. According to the version preserved on BM 131658, there are no signs missing in the break.

11'. *NIN-tu*<sub>4</sub> is broken on K 59+ (A) r. 23: *BE MIN-ma ina SILIM-ti ŠU.SI MUR MURUB<sub>4</sub> hal-qat* [x x x]-*bat* *NU SILIM-at* (...) (Koch 2005, 424). Koch's *bat* should now be read ÚŠ. This entry should thus be translated as follows: "If ditto (= you perform an extispicy) and in a favourable extispicy the Middle Finger of the lungs is missing – the mistress will die, it is unfavourable. In an unfavourable extispicy it is favourable."

16'. The middle section of this entry is damaged on K 59+ (A) r. 28. Koch (2005, 425) read: *tal šà 15 u 150 sa<sub>5</sub> pa* [x] [x] *gál gaba.uš-tum* (...). Upon collation, K 59+ (A) r. 28 reads here: (...) *tal ŠÀ 15 u 150 sa<sub>5</sub> pa*-[*r*]-*i-ik* GABA.UŠ-*tu*<sub>4</sub> (...). Entry 73 should thus be translated as follows: "If ditto (= you perform an extispicy) and in a favourable extispicy the Diaphragm on the right and on the left side is red (and) lies in a transversal position – it is a *pitruštu*-sign, it is unfavourable. In an unfavourable extispicy it is favourable." The sign *pitruštu* is a powerful sign which decides the outcome of an extispicy and is consistently associated with the right/left dichotomy: see Koch 2005, 10-21.

17'. On K 59+ (A) r. 29 there is a large break between ŠÀ.NIGIN 15 and the first TAG.MEŠ. Koch (2005, 425) tentatively read: *be 2-ma ina silim-ti šà.nigin 15* [u 150] *tag.meš tag.meš nu silim.meš-šá Ĥul.meš-šá i-šu silim-át* "If ditto (= you perform an extispicy) and in a favourable extispicy the Coils of the Colon are destroyed on the right [and left]: Evil-portending (signs), its unfavourable signs, its bad signs are few that is favourable." In fact, the line reads: "If ditto (= you perform an extispicy) and in a favourable extispicy the Coils of the Colon are 15 – it is a *nipĥu*-sign, (but) favourable features cannot be considered unfavourable, unfavourable features cannot be considered favourable; (an extispicy) whose negative signs are few is favourable." The entry comments on the meaning of *nipĥu*, which is a sign

whose function in extispicy seems to have been that of inverting the (positive or negative) meaning of an omen: see Koch 2005, 10-21.

18'-19'. The middle section of this entry is damaged on K 59+ (A) r. 30. Koch (2005, 425) reads: (...) šà.nigin bal.[meš x x x] iḫ nu silim-at [...]. Koch's iḫ corresponds to the two final vertical wedges of SU. Note the repetition of BAL as verb of the protasis, describing a condition of the coils of the colon, and as verb of the apodosis. Likewise, BAR is used both in the protasis and in the apodosis in the following entry. Note that K 59+ (A) r. 31 (Koch 2005, 425) is broken after KUR-*k[a]*. Entries 75-76 should now be translated as follows: (75) "If ditto (= you perform an extispicy) and in a favourable extispicy the Coils of the Colon are upside down - the prince's land will rebel against him, it is unfavourable. In an unfavourable extispicy it is favourable; (76) If ditto (= you perform an extispicy) and in a favourable extispicy the Coils of the Colon are divided in two - your land will be divided in half, it is unfavourable. In an unfavourable extispicy it is favourable."

20'. The second half of this entry, including the apodosis, is not preserved on K 59+ (A) r. 32 (Koch 2005, 426). The entry should now be translated as follows: "If ditto (= you perform an extispicy) and in a favourable extispicy the Coils of the Colon are ten - wailing will befall my army. Ditto (= it is unfavourable. In an unfavourable extispicy it is favourable)."

21'. The reconstruction of the apodosis is uncertain: we suppose here that ÉRIN AŠ.TE KUR KÚR is to be connected with DAB-*bat* at the end of the line, with šá-*niš* introducing a variant: "If ditto (= you perform an extispicy) and in a favourable extispicy the Coils of the Colon are twenty - it is a *niphu*-sign, the army will seize the throne of the enemy's land, alternatively; the king's son will rebel against his father (and) seize the throne; ditto (= it is unfavourable. In an unfavourable extispicy it is favourable)."

22'. BM 131658 allows reconstruction of the end of this entry, thus filling the break on K 59+ (A) r. 34. The entry should now be translated as follows: "If ditto (= you perform an extispicy) and in a favourable extispicy the Coils of the Colon are visible and split - it is a *pitruštu*-sign. Ditto (= it is unfavourable. In an unfavourable extispicy it is favourable)."

#### Notes

1. This article results from research conducted under the auspices of the project REPAC "Repetition, Parallelism and Creativity: an Inquiry into the Construction of Meaning in Ancient Mesopotamian Literature and Erudition" (2019-2024, University of Vienna) that has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme (Grant agreement no. 803060). The Trustees of the British Museum, London, are thanked for permission to publish BM 131658 and cite other tablets in their collections.

2. The divinatory literature of the first millennium BCE includes a number of scholarly compositions which developed around the extispicy series *Bārātu* and represent the diviners' efforts to reach a certain degree of methodological abstraction. This is the goal of the final chapter of *Bārātu*, known as *Multābiltu* "Interpretation" (Koch 2005, 84-272). The chapter does not concern any specific part of the liver or the entrails, but presents general rules for their interpretation, sometimes expressed in abstract terms. Similar material is found in the so-called *Niširti bārūti* ("the secrets of the art of the diviner") texts (Koch 2005: 34-72), a genre which treats technical issues such as the calculation of the "stipulated term" (the period for which the divination was valid), the effects of various "joker signs" on the interpretation of an extispicy observation and the value of all possible subdivisions of the zones of the liver and the lungs.

3. The "Middle Finger of the lungs" is the most frequently mentioned part of the lungs in extispicy texts and can be confidently identified with the accessory (intermediate) lobe of the right lung. See, e.g., Koch 2005, 77 and 81. See also my forthcoming article, "Written on the lungs: the Neo-Assyrian lung model Rm 620 and Ancient Mesopotamian lung divination" (*WdO*).

4. The verb of the protasis is *TI-at*, and not *BAL-at*, as suggested by Koch (2005, 423-424 B r7'). Note that Koch emends *TI-at* in K 59+ (A) r19' in *bal?-at* ("If... the Middle Finger of the lungs is turned? to the right and left (...).") The emendation is not necessary.

#### Bibliography

U.S. KOCH, *Secrets of Extispicy: the Chapter Multābiltu of the Babylonian Extispicy Series and Niširti bārūti Texts mainly from Assurbanipal's Library* (AOAT 326), Münster 2005.

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