

**Operational Force in the World's
Earliest Incantation Tradition**

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Operational Force in the World's Earliest Incantation Tradition

Introduction: It could be argued that it is only one's definitions of the natural world which allows for any real delineation between magic, science, and religion. Differing stances on the natural world resulted in opposing doctrines among the clergy-men of pre-modern Europe: while traditional clergy-men permitted the use of curative holy water or the ringing of the church bell to divert storms etc., an emerging group of conservative, university trained clergy-men opposed all such religio-magical charms. It was their university exposure to the views and teachings of Aristotle, the Greek thinker who argued (among other things) that 'nothing could work at a distance,' that lead this more conservative clergy to reject old world magic and fledging science alike as stemming "from the Devil."¹

In the more recent past, James G. Frazer's 1890 work, *The Golden Bough*, represents an important ground work in the study of comparative religion and magic. Influenced by Darwinian notions of evolution that so fascinated his generation, Frazer proposed that societies *evolve* from "primitive" magic, to religion and finally to science. While such a proposal was certain to meet with opposition, in the end none have been more prolific in their objections than Frazer's fellow anthropologists and their successors.² Subsequent reactions against Frazer's proposals have

¹ See Keith Thomas and his authoritative "Religion and the Decline of Magic" - Thomas 1971 pg. 304

lead anthropologists to question the distinction between magic and religion in pre-modern cultures, specifically, did such a distinction even exist in the minds of earlier people? Frazer's stronger opponents even object to the use of the term "magic" at all, on the grounds that it is a term that is now loaded with early-modern and western bias.³

As Mirecki and Meyer noted, "biased descriptions and definitions of magic may be seen in the likes of Sir James G. Frazer (*The Golden Bough*, 1910) and many others, but they are ultimately rooted in Greco-Roman polemic and Protestant anti-Roman Catholic statements."⁴

The core of these positions, essentially that the ancient religio-magical world view should not be interpreted (much less judged) solely with reference to modern criteria, has seen general acceptance within the branches of specialist history studies, to include Assyriology. As Elenor Robson has eloquently put it: "If even Isaac Newton was not a 'scientist' by modern definitions, and his work not 'science' but 'natural philosophy', then there is little point in attempting to identify ideas and activities in ancient Mesopotamia, or anywhere in the pre-modern world, that happen to coincide with current (folk) ideas about what science is or ought to be."⁵ Along with Robson, and whether in regards "science," "magic," or "religion" one might endeavor to "understand ancient thoughts and practices in their own socio-political context."⁶

² No doubt these objections were as much about the fundamentally biased way in which Frazer discussed his subject matter, as in his description of the sorcerer: "In short, to him magic is always an art, never a science; the very idea of science is lacking in his undeveloped mind. It is for the philosophic student to trace the train of thought which underlies the magician's practice; to draw out the few simple threads of which the tangled skein is composed; to disengage the abstract principles from their concrete applications; in short, to discern the spurious science behind the bastard art." (see Frazer 1890 ch. 4)

³ Versnel 1991 pg. 178. A well known critic of Frazer was W.J. Goode, see Goode "Magic and Religion. A Continuum", *Ethnos* 14 (1949) 172- 182

⁴ Mirecki and Meyer 2001, pg 2. The authors cite the contribution of Jonathan Z. Smith, Fritz Graf, Robert K. Ritner and Stephen D. Ricks, essays appearing in the same volume.

⁵ Robson 2008 pg. 410

⁶ *Ibid.* pg. 411. A similar stance is advanced by Wiggermann and Binsbergen 1999 pg.6: "...we cannot define magic simply by reference to a cognitive sub-system ('modern science') of our culture. Frazer's characterisation of magic as pseudo-science is untenable...Taking modern science as our touchstone would reduce the analytical exercise to a simple act of ethnocentric projection on our part.."

In terms of potential for the direct transmission of ancient belief, few surviving ancient textual traditions can rival the extent archives of Mesopotamian cuneiform literature; the Early Dynastic incantations of Mesopotamia offer the chance to study the problem of the separation of magic and religion from the earliest attestable written incantations in the world; it follows that what these texts have to say is of no small importance for the greater Assyriological and Anthropological discussion. This paper will explore themes of “theistically operative force” (magic power by the gods) and “non-theistically operative force” (magic not powered by the gods) in order to assert that from its earliest exemplars, Mesopotamian magic is demonstrably theistically operative. Discussion will proceed first to a brief outline of opposing views (1.0 and 1.1 below); in section 2.0 the closing formula of late period incantations and their theistic properties are discussed; in sections 3.0 and 3.1 the Early Dynastic corpus of incantations is defined and the theistically charged formulae of the period are studied. A summary and conclusion is presented in 4.0.

1.0 - Non-theistic Operative Force - Bottero:

Jean Bottero writing in his seminal work *Religion in Ancient Mesopotamia* (2003), saw magic and religion as distinct and separate in Mesopotamia, at least in the beginning.⁷ According to Bottero, early incantation specialists developed “anti-evil techniques” in response to the evils of demons, snakes, scorpions and so forth. These incantations operated according to the specialists own innate force, states the author, using his *hand* in conjunction with objects deemed efficacious and using his *voice* to impose his will over the demonic.⁸ Thus, the author employs the latin term *Ex opere operato* (roughly: ‘by the work

⁷ These suggestions are a condensed and simplified version of Bottero’s treatment of the same topic – see RLA 7, Magie A.

worked’) in describing the operating principal evident in the earliest incantations, a time when incantations were efficacious yet independent from the gods.⁹ As an illustration of this a Sumerian incantation found at both Early Dynastic Fara and Ebla, is given and Bottero’s (abbreviated) translation reads:

*“The Scorpion, its tail is pulled off. Its body is made of gold! Its tongue and its body are henceforth like a hand and an arm (separated)!.”*¹⁰

Before the turn of the 2nd millennium, Bottero posits a major change: an “exorcistic reform movement” would shift the response to demons from “magical therapeutics” to “exorcistic therapeutics”; in other words, magic was no longer innately human but it was up to the gods to “inject their will and their power” to make incantations effective and successful.¹¹

1.1 Non-theistic Operative Force – Wiggermann/Binsbergen:

A second non-theistic proposal comes from Frans Wiggermann and co-author Wim van Binsbergen (an anthropologist). In their 1999 article the authors posit a theoretical perspective of magic in history; more specifically they attempt to situate magic in its historical and social-political setting within ancient Mesopotamia.¹² In order to do so, the authors engage in a “deep structural reading” of Mesopotamian history and literature seeking to detect an

⁸ Bottero 2003, pg. 192-194

⁹ Bottero 1988 (RLA 7) pg. 207-208

¹⁰ Bottero 2003, pg. 193 – this incantation is treated in BFE 1. In his RLA 7 entry, Magie A, Bottero gives BFE 27 as a further example.

¹¹ Bottero 2003, pg. 194-200

¹² This paper appeared in the volume *Mesopotamian Magic: Textual, Historical and Interpretive Perspectives*. 1999. Eds. Karl van der Toorn and Tzvi Abusch. Styx: Groningen pp. 3-34

underlying historical narrative in the texts that the scribes themselves may not have been aware of.¹³

The resulting study is a nuanced and complicated articulation of two independent yet co-existent forces in Mesopotamian society: a) the Holistic world-view¹⁴ centers on the cult of Enki in Eridu. This earlier layer of centralization in the south is centred around the cosmological order of the ME (Akk. *paršu*), and the authors define this order as “the rules of tradition, the unchanging ways in which the world of man and things is supposed to be organised..[it constitutes] natural law, a guideline for behaviour untainted by human or divine interference.”¹⁵ Hence, despite its association with Enki, the authors see this order as essentially non-theistic. The second force in Mesopotamian society that is posited in this paper is b) the hegemonic world-view, which is the “religious counterpart” to emerging political centralization, a centralistic idiom focusing on the god Enlil: Enlil governed by means of NAMTAR (Akk. *šimtu*), by “determining the fates or destinies of the gods, man and the universe.”¹⁶ Hence, according this analysis, the dynamic in Mesopotamian literature, particularly the oft noted “tension” between Enlil and Enki, reflects nothing less than the clash between old world pre-urban tradition and the emergent authority of the city states, manifested in Enlil.

While the above proposals are bold and intriguing in their own right, that they are also fraught with problems and contradictions has been noted.¹⁷ In order to reinforce their argument that magic “has its foundation in the realm of ME / *paršu* and the antiquity of Eridu,”¹⁸ and ultimately, to state that that magic has a non-theistic operative force,

¹³ Wiggermann/Binsbergen 1999 pg. 20

¹⁴ Holism here implies the mutual dependency of man and his surroundings. Ibid. pg. 25

¹⁵ Wiggermann/Binsbergen 1999 pg. 21

¹⁶ Wiggermann/Binsbergen 1999 pg. 22

¹⁷ These problems may stem in part from the relatively small corpus of mostly mythological material used to form arguments. See Joann Scurlock 2002 in particular pgs. 479-480; for an objection to Wiggermann/Binbergen’s interpretation of the phrase “the secret of heaven and earth” and its relevance to either the holistic or hegemonic domains (to use the author’s terminology), see Alan Lenzi 2008 pgs. 62-64

Wiggermann and Binsbergen underplay obvious theistic involvement in many incantation texts – for example they explain the involvement of Asalluhi / Marduk in the Marduk/Ea type incantations, or the common Akkadian closing formula *šiptu ul yattun šiptu DN* (it is not my incantation, it is the incantation of such and such a divinity), as examples of mere “non-sequitur.”¹⁹ As will be argued in the following sections, however, these aspects of the Mesopotamian incantation which are sometimes termed “divine legitimation,” are not beside the point, and *do* follow an understanding of the texts as theistically operative.

2.0 Theistic Operative Force:

While subject to somewhat infrequent discussion, the recognition of divine legitimation in incantation texts is not new. Writing in 1903, R. Campbell-Thompson recognized already that: “The human sorcerer with all his ceremonies and abracadabra was powerless against supernatural evil unless he could depend on the aid of some more powerful spirit... it was the gods to whom he turned in his hour of need.”²⁰ More recent studies have affirmed this basic observation, noting that an incantation spoken by a human was phenomenologically just plain human speech, “neither powerful nor divine.” Efficacy could be achieved “only through the use of non-human power and authority that had become closely associated with the activity of divinities...human speakers of incantations needed to legitimate their human discourse as *divine* discourse.”²¹ This position can hardly be deemed speculative as verbal techniques were one of the primary ways by which the exorcist sought to add the legitimacy of the divine to his incantation – these verbal techniques, moreover, become one of

¹⁸ Wiggermann/Binsbergen 1999 pg. 26

¹⁹ Wiggermann/Binsbergen 1999 pg. 26

²⁰ Campbell-Thompson 1903, pg. XXIV

²¹ Lenzi 2011 pg. 138

the most visible aspects of the written incantation texts.

In 1995 Graham Cunningham studied some 450 incantation texts ranging 2500-1500 BC for the completion of his PhD dissertation at Cambridge university.²² In each period under study, the Pre-Sargonic, Sargonic, Ur III and Old Babylonian periods, Cunningham analyzed the incantations according to a) function b) helpful divine intervention and c) harmful divine intervention (among other criteria). Importantly, Cunningham's analysis demonstrates that the principal concern of these incantations is "the mediation between the human and divine domains" and that "rather than isolating incantations from temples by classifying them as magical, the Mesopotamian conceptual scheme should be respected and they should be classified as religious."²³ To demonstrate these conclusions, the author drew attention again and again to the use of divine legitimation formulae employed throughout the Mesopotamian incantation corpus, and in particular, to standardized closing formulae which frequently state words to the effect of "it is not my incantation, it is the incantation of the god so and so."²⁴

These closing formulae, which will be of primary interest in the proceeding study below, were given a carefully nuanced discussion by Alan Lenzi in his 2011 article *Šiptu ul Yuttun: Some Reflections on a Closing Formula in Akkadian Incantations*.²⁵ Lenzi identified four distinct (albeit similarly focused) variants of the formula within Akkadian incantation, which were defined as follows:²⁶

²² The research was published in G. Cunningham 1996: *Deliver Me from Evil: Mesopotamian Incantations 2500-1500 B.C.* . Studia Pohl 17

²³ Cunningham 1996 pg. 4

²⁴ See Cunningham 1996 pgs. 2, 13-16,57,65,83-84 and 118

²⁵ See Bibliography, Lenzi 2010

²⁶ The information contained in the above table is summarized from Lenzi 2010, pgs. 142-147

TABLE 1:

	Formula	Translation	Notes
Formula 1	<i>šiptu</i> / EN ₂ DN	“Incantation of the god/s X.”	-Found in Sumerian and Akkadian incantations.
Formula 2	du ₁₁ -ga / <i>ina qibūt</i> DN	“By the command of god X.”	-Imbues incantation with the will of the gods. Frequent in Maqlu series.
Formula 3	DN <i>šiptu iddi</i>	“The god X cast the spell.”	-Implies the most direct involvement of the divine -Variant versions state that DN cast the incantation, which the exorcist merely repeated it.
Formula 4	<i>Šiptu</i> / EN ₂ / TU ₆ ul yuttun	“The incantation is not mine.”	- Occurs only in Akkadian incantations. - Occurs only in combination with formula 1 or 3.

These formulae, used independently or in other cases combined with each other, had a uniform purpose, as Lenzi rightly observes: “all these conventional legitimation formulae necessarily assume that their utterance was effective, that these words did things. Without this assumption, the exorcist’s incantation would remain his own and could never legitimately be considered divine. However with this assumption, the exorcist’s words effected a transformation of the entire incantation; his speech became divine decree.”²⁷

In the late tradition, whether through these closing formulae or through other explicit statements such as “My incantations is actually Ea’s, my spell is actually Marduk’s,”²⁸ the legitimacy and power of the magic was explained by the exorcist as being derivative from the gods. In like manner, requests to the divine such as “place your incantation, over my

²⁷ Lenzi 2010, pg. 147

²⁸ From the *Utukkū Lemnūtu* series, tablet 3 line 150 – following Geller 2007 pg. 201

incantation” entail the same thing.²⁹ In a similar context occurs a command (or request) to the

gods which Lenzi considers the most explicit of all, namely: *qibīt pīya sullim* “Carry out the command of my mouth.”³⁰ Thus in the late period, through the constant reliance on the divine for success, magic and religion seem indivisible.

Despite the doubt cast on the theistic operative power of early magic in sections 1.0 and 1.1 (above), the question may now be posed: Should the earliest incantation corpus really be deemed non-theistic despite the demonstrable presence of the formulae under discussion?

3.0 The Closing Formula in the Early Dynastic Incantation Corpus:

Section A - Published ED Incantations: The corpus of ED incantation texts dates to approximately 2600-2500 BC and is primarily known from the texts published in Manfred Krebernik’s ground breaking (and still unsurpassed work *Die Beschwörungen aus Fara und Ebla*.³¹ These incantations will be discussed below using the abbreviation BFE (1-39). The texts of BFE include: **i)** 16 Sumerian incantations from Fara are contained on three large multi-columned tablets and a duplicate. These texts have been dated to one or two generations before the reign of Ur-Nanshe, or 2500 B.C.³² And **ii)** 12 tablets, some multi-column, come from the site of Ebla outside the Mesopotamian periphery, and contain 10 distinct incantations in Sumerian (and additionally two incantations which duplicate a Fara text)³³ as well as 13

²⁹ Ibid. line 182 See further Lenzi 2010, pg. 124

³⁰ Following Lenzi 2010, pg. 147

³¹ M. Krebernik 1984: *Die Beschwörungen aus Fara und Ebla. Untersuchungen zur ältesten keilschriftlichen Beschwörungsliteratur*, TSO 2, Hildesheim.

³² VAT 12597 (CDLI number P010631), VAT 12524 (CDLI number P010644), and VAT 12684 (CDLI number P010665). Now stored at the Vorderasiatisches museum in Berlin, these tablets were first examined in Deimars 1923 *Schultexte aus Fara* and so are tablets likely to have been excavated from that location in 1902-3 by a German expedition led by R. Koldewey. In addition, TSS 170 (CDLI P010769) also from Fara contains duplicates of 5 of the incantations found also on VAT 12597. For the tablet’s dating see Cunningham 1996 pg. 6

incantations in Eblaite.³⁴ **iii)** A Sumerian incantation from Lagash which is a duplicate of an Ebla incantation was studied (BFE 27e).³⁵ Together, this amounts to 39 distinct incantations from Fara and Ebla (and a duplicate from Lagash).

However, to this must now be added: **iv)** 5 ED Semitic incantations from Ebla that were treated in C.H. Gordon 1992.³⁶ **v)** In 1996, Krebernik published 2 new ED incantations from Ebla, 1 Sumerian and 1 Semitic, in addition 2 Eblaite duplicates are treated;³⁷ **vi)** In a 2006 CDLI bulletin, Niek Veldhuis translated and published 2 ED Sumerian incantations from an unprovenanced tablet.³⁸ **vii)** In 2009, Krebernik and Postgate published 1 Sumerian incantation from Abu Salabikh.³⁹ **viii)** A text from Nippur which was considered Sargonic or early Ur III by Bendt Alster (1976) was reclassified an ED incantation by Michalowski 1992.⁴⁰ And finally, **ix)** an ED text from Mari was published by Bonechi and Durand in 1992 and may be classified as an incantation.⁴¹ Altogether this amounts to 51 distinct and published Early

³³ Interestingly, the Ebla texts TM 75 G.1619 and TM 75.G.1722 contain an incantation which is duplicated on a tablet VAT 12597 from Fara. For borrowing and commonality of magical praxis between the two sites, see 3.1 below.

³⁴ These tablets from Ebla were originally published in transliteration only by D.O. Edzard ARET 5 (1984). The reading of some texts as Sumerian or Semitic is subject to some ambiguity in Krebernik 1984 – I have referred to more recent classifications from the SEAL (Sources of Early Akkadian Literature) project from Leipzig in these cases. <http://www.seal.uni-leipzig.de/>

³⁵ It is also possible that the Lagash tablet should be considered original, with the Eblaite version a duplicate. The tablet, *Bi Mes* 3 31 (BFE 27e) is badly broken, with only 4-5 lines preserved.

³⁶ These texts correspond to ARET 1-5, texts not treated in Krebernik 1984. See C. H. Gordon 1992: The Ebla Exorcisms, in C. H. Gordon/G. A. Rendsburg (eds.), *Eblaitica: Essays on the Ebla Archives and Eblaite Language*, vol. 3, Winona Lake, 127–137. CDLI numbers are: ARET 5 1 (CDLI P241222), ARET 5 2 (CDLI P242379), ARET 5 3 (CDLI P241756), ARET 5 4 (CDLI P241758), ARET 5 5 (CDLI P240790)

³⁷ M. Krebernik 1996: *Neue Beschwörungen aus Ebla*, *VO* 10, 7–28. Krebernik 1996 # 2 and 3 (TM.75.G.1601) are duplicates of BFE 31 and 32 (TM 75 G 2459). Additionally, the second half of Krebernik 1996 #4 is identical to material in ARET 5 4 and ARET 5 5 (published in C.H. Gordon 1992).

³⁸ N. Veldhuis 2006: *Another Early Dynastic Incantation*. http://cdli.ucla.edu/pubs/cdlb/2006/cdlb2006_002.html The tablet in question is now held at the Musées royaux d'Art et d'Histoire, Brussels, Belgium. Tablet # MRAH O.1920 (CDLI P272783).

³⁹ Krebernik/Postgate 2009: The tablets from Abu Salabikh and their provenance. *Iraq*, 71:pp. 1–32. The Abu Salabikh incantation is contained on AbS 2714, CDLI # P010007

⁴⁰ See B. Alster 1992: *Early Patterns in Mesopotamian Literature* (AOAT 25), pgs 14-18. Michalowski lists the incantation as Early Dynastic – see Michalowski 1992 pg. 323. The incantation was first catalogued in Westenholz OSP 1 no. 6. See also CDLI # P216083

Dynastic incantations (excluding duplicates).⁴²

Section B - Unpublished and Inaccessible ED Incantations: Among those texts that have been identified but remain difficult to analyze for one or another reason are: **x)** Cunningham's 1996 study listed an unprovenanced incantation apparently dating to the later ED period and written in Sumerian, RIAA 51.⁴³ **xi)** Ad 504 is an Early Dynastic incantation from Adab. It is cited in Michalowski 1992 pg. 323; the text remains unpublished and inaccessible and is stored in Istanbul.⁴⁴ **xii)** A set of three soon to be published tablets, each containing up to 9 incantations is stored in the Schøyen collection in Norway. These tablets have been assigned the museum numbers MS 4549/1, MS 4549/2 and MS 4550.⁴⁵ The interested reader may also wish consider an assortment of texts which cannot at present be categorized as ED incantations (with certainty) and so have not been included here; with further study, some of these texts may be included in the corpus.⁴⁶

⁴¹ See Bonechi and Durand *Oniromancie et magie à Mari à l'époque d'Ébla*, In Pelio Fronzaroli, *Literature and Literary Language at Ebla (=Quaderni di Semitistica 18)*, pg. 155. The opening rubric seems to be misspelled here: e2-AN-nu-ru. Text is largely broken. Although Bonechi continues to call this an incantation text (Bonechi/Catagnoli 1998 n, 46), Cunningham (1996 pg. 10 n. 1) however calls this simply a "literary text."

⁴² Of these 51 texts, 31 are written in Sumerian, 20 are written in Semitic (Eblaite). 16 originate from Fara, while 30 come from Ebla; 1 comes from Abu Salabikh, 1 from Nippur, 1 from Mari. A further 2 texts remain unprovenanced. (The ED text from Lagash is a duplicate and counted by as a distinct incantation).

⁴³ See Cunningham 1996 # 19 - the tablet is stored at the *Musées royaux d'Art et d'Histoire*, Brussels, Belgium, tablet number MRAH O.0084 (CDLI P216414). Unfortunately no up to date transliteration/translation are yet available.

⁴⁴ This situation was confirmed in a personal communication from P. Michalowski, 8/12/2013.

⁴⁵ Confirmed in a personal communication with A. George, 8/14/2013. See CDLI entries P253640, P253641 and P253642 respectively.

⁴⁶ These texts include: **ii)** CBS 8797 (cited in Michalowski 1992 pg. 323) is an unpublished incantation which may turn out to be of Ur III date (see CDLI P263617; OBO 160/3 note 352 states that the text is to be treated in a forthcoming volume – OSP III). **iii)** RBC 2000 which was cited in Michalowski 1992 pg. 323 but has been reclassified as an Ur III prayer: see Velhuis 2003: http://cdli.ucla.edu/pubs/cdlb/2003/cdlb2003_006.pdf. Not included in this study are further two texts deemed to contain "incantation like" material. They are CIRPL URN 49 from Lagash (see Cunningham 1996 #17); and Bey 00-002 is a ED text from Tell Beydar that eludes classification: it lacks the en2-e2-nu-ru rubric, but has some features that echo the incantation text tradition. The text was treated Sallaberger in Subartu 12, 37-42 (2004). Beyond this, Krebernik has identified two ED texts which possibly contain ritual instructions: "Eine Kultmittelbeschwörung mit Ritualanweisung ist vielleicht SF 30 ii 2 iii 3 - SF 50" (Krebernik OBO 160/1 pg 318).

Turning to the subject of the closing formula in the ED incantation corpus, it will be seen that formula 1: *šiptu* / EN₂ DN “(It is the) incantation of the god/s X,“ is very strongly attestable throughout these texts. In Fara this is written KA+UD-du11-ga + DN (or in an abbreviated form: KA+UD). Krebernik has stated that KA+UD has an approximate equivalence to TU6,⁴⁷ thus the formula may state something like: “incantation speech of DN.” In Ebla the closing formula occurs in a slightly different form although with the same meaning: UD-du11-ga +DN. In two Eblaitic incantations this is written syllabically.⁴⁸ The closing formula designated by Lenzi as formula 3: DN *šiptu iddi* (“the god X cast the spell”) seems strictly attestable only in a single extent ED incantation.⁴⁹

In table 2 below, the closing formula of the incantations from Fara and Ebla will be presented in a chart (if present), and (when possible) the formulae of the few tablets from Lagash, Abu Salabikh, Nippur, Mari and those of unknown provenience will be charted. Duplicates are not presented and so each of the 51 incantations entries in Section A (below) represents a distinct incantation. While an analysis of the data will follow, it should be stated here that the various writings ^dnin-DU.MUŠ.A.HA, ^dnin-KAR.MUŠ, A.HA.BU.DU and ne-gi-ri-ma (etc.) all signify the goddess Ningirima (see Krebernik 1984 pg.233-252). For an explanation of the designation “Mesopotamian tradition” or “Syrian tradition” that occurs in each entry, see 3.1 below.

⁴⁷ Krebernik 1984, pg. 208

⁴⁸ BFE 9: NE-du-ga and Krebernik 1996 #1: AL₆-du-ga

⁴⁹ See below, Gordon 1992 #1 (=ARET 5 1) which closes with: “Elil, the father of the gods, performs the magic.”

TABLE 2:

Identifying information:	Provenance/ Language/ Tradition	Closing formula (if present):	Notes:
Section A: Published Incantations			
BFE 1	Fara/Sumerian: Mesopotamian Tradition	KA+UD-du ₁₁ -ga ^d nin- DU.MUŠ.A.HA	Two duplicates from Ebla give the formula: UD-du ₁₁ -ga ^d nin- DU.MUŠ.A.HA
BFE 2	Fara/Sumerian: Mesopotamian Tradition	KA+UD-du ₁₁ -ga ^d nin- D U.MUŠ.A.HA	
BFE 3	Fara/Sumerian: Mesopotamian Tradition	KA+UD-du ₁₁ -ga ^d nin- DU.MUŠ.A.HA	
BFE 4	Fara/Sumerian: Mesopotamian Tradition	Not present	
BFE 5	Fara/Sumerian: Mesopotamian Tradition	[d]NE.DAG dumu-NUN [x] UD [T]AG (broken) ?	- Non-standard formula: “(may?) ^d .NE.DAG, the child of princes (?) let the incantation emerge.” - Tablet broken
BFE 6	Fara/Sumerian: Mesopotamian Tradition	KA+UD	- Occurs in one of two duplicates
BFE 7	Fara/Sumerian: Mesopotamian Tradition	^d NE.DAG dumu-NUN a TU ₆ nam-tag	- Non-standard formula: “May ^d .NE.DAG not let the incantation go out from the water.”
BFE 8(1/2)	Fara/Sumerian: Mesopotamian Tradition	KA+UD	
BFE 9	Ebla/Sumerian: Mesopotamian Tradition?	na-NE he-du-he NE-du-ga ne-gi- ri-ma ₂ (or ma) lu ₂ ze ₂	- Syllabic spelling. - Non-standard formula: “As a cattle pen (or broken pot) may she (Ningirima?) release the spell.”
BFE 10	Ebla/Sumerian: Mesopotamian Tradition	UD-du ₁₁ -ga ^d nin-DU.MUŠ.A.HA	- Variant sign order
BFE 11	Fara/Sumerian: Mesopotamian Tradition	KA+UD	
BFE 12	Fara/Sumurian: Mesopotamian	K[A+U]D?	

	Tradition		
BFE 13	Fara/Sumerian: Mesopotamian Tradition	KA+UD	
BFE 14	Fara/Sumerian: Mesopotamian Tradition	KA+UD	
BFE 15	Fara/Sumerian: Mesopotamian Tradition?	N/A	- Tablet broken
BFE 16	Fara/Sumerian: Mesopotamian Tradition?	N/A	- Tablet broken
BFE 17	Fara/Sumerian: Mesopotamian Tradition?	N/A	- Tablet broken
BFE 18	Fara/Sumerian: Mesopotamian Tradition?	N/A	- Tablet Broken
BFE 19	Ebla/Sumerian: Mesopotamian Tradition	UD-du ₁₁ -ga ^d nin-MUŠ.A.HA.DU	
BFE 20	Ebla/Sumerian: Mesopotamian Tradition	UD-du ₁₁ -ga ^d nin-MUŠ.A.HA.DU	
BFE 21	Ebla/Semitic: Mesopotamian Tradition	UD-du ₁₁ -ga ^d nin-BU	
BFE 22	Ebla/Semitic: Mesopotamian Tradition	UD-du ₁₁ -ga ^d nin-DU.MUŠ.A.HA	
BFE 23	Ebla/Sumerian: Mesopotamian Tradition	UD-du ₁₁ -ga ^d nin-DU.MUŠ.A.HA	
BFE 24	Ebla/Sumerian: Mesopotamian Tradition	UD-du ₁₁ -ga ^d nin-DU.MUŠ.A.HA	
BFE 25	Ebla/Semitic: Mesopotamian Tradition	UD-du ₁₁ -ga ^d nin-DU.MUŠ.A.HA	
BFE 26	Ebla/Semitic: Mesopotamian Tradition?	GAN ₂ .KEŠ ₂ ^{giš} ŠUDUL? ^d a-dar- wa-an _{T18} mušen. _{T18} mušen uš-da- si-ir ^d ga-mi-iš	- Non-standard formula (possibly): "I want to bind the yoke of Adar- wa-Ans, the lord of eagles, (the god) Kamish has fixed it." - includes en2-e2-nu-ru rubric
BFE 27	Ebla/Sumerian: Mesopotamian Tradition	UD-du ₁₁ -ga ^d nin-DU.MUŠ.A.HA	
BFE 28	Ebla/Semitic: Mesopotamian Tradition	UD-du ₁₁ -ga ^d nin-DU.MUŠ.A.HA	

BFE 29	Ebla/Semitic: Mesopotamian Tradition	UD-du ₁₁ -ga ^d nin-DU.MUŠ.A.HA	
BFE 30	Ebla/Semitic: Mesopotamian Tradition	UD-du ₁₁ -ga ^d nin-MUŠ.DU.A.HA	
BFE 31	Ebla/Sumerian: Mesopotamian Tradition	UD-du ₁₁ -ga ^d nin-DU.MUŠ.A.HA	
BFE 32	Ebla/Semitic: Syrian Tradition	ha-na-LAM in ^d nin-DU. MUŠ.A.HA mes-ma-si-gal-li ga- li DIGIR.DIGIR.DIGIR	- Obscure: Krebernik 1996 pg. 19 suggests something like: “Our lips (will be) united through Ningirim, the great exorcist of the gods.”
BFE 33	Ebla/Semitic: Mesopotamian Tradition	UD-du ₁₁ -ga ^d nin-DU.MUŠ.A.HA	
BFE 34	Ebla/Sumerian: Mesopotamian Tradition	UD-du ₁₁ -ga ^d nin-DU.MUŠ.A.HA	
BFE 35	Ebla/Semitic: Mesopotamian Tradition	UD-du ₁₁ -ga ^d nin-DU.MUŠ.A.HA	
BFE 36	Ebla/Sumerian: Mesopotamian Tradition	UD-du ₁₁ -ga ^d nin-DU.MUŠ.A.HA	
BFE 37	Ebla/Semitic: Mesopotamian Tradition	[U]D-du ₁₁ -ga ^d nin- DU.MUŠ.A.HA	
BFE 38	Ebla/Semitic: Mesopotamian tradition?	UD-du ₁₁ -ga [broken]	- Broken – almost certainly a closing formula. Lacks en2-e-nu-ru rubric.
BFE 39	Ebla/Semitic: Syrian Tradition	NU K[A] [?] [] ^d nin- KAR.MUŠ maš-maš-ti DIGIR.DIGIR	- Sense obscure: “The word (is) not against Ningirima, the exorcist of the gods.”
Gordon 1992 #1 (ARET 5 1)	Ebla/Semitic: Syrian Tradition?	i-na-E ₂ -aš ₂ na-E ₂ -su i-li-lu A-MU DINGER.DINGER.DINGER	- Non-standard: “Elil, the father of the gods, performs the magic.” Colophon reads: UD-du ₁₁ -ga 1 SUD “Spell of the star.”
Gordon 1992 #2 (ARET 5 2)	Ebla/Semitic: Syrian Tradition	N/A	- Tablet broken.
Gordon 1992 #3 (ARET 5 3)	Ebla/Semitic: Syrian Tradition	Not present.	- See Bonechi/Catagnoti 1998 pg. 29 concerning (lack of) closing formula
Gordon 1992 #4 (ARET 5 4)	Ebla/Semitic: Syrian Tradition	Not present.	- See Bonechi/Catagnoti 1998 pg. 29 concerning (lack of) closing formula

Gordon 1992 #5 (ARET 5 5)	Ebla/Semitic: Syrian Tradition	Not present.	- See Bonechi/Catagnoti 1998 pg. 29 concerning (lack of) closing formula
Krebernik 1996 #1	Ebla/Sumerian: Mesopotamian Tradition	AL ₆ -du-ga [n]e-gi-ri-ma	- Syllabic spelling - Non-standard formula, literally: “the wish(?) of Ningirim.”
Krebernik 1996 #4	Ebla/Semitic: Syrian Tradition	Not present.	
Niek Veldhuis 2006 #1 = MRAH O.1920	Unknown/ Sumerian: Mesopotamian tradition	UD.KA du ₁₁ -ga ^d nin-girim _x (BU.KU ₆ .DU)	
Niek Veldhuis 2006 #2 = MRAH O.1920	Unknown/ Sumerian: Mesopotamian Tradition	UD.KA du ₁₁ -ga ^d nin-girim _x (BU.KU ₆ .DU)	
Krebernik/Postgate 2009 pg. 11 = AbS 2714	Abu Salabikh/ Sumerian: Mesopotamian Tradition	UD-du ₁₁ -ga [^d]nin-[gi]rima _x ([A].HA.BU.DU)	
Alster 1976 = N 1235 + 6283	Nippur/ Sumerian: Mesopotamian tradition	KA ^d en.[l]il ₂ -la ₂ -kam	- Non-Standard formula: variant of abbreviated form KA+UD? - Dating controversial
Bonechi/Durand 1992 – TH 80.111	Mari/ Semitic: Mesopotamian tradition?	N/A	-Tablet Broken
Total Mesopotamian Tradition Texts: 43		a) demonstrates a form of the typical closing formula: 33 b) demonstrates theistic closing request: 4 c) demonstrates neither a) nor b) : 1 d) broken: 5	
Total Syrian Tradition Texts: 8		a) demonstrates a form of the typical closing formula: 1 b) demonstrates theistic closing request: 2 c) demonstrates neither a) nor b) : 4 d) broken: 1	
Section B: Unpublished/Inaccessible			
Cunningham 1996 #19 = RLAA 51 = MRAH O.0084	Unknown/ Sumerian	N/A	- Text remains untreated. However signs making up standard closing formula do not appear to be present.
Ad 504	Adab/ Sumerian?	N/A	- Listed in Michalowski 1992, pg. 323
MS 4549/1	Unknown/ Sumerian:	KAxUD d.nin-A.BU.HA.DU	- Closing formula attestable on at least

	Mesopotamian Tradition		four of 9 incantations. Not attestably in every case (A.R. George, private communication 8/14/2013)
MS 4549/2	Unknown/Sumerian?	Not Present	- Lack of closing formula confirmed by A.R. George, private communication 8/14/2013
MS 4550	Unknown/Sumerian?	Not Present	- Lack of closing formula confirmed by A.R. George, private communication 8/14/2013

Summary: Of the 16 Sumerian incantations from Fara, 11 texts contain a form of the closing formula: 9 of these instances are equivalent to the standard formula KA+UD-du₁₁-ga^dnin-DU.MUŠ.A.HA.⁵⁰ Two of these incantations conclude with a request to a god (^dNE.DAG) for support,⁵¹ and so their categorization as theistic formulae is suggestible. Four incantations are broken at the bottom and are not analyzable.⁵² Among this group only BFE 4 seems to lack a discernible theistic closing formula.

In the group of 13 Sumerian texts from Ebla texts, 12 contain the standard closing formula,⁵³ while a single text contains a non-standard (although still theistic) closing formula.⁵⁴ The Semitic texts from Ebla however present more variation: While 10 Semitic texts contain a standard closing formula,⁵⁵ 7 lack the formula in any form.⁵⁶

The Sumerian text from Abu Salabikh contains the standard closing formula, as do two

⁵⁰ BFE 1,2,3,6,8,11,12,13,14

⁵¹ BFE 5, 7

⁵² BFE 15,16,17,18

⁵³ BFE 1,9,10,19,20,23,24,25,27,31,34,36 and Krebernik 1996 #1

⁵⁴ BFE 9

⁵⁵ BFE 21,22, 28, 29, 30,33, 35, 37; BFE 38 concludes with UD-du₁₁-ga [broken] and so is likely to attribute the spell to a divinity of some sort. Gordon 1992 1 (=ARET 5 1) contains formula 3: "the god X cast the spell."

⁵⁶ BFE 32,39; Krebernik 1996 #4; Gordon 1992 2-5 (=ARET 5 2, ARET 5 3, ARET 5 4, ARET 5 5), Alster 1976 = N 1235 + 6283 and Bonechi/Durand 1992 – TH 80.111, respectively.

of the texts lacking provenience and the text from Nippur. The text from Mari is broken.⁵⁷

3.1 Geographical and Theological Considerations:

Ebla and the Syrian tradition: Given that such a large portion of the extent ED incantation corpus comes from the peripheral Syrian city of Ebla, any attempt at categorization would benefit from a careful study of these texts. An important observation is that the Ebla texts can (roughly) be dated somewhat later than those from Fara, on the grounds that they more closely follow the reading order of signs.⁵⁸ Bonechi and Catagnoti (SEL 15 1998) have already advanced the study of these texts considerably, even providing a “provisional conclusion” that goes a long way toward explaining the irregularity of the closing formula at Ebla. While in the Sumerian incantations at Ebla the closing formula is regular, it is irregular in the Semitic texts as Ebla (specifically, it is absent in 7 of 17 of these texts - see note 52 above). Regarding these absences, the authors propose that: “Two types of incantation seem to be attested in the Semitic Ebla incantations. A local one is to be recognized in those compositions that do not present *enenuru at the beginning and UD-du₁₁-ga Ningirima at the end.”⁵⁹ This suggestion would neatly account for the disruption in an otherwise solid typology, and in the above table the incantation texts have been labeled as belonging to the “Mesopotamian” or to the “Syrian” tradition (following Bonechi/Catagnoti).

Over and above typological or philological considerations, the strong presence of Syrian deities in these texts, such as the gods/demons Hadda, Ḥabḥaby, Adar-wa-Ans or Kamish distinguish the texts of the Syrian tradition from those of the Mesopotamian. In some cases

⁵⁷ Krebernik/Postgate 2009 #1, Veldhuis 2006 1 and 2

⁵⁸ Cunningham 1996 pg. 10 - following Krebernik 1984 pg. 1

⁵⁹ Bonechi/Catagnoti 1998, pg. 29

incantations grouped in the Syrian tradition continue to reference Mesopotamian gods however, in a way that makes their categorization problematic: While Bonech/Catagnoti 1998 have given BFE 32 as a Syrian type incantation as it lacks the enenuru rubric, it nevertheless concludes “Ningirima, the great incantation priestess of the gods.” BFE 39 concludes with some sort of formula which Krebernik translates as possibly “the word is not against me, the word is not against Ningirima, the incantation priestess of the gods” (sense unclear, as it is not the usually logic behind the standard incantation formula).⁶⁰ These two texts seem to be the only two in the overall extent ED corpus to explain that Ningirima is “the incantation priestess of the gods” - a fact that may not have required explanation in the Mesopotamian texts.

Perhaps more interesting (and perplexing) still is ARET 5 1 which lacks an enenuru rubric but which concludes “Elil (=Enlil) the father of the gods performed the magic.” This is analogous with Lenzi’s formula 3, described above (table 1). Further, a form of the typical ED closing formula appears in the colophon of the text, stating: UD-du11-ga 1 SUD “incantation of the star.”⁶¹ Thus while those incantations grouped as the Syrian tradition generally do not follow the typology of the Mesopotamia texts, they may demonstrate influence and some borrowings.⁶²

So if the Syrians had their own incantation tradition why have so many Mesopotamian texts been found at the palace at Ebla? Bonechi and Catagnoti have suggested that it may reflect an ongoing process of elite trade: “together with other precious items, up-to-date eastern

⁶⁰ Krebernik 1984, pg. 194. “. "Das wort (ist) nicht gegen mich, das wort (ist) nicht gegen Ningirima, die Beschwörerin der Götter." Whether or not the incantation would have contained the enenuru rubric is impossible to tell as the top of the tablet is broken.

⁶¹ See Gordon 1992 #1. Discussed in note 45 (above). While this incantation does have a closing formula equivalent to Lenzi’s formula 3 “DN *šiptu iddi* “the god x cast the spell,” this remains the only example of an incantation to employ this formula in the ED period. Formula 1, that is *šiptu* / EN₂ DN “incantation of god X” does occur in the colophon (rather than the final line of the incantation), but attributes the incantation to “a star” rather than Ningirima. Therefore neither formula brings the incantation into strict alignment with the typical formulaic closing of Mesopotamian type incantations of the period.

⁶² For a more nuanced suggestion regarding the influences on this particular incantation, see *Kishite Culture and the Unprovenient texts* below.

written sources came regularly at Ebla.”⁶³ While the scribes interest in practicing foreign scripts and embellishing their tablet collections may be a suggestible motivation,⁶⁴ magic was deemed especially efficacious when it transcended “normal” speech, and attained some sense of “otherness.” This “otherness” could be achieved by incorporating archaic, poetic, or exotic speech principals such as the use of “Mumbo Jumbo” or through the inclusion of foreign speech elements.⁶⁵ The exotic and esoteric appeal of foreign magic may be another reason why Eblaite scribes would stock pile tablets of the Mesopotamian tradition, and even emulate aspects of these texts in tablets containing incantations of the local tradition.

The Mesopotamian Tradition: By now the typology that is behind the classification of this group, the inclusions of the en2-e2-nu-ru and closing formulae, will be familiar to the reader; however, some discussion of the unexpected theology at work in ED incantations of the interior may be in order. As demonstrated in Table 2 above, some 37 of 38 non-broken analyzable incantation texts from the Mesopotamian tradition attribute the incantation to a deity (or in 4 cases request a divine action); in 34 of those instances the deity invoked is Ningirima, thus demonstrating her eminent importance to this genre.

Of great surprise, and still lacking any substantial explanation, is the fact that Enlil occurs as the senior god, the advisor, throughout the corpus. Thus, instead of the classic Marduk/Ea type arrangement wherein the junior god (Marduk) entreats the senior god (Enki) for ritual advise on behalf of the patient (in actually, the patient of the exorcist), in this period

⁶³ Benechi/Catagnoti 1998, pg. 28

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ See Neik Veldhuis 1999: The Poetry of Magic. In T. Abusch and K. van der Toorn (eds.), *Mesopotamian Magic: Textual, Historical, and Interpretative Perspectives*. Ancient Magic and Divination 1. Groningen: Styx Publications, 35-48. See further J.J. van Dijk, introduction to YOS XI 1985.

Ningirima sends for the advice of Enlil.⁶⁶ In this context, see BFE 7,8,9,10 and 11. M.J. Geller has tentatively suggested that the imagery involved here, a goddess approaching an enthroned god, may have formed the basis for the scenes that are repeatedly attested in Ur III cylinder seals, wherein a goddess introduces a supplicant to a seated god. He states: “It may be that the imagery represented on cylinder seals reflects Early Dynastic incantations in which the goddess acts on the suppliant’s behalf, a role which was later to be replaced by Asalluhi and Enki.”⁶⁷ It is perhaps unsurprising that the only ED incantation extant from Nippur replaces the typical KA+UD-du₁₁-ga dⁿⁱⁿ-DU.MUŠ.A.HA with what is perhaps a local variant: KA d^{en}.[1]il₂-la₂-kam.

No less surprising in this genre is the role of Enki as the bringer of illness⁶⁸ see for example BFE 8 and BFE 28 where Enki seems to afflict the patient with evil eye, or binds sickness within him; however this picture is not without contradictions, and in the two unprovenient texts recently published by Veldhuis, Enki is among a group of gods (including Utu and Nanna) coming to the aid of the patient against (apparently) hostile winds.

Following orthographical considerations such as the reading order of signs, it was deemed that the main body of Fara texts dates to a slightly earlier period than the corpus at Ebla – therefore, BFE 1 is known both from a Fara text (VAT 12597) and two slightly later duplicates from Ebla (ARET V 8, ARET V 10). BFE 27 is known from a broken tablet from Lagash (2 H-T 6) and from Fara (ARET 5 19). Together with isolated exemplars from Abu Salabikh, Nippur and Mari, these texts of the Mesopotamian tradition of incantations can be seen to stretch from the Sumerian heartland and along the length of the Euphrates reaching as far as

⁶⁶ Krebernik 1984 pg. 211, Cunningham 1996, pg. 24

⁶⁷ M.J. Geller 1987, Review: Die Beschwörung aus Fara und Ebla by Manfred Krebernik in *BSOAS* 50/1 1987 pg. 125

⁶⁸ See here Cunningham’s discussion of Enki in ED incantations – Cunningham 1996, pg. 35-38

Ebla (near the Mediterranean.)

Kishite Culture and the Unprovenanced texts: I. J. Gelb, writing in 1981, posited another possible source of influence on the scribes of Ebla – that emanating from the Kish civilization. According to this view “Ebla belonged to what has been termed the Kish civilisation, a cultural area centred on Kis and extending via Mari to Ebla, with towns such as Abi Salabikh lying in an intermediate zone between the Semitic north and the Sumerian south.”⁶⁹

In light of this proposal, it is interesting to note that Bonechi and Catagnoti suggest that ARET 5 1, ARET 5 2, and ARET 5 3⁷⁰ reflect contact with Kishite culture. This suggestion is made on two grounds: **i)** the medley of gods named in these incantations which include ^da-da, the goddess ^dutu, ^dsa-nu-ga-rui₂, SUD // ga-ba-ga-bu = Kabkab, and ^di-li-lu = Enlil;⁷¹ and **ii)** the possibility that Ebla and Kish were political centers which controlled Aleppo and Nippur around this time.⁷²

The formula UD-du₁₁-ga [A].HA.BU.DU concludes the incantation from Abu Salabikh, and demonstrates a variant writing for Ningirima, substituting the expected sign MUŠ for BU; further, Ningirima’s name is written ^dNin-BU in one incantation from Ebla (BFE 21). Is there some significance for the substitution of MUŠ, the typical sign used in the writing of this name, for BU? While there are no grounds for suggesting this is in some way a derivative from Kish scribal culture, it may be a convention in the cities which Gelb has grouped under the Kish “umbrella.” A look at Krebernik’s catalog of variant spellings of the name Ningirima⁷³

⁶⁹ Cunningham’s synopsis of Gelb’s 1981 argument has been used here. Cunningham 1996 pg. 9

⁷⁰ Given as Gordon 1992 1, 2 and 3 in table 2 above.

⁷¹ Bonechi/Catagnoti 1998, pg. 24

⁷² Bonechi/Catagnoti 1998, pg. 29

⁷³ Krebernik 1984 pg. 233

offers tentative support for this suggestion, as the writings utilizing BU occur in lexical and literary texts from Abu Salabikh (IAS 47 and 113). Texts from Nippur have also demonstrated this convention (ISET 1 217 = Ni. 4176, and ISET 1 218 = Ni. 13214); however, other texts may offer some contradiction.⁷⁴ Should there be anything to this, it may provide some indication as to the probable provenience of a sizable portion of the currently unprovenienced incantations: Veldhuis 2006 # 1 and 2 conclude with the formula: UD.KA du₁₁-ga d^dnin-girim_x (written BU.KU₆.DU). While the soon to be published Schøyen tablet MS 4549/1 contains the phrase KA_xUD d.nin-A.BU.HA.DU.⁷⁵ Further examination of the occurrences of BU in the writing of Ningirima would be required however.

4.0 Conclusions:

This study was initiated with the intention of finding a suitable analytical framework for the study of the operative force apparent in the earliest incantation tradition. The cataloguing and analysis of the closing formula represents a very modest step, however the data nonetheless informs the discussion of operative force in early Mesopotamian magic. While it has been demonstrated that the typical ED incantation from the Mesopotamian tradition is characterized by both the enenuru rubric and the KA+UD-du₁₁-ga Ningirima formula,⁷⁶ it is the latter formula that should probably be considered more diagnostic: as Alan Lenzi discusses, the rubric en₂-e₂-nu-ru or en₂ occurs extensively in other types of texts such incantation-prayers. A

⁷⁴ For example MDP 14 58 from Sargonic period Susa.

⁷⁵ From the photograph available at CDLI P253640 the formula is visible at least four times; with closer examination of the tablet due in a forthcoming volume by Andrew George, the formula be demonstrated to have further occurrences among the 9 incantations of the tablet. Special thanks to Douglas Frayne for assistance in the study of the relevant sign forms here, and for his advice and suggestions regarding provenience.

⁷⁶ As mentioned above, 33 of 38 non-broken and analyzable texts of this type contain some variant of this formula with a further 4 concluding with a theistic request of some sort)

formal characteristic which distinguishes one genre from the other is the fact that incantations are concluded with divine legitimation formulae “intended to raise the authority of the ritual speech to the level of divine decree and thereby coerce the addressee to obey,” while, on the other hand, incantation-prayers remain the speech of mortal supplication.⁷⁷

Given that the defining feature of this corpus seems, on closer inspection, to be its theistic mode of legitimation, Bottero’s notion of early incantations as function according to “*Ex opere operato*” seems unlikely. The argument is made more doubtful when it is realized that Bottero’s example texts actually conclude with the typical formula attributing the incantation to Ningirima.⁷⁸ Further, it may be noted that these findings present grounds for concern when considering Wiggermann and Binsbergen’s 1999: particularly, the suggestion that formulae such as *šiptu ul yattun šiptu DN* should be seen a mere “non-squiter” in the (‘non-theistic’) history of magic.⁷⁹

⁷⁷ Lenzi 2011, pg. 18-23

⁷⁸ As mentioned in 1.0 (specifically note 10) above, Bottero 2003, pg. 193 cited BFE 1 as an example. In his RLA 7 entry, *Magie A*, Bottero gives BFE 27 as a further example. Although the author does not provide a translation for the conclusion of these texts, both texts give the typical closing formula, attributing the incantation to Ningirima.

⁷⁹ Wiggermann/Binsbergen 1999, pg. 26

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