

A Late Babylonian *lillidu* – In his latest volume of cuneiform texts from Uruk, *SpBTU* IV, Egbert von Weiher has made available in text no. 153 an important contribution to Babylonian gynaecological literature. The topics covered are haemorrhage and difficulty in delivery. The most unusual passage, obv. 21-31, shows a midwife at the bedside, recording her remarks and overseeing the delivery of the child. The pregnant woman is administered a special potion, and made to walk up and down. The midwife examines her (reading SAL.ŠÀ(!).ZU tam-mar-ú-ma), and declares that delivery is imminent (um-ma Û.TU.DA qé-ru-ub). If there is a particular development (A.MEŠ-šá ú-šá-ra-qam(?) -ma(?): meaning unclear) the foetus will die in utero.

A crux here has been the sign group read by the editor as GAZ-lit-su in lines 23 and 26 (see p. 91, note on line 23). In fact, the first sign is rather lil, so that the troublesome word is simply *lillidu*, “offspring ».

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