



Studies in Sumerian Vocabulary: dnin-ka6; immal/šilam; And še21.d

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# Studies in Sumerian Vocabulary: <sup>d</sup>nin-ka<sub>6</sub>; immal/šilam; and še<sub>21</sub>.d

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The following three studies result from my work on Old Babylonian lexical lists and on the composition *Nanše and the Birds*.<sup>1</sup>

## 1. Mongoose = <sup>d</sup>nin-ka<sub>5/6</sub>

The Sumerian word for mongoose (or perhaps more generally “rodent;” see Civil 1994: 87) is conventionally read <sup>d</sup>nin-kilim, with the Akkadian equivalent *šikkû* (see Landsberger 1934: 110–13). Purpose of this note is to demonstrate that the correct reading is <sup>d</sup>nin-ka<sub>6</sub> and that the Akkadian *šikkû* is a loan from the Sumerian.

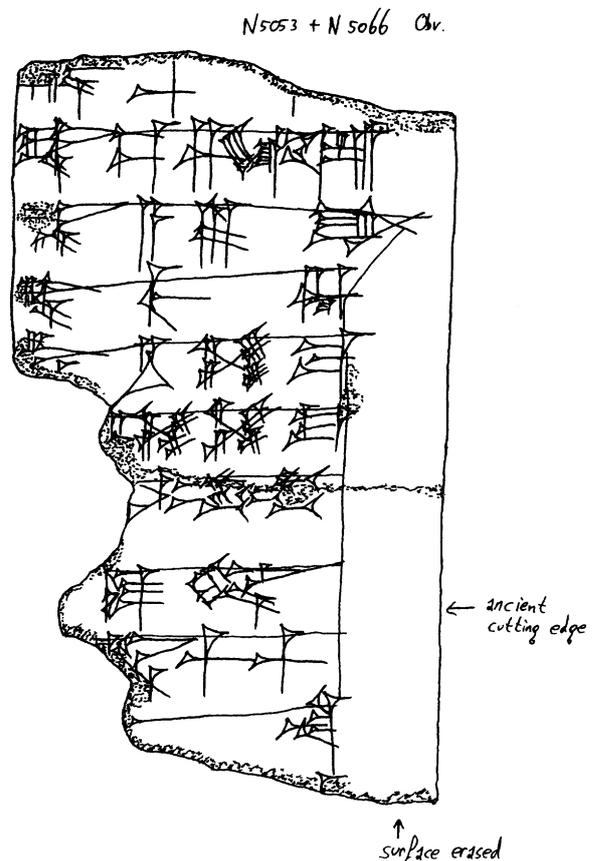
### 1.1. Old Babylonian Spellings

Throughout the history of cuneiform the word under discussion is written (<sup>d</sup>nin-PEŠ<sub>2</sub>); only in the Old Babylonian period a variant spelling <sup>d</sup>nin-LUL is attested. Since LUL and PEŠ<sub>2</sub> are similar the variant has often been overlooked. The basic difference between PEŠ<sub>2</sub> and LUL is that the former begins with a rectangular LU-shaped head, whereas the head of the latter is in the form of a diamond.<sup>2</sup> That this variance is not

1. I am preparing a study entitled *Sumerian Religion, Literature, and Scholarship: Nanše and the Birds*. This volume will include first editions of *Nanše and the Birds* and the Old Babylonian “forerunner to ur<sub>5</sub>-ra 18” (fish and birds). Unless otherwise indicated, quotations from literary texts refer to the Electronic Text Corpus of Sumerian Literature (ETCSL; [www-etcsl.orient.ox.ac.uk/](http://www-etcsl.orient.ox.ac.uk/)).

2. For the paleography of PEŠ<sub>2</sub> see Krebernik (1984: 287–90) and Englund (1995: 40–41 with note 9).

merely due to scribal negligence may be concluded from N 5053 + N 5066 obverse, an extract from the Old Babylonian list of wild animals from Nippur.<sup>3</sup> The exercise covers a variety of rodents (peš<sub>2</sub>) and continues with [<sup>d</sup>]nin-LUL in line 8’.



3. I am preparing a full edition of this list.

This particular extract of the sections *peš<sub>2</sub>* and <sup>d</sup>nin-LUL is a model text in a teacher's hand to be copied by a pupil.<sup>4</sup> Here LUL is clearly and no doubt intentionally distinguished from *PEŠ<sub>2</sub>* in the preceding lines. The distribution of the two spellings in Old Babylonian literary texts may be tabulated as follows:<sup>5</sup>

## 1.1

	Provenance	<sup>d</sup> nin- <i>PEŠ<sub>2</sub></i>	<sup>d</sup> nin-LUL
Ur <sub>5</sub> -ra wild animals	Nippur	2	4
SP 1.9	Nippur <sup>6</sup>	4	1
	Ur <sup>7</sup>	1	1
Good Seed of a Dog 2 <sup>8</sup>	Nippur	1	1?
SP 23.9	Unknown		1
	Ur <sup>9</sup>	1	
CT 6 14 (lexical prism) <sup>10</sup>	Sippar?		3

Since both *PEŠ<sub>2</sub>* and LUL have a value /ka/, the conclusion is near that the word is to be read <sup>d</sup>nin-ka<sub>6</sub> (*PEŠ<sub>2</sub>*) with the orthographic variant <sup>d</sup>nin-ka<sub>5</sub> (LUL).

## 1.2. Supporting Lexical Evidence

The reading <sup>d</sup>nin-ka<sub>5/6</sub> is confirmed by the first millennium Ea tradition. Ea I 198 (*MSL* 14, 186):

4. The pupil's copy would be to the right in the part of the tablet that was cut off in antiquity. This is a so-called type II tablet according to Civil's typology (see *MSL* 12, 27).

5. All texts mentioned here were collated from the originals or from photographs. <sup>d</sup>Nin-ka<sub>5/6</sub> also appears in SP 1.128<sup>3</sup>; in Farmer's Instructions 65 (Civil 1994) and in UHF 608 (Geller 1985). These attestations are not useful for paleographic investigations because either the relevant sign is too damaged, the tablet is unpublished, or the published hand copy is indiscriminate.

6. Texts I, K, J and M have *PEŠ<sub>2</sub>*; D has LUL (sigla follow Alster 1997).

7. *UET* 6/2 239: *PEŠ<sub>2</sub>*; *UET* 6/2 339: LUL. The sign form in *UET* 6/2 320 is indiscriminate (copy is correct).

8. Photographs of the tablets in Sjöberg 1972.

9. *UET* 6/2 210.

10. Collated: D ii19-20: <sup>d</sup>nin-ka<sub>5</sub><sup>mušen</sup>; <sup>d</sup>nin-ka<sub>5</sub>-ma<sup>mušen</sup>; and D ii20: ki-ib-<sup>d</sup>nin-ka<sub>5</sub><sup>mušen</sup>

1.2 ka-a *PEŠ<sub>2</sub>* *pešu* (sign name) *šikkû*

On the surface the Ea entry may seem to suggest that ka<sub>6</sub>(*PEŠ<sub>2</sub>*) = *šikkû* = "mongoose," but that is clearly incorrect. In fact, the lexical entry intends to say that the reading *PEŠ<sub>2</sub>* = ka<sub>6</sub> occurs as an element in the Sumerian word that equals *šikkû*, that is in <sup>d</sup>nin-ka<sub>6</sub>. This interpretation of Ea I 198 is supported by the variant gloss ni-ka (text C). This is not to be understood as still another reading of *PEŠ<sub>2</sub>*, but rather as a gloss to the full equivalent of *šikkû*, <sup>d</sup>nin-ka<sub>6</sub>.

Early evidence for *PEŠ<sub>2</sub>* = ka<sub>6</sub> in the word (<sup>d</sup>)n<sup>d</sup>nin-*PEŠ<sub>2</sub>* comes from the Ebla version of the ED list of birds.<sup>11</sup> Line 86 is attested in three copies:

1.3 ED Fara <sup>12</sup>	ki <sup>1</sup> (HI)-n <sup>d</sup> nin-ka <sub>6</sub> <sup>mušen</sup>
ED Ebla	ki-ka <sup>mušen</sup>
OB Yale	ki-ib- <sup>d</sup> nin-ka <sub>6</sub> <sup>mušen</sup>

The Ebla version tends to use abbreviated and syllabic spellings, in this case omitting the -n<sup>d</sup>nin-<sup>13</sup>

1.3. (<sup>d</sup>)Nin-ka<sub>5/6</sub> and <sup>d</sup>Nin-kilim

(<sup>d</sup>)Nin-ka<sub>5/6</sub> is to be distinguished from its homograph, the divine name <sup>d</sup>nin-*PEŠ<sub>2</sub>*, for which the reading <sup>d</sup>nin-kilim is well established.<sup>14</sup> In ED writing the divine determinative usually distinguishes the two; the name of the goddess is written <sup>d</sup>nin-kilim(*PEŠ<sub>2</sub>*), the rodent is written nin-ka<sub>6</sub>(*PEŠ<sub>2</sub>*).<sup>15</sup> In OB the determinative is added to both,

11. See Pettinato's edition in *MEE* 3, 105-23. A new edition of ED Birds, including two Old Babylonian copies, will appear in the author's forthcoming study of *Nanše and the Birds*.

12. The photograph of the Fara text (*SF* 58: <http://early-cuneiform.humnet.ucla.edu/DL/VAM/FARA/HTML/P010648.HTM>) is illegible here. The apparent HI is a damaged or unfinished KI.

13. See Pettinato in *MEE* 3: 119-20.

14. Numerous glosses and syllabic spellings ranging from third to first millennium attest to this reading. They are collected by Krebernik (1984: 287-97); add *OSP* 1 7 iv 8 (Sargonic; discussed by Krebernik on p. 241) and the Old Babylonian incantation *YOS* 11, 69 2; 7; and 9: <sup>d</sup>nin-gi<sub>4</sub>-li<sub>2</sub>-na.

15. See ED Birds 86 (example 1.3 above). Nin-ka<sub>6</sub> (without divine determinative), or ni-ka<sub>6</sub> is attested in bilingual Ebla lists where it is translated by various words for mice and other rodents (see the discussion by Krebernik 1983: 33-34 and 46). For attestations in unilingual Ebla lists see *MEE* 15

which may well explain why, in order to avoid confusion, Old Babylonian scribes occasionally preferred LUL instead of PEŠ<sub>2</sub>. This scribal habit is found in various places (Nippur, Ur, and perhaps Sippar) but found no following in later orthography. In post-Old Babylonian periods the signs LUL and PEŠ<sub>2</sub> give no rise to confusion and the names of both the goddess and the animal are written <sup>d</sup>nin-PEŠ<sub>2</sub>.

#### 1.4. *šikkû* < <sup>(d)</sup>nin-ka<sub>6</sub>

The Akkadian word *šikkû* is a loan from Sumerian <sup>(d)</sup>nin-ka<sub>6</sub>, witnessing a rare but not unparalleled n/š alternation. The Emesal form of the word, attested only once in Old Babylonian context, is še-en-ka<sub>6</sub>,<sup>16</sup> with initial /n/ in Emegi corresponding to /š/ in Emesal, comparable to EG niġ-bun<sub>2</sub>-na = ES še-en-bun<sub>2</sub>-na; EG <sup>d</sup>nin-tu = ES <sup>d</sup>še-en-tu, etc.<sup>17</sup>

It is unlikely that the Akkadian word was borrowed from liturgical Emesal. More plausibly, še-en-ka<sub>6</sub> and *šikkû* both derive from nin-ka<sub>6</sub> in some local dialect of Emegi. Several of the characteristic Emesal phoneme shifts have a counterpart in Emegi, for instance the g/b alternation (Civil 1973). Bauer (1998: 435–36) has argued that some of these shifts are attested in those rare places where the local Lagaš dialect surfaces in Old Sumerian texts, so that Emesal may historically derive from this dialect. It is not unlikely that an n/š correspondence existed in Sumerian dialectology; it may be attested in the modal prefix ša- (= na-?) and in peculiarities of the writing system such as ša = na<sub>5</sub> and šer<sub>7</sub> = nir.

Akkadian words that superficially seem to derive from Emesal may be explained in a similar way.<sup>18</sup> EG šag<sub>4</sub>-zu = ES \*ša-ab-zu = Akkadian

(= MVS 4) 136 (TLME 57) and notes 120, 377 and 378 with further literature.

16. BM 23631, OrNS 54: 121, as discussed by Civil 1994, 104 note 83. See also George (1999: 296–97 note 37).

17. On the š/n alternation in Emesal and Emegi see Schretter (1990: 68–69) with earlier literature.

18. A different case is *mutinnu* (EG ġeštīn = ES mu-tin) that is attested only in first millennium learned texts where loans from Emesal are to be expected.

*šabsūtu*; EG niġ<sub>2</sub>-gig = ES aġ<sub>2</sub>-gib = Akkadian *ikkibu*; and EG niġ<sub>2</sub>-gul = ES aġ<sub>2</sub>-gul = Akkadian *akkullum* may all be examples of Sumerian words that entered the Akkadian language in an area where the local dialect of Sumerian exhibited some of the typical “Emesal” characteristics. Unfortunately, local dialects of Sumerian are very rarely observable in the written record.

## 2. Immal<sub>2</sub>; Šilam and Ab<sub>2</sub>-šilam

On the authority of Emesal Voc II 91 (MSL 4 19)<sup>19</sup> Landsberger argued that im-ma-al is the Emesal equivalent of šilam (TUR<sub>3</sub>×SAL), meaning “cow” (MSL 8/1 62). The purpose of this note is to demonstrate that immal, written im-ma-al or immal<sub>2</sub> (TUR<sub>3</sub>×SAL) is a Sumerian (Emegi) word, which in the Old Babylonian period means “wild cow,” whereas (ab<sub>2</sub>)-šilam was used for “(domestic) mother cow.” In an earlier period both šilam and immal<sub>2</sub> were used for domestic cows.

### 2.1. Old Babylonian Lexical Evidence

The Old Babylonian Nippur list of wild animals (forerunner to ur<sub>5</sub>-ra 14; unpublished) contains the following passage:

2.1	am	wild bull
	am-si	elephant
	am-si-kur-ra	camel or dromedary
	sumun <sub>2</sub>	wild cow
	KA <sup>20</sup>	?
	TUR <sub>3</sub> ×SAL	wild cow

Variants show that the last line is to be read immal<sub>2</sub>:

UM 29-16-31	TU[R <sub>3</sub> ×SAL]
N 4058	im-[ma-al]
Ni 3776	TUR <sub>3</sub> ×SAL
IM 58670 <sup>21</sup>	im-ma-al

19. The reading im-ma-al as reconstructed in MSL 4 is now confirmed by the new fragment UM 29-15-134 (Veldhuis 1996).

20. Kir<sub>4</sub> = hyena seems unlikely here.

21. IM 58670 (3 N-T 742) + IM 58671 (3 N-T 743), studied from a cast in The Oriental Institute, Chicago.

Proto-Ea 398a-b provides two readings for TUR<sub>3</sub>×SAL:<sup>22</sup> [i]m-m[a-al] and [ši-la-a]m. First millennium Ea/Aa records both these readings of TUR<sub>3</sub>×SAL, but in addition lists the related sign TUR<sub>3</sub>×BAR, with basically the same set of readings.<sup>23</sup> TUR<sub>3</sub>×BAR with the readings immal<sub>2</sub>, šilam<sub>2</sub>, etc. is a late (post-Old Babylonian) invention and should not be used in transliterating early texts.<sup>24</sup>

In the Old Babylonian period šilam and immal<sub>2</sub> are both bona fide readings of TUR<sub>3</sub>×SAL and the question remains how to distinguish between the two. The following explorations will start from the assumption that where TUR<sub>3</sub>×SAL refers to a wild animal it is to be read immal<sub>2</sub> (2.2), whereas TUR<sub>3</sub>×SAL = šilam is used for a domestic cow, most often in the expression ab<sub>2</sub>-šilam (2.3). As an additional complication it appears that at several places TUR<sub>3</sub>×SAL is used to designate a male person or god, probably to be read šilam (2.4). In section 2.5 I will discuss the Emesal word im-ma-al and §2.6 is devoted to pre-Old Babylonian orthographies of šilam and immal.

## 2.2. Old Babylonian immal<sub>2</sub> and im-ma-al = “wild cow.”

There are two different Old Babylonian contexts in which TUR<sub>3</sub>×SAL refers to a wild animal and is to be read immal<sub>2</sub>. First, several goddesses are described as “wild cow” (Inana, Uraš and Nanše). Second, TUR<sub>3</sub>×SAL appears at several places as the counterpart of am or gud-am. In addition the spelling im-ma-al is attested a few times in Emegi texts.

22. MSL 14, 47.

23. MSL 14, 401 and 423 (with note to lines 80ff). The readings arhuš<sub>2/3</sub> and uš<sub>5/6</sub> are known only in the late period and do not concern us here.

24. Some forms of ED and Ur III TUR<sub>3</sub> look like TUR<sub>3</sub>×BAR, and are occasionally read IMMAL in Assyriological literature (for instance Krecher 1983). In a regular third millennium TUR<sub>3</sub>(NUN.LAGAR) the horizontal of the NUN may cross the inner vertical of the LAGAR. Fairly often the horizontal does not continue into the LAGAR and a separate small horizontal crossing the vertical of the LAGAR is added to mimic the appearance of the sign as described before. This does not constitute a separate sign, but is simply a variant of TUR<sub>3</sub>.

### 2.2.1. The Goddess is a Wild Cow

In Nisaba A 2–3<sup>25</sup> Uraš is referred to as TUR<sub>3</sub>×SAL. The word is used in the same context as šeg<sub>9</sub> (ibex), suggesting that a wild animal is meant:

2.2   <sup>d</sup>nisaba immal<sub>2</sub> gal   <sup>d</sup>uraš-e tud-da  
          šeg<sub>9</sub> nağa kug-ga ga zid gu<sub>7</sub>-a  
          Nisaba born by the great wild cow Uraš  
          ibex, fed on good milk among pure potash.

Uraš receives this same epithet in Lugalbanda I 61: “Uraš had borne these seven, the Wild Cow had nourished them with milk.” Nanše is called “Wild Cow” in Nanše and the Birds 11–13:

2.3   e-ne an-ta ki-a gub-ba-[am<sub>3</sub>]  
          immal<sub>2</sub> kug-gin<sub>7</sub> a-e mu-un[. . .]  
          u<sub>5</sub><sup>mušen</sup> kug immal<sub>2</sub> babbar a bar-ra a  
          bi<sub>2</sub>-i[n-nağ]  
          Stepping onto earth from heaven,  
          She [stood] in the water like a pure wild cow.  
          Being a pure goose, a white wild cow  
          she [drank] water at the waterside.

As I will argue elsewhere u<sub>5</sub><sup>mušen</sup> is the wild goose. Since this passage takes place *in illo tempore*, when Nanše steps down to earth to build her temple in the water (line 21), a wild cow is more in place than a domestic species. Perhaps this etiology of Nanše’s temple is referred to in the section devoted to her in the Temple Hymns, which contains the sign TUR<sub>3</sub>×SAL in broken context (line 272).

Inana is referred to as “great wild cow” in Ininšagura (Inana C) 183:  
diğir an ki-a a-na me-a-bi immal<sub>2</sub>  
gal-bi-me-en

You are the great wild cow among all  
the gods of heaven and earth.

The reading immal<sub>2</sub> here is confirmed by Emesal texts, which frequently use this epithet (written im-ma-al; see §2.5), and by the following passage in the Song of the Hoe 50:

25. For this passage see also below, §2.6.3 (Ur III exemplar).

- 2.4 nin e<sub>2</sub>-an-na im-ma-al zid-da  
The lady of Eanna, the good wild cow.

The only reason why the word is spelled syllabically in the Song of the Hoe is the appearance of the sign AL.<sup>26</sup>

### 2.2.2. *Immal<sub>2</sub> with other Wild Animals*

At several places TUR<sub>3</sub>×SAL is parallel to or mentioned in the same context as am or gud-am, “wild bull.” Examples are Ninurta’s Return 102–103; Temple Hymns 459; SP 2.94 VS 17 10 126–27; and Lugalbanda II 121:

- 2.5 ki-še<sub>3</sub> umbin-zu am kur-ra immal<sub>2</sub> kur-ra  
eš-ad-am<sub>3</sub> ba-nu<sub>2</sub>  
On the ground your (= Anzud’s) talons are like a trap laid out for the wild bull of the mountain, for the wild cow of the mountain.

The reading immal<sub>2</sub> in these contexts is supported by the lexical quotation above (example 2.1) and by an unprovenanced proverb where an im-ma-al meets another wild animal: a lion.

- 2.6 ur-mah-e ša<sub>3</sub>-ne-ša<sub>4</sub> im-m[a-a]l-la šu ba-ab-te  
The lion accepted the supplication of the cow. (SP 5.62)<sup>27</sup>

### 2.3. *Šilam and Ab<sub>2</sub>-šilam*

The Nippur list of domestic animals includes the item ab<sub>2</sub>-šilam,<sup>28</sup> the reading šilam in this expression is well established (see below). Ab<sub>2</sub>-šilam, meaning (domestic) mother cow, occurs in a restricted set of contexts, in most cases in con-

nection with her calf, or with milk products (milk, fat, cheese).<sup>29</sup> The reading of šilam in this expression is assured by constructions such as amar ab<sub>2</sub>-šilam-ma-gin<sub>7</sub> (Lugalbanda I 350). The spellings consistently indicate that ab<sub>2</sub>-šilam is not a genitive compound, which has given grounds in the past to take ab<sub>2</sub> as a determinative (<sup>ab<sub>2</sub></sup>šilam). An Old Babylonian incantation in syllabic Sumerian shows that ab<sub>2</sub> is part of the word, so that this interpretation has been abandoned (ga-ra ab-ši-il-la-ma for gara<sub>2</sub> ab<sub>2</sub>-šilam-ma).<sup>30</sup>

In a couple of places TUR<sub>3</sub>×SAL, without preceding ab<sub>2</sub>, clearly refers to a domestic cow; for instance in Cursing of Agade 164–165:

- 2.7 ud<sub>5</sub> GI<sup>d</sup>en-lil<sub>2</sub>-la<sub>2</sub> amaš-ta ba-ra-ra-aš  
na-gada-bi bi<sub>2</sub>-in-us<sub>2</sub>-u<sub>2</sub>-uš<sub>2</sub>  
šilam tur<sub>3</sub>-bi-ta ba-ra-ra-aš unu<sub>3</sub>-bi  
bi<sub>2</sub>-in-us<sub>2</sub>-u<sub>2</sub>-uš<sub>2</sub>  
The . . . (?) goats of Enlil left their folds,  
their herdsmen followed them;  
The cows left their pens, their cowherds  
followed them.

The point of this passage is that the Gutians destroyed civilized life, so that TUR<sub>3</sub>×SAL cannot mean anything but “domestic cow.” The reading šilam is confirmed by the variant ab<sub>2</sub>-šilam in one exemplar (STVC 94; text L).<sup>31</sup> Other places where TUR<sub>3</sub>×SAL refers to a domestic cow, to be read šilam, are Ibbi-Sin D 19,<sup>32</sup> Nanna A 2, Nawirtum Elegy 5–6, and Fields of Ninurta 93’ (see below section 2.6.3). While Enki ejaculates in Enki and the World Order (250–255) his voice is compared to that of a TUR<sub>3</sub>×SAL, “mooing for her calves in the grass, the pen of scorpions.” The mentioning of calves and the reference to

26. There is no reason to suspect that im-ma-al is Emesal here since there are other places where the Emegi word is spelled this way. See the examples 2.1, 2.6 and 2.11.

27. YBC 4604 i 6 (Alster 1997: pl. 118). The text is slightly damaged, but enough remains to establish the reading.

28. Written ab<sub>2</sub>-TUR<sub>3</sub> (MSL 8/1 87 209). On this spelling, which is used in all the exemplars of the standard Nippur list known to me, see below § 2.6. The edition in MSL 8/1 is somewhat misleading since it includes in the composite text a variant Nippur version (SLT 51=V<sub>29</sub>) that has a divergent order and some divergent items. This version includes the item ab<sub>2</sub>-šilam(TUR<sub>3</sub>×SAL) which in the edition has become “line 217a.” There is no text that has both the lines ab<sub>2</sub>-TUR<sub>3</sub> and ab<sub>2</sub>-TUR<sub>3</sub>×SAL.

29. Unfortunately PSD A/2 has no entry or sub-entry devoted to ab<sub>2</sub>-šilam. There is no point in collecting all the references here since there is little news to tell. See also below the Ur III examples 2.13–2.14 (§2.6.3).

30. Cohen (1976: 138 44). See Krebernig 1984, 42 for a presentation of all available parallels. See also ab<sub>2</sub>-ša<sub>3</sub>-lam in the Ur III incantation HS 1555 (TMH NF 4 67) + HS 1587 line 23 (Finkel 1998, 79).

31. See the score edition in Cooper (1983: 169).

32. “There shall be no end to the fat and the milk of the cow (šilam) dwelling in the cattle-pen”; a context that is very similar to the ones where ab<sub>2</sub>-šilam is found.

motherly care indicate the reading *šilam* here. Although the comparison is not direct, but rather between Enki's voice and the cow's mooing, the emphatic feminine nature of *šilam* and the decidedly masculine activity of Enki produce an odd comparison.

#### 2.4. Males described as *šilam*-(za)

At a few places in Old Babylonian literature TUR<sub>3</sub>×SAL describes a male person or god.<sup>33</sup> In Temple Hymns 311 the god Šara is described as follows:

2.8 gu<sub>2</sub>-haš la<sub>2</sub>-la<sub>2</sub> igi bar *šilam*-ma  
Hairdresser<sup>34</sup> with the gaze of a *šilam*.

The reading *šilam* is assured by the following -ma. Utu receives the epithet TUR<sub>3</sub>×SAL ban<sub>3</sub>-da in Utu B 7. At two places a male is described as a TUR<sub>3</sub>×SAL-za; where the meaning of -za remains unexplained. In Enmerkar and the Lord of Aratta 182–184 the messenger describes Enmerkar to the Lord of Arattta:

2.9 tarah-maš kur bad<sub>3</sub>-da a<sub>2</sub> nun ġal<sub>2</sub>  
*šilam*-za maš naġa kug-ga umbin  
sud<sub>2</sub>-sud<sub>2</sub>-e  
ab<sub>2</sub> zid-da kur šag<sub>4</sub>-ga tud-da  
The stag of the high mountains, endowed  
with princely antlers,  
*šilamza*, kid pawing the pure potash with  
its hoof,  
Whom the good cow had given birth to  
in the heart of the mountains.

TUR<sub>3</sub>×SAL-za further appears in Temple Hymns 103,<sup>35</sup> where it describes the Ekišnugal and thus Nanna. In these cases the reading *šilam* is indicated by a gloss in a Neo-Babylonian copy of An = Anum: <sup>d</sup>TUR<sub>3</sub>×SAL<sup>šī-la</sup>-za.<sup>36</sup>

33. See also Foster in *NABU* 1996/68.

34. Inana calls Šara “my manicurist and my hairdresser” in Inana's Descent 336 (umbin ku<sub>5</sub>-ku<sub>5</sub>-ra-ġu<sub>10</sub>, ġu<sub>2</sub>-haš la<sub>2</sub>-ġu<sub>10</sub>). For gu<sub>2</sub>-haš = “braid” see Farber (1977: 159).

35. See Sjöberg (1969: 74).

36. *SLT* 121 line 4; see Sjöberg (1969: 74) and Litke (1998: 168 line 4 with notes). A parallel text has [<sup>d</sup>TUR<sub>3</sub>×SAL]-kur. Since the *SLT* text has the *lectio difficilior*, and because

The evidence suggests that at least in some periods or registers of Sumerian *šilam* is less gender-specific than the writing with inscribed SAL seems to indicate.

#### 2.5. Old Babylonian *Emesal im-ma-al* and *šilam*

The equivalents of immal<sub>2</sub> and *šilam* in *Emesal* are im-ma-al and *šilam* respectively. In Old Babylonian *Emesal im-ma-al* is usually an epithet of Inana, in accordance with its use in *Emegi* for a variety of goddesses (see Schretter 1990: 170–71 for references). *Šilam* appears in some late *Emesal* texts (for instance Cohen 1988: 508 a+120); I have not found any Old Babylonian attestations so far,<sup>37</sup> but this may well be a coincidence. The *Emesal im-ma-al* (or em-ma-al) differs only from its *Emegi* equivalent in its preferred spelling, comparable to ES -men<sub>3</sub> for EG -men, etc.

#### 2.6. Pre-Old Babylonian TUR<sub>3</sub> = *Šilam* and *Immal*<sup>38</sup>

In pre-Old Babylonian orthography the sign TUR<sub>3</sub> was used for tur<sub>3</sub>, *šilam*, and *immal*. In the following I will investigate the evidence for the different periods.

##### 2.6.1. *Fara* and *Ebla*

Krecher 1983 and Krispijn 1981–1982 independently recognized the existence of an unorthographic *Ebla* copy of the ED list of domestic

TUR<sub>3</sub>×SAL-za appears twice in Old Babylonian literature I give preference to the -za reading. Whether the gloss faithfully represents the Old Babylonian understanding of the word remains, of course, a moot question.

37. Krecher (1966: 216) proposed to read *šilam*′(TUR<sub>3</sub>) amar-bi in *CT* 15 7 24. By itself this reading is plausible and gives good sense, but the parallelism with gud<sub>3</sub> in the preceding line makes tur<sub>3</sub> more likely.

38. Lexical texts from *Fara* quoted in this section were collected from photographs published on the *CDLI* web site (<http://early-cuneiform.humnet.ucla.edu/>), except for *SF* 1 for which a photograph is available in the original publication.

animals that is known in regular writing in copies from Ebla, Fara, and Abu Salabikh.<sup>39</sup> This list includes both /šilam/ and /imma/. The comparison with the orthographic sources provides the following results:

2.10	Ebla syllabic ( <i>MEE</i> 3 62)	Orthographic ( <i>SF</i> 81)
105	še <sub>3</sub> -li-im	-TUR <sub>3</sub> ( <i>LAK</i> 77)
106	še <sub>3</sub> -li-im-gal	gal -TUR <sub>3</sub>
107 <sup>40</sup>	u <sub>3</sub> -ma-al <sub>6</sub>	TUR <sub>3</sub> ( <i>LAK</i> 78)
108	[u <sub>3</sub> ]-ma-al <sub>6</sub> [gal]	gal TUR <sub>3</sub>
...		
121	še <sub>3</sub> -lam	-TUR <sub>3</sub>
122	še <sub>3</sub> -lam kar	kar -TUR <sub>3</sub>
123	u <sub>3</sub> -ma-al <sub>6</sub>	TUR <sub>3</sub>
124	u <sub>3</sub> -ma-al <sub>6</sub> ga-la	kar TUR <sub>3</sub>

Furthermore, the same list includes the item

114 na-ga še<sub>3</sub>-li-im naġa LU ab<sub>2</sub>

The Fara version (*SF* 81), which is the only non-Ebla version available at this point, makes a distinction between the sign for /šilam/ (*LAK* 77) and the sign for /imma/ or /umma/ (*LAK* 78). *LAK* 77, transliterated here as -TUR<sub>3</sub>, is the sign TUR<sub>3</sub> (*LAK* 78) with the first, stronger vertical omitted. The distinction may well be artificial; the sign is used only in one other lexical Fara text.<sup>41</sup> The gloss še<sub>3</sub>-li-im or še<sub>3</sub>-lam for -TUR<sub>3</sub> (105–106 and 121–122) corresponds to Ebla Sign List 11 TUR<sub>3</sub> = *si-la-mu-um* (Archi 1987). The first part of the Ebla Sign List follows ED Lu A (though with many omissions); the present line refers to ED Lu A 28, which may be read gal-šilam(TUR<sub>3</sub>).<sup>42</sup> This reading is confirmed by a variant in an Old Babylonian copy from Nippur *SLT* 112,<sup>43</sup> which has [gal]-šilam (TUR<sub>3</sub>×SAL).

39. *SF* 81; *IAS* 25–26; *MEE* 3 nos. 12–17; edited in *MEE* 3, 47–56. The archaic version (see *ATU* 3) is not relevant here.

40. For al<sub>6</sub>(MAH) in Ebla see Krebernik (1984: 136).

41. *SF* 1, column 8, 13–15 (god list).

42. Note that the extant Fara copies of ED Lu A 28 (*SF* 33 and 34) write the regular TUR<sub>3</sub> sign (*LAK* 78), not the sign -TUR<sub>3</sub> (*LAK* 77).

43. Collated. The full description of this tablet is now CBS 6142 (*SLT* 112) + CBS 7989 (*PBS* 11/3 75) + UM 29–16–252 (+) UM 29–16–221 (+) UM 29–16–224

We may conclude that the Early Dynastic evidence demonstrates that TUR<sub>3</sub> may be read immal and šilam.<sup>44</sup> Line 114 of the list quoted above (example 2.10) seems to imply that AB<sub>2</sub> or LU. AB<sub>2</sub> may have a reading /šilam/. It is more likely, however, that the unorthographic text has an explanatory variant here. The appearance of immal (TUR<sub>3</sub>) in this list of domestic animals leads to the conclusion that in the ED period both immal and šilam were domestic; by what time immal became to be used for “wild cow” is unknown.

### 2.6.2. Gudea

In Gudea Cyl. B 4.7–9 the word /imma/ appears as im-ma-al:

2.11 u<sub>8</sub> gig<sub>2</sub>-ge umbin mi-ni-ib<sub>2</sub>-kiġ<sub>2</sub>  
im-ma-al an-na-ke<sub>4</sub>  
ubur si ba-ni-ib<sub>2</sub>-sa<sub>2</sub>  
They sheared the black ewes  
And the cow of heaven  
Let her teats flow.

It is not clear whether im-ma-al is supposed to be a wild or a domestic cow here. Not helpful is Gudea Cyl. B 16.20:

2.12 TUR<sub>3</sub> ki-nu<sub>2</sub>-ba dub<sub>3</sub> ġar-ra-am<sub>3</sub>  
(The bed) was a TUR<sub>3</sub> kneeling down in  
its sleeping place.

TUR<sub>3</sub> denotes an animal here and may either be read šilam or immal; whether the animal in question is supposed to be wild or domestic may not be deduced from the context.

### 2.6.3. Ur III

In the Ur III period the reading TUR<sub>3</sub> = immal is indirectly attested in the writing IB<sub>2</sub>-TUR<sub>3</sub><sup>ki</sup> for Tummal, to be read tum-mal<sub>x</sub> (TUR<sub>3</sub>)<sup>ki</sup>.<sup>45</sup> The expression ab<sub>2</sub>-šilam(TUR<sub>3</sub>) is attested in Lagaš

44. Also *BE* 1 93 5' where TUR<sub>3</sub> has been read šilam by various authors (Steinkeller 2001, 70 note 205; Steible in *FAOS* 5/2 220–21 with earlier literature). The reading immal is equally possible here.

45. See De Maaijer (1999) and Steinkeller (2001: 66–71).

	Fara	ED-Ur III	OB	OB Emesal	first mill. (lexical)
tur <sub>3</sub>	TUR <sub>3</sub>	TUR <sub>3</sub>	TUR <sub>3</sub>	TUR <sub>3</sub>	TUR <sub>3</sub>
immal <sub>(2)</sub>	TUR <sub>3</sub>	TUR <sub>3</sub>	TUR <sub>3</sub> ×SAL im-ma-al	im-ma-al	TUR <sub>3</sub> ×BAR
šilam	-TUR <sub>3</sub> TUR <sub>3</sub>	TUR <sub>3</sub>	TUR <sub>3</sub> ×SAL (TUR <sub>3</sub> )	[TUR <sub>3</sub> ×SAL]	TUR <sub>3</sub> ×SAL

administrative texts, where it appears a few times in documents about calves (*TCTI* 2 2646; ŠS4):

2.13 7 amar ab<sub>2</sub>-TUR<sub>3</sub> / 1.0.0 še gur lugal-ta  
(one line erased)  
še amar-e gu<sub>7</sub>-a  
Seven calves of *šilam* cows; 1 royal *gur*  
of grain each  
grain eaten by the calves.

A very similar text has amar-TUR<sub>3</sub> which is either an error or an abbreviation for amar ab<sub>2</sub>-TUR<sub>3</sub>.<sup>46</sup> A third attestation is *TCTI* 2 3629 (ŠS 1):

2.14 8 amar ab<sub>2</sub>-TUR<sub>3</sub>  
<sup>d</sup>nanše  
a-du<sub>8</sub>-du<sub>8</sub> na-gada

This use of ab<sub>2</sub>-TUR<sub>3</sub> in connection with calves is consistent with Old Babylonian usage (see §2.3) and makes it likely that the reading is ab<sub>2</sub>-šilam (TUR<sub>3</sub>).<sup>47</sup>

Ab<sub>2</sub>-šilam appears in two incantations from Ur III Nippur, once written ab<sub>2</sub>-ša<sub>3</sub>-lam and once ab<sub>2</sub>-TUR<sub>3</sub>.<sup>48</sup>

What little remains of Ur III literature confirms that TUR<sub>3</sub> is used in places where Old Babylonian copies have TUR<sub>3</sub>×SAL. The first reference is the Lagaš copy of Nisaba A line 2 (*NFT* 171; see Hallo 1970, 123). We have argued above that in this line the sign is to be read immal<sub>(2)</sub> (example 2.2). The second case is Fields of Ninurta 93' where TUR<sub>3</sub> (or TUR<sub>3</sub>×SAL in the O.B.

copies) is probably to be read šilam, because it stands in parallelism to ab<sub>2</sub>.<sup>49</sup>

#### 2.6.4. TUR<sub>3</sub> = šilam in O.B.

At several places in Old Babylonian literature the spelling TUR<sub>3</sub> = šilam persisted. One of the sources of Nanna A writes TUR<sub>3</sub> where the duplicate has TUR<sub>3</sub>×SAL (see Sjöberg 1960: 18), and the god name Ama-šilam-ma is written Ama-TUR<sub>3</sub>-ma (see Jacobsen and Alster 2000: 327 commentary to line 40). It is likely that more such examples are to be found.

#### 2.7. Conclusion

The history of the orthography of tur<sub>3</sub>, šilam, and immal<sub>(2)</sub> may be summarized in the table above.

It is likely that at least in some periods or registers šilam means “bovin” despite the Old Babylonian spelling TUR<sub>3</sub>×SAL. The gender-specific words are ab<sub>2</sub>-šilam and šilam-za.

### 3. še<sub>21</sub> = To Lie/Lay Down (Inanimate)

Purpose of the present note is to demonstrate that Sumerian had two verbs for to lay down or to sleep, nu<sub>2</sub>.d and še<sub>21</sub>.d, the first specialized for animate beings, the second for inanimates. The distinction between these verbs was lost in or

46. *TCTI* 2 3883; IS 1.

47. The Lagaš personal name ab<sub>2</sub>-TUR<sub>3</sub>-e (*CT* 7 32 BM 18395 obv. 5; *CTNMC* 54 i2 and i17; *MVN* 17 72 ri) may be an abbreviation for ab<sub>2</sub>-šilam-e tud-da (“born to a mother cow;” thus Heimpel 1968: 207).

48. HS 1555 (*TMHNF* 4, 67) + 1587 (Finkel 1998, 79) line 24: i<sub>3</sub> ab<sub>2</sub>-ša<sub>3</sub>-lam-ma; CBS 8241 (*PBS* 13 35 = *NATN* Plate II) line 14: ab<sub>2</sub>-TUR<sub>3</sub>.

49. An edition of this composition by Gonzalo Rubio, including several unpublished duplicates, is forthcoming; until then the interpretation of TUR<sub>3</sub>×SAL/TUR<sub>3</sub> in this line remains difficult to evaluate. The line is discussed in Rubio forthcoming; the Ur III duplicate (6N-T115) was collated from a photograph of the flat cast in the University of Pennsylvania Museum.



3.3.  $\text{\textcircled{š}}e_{21}^{\text{mušen}}$  and  $(\text{\textcircled{g}}i\text{\textcircled{š}})nu_2^{\text{mušen}}$ 

The spellings  $NA_2^{\text{mušen}}$  and  $HU.NA_2^{\text{mušen}}$  in third millennium and Old Babylonian sources are equivalent writings for  $\text{\textcircled{š}}e_{21}^{\text{mušen}}$  or “sleeper bird;” nowhere do they appear together in the same text.

$\text{\textcircled{š}}e_{21}^{\text{mušen}}$  appears in Nanše and the Birds C14 (above example 3.6) and in the Old Babylonian lists of fish and birds from Nippur (115') and Ur (*UET* 7 92 iv 32). In ED Birds the word is written  $NA_2^{\text{mušen}}$  (*MEE* 3 111 40).<sup>53</sup> This writing also appears in the variant Old Babylonian Nippur list CBS 7950<sup>54</sup> (*SLT* 65 ii4').

In late Old Babylonian bird lists the word is written  $\text{\textcircled{g}}i\text{\textcircled{š}}nu_2^{\text{mušen}}$  (Šaduppum: IM 51144 ri3 48 and Sippar(?): *CT* 6 14 Dii14).<sup>55</sup> The  $\text{\textcircled{G}}i\text{\textcircled{š}}$ -determinative makes the reading  $nu_2$  obligatory. This reading of the bird name is continued in Middle Babylonian and first millennium lexical tradition where  $na_2\text{-}a^{\text{mušen}}$  is rendered *iššūr mūši* (“night bird”) or *šallalu* (“sleeper”).<sup>56</sup>

53. *MVN* 13 740 (photograph and edition in Owen 1981), an Ur III administrative text that records the deliveries of a wide variety of birds, lists 1621 [N] $A_2^{\text{mušen}}$  (line 20). The line is slightly damaged and may be read [N] $A_2^{\text{mušen}}$ , or [idi]gna<sup>mušen</sup>, [HU.N] $A_2^{\text{mušen}}$  is excluded.

54. The full description of this tablet is now CBS 4608 = *SLT* 230; *PBS* 12/1 14 + CBS 6402 = *SLT* 40 + CBS 7379 = *SLT* 217 + UM 29-16-220 (+) CBS 7950 = *SLT* 65 (+) UM 29-16-452. The fragment CBS 7950 (*SLT* 65) was published as CBS 7590. The tablet was reconstructed by M. Civil in *MSL* 10, 145.

55. IM 51144 is a multi-column lexical list from Old Babylonian Šaduppum that was partly published in *MSL* 6 (section wood) and 7 (section dug). I wish to thank Miguel Civil, who kindly made a photograph of this tablet available to me.

## 3.4. Conclusion

In all attestations of  $\text{\textcircled{š}}e_{21}$  where it means “to rest,” or “to put to rest,” the one resting is an animal: lions (3.3), snakes (3.4), birds (3.5–3.7), and fish (3.8). We may conclude that  $\text{\textcircled{š}}e_{21}.d$  means “to rest” or “to lay to rest” for inanimate beings. In Gudea the writings  $NA_2$  and  $NA_2.HU$  are used indiscriminately; the usage of the sign  $NA_2$  for /šed/ is supported by the Ebla Sign List (example 3.2). For competent readers and writers of Sumerian it may have been unnecessary to indicate the difference orthographically. In the Old Babylonian period the verb  $\text{\textcircled{š}}e_{21}.d$  occasionally produced problems: source H of Lugalbanda II (example 3.5) consistently writes *tuš* for  $\text{\textcircled{š}}e_{21}$  (*PBS* 5 16; O.B. Nippur; see Wilcke 1969, 153) and in the lexical tradition  $\text{\textcircled{š}}e_{21}^{\text{mušen}}$  is gradually replaced by  $na_2\text{-}a^{\text{mušen}}$  (§3.3).

Examples of suppletive stems for animate and inanimate subjects are not too numerous but they do exist: *til* (animate) and *lug* (inanimate) is such a case (plural in both cases  $se_{11}$ ).<sup>57</sup> In the Old Babylonian period suppletive stems tend to be lost, a process that is observable in the present case.

The question remains what the relation is between  $\text{\textcircled{š}}e_{21}.d$  = “to rest,” and  $\text{\textcircled{š}}e_{21}$  = “to name.” It is likely that the two words have no relation at all; they are written by the same sign combination because of an accidental (partial?) similarity in their phonemic form.

56. *MSL* 8/2, 134 242–243; *Emar* 6/4 131 65'; see Salonen (1973: 232).

57. See Steinkeller (1984).

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