Studies in Sumerian Vocabulary: 
\( ^d\text{nín-k}a_6; \) immal/šilam; and \( ^{št}e_21.d \)

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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.¹

1. **Mongoose = \( ^dnin-ka_6 \)**

The Sumerian word for mongoose (or perhaps more generally “rodent;” see Civil 1994: 87) is conventionally read \( ^dnin-kilim \), with the Akkadian equivalent šikkû (see Landsberger 1934: 110–13). Purpose of this note is to demonstrate that the correct reading is \( ^dnin-ka_6 \) 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 \( ^dnin-\text{PEŠ}_2 \); only in the Old Babylonian period a variant spelling \( ^dnin-LUL \) is attested. Since LUL and PEŠ₂ are similar the variant has often been overlooked. The basic difference between PEŠ₂ 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.² That this variance is not 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.³ The exercise covers a variety of rodents (peš₂) and continues with \( ^dnin-LUL \) in line 8'.

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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 ur₅-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/).

² For the paleography of PEŠ₂ see Krebernik (1984: 287–90) and Englund (1995: 40–41 with note 9).

³ I am preparing a full edition of this list.
This particular extract of the sections pes₂ and d nin-LUL is a model text in a teacher’s hand to be copied by a pupil.4 Here LUL is clearly and no doubt intentionally distinguished from PEŠ₂ in the preceding lines. The distribution of the two spellings in Old Babylonian literary texts may be tabulated as follows:5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Provenance</th>
<th>d nin-PES₂</th>
<th>d nin-LUL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ur₅-ra</td>
<td>Wild animals</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SP 1.9</td>
<td>Nippur² 2 4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ur²</td>
<td>Nippur² 1 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good Seed of a Dog</td>
<td>Nippur² 1 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SP 23.9</td>
<td>Unknown 1 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CT₆ 14</td>
<td>Sippar² 3 10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Since both PEŠ₂ and LUL have a value /ka/, the conclusion is near that the word is to be read d nin-ka₆ (PES₂) with the orthographic variant d nin-ka₅ (LUL).

1.2. Supporting Lexical Evidence

The reading d nin-ka₅/₆ is confirmed by the first millennium Ea tradition. Ea I 198 (MSL 14, 186):

4 ka-a PEŠ₂ pešu (sign name) šikkû

On the surface the Ea entry may seem to suggest that ka₆ (PEŠ₂) = šikkû = “mongoose,” but that is clearly incorrect. In fact, the lexical entry intends to say that the reading PEŠ₂ = ka₆ occurs as an element in the Sumerian word that equals šikkû, that is in d nin-ka₆. 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 PEŠ₂, but rather as a gloss to the full equivalent of šikkû, d nin-ka₆.

Early evidence for PEŠ₂ = ka₆ in the word d nin-PEŠ₂ comes from the Ebla version of the ED list of birds.⁶ Line 86 is attested in three copies:

1.3 ED Fara¹² ki(HI)-nin-ka₆ muleš
ED Ebla ki-ka₆ muleš
OB Yale ki-ib₅ d nin-ka₆ muleš

The Ebla version tends to use abbreviated and syllabic spellings, in this case omitting the -nin-.³³

1.3. d nin-ka₅/₆ and d Nin-kilim

(d) Nin-ka₅/₆ is to be distinguished from its homograph, the divine name d nin-PES₂, for which the reading d nin-kilim is well established.¹⁴ In ED writing the divine determinative usually distinguishes the two; the name of the goddess is written d nin-kilim (PEŠ₂), the rodent is written nin-ka₆ (PEŠ₂).¹⁵ In OB the determinative is added to both,

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 original or from photographs. d Nin-ka₅/₆ also appears in SP 1.128; 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 PEŠ₂; D has LUL (sigla follow Alster 1997).
⁷ UET 6/2 239: PEŠ₂; 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 6/2 320: LUL. The sign form in UET 6/2 320 is indiscriminate (copy is correct).
¹⁰ Photographic records of the tablets in Sjöberg 1972.
¹¹ Collated: D i19-20: d nin-ka₅ muleš; d nin-ka₅-ma muleš; and D ii20: ki-ib₅ d nin-ka₅ muleš.
¹³ 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 KL.
¹⁵ 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. d nin-gi₄-ša-nu.
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which may well explain why, in order to avoid confusion, Old Babylonian scribes occasionally preferred LUL instead of PEŠ₂. 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 PEŠ₂ give no rise to confusion and the names of both the goddess and the animal are written ₄nin-PEŠ₂.

1.4. ۓ slikû < (ᵈ)nin-ka₆

The Akkadian word slikû is a loan from Sumerian (ᵈ)nin-ka₆, witnessing a rare but not unparalleled n/s alternation. The Emesal form of the word, attested only once in Old Babylonian context, is še-en-ka₆,16 with initial /n/ in Emegi corresponding to /š/ in Emesal, comparable to EG niĝ-bun₂-na = ES še-en-bun₂-na; EG ²nin-tu = ES ²še-en-tu, etc.17

It is unlikely that the Akkadian word was borrowed from liturgical Emesal. More plausibly, še-en-ka₆ and slikû both derive from nin-ka₆ 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/s 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 = na₅ and šer₇ = nir.

Akkadian words that superficially seem to derive from Emesal may be explained in a similar way:18 EG šag₄-zu = ES *(ša-ab)-zu = Akkadian šabsat(u); EG niĝ₂-gig = ES aĝ₂-gib = Akkadian ikkibu; and EG niĝ₂-gul = ES aĝ₂-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(2); Salir and Ab₂-šilam

On the authority of Emesal Voc II 91 (MSL 4 19)19 Landsberger argued that im-ma-al is the Emesal equivalent of šilam (TUR₃-xSAL), meaning “cow” (MSL 8/1 62). The purpose of this note is to demonstrate that immal, written im-ma-al or immal₂ (TUR₃-xSAL) is a Sumerian (Emegi) word, which in the Old Babylonian period means “wild cow,” whereas (ab₂)-šilam was used for “(domestic) mother cow.” In an earlier period both šilam and immal₂ were used for domestic cows.

2.1. Old Babylonian Lexical Evidence

The Old Babylonian Nippur list of wild animals (forerunner to ur₅-ra 14; unpublished) contains the following passage:

2.1 am wild bull
am-si elephant
am-si-kur-ra camel or dromedary
sumun₂ wild cow
KA²⁰ ?
TUR₃-xSAL wild cow

Variants show that the last line is to be read immal₂:

UM 29-16-31 TU[R₃-xSAL]
N 4058 im-[ma-al]
Ni 3776 TUR₃-xSAL
IM 58670²¹ 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).
21. IM 58670 (3 N-T 742) + IM 58671 (3 N-T 743), studied from a cast in The Oriental Institute, Chicago.

(= 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 3n alternation in Emesal and Emegi see Schretter (1990: 68–69) with earlier literature.
18. A different case is mutinnu (EG ĝestin = ES mu-tin) that is attested only in first millennium learned texts where loans from Emesal are to be expected.
Proto-Ea 398a-b provides two readings for TUR₃×SAL:²² [i]m-[m-a-al] and [i]-l[a-a]l[m]. First millennium Ea/Aa records both these readings of TUR₃×SAL, but in addition lists the related sign TUR₃×BAR, with basically the same set of readings.²³ TUR₃×BAR with the readings immal, šilam₂, etc. is a late (post-Old Babylonian) invention and should not be used in transliterating early texts.²⁴

In the Old Babylonian period šilam and immal₂ are both bona fide readings of TUR₃×SAL and the question remains how to distinguish between the two. The following explorations will start from the assumption that where TUR₃×SAL refers to a wild animal it is to be read immal₂ (2.2), whereas TUR₃×SAL = šilam is used for a domestic cow, most often in the expression ab₂-šilam (2.3). As an additional complication it appears that at several places TUR₃×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 immal₂ and im-ma-al = “wild cow.”

There are two different Old Babylonian contexts in which TUR₃×SAL refers to a wild animal and is to be read immal₂. First, several goddesses are described as “wild cow” (Inana, Ūraš and Nanše). Second, TUR₃×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.

2.2.1. The Goddess is a Wild Cow

In Nisaba A 2–3²⁵ Ūraš is referred to as TUR₃×SAL. The word is used in the same context as šeg₁ (ibex), suggesting that a wild animal is meant:

2.2 a-nisaba immal₂ gal ʿu-raš-e tud-da šeg₁ na-ga kug-ga ga zid gu₇-a
Nisaba born by the great wild cow Ūraš
ibex, fed on good milk among pure potash.

Ūraš receives this same epithet in Lugalbanda I 61: “Ūraš 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-[am₃]
immal₂ kug-gin₇ a-e mu-un-[...]
u₅-mud₅ kug immal₂ babbar a bar-ra a
bi₂-[n-naq]
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 u₅-mud₅ 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 TUR₃×SAL in broken context (line 272).

Inana is referred to as “great wild cow” in
Ininšagura (Inana C) 183:
diḡir an ki-a a-na me-a-bi immal₂
gal-bi-me-en
You are the great wild cow among all
the gods of heaven and earth.

The reading immal₂ 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 e₂-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.²⁶

2.2.2. Immál₂ with other Wild Animals

At several places TURₙₓSAL 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-še₃ umber-zu am kur-ra immál₂ kur-ra
⁸⁰es-ad-am₃ ba-na₄
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 immál₂ 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-m₉₉₃ sa₃-ne₄ im-[a-a]l-la su ba-ab-te
The lion accepted the supplication of the cow. (SP 5.62)²⁷

2.3. Šilam and Ab₂-silam

The Nippur list of domestic animals includes the item ab₂-silam;²⁸ the reading šilam in this expression is well established (see below). Ab₂-silam, meaning (domestic) mother cow, occurs in a restricted set of contexts, in most cases in connection with her calf, or with milk products (milk, fat, cheese).²⁹ The reading of šilam in this expression is assured by constructions such as amar ab₂-silam-ma-gin₇ (Lugalbanda I 350). The spellings consistently indicate that ab₂-silam is not a genitive compound, which has given grounds in the past to take ab₂ as a determinative (₇₉ab₂-silam). An Old Babylonian incantation in syllabic Sumerian shows that ab₂ is part of the word, so that this interpretation has been abandoned (ga-ra ab-ši-il-la-ma for gar₂ ab₂-silam-ma).³⁰

In a couple of places TURₙₓSAL, without preceding ab₂, clearly refers to a domestic cow; for instance in Cursing of Agade 164–165:

2.7 ud₅ GI den-l₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₉₆

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 ab₂-TURₙ (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 = V₂₉) that has a divergent order and some divergent items. This version includes the item ab₂-silam (TURₙₓSAL) which in the edition has become “line 217a.” There is no text that has both the lines ab₂-TURₙ and ab₂-TURₙₓSAL.

29. Unfortunately PSD A/2 has no entry or sub-entry devoted to ab₂-silam. 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).


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 ab₂-silam 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 TUR₃-SAL describes a male person or god. In Temple Hymns 311 the god Sara is described as follows:

2.8 gu₂-haš la₂-la₂ igi bar šilam-ma
Hairdresser₃⁴ with the gaze of a šilam.

The reading šilam is assured by the following -ma. Utu receives the epithet TUR₃-SAL ban₃-da in Utu B 7. At two places a male is described as a TUR₃-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 Aratta:

2.9 tarah-mas kur bad₃-da a₂ nun ga₂
šilam-za ma₂ na₂ ga₃-ga umbin
sud₂-sud₂-e
ab₂ zd₃-da kur šag₄-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.

TUR₃-SAL-za further appears in Temple Hymns 103, 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: dTUR₃-SAL₃-la-za₃.³⁶

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 immal₂ 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, 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 -men₃ for EG -me-en, etc.

2.6. Pre-Old Babylonian TUR₃ = Šilam and Immal

In pre-Old Babylonian orthography the sign TUR₃ was used for tur₃, 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

33. See also Foster in NABU 1996/68.
34. Inana calls Sara “my manicurist and my hairdresser” in Inana’s Descent 336 (umbin ku₃-ku₃-ra-gu₁₀, gu₂-haš la₂-gu₁₀). For gu₂-haš = “braid” see Farber (1977: 159).
36. SLT 121 line 4; see Sjöberg (1969: 74) and Litke (1998: 168 line 4 with notes). A parallel text has [dTUR₃-SAL]-kur. Since the SLT text has the lectio difficilior, and because TUR₃-SAL-za appears twice in 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(TUR₃) amar-bi in CT 15 7 24. By itself this reading is plausible and gives good sense, but the parallelism with gu₃-d₃ in the preceding line makes tur₅ more likely.
38. Lexical texts from Fara quoted in this section were collated 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. This list includes both /silam/ and /immal/. The comparison with the orthographic sources provides the following results:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Ebla syllabic</th>
<th>Orthographic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>105</td>
<td>še₃-li-im</td>
<td>-TUR₃ (LAK 77)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>106</td>
<td>še₃-li-im-gal</td>
<td>gal -TUR₃</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>107</td>
<td>u₃-ma-al₆</td>
<td>TUR₃ (LAK 78)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>108</td>
<td>[u₃]-ma-al₆ [gal]</td>
<td>gal TUR₃</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We may conclude that the Early Dynastic evidence demonstrates that TUR₃ may be read immal and šilam. Line 114 of the list quoted above (example 2.10) seems to imply that AB₂ or LU. AB₂ may have a reading /šilam/. It is more likely, however, that the unorthographic text has an explanatory variant here. The appearance of immal (TUR₃) in this list of domestic animals leads to the conclusion that in the ED period both immal and šilam where domestic; by what time immal became to be used for “wild cow” is unknown.

Furthermore, the same list includes the item

114 na-ga še₃-li-im na nga LU ab₂

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 /immal/ or /ummal/ (LAK 78). LAK 77, transliterated here as -TUR₃, is the sign TUR₃ (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. The gloss še₃-li-im or še₃-lam for -TUR₃ (105-106 and 121-122) corresponds to Ebla Sign List 11 TUR₃ = 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(TUR₃). This reading is confirmed by a variant in an Old Babylonian copy from Nippur SLT 112, which has [gal]-šilam (TUR₃×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 al₆(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 TUR₃ sign (LAK 78), not the sign TUR₃ (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
44. Also BE 1 93 5’ where TUR₃ 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.
administrative texts, where it appears a few times in documents about calves (TCTI 2 2646; ŠŠ4):

2.13 7 amar ab₂-TUR₃ / 1.0.0 še gur lugal-ta
(one line erased)
še amar-e gu₇-a
Seven calves of šīlam cows; 1 royal gur
of grain each
grain eaten by the calves.

A very similar text has amar-TUR₃ which is
either an error or an abbreviation for amar ab₂-
TUR₃. A third attestation is TCTI 2 3629 (ŠŠ 1):

2.14 8 amar ab₂-TUR₃
d₄nanše
a-du₅-du₅ na-gada

This use of ab₂-TUR₃ in connection with calves
is consistent with Old Babylonian usage (see §2.3)
and makes it likely that the reading is ab₂-šīlam
(TUR₃).⁴⁶

Ab₂-šīlam appears in two incantations from Ur
III Nippur, once written ab₂-ša₃-lam and once ab₂-
TUR₃.⁴⁸

What little remains of Ur III literature con-
firms that TUR₃ is used in places where Old
Babylonian copies have TUR₃ₓSAL. The first ref-
ence 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(₂)
(example 2.2). The second case is Fields of Ni-
nurta 93 where TUR₃ (or TUR₃ₓSAL in the O.B.
copies) is probably to be read šīlam, because it
stands in parallelism to ab₂.⁴⁹

2.6.4. TUR₃ = šīlam in O.B.

At several places in Old Babylonian literature
the spelling TUR₃ = šīlam persisted. One of the
sources of Nanna A writes TUR₃ where the
duplicate has TUR₃ₓSAL (see Sjöberg 1960: 18),
and the god name Ama-šīlam-ma is written Ama-
TUR₃-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 tur₃, šīlam,
and immal(₂) may be summarized in the table
above.

It is likely that at least in some periods or regis-
ters šīlam means “bovin” despite the Old Babylo-
nian spelling TUR₃ₓSAL. The gender-specific
words are ab₂-šīlam and šīlam-za.

3. še₂₁ = 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, nu₂₁d and še₂₁d, the first specialized for
animate beings, the second for inanimates. The
distinction between these verbs was lost in or

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⁴⁶ TCTI 2 3883; IS 1.
⁴⁷ The Lagaš personal name ab₂-TUR₃-e (CT 7 32 BM
18395 obv. 5; CTNMC 54 i2 and 117; MVN 17 72 ri) may be
an abbreviation for ab₂-šīlam-e tud-da (“born to a mother cow;”
thus Heimpel 1968: 207).
⁴⁸ HS 1555 (TMH NF 4, 67) + 1587 (Finkel 1998, 79) line
24: i3 ab₂-ša₃-lam-ma; CBS 8241 (PBS 13 35 = NATN Plate II)
line 14: ab₂-TUR₃.
⁴⁹ An edition of this composition by Gonzalo Rubio, in-
cluding several unpublished duplicates, is forthcoming; until
then the interpretation of TUR₃ₓSAL/TUR₃ in this line
remains difficult to evaluate. The line is discussed in Rubio forth-
coming; the Ur III duplicate (6N-T115) was collated from a
photograph of the flat cast in the University of Pennsylvania
Museum.
before the Old Babylonian period, so that še₂₁.d became a source of some confusion.

3.1. The Lexical Evidence

In his edition of Home of the Fish Civil quoted the following extract from Proto-Diri (1961: 168):

3.1 se-e HUN₂₁ nabum to call (by name);
     to name
    rabasum to lie down; rest
    šu-[w]u-um ?
    itūlum to lie down

The gloss še-e (še₂₁) for ‘to name’ (Akkadian nabum) is confirmed by Proto-Ea/Proto-Aa 844; the conventional reading sa₄ is based on Middle Babylonian (Ugarit: MSL 14 144 ii23') and first millennium sources. The verb e₂₁ = “to sleep” is not found in other Old Babylonian or later lexical sources. Confirmation for this reading from a much earlier period comes from the Ebla Sign List, (Archi 1987) line 72:

3.2 NA₂ = še₃-tum.

The Ebla Sign List provides semiticized forms (ending in –um) of Sumerian values, so that the present entry indicates the reading /sed/ for NA₂.⁵⁰

3.2. Literary Attestations

The oldest attestation known to me is in Gudea Cyl. A iv 19 (Gudea’s dream) and v 16 (Nanse’s explanation). The lines are identical, but the spelling of the verb differs:

3.3 zid-da gab3-na pirīg i₃-NA₂-NA₂ (iv19)
   zid-da gab₃-na pirīg i₃-še₂₁(NA₂,HU)-
   še₂₁(NA₂,HU) (v16)
Lions were lying at his right and his left.

The example demonstrates that by this period the verb še₂₁ may be written NA₂ or NA₂,HU. The sign HU, read mušen, may be understood as a partial gloss.

The verb is used for snakes in Lugalbanda II 34–35:

3.4 šī-ri₅-na-bi muš saq-kal-gin₇
    id₂ ka 7 ṣutu-ka šaq₄-ba mu-un-še₂₁še₂₁
It roots rested like saqkal snakes
In Utu’s river that has seven inlets.

Elsewhere in this composition it used for the young of the Anzud bird being put in its nest (41):

3.5 gud₃ im-ma-ni-ib-gar amar-bi ba-e-še₂₁
   (Anzud) had established there its nest
   and laid there its chick to rest.

In the lines 57 and 93 Lugalbanda is subject of the same expression. The verb is used at two places in Nanše and the Birds (C14):

3.6 še₂₁ mušen gud₃ amar-bi [...] bar-ba
    nom-mi-ib₂š[e₂₁]
The še bird lays the young of its nest
outside the [...] 

This line is an etymological explanation of the bird name še₂₁ mušen (see §3.3). Line D 28 of the same composition runs as follows:

3.7 ti-ri₂-da mušen gis-gi-a ti-ri₂-da ba-e-še₂₁
   The tirida bird in the reed thicket rests
   with the runaway.

For the translation ti-ri₂-da = “runaway,” see Civil (2002: 65–68), who, quoting this line, translates, “the tirida bird calls tirida in the reed thickets.”⁵¹ Since Nanše and the Birds records several birdcalls this translation has some inherent plausibility. The problem, however, is that sa₄/še₂₁ = nabû is used for “to call (by name),” not for “to call.”

Nominal forms of the verb are found in Home of the Fish 37–38.⁵²

3.8 a zal-le-gin₇ še₂₁-zu na-an-ba-la₂-e
   iti₆ e₂-ba nam-ba-ni-in-kur₉-kur₉ še₂₁-zu
   na-an-ba-la₂-e
Like flowing water your bed will be spread.
The moonlight will enter that house, your bed will be spread.

51. Civil asserts that ti-ri₂-da mušen is identical with al-ti-ri₂-gu₂-mušen (with many spelling variants). This is unlikely since both appear in ED Birds (MEE 3, 112 lines 77 and 78).
52. Following the version in UET 6 45. See the edition and translation by Civil (1961).
3.3. $\text{šē}_2\text{mugen}$ and $\text{šē}_2\text{nu}^2\text{mugen}$

The spellings NA$_2$mugen and HUNA$_2$mugen in third millennium and Old Babylonian sources are equivalent writings for $\text{šē}_2\text{mugen}$ or “sleeper bird,” nowhere do they appear together in the same text. $\text{šē}_2\text{mugen}$ appears in Nanne 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$_2$mugen (MEE 3 111 40). This writing also appears in the variant Old Babylonian Nippur list CBS 7950 (SLT 65 ii4').

In late Old Babylonian bird lists the word is written $\text{ginu}^2\text{mugen}$ (Saduppum: IM 51144 ri 48 and Sippar(?): CT 6 14 Di14). The ČIS-determinative makes the reading $\text{nu}^2$ obligatory. This reading of the bird name is continued in Middle Babylonian and first millennium lexical tradition where na$_2$-amugen is rendered $\text{iššur mūši}$ (“night bird”) or $\text{šallalu}$ (“sleeper”).

3.4. Conclusion

In all attestations of $\text{šē}_2\text{d}$ 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 $\text{šē}_2\text{d}$ 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 $\text{šē}_2\text{d}$ 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 $\text{šē}_2\text{d}$ occasionally produced problems: source H of Lugalbanda II (example 3.5) consistently writes tuš for $\text{šē}_2\text{d}$ (PBS 5 16; O.B. Nippur; see Wilcke 1969, 153) and in the lexical tradition $\text{šē}_2\text{mugen}$ is gradually replaced by na$_2$-amugen (§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$^1\text{n}$). 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 $\text{šē}_2\text{d} = “\text{to rest},”$ and $\text{šē}_2 = “\text{to name.}\text{”}$ 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.

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$_2$mugen (line 20). The line is slightly damaged and may be read [N]A$_2$mugen; or [idi]gna$mugen,$ [HUN]A$_2$mugen is excluded.

54. The full description of this tablet is now CBS 4608 = SLT 280; 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.


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