I. Introduction

That someone just by looking, through a kind of witchcraft or power of the eyes, may cause harm to another person, animal, or object seems to be an almost universal belief known as the evil eye. Early in our century the German ophthalmologist Siegfried Seligmann published the still classic study concerning this phenomenon, Der böse Blick,\(^1\) where he presented a great deal of material from nearly everywhere in the world. Seligmann also included examples from ancient Mesopotamia and stated plainly that the evil eye was frequently referred to in Assyrian and Babylonian texts.\(^2\) He based this on the evidence presented in the works of François Lenormant, Charles Fossey, and Morris Jastrow, all of whom described the evil eye as a very common belief:

Les Assyriens avaient sur la fascination les mêmes idées que les Grecs, les Latins et tant d'autres peuples, et l'on trouve souvent le mauvais œil indiqué, sans autre détail d'ailleurs, comme l'un des dangers les plus menaçants pour l'homme.\(^3\)

Assyriologists at the turn of the century based their study on Mesopotamian religion primarily on the bilingual texts from Nineveh published in 2R (1866) and 4R\(^2\) (1891),

---


\(^2\) Der böse Blick, vol. 1, p. 12: "Auch sonst wird der böse Blick in den magischen Sprüchen der Chaldäer häufig erwähnt." Die Zauberkraft des Auges, p. 16: "In den altbabylonischen Beschworungsmformen ist ungemein häufig vom bösen Blick die Rede, der als eine der größten Gefahren gilt, denen der Mensch ausgesetzt ist."

\(^3\) F. Lenormant, Die Magie und Wahrsagekunst der Chaldäer (Jena, 1878), pp. 40–41.

\(^4\) C. Fossey, La Magie assyrienne (Paris, 1902), p. 50.

ASKT (1881–82), and CT 16 and 17 (1903). As it appears from the list below, apart from the incantation CT 17, 33, igi hul occurs in these texts only in enumerations of various evils: evil man, evil mouth, evil tongue, and so on. Nevertheless, the view of the common belief in the evil eye is maintained in later literature as well. It is not only widely accepted in Assyriological literature, but is also referred to in other disciplines. Thus in a study on popular religion in modern Islamic countries, Rudolph Kriss and Hubert Kriss-Heinrich have given the following account of belief in the evil eye, apparently based on the work of M. Jastrow, published forty-seven years earlier:

Was die Furcht vor dem bösen Blick betrifft, so hat der Islam, als er sich den vorderen und mittleren Orient eroberte, das im dortigen Volksglauben fortlebende babylonische und assyrische Erbe angetreten. Babylonier und Assyrer glaubten nicht nur an die Dämonen, sondern auch an die Hexen, als deren Waffen sie den bösen Blick und das böse Wort ansahen.

Further, in the introduction to the papers from an anthropological symposium on the evil eye in 1972, it is stated that the core area of this phenomenon is the Near East, the Mediterranean, and South East Asia, and it is suggested that the belief originated in the Near East with the evolution of complex peasant-urban cultures and spread in all directions. It is statistically associated today with such features as plow agriculture and dairying, as well as premodern urbanization.

This conclusion is apparently not based on Mesopotamian material alone, but, in any case, it is curious that viewpoints proposed earlier by Assyriologists have such a wide range. As mentioned above, they were based on texts from Nineveh, but since then many rituals and incantations from other places and periods have turned up, and it is thus worthwhile to examine the material on the evil eye anew. According to the statements cited above, one should expect to find numerous references to the evil eye in cuneiform texts, but, in fact, igi hul occurs rather rarely. Fewer than ten incantations, a few medical recipes, and only one fragmentary ritual directed against the evil eye are known to me. Moreover, there are some ten instances in other contexts. Compared with the numerous incantations and rituals against witchcraft, for example, it is doubtful whether this rather limited material allows us to speak of a widespread belief in the evil eye in ancient Mesopotamia.

II. Sources

In the article “Beschwörungen gegen den Feind und den bösen Blick aus dem Zweistromlande” (Archiv Orientalní 17 [1949]: 172–211), Ebeling treated three incantations: VAT 10018; TCL 16, 89; and BL, no. 3. To these can be added CT 17, pl. 33, which Ebeling mentioned but for some reason did not include among the texts edited in


9 E. Ebeling also included VAT 13683 (ArOr 17/1, pp. 209–11). Although igi hul does not occur in this text, he considered it an incantation against the evil eye because it frequently mentions lapis lazuli: “Es
ArOr 17/1. Recently, through the publication of a “Sammeltafel” from Yale (YOS 11, 70), the number of incantations known to us against the evil eye has been almost doubled and now amounts to seven.

SUMERIAN INCANTATIONS

1. YOS 11, 70 I 1‘-14’ (see appendix)
2. YOS 11, 70 I 15‘-23’ = YOS 11, 71 (see appendix)
3. YOS 11, 70 I 24‘-II 6’ (see appendix)
4. TCL 16, 89 (E. Ebeling, ArOr 17/1, pp. 206–7 and appendix below)
5. BL, no. 3, partly duplicate to TCL 16, 89 (Ebeling, ArOr 17/1, pp. 208–9)

BILINGUAL INCANTATION

6. CT 17, 33 = STT 179 = BM 54626 (Th. G. Pinches, PSBA 23 [1901]: 200) and unpublished duplicates. A new edition of this text is in preparation by Wolfgang Schramm.

AKKADIAN INCANTATION

7. VAT 10018 (Ebeling, ArOr 17/1, pp. 203–5)

Of these texts, only the Yale incantations are specifically identified as charms against the evil eye: ka.inim.ma igi hul-kam. TCL 16, 89; BL, no. 3; and CT 17, 33 have no rubric, and in VAT 10018, the end of the text which might have contained such evidence is broken.

REFERENCES TO THE EVIL EYE IN OTHER INCANTATIONS AND RITUALS


9. û hu.ul i.gi hu.ul ţā.al du.mu ha.la.am.ma.ak.ke “Evil storm(?), evil eye destroying the child” (KUB 30, 1–4; see A. Falkenstein, ZA 45 [1939]: 12: I 2, the beginning of an incantation against witchcraft).

10. û û hu.ul i.gi hu.ul ûŠŠŠ ţā.x du.mu ha.la.am.ma.ak.ke “Evil man, evil eye, evil mouth, evil tongue, evil spell, witchcraft, spittle, evil
machinations, go out of the house!” (So in Sumerian text; Akkadian differs; Udag.hul.a. meš = CT 16, 31: 105–8; cf. Forerunner 575–77).¹¹


12. igit hul ka hul eme hul nundum hul.Ḫałal bar-šé hé-em-ta-gub, “may the evil eye, the evil mouth, the evil tongue, the evil lips stand aside!” (SBTU 2, 5: 57; at the end of an incantation with the rubric ka.inim.ma id ka ḫałal tag₄₄₅₄, “incantation to open the mouth of a canal”).

Similar contexts are:

13. Udag.hul.a.meš, CT 16, 2: 52–53 = Forerunner 1. 29 (see n. 11 above); ¹²
14. Udag.hul.a.meš, CT 16, 14 III 45–47;
15. Bit rimki, third house, R. Borger, JCS 21 (1967): 5, 1. 36;
16. Šurpu IX 82;
17. CT 4, 3 obv. 29.¹²

III. THE EFFECTS OF THE EVIL EYE

These quotations all indicate that the evil eye was associated with witchcraft and sorcery (uš₁₁₁, nig.ak.a) and other evils caused by malevolent human beings. But whereas witchcraft most often resulted in conflicts with family and neighbors, serious illness, or even death,¹³ the effects of the evil eye seem to be somewhat different. In TCL 16, 89 and BL, no. 3, they are described as accidents, situations which might happen to anyone at any time: it rains too little, the cheese-making goes wrong, a tool breaks, clothes are torn, and the like. This view is supported by the Akkadian incantation VAT 10018, which mentions merely everyday occurrences, although some of them have a more serious character.

Text

TCL 16, 89: 3–12(A) = BL, no. 3, 3–9 (B):

<p>| | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 3. an-né² ba-te im² nu-šēg-šēg | 4. ki-a² ba-te ūšim nu-mú-mú

---


¹² Quite uncertain is whether the Old Akkadian ritual (or incantation) MDP 14, 90 mentions the evil eye, as suggested by W. Farber, ZA 71, p. 52, ll. 1–8: ¹ Uš₂₂₂₁₂ ḫala.la pa-ti-tum, in tub-qa-ti E, uš-da-zA-ga-ar-si-ma, e-nam la-mun²⁻tām, [x]šī²⁻tām, e-sig-št, in ūš₁₁₁₁₁ KIR₁₆, i-da-ba-ah-si-ma, “An unmated black sheep he ... to the corner of the house. He ... the evil (?) eye [and ... ?]. In the garden he slaughters it.” It is further described to strip off the skin and fill it with pastatum (flax?), so MAD 3, p. 219, but the purpose of the ritual is not clear.

¹³ See my Zauberdiagnose und Schwarz Magie in Mesopotamien, Carsten Niebuhr Institute Publications (Copenhagen, 1987), pp. 50–57.
5. gud-e\(^a\) ba-te ẞšudul\(^2\)-bi im-du\(^8\)
6. ē.tür-e\(^a\) ba-te ga-ra-bi b\(^b\)im-ta-kum-kum\(^b\)
6a. amaš-e\(^2\) ba-te ua₄-bi im-tùm⁰?
7. KA ǧar-ra ha-ba-an-LU-LU
8. ǧuruš-ra mu-na-te ëb.lå mu-da-an-kum\(^a\)
9. ǧki.sikil-ra b\(^b\)mu-na-te\(^b\) tуг mu-da-an-šub
10. um.me.da dumu-da mu-na-te ẞlirum-bi mu-e-du\(^8\)\(^a\)
11. SAR.SAR-e ba-te hi.iz là.hi.li im-hul
12. pû ẞškiri₄ ba-te gurun im-hul

**Variants:** 1. 3 a: B -e; b: A omitted; 1. 4 a: B omitted; 1. 5 a: B -dè; 1. 6 a: B -re; b-b: B im-gaz⁰'-gaz⁰'; 1. 6a in B only; 1. 7 in A only; 1. 8 a: so A; B: ǧuruš-ra ba-te ẞkAL x mu-d[a⁷]-an-kêš⁰; 1. 9 a: A omits ki; b-b: B ba-te; 1. 10 a-a: B lirum₃-me mu-un-si.il; 1. 11–12: B omits both lines.

**Translation**

3. (The evil eye) approached heaven—it did not rain,
4. It approached earth—herbs did not grow,
5. It approached the ox—its yoke opened,
6. It approached the cattle pen—its cheese was destroyed,
6a. It approached the sheepfold—its ram was taken away(?),
7. . . . (?)
8. It approached the young man—(his) belt was torn(?) (B: (his) strength was bound(?)),
9. It approached the young woman—she dropped her garment,
10. It approached the nurse with the child—her hold became loose (B: her arms were torn apart),
11. It approached the vegetables—lettuce and cress became bad,
12. It approached the garden—the fruit became bad.

**Commentary**

Copies of both texts are rather poor, and the translation is in some cases difficult and uncertain.

6.: kum “to crush,” which is almost never used as a finite verb, and gaz, “to crush, to slaughter,” are both obscure in connection with cheese as well as with ëb.lå, “belt” in l. 8. It is expected that the cheese-making process goes wrong and that the belt is torn.
6a.: the last sign of the line cannot be identified with certainty on the basis of Langdon’s copy. It looks like LAM which, however, is not attested as a verb. Ebeling read im-tùm, which seems to be the best solution.
7.: inim.ğar or išt.ğar = ӕgirrù, “utterance, reputation,” with the verb dib, “to pass,” or dab, “to grasp,” is unclear to me. The verb lu is most probably not meant here, since it is likely to have a prefix chain containing –ni- or mi-ni-.
8.: text B is difficult, the last sign seems to be kêš, but compare the following line from Saq.gig.ga.meš: ūšul à tuku à-na mu-un-da-til = ẞa êṭli bël emūqi emūqišu uqateti, “(the demon) brought the strong man’s strength to an end” (CT 17, 22: 149–50). Is it possible to read mu-da-an-til-le in text B?

10.: for lirum with dug, see *CAD* s.v. *kirimmu* for examples; KIB = lirum<sub>3</sub>, see R. Borger, AOAT 33, p. 294.

VAT 10018, 8–15, Ebeling, ArOr 17/1, pp. 203–4:

8. Ša<sup>10</sup>BAHAR <i>tá</i>-<i>te-pí</i> ŪDU<sub>3</sub>-šú Ša<sup>10</sup>MA.LAH<sub>4</sub> tu-<i>te</i>-ib-bi šišMÁ-[šú]
9. Ša GUD.NITA<sub>2</sub> dan-ni šaš-te-bir šišUDUL-šú
10. Ša ANŠE.NITA<sub>2</sub> a-li-ki šaš-te-bir ku-ri-is-sú
11. ša miš-par-te le-<i>2</i>-e-[i] taš-te-bir ši-ši-is-sa
12. ANŠE.KUR.RA a-li-ku mu<sup>2</sup>-ur<sup>2</sup>-šú ? Šu GUD.NITA<sub>2</sub> ib-ri-šú ú-sad-di
13. ša kinûni nap-hi ŠEŠ tu-sa-ap-pi-[ih]
14. ina pi-i diŠKUR ša-gi-ši [a-a] r-ta-di [bu]-ul EDIN<sup>7</sup>
15. ina bi-rir ŠEŠ.MEŠ-e DUG.MEŠ ta-at-ta-di šal-tum

8. You (evil eye) have broken the oven of the potter, you let the sailor’s boat sink,
9. You have broken the yoke of the strong ox,
10. You have broken the shin of the running donkey,
11. You have broken the šišṭu (a part of the loom) of the skilled woman weaver,
12. You (text: it) have made the running horse drop its foal and the bull drop its companion,
13. You have scattered the tongues of the lighted stove,
14. At the command of murdering Adad you have thrown down the wild animals,
15. You have thrown quarrel between good brothers.

In CT 17, 33: 5–10, on the other hand, the misery caused by the evil eye is described in rather general terms.<sup>14</sup>

5. [igi nig.h]ul dîm-ma pap.hal.la-ke<sub>4</sub>:
   1. ni le-mut-tu<sub>4</sub> mut-tal-lik-tu<sub>4</sub>
6. [ub-šê ab]-šî-in-bar ub im-sud:
   2. a-na tûb-qa ip-pal-lis-ma tûb-qi ú-ri-iq
7. [da-šê ab]-šî-in-bar da im-sud:
   3. ana šâ-hat ip-pal-lis-ma šâ-hat ú-ri-iq
8. [ama/amas kalam-ma-šê] ab-šî-in-bar ama(/ ama<sub>3</sub>) kalam im-sud:
   4. ana maš-tak ma-a-tú ip-pal-lis-ma maš-tak ma-a-tú ú-ri-iq
9. [lû.u<sub>18</sub> lu] pap.hal.la-šê ab-šî-in-bar ġis kud-kud-da-gin<sub>7</sub> gû
   5. ki-a im-mi-in-gam:
10. ana a-me-lu mut-tal-li-ku ip-pal-lis-ma ki-ma ış-ṣi nak-su
    6. še-eb-ri ki-šad-su liq-ta-du-ud

5. The eye of an evil, restless (man) (Akk: evil, restless eye),
6. when it looks into the corner, it makes the corner empty,
7. when it looks at the side (of the house), it makes it empty,

---

<sup>14</sup> Restored from Schramm’s manuscript, translation mine.
8. when it looks at the living quarters of the land, it makes the living quarters of the land empty,
9. When it looks at the restless man, he bends his neck like a cut (and) broken tree.

IV. Descriptions of the Evil Eye

The parallelism between igi hul and lú hul, ka hul, eme hul, etc. indicates that the eye is that of an evil person or a witch seeking to harm his or her enemy, but in some of the Sumerian incantations the eye is said to be an animal or a monster like the muš.huš, “dragon”: YOS 11, 70 I 15′-17′ = 71, 1-3

igi gud aš-ām igi udu-ām (YOS 11, 71: udu aš-ām
igi lú šár-ām ka lú šár-ām (YOS 11, 71: šár-ra-ām)
igi hul-ām nig nam.hul.hul

The eye is a single ox, the eye is a (single) sheep,
the eye is numerous men, the mouth is numerous men,
the eye is evil, the most evil thing.
YOS 11, 70 I 24′-25′

igi gud anše? piriš3?.huš? igi lú.ulu3
gud anše? piriš3?.huš?

The eye (is) an ox, a donkey, a fierce lion, the eye of man (is),
an ox, a donkey, a fierce lion.
TCL 16, 89: 1–2 = BL, no. 3, 1–3

igi muš.huš igi lú.ulu3 muš.huš
igi lú nig.hul dìm-ma muš.huš

The eye (is) a dragon, the eye of the man (is) a dragon,
the eye of the evil man (is) a dragon.

In the bilingual text, CT 17, 33, the evil eye is not described in this way. In the beginning, it is associated with expressions such as lú-lú and nig.lú.lú = dalhāti, “distressing”; lál-lál and nig.lá = kāšatu, “binding”; dù-du = kāmātu, “ensnaring”; and tu.ra gig-ga nam.lú.u18.lu-ke4 = mušamrišatu ša nisī, “causing illness to the people.” In contrast to this, the Akkadian incantation VAT 10018 explicitly says that the eye is that of an enemy, a man or a woman:
VAT 10018, 1–4:

1. [. . . ] e-nu e-nu l[em-ne-et e-nu] a-a-bat
2. [. . . e]-nu a-sa-ta [labšat] nam-ri-ri šá lÚ.kúr
3. [e]-na-at sinnšiti e-na-at zik[ari e-n]a-at lÚ.kúr e-na-at NIN?
4. e-na-at še-‘i e-na-at še-‘i e-na-at ta-ri e-na ši-te15

15 Quoted after Ebeling, ArOr 17/1, p. 203.
1. [... ] the eye, the eye is evil, the eye is hostile,
2. [... ] the eye goes out, [enveloped] in the splendor of an enemy.
3. Eyes of a woman, eyes of a man, eyes of an enemy, eyes of... (?)
4. eyes of a neighbor, eyes of a neighbor, eyes of... (?), two eyes!

V. PROTECTION FROM THE EVIL EYE

In the Near East today, eye imitations made of glass are worn as amulets against the evil eye. Beads resembling an eye or a pair of eyes are known from ancient Mesopotamia and are often understood as such amulets; the texts, however, prescribe other remedies. Means to protect against the evil eye are described in incantations as, for example, in the instructions of Enki to his son Asarluhi. They suggest the use of rather simple things, such as a strand of wool: sik šīk šīk babbar saḫ-ḡā-ni û-me-ni-kēš, “bind black wool and white wool around his head!” (YOS 11, 70 I 20'; 71, 15–16 differs slightly; see appendix below).

BL, no. 3, 12–17

12. 7 A šē ṣur-re eḫer ḫānagā3-kam
13. 7 A šē ṣur-re eḫer na4urš-kam
14. 1-ta û-me-ni-he
15. inim-ta û-me-ni-kēš
16. nam.Šub-ta
17. gū lū gig-ra û-mu-ni-lā [x]

12. 7... from the back of the pestle,
13. (and) 7... from the back of the grinding slab
14. you mix with oil.
15. You bind it with the word,
16. with the incantation
17. you tie it around the neck of the patient.

In CT 17, 33, Enki is acting alone, curing the person fallen sick because of the evil eye by wiping him off with bread, a very common practice for cleansing. Compare the end of the fragmentary incantation YOS 11, 70 I 12'–13': su lū.uluš dumu diḫir-re-[x] û-mete-g[ur]-gur, “wipe off the body of the man, the son of his god.”

CT 17, 33: 11–14

11. ḏEn.ki lu-ḫi igi û-bi-in-duš :
    12. ninda saḫ-ḡā-na mu-ni-in-ḡar :

  12. ninda saḫ-ḡā-na mu-ni-in-ḡar :
    a-ka-lu ina qaq qa-di-šū iš-kun

16 See E. Douglas van Buren, “Amulets in Ancient Mesopotamia,” Or. n.s. 14 (1945): 18–23; esp. p. 18 with literature: “Other amulets against the Evil Eye were pieces of onyx or agate which, by their markings, resembled an eye or a pair of eyes. They were known in Akkadian times and in the first half of the second millennium, but the majority of those which have survived belonged to the Kassite and late Assyrian periods.”
13. ninda su-na mu-ni-in-te:
   a-ka-lu ana su-šú ú-ḫaḫ-hi
14. süd-dè nam.til-la-ke₄ mu-un-na-an-šûd:
   ik-ri-bi ba-la-ṭu i-ka-rāb-šû

11. Enki saw this man,
12. placed bread on his (the patient’s) head,
13. approached bread to his body,
14. prayed for him the prayer of life.

There are only a few instances of medical texts with remedies for the evil eye. The plant list BAM 1 gives a very short recipe for an ointment:

I 60 ú NUMUN a-zal-le-e : ú IGI.HUL-te : ana NA NU TE ina I.GIŠ dap-ra-ni Eš
61 ú NUMUN al-lum-zi : ú KI.MIN : KI.MIN

The seed of the azallû-plant : medication (against) the evil eye : that it should not approach a man, rub on in juniper oil.
The seed of the allumzu-plant : ditto : ditto.17

According to Franz Köcher, BAM, vol. 4, p. xvii, the same stones as listed in BAM 361, 1–7 against evil signs are prescribed against the evil eye in an unpublished text from the Louvre: AO 17619. The stones in BAM 361 are: carnelian, lapis lazuli, muššaru, pappardilû, papparminû, [. . .], ašgikû, turminû, hilibû, šadānu šaḥtu (hematite), lamassu, “fish eye,” ajartu (shell), and abasminû (a greenish stone).

The only example of directions for a ritual against the evil eye known to me is BAM 374 obv. 3′–8′, unfortunately, in fragmentary context:

3′. [DÛ.DÛ.BI . . . ]
5′. [X X mš]-na-a DÛ-ud[s] ana DINIR-M[U³] x x
6′. [x su-up]-pî-já lim-da-ma dû-li-li-ku-nu [lud-hûl]
7′. [an-na]m râ°-šû DUG₄.GA-ma NÎG.NA ana ID SUB-di
8′. IGI HUL ana NA NU [TE]

3′. [Its ritual: . . . ]
4′. You libate beer and say as follows:
5′. [. . wh]at have I done to m[y] god [or to my goddess(?)]?
6′. Take note of my pray[ers(?)], and [I shall proclaim] your glory.
7′. You say [th]i[s] [th]ree times, and then you throw the incense burner into the river.
8′. The evil eye shall not [approach] the man.

VI. CONCLUSION

The references to the evil eye show that the phenomenon was recorded in ancient Mesopotamia over a very long period of time: from the end of the third millennium until

17 Cf. CT 14, 32: K. 9061, a fragment of a plant list, l. 8′: ū IGI[HUL [. . . ](9′) ū IGI[HUL [. . . ].
the Late Babylonian period. Most sources are Sumerian, some of them with Akkadian translation, and there is one Akkadian incantation. At least one composition (CT 17, 33) was widely distributed with duplicates from Nineveh, Assur, Sultantepe, and the Late Babylonian period. Considering the enormous number of incantations and ritual texts, however, the rather small number of references concerning the evil eye does not justify speaking of a widespread belief among the ancient cultures of Mesopotamia. The evil eye is connected with witchcraft, but, in fact, witches are rarely accused of looking at their victims, whereas their evil words are frequently mentioned in Maqlû and similar incantations.

It is remarkable that sources for the evil eye, with few exceptions, are Sumerian and incantations against witchcraft, on the other hand, are mostly Akkadian. One possible explanation is that the evil eye belief primarily belongs to the older period of Mesopotamian history, but another might well be found in the literary tradition of incantations and ritual texts. In the first millennium B.C., these texts were copied and studied by highly educated specialists such as incantation priests and physicians who performed healing and apotropaic rituals for the king, the royal family, and high officials. Although the evil eye, like witchcraft, was the work of human beings, its effects were generally thought to be of a more harmless character. It belonged to everyday annoyances but was not really dangerous since, usually, it did not affect the health of the person. This may be the reason for the absence of rituals against the evil eye. It was simply not serious enough to demand a place among the important incantation series, which protected against demons, witchcraft, and diseases, and not important enough to require a complicated ritual to avert it. Thus, it may be true that belief in the evil eye in ancient Mesopotamia was as common as the early Assyriologists postulated, but the written sources do not allow one to affirm this.

APPENDIX

Text

YOS 11, 70 I 1'-14'

Beginning lost

col. i 1': [...]  
2'. [x x]-ta ṭišk[irid(?)] x]  
3'. saŋ saŋ-šè(?) [x x]  
4'. En.ki-ke4 dAsar.lu.hi [x]  
5'. ne-šè dumu-ğu₁₀ hul bi-[x]  
6'. dAsar.lu.hi dumu-ğu₁₀ ū₁-[x]  
7'. ṭiškirid pa-bi ū₁-[x]

18 But cf. Maqlû III 9-14: ša ardati damiqti inibša itbal, ina nekemša kuzubša ḫe, eša ippalisma bāṣṭašu ikim, ardata ippalisma inibša itbal, īmuran-nima kaššaṭu iliša arkiša, ina īmiša iptaraš alaktu, "she carried off the young woman’s attractiveness; by her angry look she took away her charm. She looked upon the young man and took away his virility. She looked upon the young woman and carried off her attractiveness. The sorceress saw me, she followed me, with her spittle she blocked (my) way."
Translation

1'.-3'. ...

4'. Enki [said] to Asarluhi:
5'. “Now, my son, evil [. . .]
6'. Asarluhi, my son, [. . .]
7'. [. . .] the top(?) of the pin,
8'. [. . .] the limbs [. . .]
9'. he [. . .]
10'. [. . .] the tooth of the pin.
11'. The evil standing aside [. . .]
12'f. Wipe off the body of the man, son of his god!”
14'. It is an incantation against the evil eye.

Commentary

The translation is very difficult since the verbs of several lines are broken off. The beginning of the text, until l. 3’ inclusive, probably contained a description of the evil eye or the illness caused by it. Lines 4’-13’ describe the cure implying that the patient is wiped with some substance, normally bread or flour; cf. CT 17, 33 above.

Text

YOS 11, 71 (A) = YOS 11, 70 I 15’-23′(B)

1A. [. . .] igi udu Aš-âm
   B. igi gud Aš-âm igi udu-âm
2A. [. . .]-âm ka lú šár-ra-âm
   B. igi lú šár-âm ka lú šár-âm
3A. [. . .] nîg im-hul-hul
   B. igi hul-âm nîg nam.hul.hul
4A. [. . .].hi igi im-ma-an-sum
   B. ḠAsar-lû-hi igi im-ma-an-sum
5A. [a.a-ni ḠE]n.ki-ra é-e ba-ši-in-kur₉
6A. [gù] mu-na-dé-e
7A. a.a-Ḡ[u₁₀] igi gud Aš-âm igi udu Aš-âm
8A. a.râ min-kam-ma-aš ū-ub-dug₄
10A. dEn.ki-ke₄ dumu-ni dAsar.lù.hi
11A. mu-na-ni-ib-gi₄-gi₄
12A. dumu-ģu₁₀ a.na nu-e-zu a.na a-ra-ab-dah-e
13A. dAsar.lù.hi a.na [nu-e-z]u ⟨a.na⟩ a-ra-ab-[dah]-e
14A. nīg ģā.e zu-a-ģu₁₀ ū za.e in-gi-zu
   B. nīg ģā.e za-ģu₁₀ ū za ģā-e-zu
15A. ġe₂₆-na dumu-ģu₁₀ sik babbar sik ġig
   B. sik ġig sik babbar
16A. saĝ-ġā-ni ū-me-in-kēš
   B. saĝ-ġā-ni ū-me-ni-kēš
17A. īgī hul lú nīg.hul dīm-ma
   B. īgī hul lú nīg.hul dīm-ma
18A. gud-gin₇ hē-em-ta-gaz
   B. gud-gin₇ hē-em-ta-gaz
19A. ka.inim.ma īgī hul-a-kam
   B. ka.inim.ma īgī hul-kam

Translation

1. The eye is a single ox, the eye is a (single) sheep,
2. the eye is numerous men, the mouth is numerous men,
3. the eye is evil, the most evil thing.
4. Asarluhi saw this,
5. he went to his father Enki in the temple
6. (and) he spoke (thus) to him:
7. "My father, the eye is a single ox, the eye is a single sheep!"
8. A second time he spoke:
9. "What I shall do I do not know, what can cure him?"
10–11. Enki answered his son Asarluhi:
12. "My son, what do you not know? What can I add?
13. Asarluhi, what do you not know? What can I add?
14. What I know, you also know.
15. Go my son, black wool and white wool
16. bind around his head."
17. The evil eye of the evil-doing man
18. may it be slaughtered like an ox!
19. It is an incantation against the evil eye.

Text

YOS 11, 70 I 24'-II 7'

col. i 24'.  īgī gud anšē₇ piriği₃ huš₇ īgī lù.uulu₃
25'. gud anšē₇ piriği₃ huš₇
Several lines missing
ii 2'. [x]-e-[. . .]  
3'. [x] kaskal-la ʾt[x]r̡[x] [x x]  
4'. i áb kug-ga ga ʾ[ḥ š̱]lam-ma  
5'. tēš-bi u-me-[x x]  
6'. eme hul.ḡál bar-[ṣ ḫ-em-ta-gub]  
7'. ka.[inim. ṭa igi hul-kam]

Translation

col. i 24'. The eye (is) an ox, a donkey, a fierce lion, the eye of man (is),  
25'. an ox, a donkey, a fierce lion.  
Gap  Enki instructs Asarluhi:]
ii 3'. “[. . .] on/of the road,  
4'. fat of a pure cow, milk of a cow,  
5'. you [mix?] together.”  
6'. The evil tongue [shall stand aside.]  
7'. [It is an incantation against the evil eye.]

Commentary

Col. ii 4'. For this line, cf. BIN 2, 22: 195 = O. R. Gurney, AAA 22, p. 92: i áb kug-ga ga  
áb šilam-ma šu u-me-ti : šam-ni ár-hu el-le-tu ši-zib la-a-tu le-qē-e-ma; CT 17, 12:  
30 = KAR 123, 9–10 = Saḡ.gig.ga.meš III; BL, no. 4, rev. 27

Text

TCL 16, 89

1. igi muš.huš igi lū.[ulu₂] muš.huš  
2. igi lū nīg.hul d[im]-ma muš.huš  
3. an-nē ba-te im ⟨nu⟩šēg-šēg  
4. ki-a ba-te ú.šim nu-mú-mú  
5. gud-e ba-te šišu₃ul₂-bi im-du₈  
6. ē.tūr-e ba-te ga.ra-bi im-ta-kum-kum  
7. KA ḫar-ra ha-ba-an-LU-LU  
8. ḫuruš-ra mu-na-te ib.lá mu-da-an-kum  
9. ⟨ki⟩.sīkīl-ra mu-na-te tūg mu-da-an-šub  
10. um.me.da dumu-da mu-na-te lirum-bi mu-e-du₈  
11. Sār.Sār-e bā-te hi.is zā.hi.li im-hul  
12. pū šiš.kīl₆ ba-te gurun im-hul  
13. igi kur-ra kur-ta nam-ta-an-ē  
14. šēg₉.bar-re sī.muš-bi nam-ta-an-ē  
15. igi hul igi gig-ga ḫé-kud  
16. kū₉.wa.ḡ.lā-gin₇ ḫé-dār  
17. dug {si₃l₂₃} bur.zi bahar₂-ka till₉₂-a ḫ[é]₉-gaz-gaz  
18. gub-bu-da-ba gub-bu-da-ba
19. Kā e.sīr-ra-ka gub-bu-da-ba
20. šul diğiňr nu-tuku gaba im-ma-an-ri
21. iga il-ēm hé-sig-e
22. ēAsar-e Abzu-a
23. nam-mu-un-da-búr-e

Translation

1. The eye (is) a dragon, the eye of the man (is) a dragon,
2. the eye of the evil man (is) a dragon.
3. It approached heaven—it did not rain.
4. it approached earth—herbs did not grow,
5. it approached the ox—its yoke opened,
6. it approached the cattle pen—its cheese was destroyed,
7. . . .
8. it approached the young man—(his) belt was torn(?),
9. it approached the young woman—she dropped her garment,
10. it approached the nurse with the child—her hold became loose,
11. it approached the vegetables—lettuce and cress became bad,
12. it approached the garden—the fruits became bad.
13. The eye of the mountain came out from the mountain,
14. the wild ram let its shining horns come out.
15. May the evil eye (like?) the sick eye be cut off,
16. may it split open like a leather bag,
17. may it go to pieces (like) the potter's pursītu-pot on the market place.
18. While standing, while standing,
19. while standing at the mouth(?) of the street,
20. it opposes the young man who has no personal god.
21. Let the eye turn into a wind,
22. Asar in Abzu
23. may he not undo it!

Commentary

1–12. See above pp. 23–24.
13. kur may denote the netherworld.
17. For this line, cf. CT 16, pl. 33, 170: šika dugbur.zi bahar₂-gin, tilla₄ hé-nil-ib-gaz-gaz : ki-ma ha₄-bi pur-si-it pa-ha-ri ina ri-bi-ti lih-tap-pu-u, Udug.hul.a.meš VI.
22–23. This phrase often ends an incantation, for example, ēAsar.lú hi dumu Eridúk₁-ka₄, é Abzu Eridúkᵢ-ga nam-mu-da-an-búr-re, VS 17, 30: 8–9; also VS 17, 29: 4–7; YOS 11, 31: 2–3; and passim. Asar (or Asarluhi) is the ergative subject and nam-mu-un-da-búr-e seems to be prohibitive (see my The Sumerian Language [Copenhagen 1984], pp. 195 f.), although we rather expect an affirmative form: “Asar undid it (i.e., the sorcery)!”