

Chapter H

Appendix – Treatments for Women’s Hair

Treatments for women’s hair in first millennium BCE Mesopotamian medical texts present an interesting case, where prescriptions for women are included in a “non-gynaecological” section or treatise of the therapeutic corpus, among remedies formulated for a (generalized) male patient. Since prescriptions for women’s hair are otherwise not attested within the women’s healthcare texts, but nonetheless present related material, these prescriptions have been included here due to the interest for the subject of women’s healthcare in ancient Mesopotamia. The exclusion of these treatments from the immediate corpus of gynaecological material provides a clue to Mesopotamian healing specialists’ classification of medical topics, suggesting that the focus of the women’s healthcare texts was on conditions of the female sexual organs and on topics having to do with reproduction. However, it is worth mentioning that cosmetic prescriptions are occasionally found in Late Babylonian medical collections for women’s health issues (see text A.2.2).

The main text presented in Chapter H are Neo-Assyrian fragments of a two-column tablet from Nineveh, (BAM 498–500+) preserving remedies for specific conditions of the head (e.g. the *ašû*-disease) as well as recipes to counter hair loss, which also include a few prescriptions specifically for women’s hair. The tablet belongs to the first section of the *Nineveh Medical Compendium* (the therapeutic series with “remedies from head to toes”), which is known in Assyriology as UGU (or CRANIUM).⁴²⁶ Recently identified new fragments and joins make it worthwhile to present here the sections for women in this text together with a few parallel or duplicating passages in other first millennium medical texts. If one compares the preserved recipes for women’s and men’s hair in the treatise CRANIUM, it is conspicuous that all the preserved treatments for women (whose hair becomes thin or falls out) are amulets attached to the head, while the treatments for men (e.g. against grey hair) involve topical applications of oils and different substances by anointing, bandaging or washing, but this choice may correlate with the purpose rather than the sex of the patient.

H.1 Treatments for Female Hair Loss in a Chapter of the Treatise CRANIUM (BAM 498–500+)

The present text (ms. A) can currently be assembled from fragments published by F. Köcher as BAM 498, BAM 499 and BAM 500, with the addition of several other fragments identified by the *Nineveh Medical Project* and the *electronic Babylonian Library Project*.⁴²⁷ The first column on the obverse is still lost. The treatments in obv. ii deal with hair loss, grey hair and dull hair in male patients, while rev. iii preserves treatments for hair loss in women, the latter of which are edited here. The preserved passages in A rev. iv deal with *ašû*-disease, also referred to as *māštu*-disease in this text. These sections duplicate a longer passage in BAM 494 (= K. 6224+) ii 16–58. The latter tablet may represent Tablet 4 or 5 of the Nineveh treatise CRANIUM. However, in contrast to BAM 498–500+, BAM 494 is mainly concerned with skin conditions befalling the head, including *ašû* (ii 3–58), *guraštu* (iii 1–6) and *kurāru* (iii 21’–iv 7), while the two last preserved remedies in col. iv 8–10 interestingly deal with hair loss (the hair falling out in tufts).⁴²⁸ Thus, while sharing overlapping topics and text sections, BAM 498–500+ and BAM 494 do not represent manuscripts of the same chapter of CRANIUM.

Two prescriptions for women countering hair loss in ms. A also occur, with minor differences, in two other texts related to the treatise on diseases of the head (CRANIUM), where they are recommended for a male patient. The amulet making use of the patient’s combed out hair to produce an amulet in ms. A 23’–25’ is also included in BAM 3 (ms. B), an Assur extract tablet collecting material from the treatise *šumma amēlu muḥḥašu umma ukāl* (CRANIUM). The compound amulet and ointment prescribed in ms. A lines 34’–35’ resembles a prescription in BAM 497 (ms. C), another Nineveh fragment dealing with ailments of the head (hair loss, *ašû*-disease).

⁴²⁶ See Steinert et al. 2018, 207, 209, 220–222 *passim* for discussion, where the title CRANIUM is introduced for this treatise, matching the title UGU.

⁴²⁷ K. Simkó suggests further indirect joins for BAM 498–500 with the following Nineveh fragments containing remedies for the hair (not exclusively recommended for women): K. 2532 (AMT 5/1), K. 3719 (AMT 76/6) (+) K. 10549 (AMT 3/6), and Sm. 712 (AMT 3/1). The former fragments offer treatments to blacken white hair.

⁴²⁸ For discussion and edition of BAM 494, see Bácskay and Simkó 2017, *JMC* 30, 1–71. For the treatise CRANIUM in the Assur Medical Catalogue and in the textual record, see also Steinert et al. 2018, 209, 220ff.

Ms. A (lines 7–8) features a short alliterative spell, of which varying longer versions or variations are encountered in ms. A lines 26'–30' (an incantation likewise used for women's hair), in BAM 526 (K. 13366): 7'–10' (used against nosebleed), in STT 277 iv 1–4 (unclear context) and in A. 3461 rev. 4'–7' (see *infra*, text A.1.2). The latter fragment focuses on women's diseases, but its exact purpose or context of use remains unclear.

List of Manuscripts

| Siglum | Museum Number | Copy | Collation | Format; Ductus | Provenience |
|--------|---|---|-----------|---|---------------------------------|
| A | K. 2416 + K. 9224 + K. 10624 + K. 11172 + K. 16402 + DT 215 + Rm. 254 (+) K. 2424 + 7016 (+ ³) K. 6206 + K. 16449 (+) K. 20128 (+ ³) K. 18178 | BAM 498 BAM 499 BAM 500 AMT 3/2 AMT 4/1 AMT 26/4 AMT 16/4 AMT 25/8 AMT 46/3 | Coll. | Fragments of a two-column tablet; Neo-Assyrian script; 7th cent. BCE | Nineveh; Ashurbanipal's library |
| B | VAT 9029 | KAR 202 BAM 3 | Coll. | Two-column tablet; Neo-Assyrian script; 7th cent. BCE | Assur; N4 library |
| C | K. 54 | BAM 497 | Coll. | Fragment of a two-column tablet; Neo-Assyrian script; 7th cent. BCE | Nineveh; Ashurbanipal's library |

Overview

| | | |
|-------|--|---------|
| i | Incantation rubric (referring to women's hair) A rev. iii 1 | 1 |
| ii | Prescription (KĪD.KĪD.BI) (amulet and ointment?) A rev. iii 2–6 | 2–6 |
| iii | (Pseudo-)Sumerian incantation (tuḥul tuḥul) A rev. iii 7–8 | 7–8 |
| iv | Incantation rubric referring to women's hair A rev. iii 9 | 9 |
| v | Fragmentary prescription A rev. iii 10 | 10 |
| vi' | Fragmentary prescription A rev. iii 11'–13' | 11'–13' |
| vii' | Fragmentary A rev. iii 14' | 14' |
| viii' | Fragmentary rubric(?) A rev. iii 15' | 15' |
| xi' | Procedure (KĪD.KĪD.BI) for a woman's hair (amulet) using hair combings (<i>mušāṭu</i>) A rev. iii 16'–18' | 16'–18' |
| x' | Pseudo-Sumerian incantation A rev. iii 19'–21' | 19'–21' |
| xi' | Incantation rubric (to prevent a woman's hair from falling out) A rev. iii 22' | 22' |
| xii' | Prescription (amulet) making use of hair combings A rev. iii 23'–25' /// B obv. ii 24–26 | 23'–25' |
| xiii' | (Pseudo-)Sumerian incantation A rev. iii 26'–30' | 26'–30' |

| | | |
|------|---|---------|
| xiv' | Incantation rubric (to prevent a woman's hair from falling out) | 31' |
| | A rev. iii 36' | |
| xv' | Prescription (ointment) | 32'–35' |
| | A rev. iii 32'–35'; variant ms. C obv. ii 1'–3' | |
| xvi' | Fragmentary Akkadian incantation | 36'–39' |
| | A rev. iii 36'–39' | |

Previous Edition and Discussion

Thompson 1924, *PRSM* 17, 10–12

Thompson 1929, *RA* 26, 68 (only AMT 26/4)

Köcher 1980a, BAM V, xxxi–xxxii and pl. 103–106

Scurlock and Andersen 2005, 10.99 (A rev. iv 2), 10.193 (A rev. iii 1)

BabMed Corpora (transliterations of BAM 498–500)

CDLI P424664 (transliteration, photo of BAM 498), P394416 (transliteration, photo of BAM 499), P398787 (transliteration, photo of BAM 500)

Nineveh Medical Project (<https://oracc.museum.upenn.edu/asbp/ninmed/>)

Electronic Babylonian Library (eBL) (<https://www.ebl.lmu.de/library/K.2416>)

Thomsen 1987, *Zauberdiagnose*, 82 n. 113 (lines 23'–24')

Scurlock and Andersen 2005, 10.192 (lines 31', 35'), 10.193 (line 22')

Worthington 2006, *JMC* 7, 21–22, 26 (lines 23'–25')

Steinert 2020, *JMC* 36, 65–66 (discussion of lines 22'–25')

Sections of BAM 498–500+ (ms. A) not edited here

| | |
|-----------------|---|
| Obv. i 1' | Fragmentary |
| Obv. ii 1'–6' | Prescription (ointment to blacken grey hair, SÍG BABBAR GI ₆) ⁴²⁹ |
| Obv. ii 7'–13' | Prescriptions (ointments, bandages) to blacken prematurely grey hair (<i>šibtu</i>) (line 7' // AMT 5/1: 5') ⁴³⁰ |
| Obv. ii 14'–18' | Prescription to blacken grey hair (SÍG BABBAR) |
| Obv. ii 19'–21' | Incantation |
| Obv. ii 22' | Incantation rubric for dull (unpleasant) hair (<i>šārat qaqqadi lā ṭābi</i>) |
| Obv. ii 23'–25' | Prescription (ointment) against grey hair |
| Obv. ii 26'–29' | Fragmentary prescription |
| Rev. iv 1 | Prescription |
| Rev. iv 2–6 | Prescription for “fleeting <i>ašû</i> ” (<i>ašû muttaprišu</i>) // BAM 494 ii 16–18 ⁴³¹ |
| Rev. iv 7 | Prescription (purpose unknown) // BAM 494 ii 19 |
| Rev. iv 8–11 | Prescription (purpose unknown) // BAM 494 ii 20–22 |
| Rev. iv 12 | Beginning of a prescription (purpose unknown) |
| Rev. iv 13'–15' | Fragmentary prescriptions for <i>ašû</i> -disease // BAM 494 ii 28–29 etc. |
| Rev. iv 16'–17' | Prescription for <i>ašû</i> -disease // BAM 494 ii 30 etc. |
| Rev. iv 18'–22' | Incantation // BAM 494 ii 31–34 |
| Rev. iv 23'–24' | Incantation rubric and prescription (referring to <i>māštu</i> -disease) // BAM 494 ii 35–36 |
| Rev. iv 25'–27' | Fragmentary incantation // BAM 494 ii 37–38 etc. |
| Rev. iv 28'–29' | Incantation rubric and prescription (referring to <i>māštu</i> -disease) // BAM 494 ii 39–40 etc. |
| Rev. iv 30'–31' | Prescription for <i>ašû</i> -disease // BAM 494 ii 41–43 |

⁴²⁹ See Scurlock and Andersen 2005, 10.203. For other prescriptions for this purpose, see also AMT 76/6: 9', 11', 13'; AMT 3/6 ii 7' (Scurlock and Andersen 2005, 10.202). For discussion, see also Kwasman 1999, NABU 1999/3, No. 60.

⁴³⁰ See Scurlock and Andersen 2005, 245 10.201 with n. 211; CAD Š/2, 387a s.v. *šibtu*.

⁴³¹ For edition of BAM 494 and duplicates, see Bácskay and Simkó 2017, *JMC* 30, 10–11. For *ašû muttaprišu* “fleeting *ašû*”, see also BAM 1 i 67 (Scurlock 2014a, 277); *Diagnostic Handbook* Tablet 33: 6 (Scurlock 2014a, 231); BAM 543 iv 25' and 36' (written RI.RI, within incantation).

| | |
|-----------------|---|
| Rev. iv 32'–33' | Prescription for <i>ašû</i> -disease // BAM 494 ii 43–44 |
| Rev. iv 34'–35' | Incantation // BAM 494 ii 47–48 |
| Rev. iv 36'–40' | Incantation rubric and prescription for <i>ašû</i> -disease // BAM 494 ii 49–51 |
| Rev. iv 41'–42' | Prescription for <i>ašû</i> -disease // BAM 494 ii 52 |
| Rev. iv 43'–44' | Fragmentary incantation // BAM 494 ii 53 etc. |
| Rev. iv 45'–46' | Fragmentary prescription for <i>māštu</i> -disease // BAM 494 ii 54–55 etc. |
| Rev. iv 47'–48' | Incantation // BAM 494 ii 56 etc. |
| Rev. iv 49'–50' | Fragmentary prescription // BAM 494 ii 57–58 etc. |

Transliteration

| | | |
|----|---------------|---|
| 1 | A rev. iii 1 | KA.INIM.MA SÍG SAG.DU MUNUS [<i>i-šaḥ-ḥu-uḥ</i>] |
| 2 | A rev. iii 2 | KÌD.KÌD.BI SÍG SA ₅ SÍG 'BABBAR' ^{sí} gZA.GÌN.NA ^ú NINNI ₅ NITA DIŠ- <i>niš</i> [NU.NU (x)] |
| 3 | A rev. iii 3 | ^{na4} GUG ^{na4} PA šá 7 GÙN.MEŠ-šá È 7 KA.KÉŠ 'KÉŠ' <i>e-m</i> [a KÉŠ ÉN ŠID- <i>nu</i>] |
| 4 | A rev. iii 4 | <i>ina</i> SAG.KI-šá KÉŠ <i>mu-šá-ti-šá</i> ' NU.NU 7 KA.'KÉŠ' KÉŠ [x x x] |
| 5 | A rev. iii 5 | ' <i>mu</i> ¹ -šá-ti-šá <i>tur-ár</i> 'SÚD' ^ú SL.'SÁ' [x x x x] |
| 6 | A rev. iii 6 | ^ú <i>ak-tam</i> šá KUR Ú.'ḪI'.A <i>an-nu-t</i> [i x] x [x x x x] |
| 7 | A rev. iii 7 | ÉN <i>tu-ḥu-ul tu-ḥu-ul</i> [x x x x x x] |
| 8 | A rev. iii 8 | <i>ma-da ḥul ma-da ḥul-ḥul</i> [x x x x x (TU ₆ ÉN)] |
| 9 | A rev. iii 9 | [K]A.INIM.MA 'SÍG' SA[G.DU MUNUS' x x x x] |
| 10 | A rev. iii 10 | [x x x ⁿ a ⁴ GUG ^{na4} Z[A.GÌN'] |

Break of unknown length

| | | |
|-----|----------------|---|
| 11' | A rev. iii 11' | 'kin' [.....] |
| 12' | A rev. iii 12' | kin-k[in'] |
| 13' | A rev. iii 13' | an-k[i] |
| 14' | A rev. iii 14' | <i>ḥa-a</i> [š-.....] |
| 15' | A rev. iii 15' | K[A.INIM.MA'] |
| 16' | A rev. iii 16' | [KÌD.KÌ]D.BI <i>mu-šá-ti-šá ina</i> 'ŠÁ' [.....] |
| 17' | A rev. iii 17' | ' <i>mu</i> ¹ -šá-ti-šá <i>ta-qal-lu ana</i> ŠÁ [KÉ]Š'-' <i>ru</i> ¹ ÉN 7-šú ŠID- <i>nu</i> |
| 18' | A rev. iii 18' | ÍB.TAG ₄ <i>mu-šá-ti š</i> -[i' T]I- <i>qé</i> DUR NU.NU 7 u 7 KA.KÉ[Š KÉŠ] 'ÉN' [ŠID'] |
| 19' | A rev. iii 19' | ÉN ki ḥuš x[x]-'u-uš' ¹ ḥé-em-'il' ¹ |
| 20' | A rev. iii 20' | èš-sa ¹ -du [x x] gu dím-ma ti-la-šè ki-bé-eš |
| 21' | A rev. iii 21' | ki-'ri ¹ -ri-šá nap-ri-šá ki-ri-ri-šá : ki-ri-ri ki-lu-ur-šá 'TU ₆ ' ÉN |

| | | |
|-----|-----------------------------------|---|
| 22' | A obv. iii 22' | KA.INIM.MA SÍG SAG.DU MUNUS <i>i-šaḥ-ḥu-uḥ</i> |
| 23' | A obv. iii 23' B obv. ii 24–25 | KÌD.KÌD.BI <i>mu-šá-ti-šá TI-qé ku-niš-tú ta-ša-pir ur-te-e</i> TÚG ^{giš} GIŠIMMAR <i>šá</i> ^{tu15} SI.SÁ DIŠ KI.MIN <i>mu-šá-ti-šú TI-qé ku-niš-tú ta-šap-pir ur-te-e</i> / ^{giš} GIŠIMMAR <i>šá</i> IGI ^{tu15} SI.SÁ |
| 24' | A obv. iii 24' B obv. 25–26 | NU.NU <i>zap-pi</i> ANŠE.KUR.RA BABBAR 7 u 7 KA.KÉŠ KÉŠ <i>ina</i> SÍG-šá KÉŠ ÉN 7-šú ŠID- <i>nu</i> <i>zap-pi</i> ANŠE.KUR.RA <i>pu-ḥa-li</i> BABBAR 7 u 7 / KA.KÉŠ KÉŠ <i>ina</i> SÍG-šú KÉŠ-as 'ÉN' 7-šú' ŠID- <i>nu</i> |
| 25' | A obv. iii 25' B | 'x x x' U ₄ .3.KÁM <i>ti-ik-ka-šá</i> GU ₇ -ši <i>a-di</i> SÍG-šá GUB-zu NU DU ₈ <i>Omits</i> |
| 26' | A rev. iii 26' | [ÉN SÍG [?] <i>k</i>] <i>a-le-e</i> ḥul-a tu-ḥu-ul ḥu-ul |
| 27' | A rev. iii 27' | [ma-da ḥ]u-ul ḥu-ul ḥu-ul ma-da ma-da |
| 28' | A rev. iii 28' | [x ki-l]i ki-li : ša ke-še-da-ni ke-še-da-nu |
| 29' | A rev. iii 29' | [x x x] imin a-rá ka-kéš-da-šè hé-en-zálag-ga |
| 30' | A rev. iii 30' | [ḥé-en-sikil ḥé]-en-dadag eme ḥul-ḡál bar-šè ḥé-em-ta-gub |
| 31' | A rev. iii 31' | [KA.INIM.MA SÍ]G MUNUS <i>ka-le-e</i> |
| 32' | A rev. iii 32' | [KÌD.KÌD.BI x x x]x NU.NU ^{na4} PA <i>šá</i> 7 GÙN.MEŠ-šá ^{na4} <i>ia-ni-ba</i> |
| 33' | A rev. iii 33' C obv. ii 1' | [^{na4} x x x ⁿ] ^{a4} <i>zib-tú gu-ti-tú</i> URUDU ZABAR [.....] [^{na4} GUG ¹ ^{na4} ZA.GÌN <i>šá-da-a</i> |
| 34' | A rev. iii 34' C obv. ii 2' | [x x x x È] 7 u 7 KA.KÉŠ KÉŠ <i>e-ma</i> KÉŠ ÉN ŠID- <i>nu</i> [..... KA.KÉ]Š KÉŠ <i>e-ma</i> KÉŠ ÉN ŠID- <i>nu</i> |
| 35' | A rev. iii 35' C obv. ii 3' | [<i>ina</i> SAG.KI-ša KÉŠ Ì.GIŠ ŠÉŠ [?] - <i>m</i>]a SÍG <i>a-lik-tu₄ ik-kal-la</i> [.....]x <i>ta-pa-šá-áš-ma</i> SÍG <i>a-lik-tú ik-kal-la</i> |
| 36' | A rev. iii 36' | [ÉN x x x x x <i>gul-g</i>]ul [?] - <i>la</i> SAG.DU <i>up-te-ti bi-la-am</i> |
| 37' | A rev. iii 37' | [x x x x x x x] ur <i>li-ḥi-ia-aq</i> |
| 38' | A rev. iii 38' | [x x x x x x x]x AN.TA <i>ku-ku ki-šá-¹a[?]</i> |
| 39' | A rev. iii 39' | [x x x x x x x x]- ¹ ta ¹ 'še-en ¹ ÉN |

For the continuation of ms. A see above

Bound Transcription and Translation

¹ KA.INIM.MA SÍG SAG.DU MUNUS [*išaḥḥuḥ*]

¹ Wording (of an incantation for the case that) the hair of a woman's head [falls out].

² KÌD.KÌD.BI *šipāti sāmāti šipāti pešēti uqnāti ašla zikar ištēniš* [taṭammi (...)] ³ *sāmta ayyarta ša sebet tikpūša tašakkak sebet kišrī takaššar ēma* [taktašru šipta taman-nu] ⁴ *ina pūti/nakkaptiša tarakkas mušātiša taṭammi sebet kišrī takaššar* [... ...] ⁵ *mušātiša turrar tasāk šurdunū* [... ...] ⁶ *aktam ša šadē šammī annūti* [... ...]

² The procedure for it: [You twine] red wool, white wool, blue-coloured wool and male *ašlu*-rush together. [...], ³ you thread carnelian and an *ayyartu*-shell with seven dots (on it). You knot seven knots (into the thread). Whenever [you have tied a knot, you recite the incantation.] ⁴ You tie it around her forehead/temples. You twine together her combed out hair; you tie seven knots. [...]. ⁵ You desiccate her combed out hair; crush (it), (you take) *šurdunū*-plant, [...], ⁶ (and) *aktam*-plant of the mountains – (all) these plants [you].

⁷ ÉN tu-ḥu-ul tu-ḥu-ul [... ...]

⁷ Incantation. Tuḥul tuḥul [... ...]

⁸ ma-da ḥul ma-da ḥul ḥul [... (*tē šipti*)]

⁸ mada ḥul mada ḥul ḥul [... (Incantation formula)].

⁹ [K]A.INIM.MA *šarat qaq[qa]d sinništi(?)* [...]

⁹ Wording (of an incantation) [to ... a woman's(?)] hair.

¹⁰ [...] *sāmtu* [... ...]

¹⁰ [...] carnelian, [lapis lazuli], [... ...]

Break of unknown length

^{11'–13'} *fragmentary*

^{11'–13'} *too fragmentary for translation*

^{14'} *fragmentary*

^{14'} *too fragmentary for translation*

¹⁵ K[A.INIM.MA(?)]

¹⁵ In[can]tation(?) for ...].

¹⁶ [KÌD.KÌ]D.BI *mušātiša ina libbi* [... ...] ¹⁷ *mušātiša taqallu ana libbi takaššar(?) šipta sebīšu tamannu* ¹⁸ *rīhti mušāti š[ī]leqqe(?) turra iṭammi sebet u sebet kiš[rī] takaššar* *šip-ta(?)* [tamannu(?)]

¹⁶ The [proced]ure for it: [You put(?) ...] her hair combings into(?) [... ...], ¹⁷ you roast her hair combings, you tie (them) together with it(?). You recite the incantation seven times. ¹⁸ She (i.e. the patient) takes(?) the rest of the hair; she twines a string (with it). [You(?) knot] seven and seven knots (into it). [You recite(?)] the incantation(?).

¹⁹ ÉN ki ḥuṣ x[x]-u-uš¹ hé-em-¹il¹

¹⁹ Incantation: *Pseudo-Sumerian spell*

²⁰ èš-sa¹-du [...] gu dīm-ma ti-la-šè ki-bé-eš

²¹ ki-¹ri¹-ri-šá nap-ri-šá ki-ri-ri-šá ki-ri-ri ki-lu-ur-šá *tē šipti*

²¹ Kiririša Napiriša Kiririša kiriri kilurša. Incantation formula.

²² KA.INIM.MA *šarat qaqqa sinništi išaḥḥuḥ*

²² Wording (of an incantation for the case that) the hair of a woman's head falls out.

²³ KÌD.KÌD.BI (var. DIŠ KI.MIN) *mušātiša teleqqe kuništa tašappir urṭē šubāti gišimmari ša pān ištāni taṭammi* ²⁴ *zappi puḥāli peši sebet u sebet kišrī takaššar ina šārtiša tarakkas šipta sebīšu tamannu* ²⁵ ... U₄.3.KAM *tikkaša ikkal adi šārtiša izzazu lā tapaṭṭar*

²³ The procedure for it (var. Alternatively): You take combings from her, you strand it into a strand of hair; you twine (it with) fibres from the texture surrounding the date palm (from the side) facing north (and with) ²⁴ bristles from a white stallion. You knot seven and seven knots, you bind (this) into her hair; you recite the incantation seven times. ²⁵ ... for three days her neck will hurt (her), (but) you shall not remove it until her hair stops (falling out).

^{26'} [ÉN *šārta k*]alē(?) ḥul-a tu-ḥu-ul ḥu-ul

^{27'} [ma-da ḥ]u-ul ḥu-ul ḥu-ul ma-da ma-da

^{28'} [x ki-l]i ki-li : šā ke-še-da-ni ke-še-da-nu

^{29'} [...] imin a-rá zú-kéš-da-šè hé-en-zálag-ga

^{30'} [hé-en-sikil hé]-en-dadag eme-ḥul-gál bar-šè hé-em-ta-gub

^{31'} KA.INIM.MA *šārat qaqqad sinništi kalē*

^{32'} [KÌD.KÌD.BI ...]... *taṭammi ayyartu ša sebet tikpūša yāni-ba* ^{33'} [...] *zibtu gutītu erū siparru* (var. *sāmtu uqnū šadā*)
^{34'} [...] *sebet u sebet kišrī takaššar ēma taktašru šipta tamannu* ^{35'} [ina pūtiša/nakkaptiša tarakkas šamna ta-paššaš]-ma *šārtu āliktu ikkalla*

^{36'} [ÉN ... *gul*]gulla(?) *qaqqada uptetti bila*

^{37'} [...] ... *liḥiaq*(?)

^{38'} [...] *eliš ku-ku ki-šā-ʾaʾ*¹

^{39'} [...] ...-ʾ*ta*¹ *še-en-šū*² ÉN

^{26'} [Incantation for] *holding back*(?) [the hair (from falling out)]: “Ḥula tuḥul ḥul

^{27'} [mada ḥ]ul ḥul ḥul mada mada

^{28'} [...] *kil*]i *kili ša kešedani kešedanu*

^{29'} [...] seven times over. Due to the knotting may she become radiant,

^{30'} [May she become pure, may] she become bright! May the evil tongue step aside!”

^{31'} [Wording (of an incantation)] to hold back the hair of a woman’s head (from falling out).

^{32'} [The procedure for it: you twine [*a thread of* ...], ^{34'} [you thread (on it)] ^{32'} an *ayyartu*-shell with seven dots, *yāni-bu*-‘stone’, ^{33'} [...] -stone, Gutian *zibtu*-stone, copper, bronze (var. [...], carnelian, lapis lazuli of the *mountains*), ^{34'} [...], you make seven and seven knots. Wherever you have made a knot, you recite the incantation. ^{35'} [you tie it around her forehead/temples. You rub (her) with oil(?)]. Then the ‘going’ hair will be retained.

^{36'} [Incantation. “...]... I have bared(?) the skull, the head. Bring it to me!

^{37'} [...] let him mix(?)

^{38'} [...] above,

^{39'} [...] ...!” Incantation (formula).

Notes

Line 1: The reconstruction of the rubric is based on BAM 499 ii 7' (see below and Scurlock and Andersen 2005, 10.193).

Lines 2–6: These lines offer at least two prescriptions: a recipe for an amulet to be worn around the forehead (lines 2–4), and a second prescription (lines 4–6), using combed out hair of the patient, which is spun as well as desiccated and crushed and then combined with plant materials. Perhaps the latter remedy was applied as a second amulet. For the *šur-dunū*-plant (reading the logogram as ^uSI.SÁ rather than ^usi-di), cf. CAD Š/3, 343–344; perhaps to be identified with rocket.

Lines 7–8: For other spells containing the formula tuḥul tuḥul, see *infra* text A.1.2). The incantation can be classified as an example of a string of “poetic Mumbo-Jumbo Sumerian” often encountered in incantations in Mesopotamian medical texts (see e.g. Veldhuis 1999, 47–48; Baragli 2019; Geller and Panayotov 2020, 87, 90, 91–93 IGI I 110'–111', 119'–120', 125', 132'–133'; Bácskay and Niederreiter 2024, 22–23 for examples). As Veldhuis (op. cit.) has shown, the elements in such formulae which are used in a repetitive, rhythmic fashion, can sometimes be recognized as meaningful words (in our case tuḥul “thigh, hip(bone), mada “(low) land; plain” (= Akk. *mātu*) and ḥul “bad”).

Lines 16'–18': If the restoration ÍB.TAG₄ *mu-šá-ṭi ši-[i² T]I-qé* in line 18' is correct, the fem. sg. pronoun *ši* “she” probably refers to the female patient as subject of the sentence, and not to the feminine noun *riḥtu* “rest”.

Lines 19'–21': Line 21' presents a mixture of Elamite divine names and *abracadabra*-phrases, perhaps reminiscent of Sumerian words. The theonyms Kiririša “great lady” and Nap(i)riša “great god” also occur in a few birth incantations from the second and first millennium BCE (see BAM 248 obv. i 56–57 (text D.1.1) for discussion).

Line 22': The verb *šaḥāḥu* “to fall out” (CAD Š/1, 75–76 sub 1c) contrasts with *kalū* “to retain, to hold back” (the hair) in line 31' and 35'. A similar contrast is found in *šārtu āliktu* “hair falling out (‘going’)” and *izuzzu* “to stop moving, to stand still” in line 35' (CAD A/1, 347b sub c; CAD U/W, 375–376 sub 2c).

Lines 23'–25': Mss. A and B slightly vary in a few details. Ms. B omits the complete line 10' found in ms. A. In line 8', ms. A reads *ur-ṭe-e TÚG* ^{gi}GIŠIMMAR “fibres from the texture (*ṣubātu*) of the date palm”, whereas ms. B only has *ur-ṭe-e* ^{gi}GIŠIMMAR. Both expressions refer to the fibres resembling horse's hair (together resembling a kind of garment), which surround the bases of the flower and leaf stalks and sometimes cover the fruit. From these fibres ropes of great stability can be made.⁴³²

In line 23', the form of the verb *ṣapāru/ṣepēru* “to strand (hair)” can be read *ta-ša-par* or *ta-ša-pir*, since according to AHW 1082a, this verb can have an *a/u* or *i/i* vocalization (cf. CAD Š, 132–133). For *kuništu* “strand, twist (made of hair)”, related to *kunšu* “ball/braid of hair”, see Köcher 1980a, BAM V, xxxv *ad* BAM 503: 12; CAD K, 540a, 542–543 (both terms are rarely attested).

Lines 32'–35': Ms. C appears to use different amulet ingredients than ms. A with the same instruction and for the same purpose. Among the amulet ingredients are shells, which likewise form popular materials in amulets for other female health issues (e.g. haemorrhage). For *ayyartu*-shell with seven dots, see also BAM 237 obv. i 47'–48', rev. iii 2, 28 (text C.1.4), KAL 7, No. 16 line 2' (text C.1.3) and line 3 above.

The *zibtu*-stone (^{na4}*zīb-tū/tu₄*) in line 33' is also attested in BAM 237 obv. i 47'–48' in an amulet prescription to stop haemorrhage (*infra* text C.1.4). Instead of ^{na4}*zīb-tu₄*, Stol (2000a, 49 n. 7) proposes to read ^{na4}*ḫáš-tum* (a stone attested in the Old Babylonian version of Lugale 603–611, which Stol regards as a variant for the *ḫaltu*-stone, cf. Schuster-Brandis 2008, 416; Joannès 1989, RA 83, 122–123). The *zibtu*-stone may refer to a shell, as it is elsewhere mentioned among “stones of the sea”.⁴³³ In the present text of ms. A, a “Gutean” variety (*zibtu gutītu*) is prescribed, not attested elsewhere to my knowledge (cf. CAD Q, 328; AHW 931a s.v. *qutū*).⁴³⁴

The variant in ms. C ii 1' preserves different minerals than ms. A, namely carnelian and ^{na4}ZA.GÌN *šá-da-a*, which I interpret as “lapis lazuli of the mountain(s)” (i.e. genuine stone, usually written *uqnū šadī*, ^{na4}ZA.GÌN KUR.RA).⁴³⁵ However, the glass texts also attest to a colourant *šadū* (spelled *ša-da-a*) that was an ingredient for making blue (lapis lazuli-coloured glass), perhaps yielding a source of cobalt or iron oxide, see CAD Š/1, 61 s.v. *šadū* C; Thavapalan 2021, JCS 73, 147, 149 n. 34. Therefore, it is not entirely certain whether *šá-da-a* in ms. C is identical with this colourant.

Line 36': For the D-stem of *petū* “to open” in the sense of “to bare (the head), to unveil”, see CAD P, 355 sub 6j (see also sub 3b).

Line 38': *ki-šá'-a* is perhaps best be understood as an imperative (fem. plural?) of *kašū* (also *kašā'u*) “to increase (strongly)”. At least in the D-stem (stative), the verb can also mean “to be plentifully endowed (with hair)” (CAD K, 297; AHW, 463), which would also suit the present context (perhaps the verb references a feminine plural *šārātu* “hair”).

Lines 39': The sign copied by Köcher before ÉN looks a bit like GÜB, but a reading *še-en*¹⁷ seems more plausible. If correct, this may be an imperative (with pron. suffix) of *šēnu* “to load; to heap up” (cf. AHW, 1091 s.v. *šēnu* I; CAD Š, 131–132).

H.2 A Treatment for Hair Loss Applicable for Men and Women in BAM 480

The Nineveh text BAM 480 (K. 2354+) presents the first tablet of the treatise CRANIUM (UGU) dealing with diseases of the head. It focuses on the topic fever/heat (or inflammation) of the head.⁴³⁶ Other sections of the tablet deal with ointments, amulets and incantations to treat hair loss. The problem is described as occurring as a side-effect of fever/inflammation

⁴³² See Landsberger 1967, *Date Palm*, 19–20 for discussion and references; see also CAD U/W, 256 s.v. *urṭū*; CAD Š, 221, 225 lex. section and sub 2 (translating “bark of the palm”); Streck 2004, ZA 94, 268–270; correct the reading ÉŠ (for *āšlu* “rope”) instead of TÚG in Steinert 2020, JMC 36, 65; 2021a, *Byzantinische Forschungen* 33, 69

⁴³³ Cf. Oppenheim 1963, *OrNS* 32, 411; Schuster-Brandis 2008, 456; Arkhipov 2012, 39, 58; 2018, 50.

⁴³⁴ The geographical designation Gutium (*G/Quṭū*) in second and first millennium BCE texts is applied to regions of the Zagros highlands north-east of the lower Tigris and in geographical and astronomical texts may replace or join Subartu (Assyria), standing for a general eastern direction (Horowitz 1998, 82–84, 91–92, 323–324 *passim*). The geographical associations of Gutium appear to contradict an association of *zibtu* with sea shells in the present context and rather point to a stone.

⁴³⁵ CAD Š/1, 54 sub 1d; CAD U/W, 196–197 sub 1a-1'; Oppenheim et al. 1970, *Glass*, 9–10, 12; Thavapalan 2020, 312.

⁴³⁶ For further discussion, see also Heeßel 2010e, 158; Steinert et al. 2018, 209, 220.

(‘heat’) of the head (col. iii 22–56). This section of the text begins with the words: “If a man’s head is hot, and the hair of his head falls out, to [remove?] the inflammation (heat) of [his] head and to bring hair loss (lit. ‘going’ hair) to a standstill” (DIŠ NA SAG.DU-su KÚM-ma S[ÍG S]AG.DU-su *i-šaḥ-ḥu-uh ana KÚM SAG.DU-[šú ZI-ḥi]* / *u SÍG DU-tú GUB-zi*; Worthington 2005, 12 rev. iii 22–23; Scurlock 2014a, 314, 315; Wee 2010a, 301, 443 §P). Since BAM 480 rev. iii 48–56 deals with hair on a man’s cheek that is falling out, the preceding prescriptions may also have been used for treating hair loss independent of additional symptoms affecting the head. The section, as a whole (which prescribes mostly ointments, in addition to a bandage and an amulet), does not contain prescriptions reserved specifically for women. But one of the treatments explicitly states that it could be used both “for a man or [a woman]” (iii 38–39 *lū ša zikari lū [ša sinništi]*). This passage of interest consists of a prescription for an ointment applied to the head and a Sumerian incantation recited over the remedy. The remedy promises that “the hair that is ‘going’ (i.e. falling out) will be prevented (from falling out)” (*SÍG DU-tú ik-kal-la*).

List of Manuscripts

| Siglum | Museum Number | Copy | Collation | Format; Ductus | Provenience |
|--------|--|-------------------------------------|-------------|---|-------------------------------------|
| A | K. 2354 + K. 2412 + K. 2453 + K. 2491 + K. 3237 + K. 6774 + K. 7086 + K. 8356 + K. 8800 + K. 8842 + K. 9828 + K. 10428 + K. 11868 + K. 13398 + K. 13399 + K. 16541 + ² K. 17155 + ² K. 17315 + ² K. 17359 + ² K. 20138 + Sm. 637 + Sm. 1156 (+ ²) K. 13417 | CT 23, 23–38 AMT 92/3 BAM 480 | Photo Coll. | Two-column tablet; Neo-Assyrian script; 7th cent. BCE | Nineveh; Library of Ashurbanipal |

Previous Edition and Discussion

Worthington 2005 (edition)

Worthington 2006

Worthington 2007

Heeßel 2010d, *TUAT NF* 5, 48–50 (partial translation)

Scurlock 2014a, 306–328 (edition)

Panayotov 2016a

Panayotov 2016b

Bácskay 2018a, 47–66 (partial edition)

Wee 2019a, 300–301, 443

Geller and Panayotov 2020, 206–220, 303–305, pl. 36–39 (edition; photos)

CDLI P365742

Electronic Babylonian Library (eBL) (<https://www.ebl.lmu.de/library/K.2354>)

The Nineveh Medical Project (NinMed) (<https://oracc.museum.upenn.edu/asbp/ninmed/>)

Transliteration

- 1 A rev. iii 36 ÉN i-bi gi ‘i-bi’ ‘gi’ hé-en-z[álag-g]e saḡ-ki zí saḡ-ki zí hé-en-zálag-ge saḡ-ki iz saḡ-ki iz
- 2 A rev. iii 37 hé-en-zálag-g[e] še-er zi ‘hé’-e[n-zálag-g]e ma-al-lal *i-di* mu-ra-an-gub ḥul-bi ḥul-ḥul <TU₆> ÉN
- 3 A rev. iii 38 KÌD.KÌD.[BI SA]G.‘DU’ ‘BURU₅’ K[UR.RA S]AG.DU ÍGIRA^{mušen} SAG.DU BURU₅.ḪABRUD.DA NÍTA^{giš}U₄.(-)
ḪI.IN^{giš}GIŠIMMAR [(x)]
- 4 A rev. iii 39 x x [... ..] ÉJN 3-šú ana ŠÀ ŠID-nu EŠ.MEŠ-su-ma SÍG DU-tú ik-kal-la lu šá NITA lu [šá MUNUS]

Bound Transcription and Translation

¹ ÉN i-bi gi 'i-bi' 'gi' h́e-en-z[álag-g]e saĝ-ki źi saĝ-ki źi h́e-en-zálag-ge saĝ-ki iz saĝ-ki iz

² h́e-en-zálag-g[e] še-er zi 'h́e¹-e[n-zálag-g]e ma-al-lal *idi* mu-ra-an-gub h́ul-bi h́ul-h́ul <TU₆> ÉN

¹Incantation: “Turn the eyes away, turn the eyes away, so that it may become bright for him! Rise from the forehead, rise from the forehead, so that it may become bright for him! It has risen from the forehead! It has risen from the forehead!

² May it become bright for him! Remove the *sheen*, so that it may become [bright for] him! It (the illness) will diminish for me, it will stand *aside* for me. Destroy its (the disease's) evil!” Incantation <formula>.

³ KÌD.KÌD.[BI] *qaqqad āribi šadī qaqqad igiré qaqqad iššūr hurri zikari uḥinnī gišimmari* ⁴ ... [... ...] *šipta šalāšišu ana libbi tamannu taptanaššassū-ma šartu āliktu ikkalla lū ša zikari lū [ša sinništi]*

³The procedure [for it: ⁴You [...]] ³the head of a mountain raven, the head of a heron, the head of a male partridge (*iššur hurri*), fresh dates from a date palm, ⁴[...]. You recite the spell three times over it. You repeatedly rub him (with it), and the falling hair will be held back, be it that of a man or that [of a woman].

Notes

Line 1: The phrase i-bi gi could be understood as i-bí-gin₇ “like smoke” (Akk. *qutru*). However, Emesal i-bí can also stand for igi “eye; face” (Attinger 2021, *Glossaire*, 555). The sign GIŠ could be understood as “to be straight, alright, well” (= Akkadian *ešēru*); see Worthington 2005, 20. Scurlock (2014b, 315) interprets źi and iz as Akkadian imperatives *iš(i)*, and *šī* (from *ašū* “to depart”); I prefer to render źi and iz as phonetic, variant spellings of Sumerian verb forms of zi(g) “to rise; to remove” (with iz perhaps standing for i-zi).

Line 2: Scurlock (2014a, 315) interprets the word še-er(-zi) “radiance, sheen” as an allusion to a shiny bald spot. The interpretation of i-di preceding mu-ra-an-gub is uncertain. Scurlock (2014a, 335 n. 112) regards i-di as a pseudo-Sumerogram, from Akkadian *idu* “arm, side”. The expected Sumerian expression would be bar-šè “aside, to the side”. Worthington (2005, 20) suggests i-di could stand for idim “furious, raging” (Akk. *ekdu*). Alternatively, i-di may be interpreted as i₇-d (íd) “river, canal” or as idim “source, spring”. The verb gub “to stand (up, firm)” in the passage is reminiscent of *izuzzu* “to stand still; to stop moving” (i.e. stop the hair from falling out) used elsewhere in BAM 480 (e.g. iii 22–23) in contrast to ‘going’ hair (cf. CAD U/W, 375–376 s.v. *uzuzzu* sub 2c; CAD A/1, 347b sub b). Thus, the “falling hair” (illness) may have been compared with a flowing river or water source, which should come to a halt.