01) A Catalog of Old Babylonian Sumerian Incantations and Rituals from Nippur in the University Museum, Philadelphia – The following is a concise catalog of published and unpublished Sumerian Old Babylonian incantations and ritual texts from Nippur from pre-WWI excavations known to me that are housed in the Babylonian Section of the University Museum, Philadelphia. Incantations from OB Nippur have previously been catalogued by Michalowski QuadSem 18 324-325: see below for citations.

CBS 3833+3835 (Finkel AMD 1 245, fig. 6) Central piece of an *imgida*. Snake incantation. Edited by Finkel AMD 1 229.

CBS 3926+CBS 3931 (ZA 92 17) Bottom edge fragment of a multi-column tablet. Partial duplicate of a pest incantation that is otherwise attested at OB Meturan. Edited by Cavigneaux and al-Rawi ZA 92 16f.

CBS 6927 (STVC 11, Michalowski QuadSem 18 324, no. 1) Right edge fragment of an *imgida*. Incantation collective that preserves a šaš gig-ga incantation (subscript [ka-inim-ma] šaš gig-ga-kam) on the reverse, followed by an en-nu-ru incantation that is not preserved. Obverse lines 6'-8' are cited by Michalowski ZA 71 17.

CBS 8857A (unpublished) Small central fragment preserving the obverse and reverse side of the tablet. This fragment preserves mention of a curative procedure involving the oral administration of what may be a lump of salt (lag mun-na) accompanied by the recitation of the “incantation of Eridu” (nam-šub Eridu-ki-ga).

CBS 10474 (ZA 71 14, Michalowski QuadSem 18 324, no. 3) Mostly intact *imgida* with a badly effaced reverse. Incantation against gall (ze₂) written in a partially syllabic script. Edited by Michalowski ZA 71 13f. (source D).

CBS 10489+CBS 10756 (STVC 16, AfO 27 38, Michalowski QuadSem 18 324, no. 4) Almost entirely intact *imgida*. Gynaecological incantation. Edited by Finkel AfO 27 37.

CBS 11366+CBS 11400 (PBS 5 76) Large fragment of the reverse of a multi-column tablet in Kurzzeilen format. This text includes a divinatory ritual where the diviner offers water and cedar to Utu, as well as a coronation ritual located within the E₂-an-na. The king is endowed with the crown and the scepter, approaches the royal dais or enclosure (barag) and foregoes his childhood name and his bur-gi-a name in favor of the name of the en-ship, a process that is overseen by the goddesses Šin-men-na and Šin-šedru. The symbolic royal dispersal of enemies of the army seems to occur before the break in reverse ii' 27'f. Partially edited (reverse ii' 5'-26') by Sjöberg OrSuec 21 111-112: see also the discussion of select passages by Alster Proverbs of Ancient Sumer (1997) 379 (rev. i' 9'-11' as a parallel to Proverb Collection 3.16), van Dijk FS Falkenstein (1965) 237 n. 18, Jeyes Old Babylonian Extispicy (1989) 30, Michalowski JCS 28 164, Polonsky The Rise of the Sun God and the Determination of Destiny in Ancient Mesopotamia (PhD thesis, UPenn, 2002) 580 n. 1690, and PSD B 187.

CBS 13256 (STVC 10, Michalowski QuadSem 18 324, no. 6) Central fragment of a multi-column tablet preserving portions of the obverse and reverse. See the discussion of Michalowski Quad Sem 18 324, who compares the incantation incipit *ensi-um, inim-um-nun-um that occurs in i‘ 2’f. with the incantation catalog Rylands Library Box 24 E 5/25, line 11 (Wilcke AIQ 24 14), as well as the remarks of Cavigneaux and al-Rawi ZA 83 175 n. 10.

CBS 13905 (unpublished) Large fragment of a two-column tablet preserving a partially bilingual text. Reverse column i parallels Uduq hul forerunner III 39-45 (Geller FAOS 12 22).

CBS 15354 (unpublished) Upper fragment of a two-column tablet with both the obverse and reverse preserved. Preserves the subscript (ka-)[inim-][ma] ;[D][im]-me-kam, implicating it as a Lamaštu incantation. This text is briefly discussed by van Dijk 25th RAI (1982) 105.


UM 29-13-717 (ZA 98 197) Bottom piece of an imgida written in archaizing script except for a subscript that identifies it as ša₃₃ zig₃₂-ga prescription. Edited by Peterson ZA 98.

UM 29-13-569 (JNER 9 126-127) Central piece of an imgida with both the obverse and reverse preserved. Incantation collective preserving a ritual for negating an oath with the subscript [ka inim ma gu DU₃₂DU₃₂-um-kam and a ritual for altering a royal dream with the subscript ka-inim-ma nam-tar lugal bur₂₂-ru-da-kam (restored from the duplicate VAT 8395 (VAS 17 28)). Edited by Peterson JNER 9.

UM 29-13-577 (unpublished) Fragment of a small two-column tablet, both obverse and reverse preserved. Preserves the Marduk-Ea dialogue in reverse column i.

UM 29-15-367 (OrNS 44 54, 56, Michalowski QuadSem 18 325, no. 23) Largely intact but partially worn two-column tablet. Birth incantation from the munus u₁₃-ta-da tradition. Edited by van Dijk OrNS 44 53-61.

UM 29-15-5 (ASJ 17 96) Almost entirely intact imgida. Contains an extract from a version of the scorpion incantation that attested in ED, Ur III, and OB contexts (edited by Michalowski OrNS 54, Cavigneaux ASJ 17). Edited by Cavigneaux ASJ 17 93-94.

UM 29-15-236 (unpublished) Upper left corner of a multi-column incantation collective with the obverse and reverse preserved and writing on the left edge. Contains a duplicate to the Namtar incantation published by Cavigneaux and al-Rawi ZA 83 176f., the first incantation that occurs on the tablet, and an incantation involving the tamarisk, which was the last incantation to occur on the tablet.

UM 29-16-758+N 927 (unpublished) Large piece of an imgida. Most of the surface is highly worn. Incantation collective preserving the subscript of an izi ša₃₃-ga incantation [...] ka-inim izi ša₃₂[g₂ ...], followed by what appears to be either a duplicate or a very similar incantation. The curative procedure described in these two incantations closely resembles the one that occurs in the gall incantation edited by Alster and Michalowski.

N 932 (Michalowski QuadSem 18 324, no. 8, unpublished) Left edge fragment of an imgida preserving the obverse and reverse. Incantation collective: the second preserved incantation parallels IM 18237 (TIM 9 64) and YBC 9898 (YOS 11 77) rev. 3f. (see Michalowski QuadSem 18 324).

N 1266 (OrNS 41 358, fig. 2, Michalowski Quad Sem 18 324, no. 9) Almost entirely intact imgida. Incantation against gall (ze₂), Edited by Alster OrNS 41 350f. (source B) and Michalowski ZA 71 13f. (source B).

N 2998 (unpublished) Small fragment of an imgida located near the bottom of the tablet, obverse and reverse preserved. Contains the subscript of a ša₃₃-gig-ga incantation (rev. 4‘: [ka-inim-ma ša₃₃ gig-ga-kam]).

N 3398 (unpublished) Small central fragment with only one side preserved. Incantation collective preserving the subscript (ka-ini[n]-ma GIR₂-G[IR₂ ...]) and the beginning of another incantation.

N 4109 (ZA 83 176) Central fragment of a multi-column tablet with only one side preserved. Cavigneaux and al-Rawi ZA 83 175 identify it as a collective of incantations, including the incantation described as a “Charme universel?,” line 2f., which was edited by Cavigneaux and al-Rawi ZA 85 185f.

N 4237 (Michalowski FS Hallo (1993) 162, Michalowski QuadSem 18 325, no. 10) Fragment of a multi-column tablet with only one side preserved. Incantation collective preserving a torch incantation, the so-called “Hymn to Kusu.” Edited by Michalowski FS Hallo (1993) 153f.

N 7154 (unpublished) Small right edge fragment of an imgida, obverse and reverse preserved. Incantation collective: appears to contain the Marduk-Ea formula on one side and a subscript followed by a double ruling on the other side followed by the beginning of another incantation.

1) Two incantations listed by Michalowski, CBS 8235 (PBS 13 33) (Michalowski no. 2) and CBS 14154 (STVC 12) (Michalowski no. 7) are not Old Babylonian in date. The former is pre-OB, perhaps Ur III, and the latter post-OB, perhaps Middle Babylonian.

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02) A prism displaying a recension of the lexical "Word List C" – The first author of this note, Krispijn, recently published an edition of a clay prism in cuneiform in the Festschrift for K. Van
The term under discussion is attested almost exclusively in its Sumerian form « pi.li.pi.li », described here as have been changed to the Akkadian form « pilpilû » (Akkadian « pilpilû »), described here as have been changed (« 𒀭𒆠imizeBox𒆠 at șu- bal-ak-a--eslintu »), l. 7). Since this figure is scarcely attested in Mesopotamian records, its nature and characteristics remain enigmatic. It is commonly accepted, however, that the pilpilû was a gender ambiguous figure, similarly as several other members of the Inanna/Istar cult. I analyze elsewhere 2 the gender ambiguity of the pilpilû, within the wider context of gender ambiguous figures in Mesopotamian administration and cult. In what follows I offer a concise survey of the textual attestations of the pilpilû, and the main conclusions reached thereof. The starting point of this examination lies in the mention of the pilpilû as a « changing » figure in the above passage.

The tablet was first spotted in the stock of a London antiquities dealer by Mark Geller. He copied it early in 2001, but kept his copy confidential until Krispijn had published the article referred to above. Subsequently it was intended to be sold at a Paris auction, where an expert evaluation identified the occurrence of the name of the city of Kamid el-Loz, ancient Kumidi, in the Beqa Valley in Lebanon.

Once the Lebanese authorities were informed about this, before the sale they asserted their preemptive rights of ownership, claiming that it was part of the Lebanese archaeological heritage. This clay prism finally arrived in Beirut in 2006, where it was catalogued and joined the collections of the National Museum.

Krispijn sent the text of his article as a token of friendship to Niek Veldhuis, who drew his attention to the Lafont article. Krispijn immediately contacted Lafont and it became absolutely clear that their two articles on this prism were written completely independently. It is gratifying to note that their conclusions are essentially consistent.

The prism itself is now on display in the National Museum in Beirut, and available on the CDLI website (reference P355744).

In his message Veldhuis referred to another small piece in Berkeley to be identified as belonging to the Tribute list (http://cdli.ucla.edu/dl/photo/P272619.jpg). Krispijn has also heard from a former Leiden colleague, Kozad Mohammed Ahmed (kozada@gmail.com) about another recension of the Tribute List, which was in the Museum of Antiquities in Sulaimaniya, Kurdistan-Iraq in 2010.

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03) On the Meaning of the « Changing pilpilû » – In a recently identified new manuscript of the « Lament for Eridu » we find the following passage:

« My house, suitable of lordship! My house of libated syrup and ghee! My chamber, my item of maidens and youth, your appeal is not lavish. May I [carry] your tears! May I carry your tears! Your tears do not cease, my heart does not calm. Because of this, the lamenters stands (and) does not sle[ep.] Like the non-performing ecstatic, (s)he does not […] the head. Like the changing pilpilû, [(s)he walks over] the public square. […]The maide[n] lets her hair hang loosely backwards. »1

In this passage we come across with a mention of a cult figure known as « pi.li.pi.li » (Akkadian « pilpilû »), described here as have been changed (« 𒌓𒆠Iraqi li- pii li šu-bal-ak-a-𒃗𒆠šu-bal-ak-a-ša-ašu »). This figure is scarcely attested in Mesopotamian records, its nature and characteristics remain enigmatic. It is commonly accepted, however, that the pilpilû was a gender ambiguous figure, similarly as several other members of the Inanna/Istar cult. I analyze elsewhere 2 the gender ambiguity of the pilpilû, within the wider context of gender ambiguous figures in Mesopotamian administration and cult. In what follows I offer a concise survey of the textual attestations of the pilpilû, and the main conclusions reached thereof. The starting point of this examination lies in the mention of the pilpilû as a « changing » figure in the above passage.

The term under discussion is attested almost exclusively in its Sumerian form « pi.li.pi.li », while its Akkadian form « pilpilû » is rare. On the whole, this term is quite uncommon, and is mostly
known from lexical lists. In several such lists it is equated with various figures that had in common one notable feature: they were all male attendants who served in the cult of Inanna/Istar. Thus, in an Old Babylonian copy of the lú list, pilpilû appeared together with several terms of various ranks of kalû, and with kurgarrû, SAG.UR.SAG and tirû. In the Old Babylonian lexical list Proto-lú, the pilpilû was documented together with the SAG.UR.SAG, kurgarrû, and tirû. In a Neo-Assyrian lexical list, the pilpilû was documented together with assinnu, kurgarrû and ararû, and each of these four terms was equated with kulu’a. In a Neo-Assyrian copy of the list lú=ša, the pilpilû was attested together with kurgarrû, SAG.UR.SAG, assinnu and nāš pilaqqû, and two terms were listed as parallel to him: the parû and assinnu. Many of the figures with which the pilpilû was attested in these lists were related in one way or another with effeminacy, and as I argue elsewhere, this perceived effeminacy was in all likelihood related to the ambiguous nature of their patron goddess, or to the fact that they characteristically lacked progeny. This gives us strong hint concerning the ambiguous nature of the pilpilû himself.

The pilpilû appears, however rarely, in several texts other than lexical lists. The fact that this figure was a member of Inanna/Istar’s cult is evident in the mythical composition « Inanna and Šu-kale-tuda » (II. 189, 201), where he is laconically mentioned as escorting the goddess on her journey. The myth of « Inanna and Ebih » tells of Inanna’s triumph over mount Ebih. In one of the passages of this text (II. 173-175), the goddess relates to three figures and to the manner in which she treated each, as part of the order she bestowed on the world. She claims to have handed the kurgarrû cutting-weapons and drums to the gala, and further to have « changed the head » of the pilpilû (« pi-li-pi-li sag šu-bal mu-ni-ak », l. 175). These actions are presumably meant to allude to specific characterizations of each of the aforementioned figures with regard to their actual performance in the cult of the goddess. However, the exact nature of the « change of head » of the pilpilû remains unclear.

One of the most significant attestations of this figure is in the « in-nin ša-gur-4-ra » hymn to Inanna. One passage of this hymn tells how the pilpilû was given a weapon by Inanna, and, later on, was said to be a person who « has been changed », attested alongside an ecstatic and a SAG.UR.SAG. In one manuscript a kurgarrû appeared instead of the SAG.UR.SAG, and the mention that the pilpilû « has been changed » was omitted. It appears that the basic message this passage conveys is that of Inanna/Istar’s control over several ambiguous figures, among which the pilpilû. Henshaw (1994: 299) viewed the weapon given by the goddess to the pilpilû as a symbol of this figure’s manliness, and the breaking of the weapon as a demonstration of Inanna’s masculine destructive conduct. Henshaw (1994: 295, 298) suggested that the reference to the pilpilû who has been « changed » was an allusion to a change of sex, achieved either by cross-dressing, a change of gender role, or by what Henshaw defined as « literal sex change », presumably meaning castration. He correctly compared this episode with the passage from the myth of « Inanna and Ebih », where the pilpilû’s head was said to have been changed by Inanna.

A different interpretation from Henshaw’s was offered by Sjöberg (1975: 226), who viewed the pilpilû as a female cult figure, which, in the current passage, assumed a masculine role. Sjöberg claimed that the above passage did not point to a change of sex of the pilpilû, but rather to the alternation between feminine and masculine roles. Assante (2009: 36), however, claimed that the said change of the pilpilû was the result of a state of trance in which this figure was, as part of its cultic performance. Lapinkivi (2010: 76) related to this passage as well, and suggested that the pilpilû was formed by Inanna out of a « punishment » that the goddess had removed from her own body, and purified. He further suggested that the goddess then bestowed wisdom on the pilpilû. Based on this passage, therefore, Lapinkivi viewed the pilpilû as a sinner that was purified, and then given wisdom. However, the connection between line 84 and the lines preceding it is not certain, so the alleged bestowing of wisdom remains purely speculative, similarly as the exact meaning of the whole passage.

Finally, we should discuss the possible etymology of the Sumerian term. Edzard (1987: 58) proposed that the term « kur.gar.ra » was meant to bear the ridicule meaning of « defecating », and that it is not coincidental that, in the Old Babylonian Proto-lú lexical list, the terms « pi.li.pi.li » and « kur.gar.ra » appear consecutively, the former meaning « der immer Pipi macht », « who always
pees». Similarly, several other scholars suggested various etymological explanations for the term, bearing the sense of « defile » or « make dirty ».\(^1\) Lapinkivi (2010: 76 n. 236, including references to literature) suggested that the etymological origin of « pi.li.pi.li » was « pi-lá/pil/pil », « to be/make obscure, to be/make dirty, defiled, disgraced ». Since no suggestion seems more compelling than the other, I venture to offer one of my own. Many of the figures with which the pilpilû was equated in the lexical lists or related in the literary compositions were originally Sumerian terms, which Akkadian denotations maintained homophony, but lost all meaning. See for example « kur.gar.ra » (Akkadian kurgarrû), « gala » (Akkadian kalû),\(^2\) « tilu » (Akkadian tiru) and « gir.se.ga » (Akkadian girseqiä). It is therefore plausible to assume that the case of the pilpilû was no different. The form seems to be a reduplication of the term « pi-li », which may be understood as comprised of « pi », « to deduct, remove, diminish, reduce » (see ePSD, s.v. « pi ») and « li », « branch, twig » (see sPSD, s.v. « li »). I do not claim that this etymology, if accepted, alludes to castration, but it may point to a sense of a flawed manliness that characterized the pilpilû.

In conclusion, the documentation of the pilpilû is extremely limited, and confined to a few lexical lists, hymns and myths. These sporadic and laconic attestations do not allow for much speculation beyond the understanding that this person was similar to other, better-understood third gender figures. However, the claim that he was « changed » by Inanna is quite suggestive as regards his gender identity. Even if the exact nature of this perceived change cannot be fully understood, it surely renders the pilpilû with certain feminine traits, either by costume, appearance or behavior. In all probabilities, these traits were related to his role as a member of the cult of Inanna/Istar. It is therefore not surprising that in the passage from the newly identified manuscript of the « Lament for Eridu » presented above, the pilpilû was mentioned in a mutual context with a lamen « Ti, Ti, Ti, Ti, Ti » (see ePSD, s.v. « Ti ») and « Ti, Ti, Ti, Ti, Ti » (see sPSD, s.v. « Ti »). I do not claim that this etymology, if accepted, alludes to castration, but it may point to a sense of a flawed manliness that characterized the pilpilû.

In other words, was the pilpilû considered to be « mobile » (Italian) because he was perceived in some way or the other as a « donna »?

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1 CBS 2189++ obv. 1-8. For an edition of the manuscript see Peled, forthcoming b.
2 See Peled, forthcoming a.
3 Old Babylonian lú obv. ii 23’-33’ (see Taylor 2001: 210-211).
4 Proto-lú:277-280 (see MSL 12: 42).
5 LTBA 2.1 vi 45’-48’ // LTBA 2.2:380-383 (see CAD K: 529, s.v. « kala’u »).
6 lú=ša Tablet 4:180, 182-184, 189, 193a, 198a (see MSL 12: 134-135).
7 See Peled, forthcoming a.
8 For the edition of the text, see Volk 1995. For commentaries and translations of it, see Bottéro and Kramer 1989: 257-271 and Black, Cunningham, Robson and Zólyomi 2004: 197-205.
10 « Lady of Largest Heart »:80 (see Sjöberg 1975: 184, 186).
11 For a brief survey of these suggestions, see Henshaw 1994: 310 n. 92.
12 But note Gabbay’s (2008) opposite opinion.

**Bibliography**


Peled, I. (Forthcoming a.) The Third Gender in the Ancient Near East: A Study of Institutionalized Gender Otherness (Cuneiform Monographs). Leiden.

Id.. (Forthcoming b.) « A New Manuscript of the “Lament for Eridu” »


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En mai 2011 paraissait le livre de A. Gadotti & M. Sigrist, Cuneiform Texts in the Carl A. Krach Library, Cornell University (with the assistance of Nicole M. Brisch and David I. Owen), CUSAS 15, Bethesda, 2011. Parmi les textes de ce volume, un lot de 8 tablettes enregistre des dépenses de grain et de farine dont la première, sur chaque tablette, est destinée à un repas-naptanum. En ce sens, l’expression de « Naptanum-text » par laquelle les éditeurs désignent ces documents est malheureuse à deux égards : il s’agit d’une part de textes rédigés par deux bureaux différents, l’un, non nommé, en charge de la gestion de grain et de farine et l’autre, explicitement désigné comme bit marî (É.GU₄,UDU.NIGA), responsable d’animaux à l’engrais ; d’autre part, le repas-naptanum n’est que la destination de la première des dépenses enregistrées sur chaque tablette, les suivantes étant destinées à d’autres usages. Il s’agit de CUSAS 15 64, 70, 75, 103, 118, 165, 178+179 et 183. Le seul texte qui comporte un nom d’année est le n° 178+179 (Rim-Sin 32), mais c’est aussi celui qui diffère le plus des autres textes, très proches les uns des autres, de sorte qu’il est possible qu’il n’appartienne pas au même lot d’archives (au contraire des autres textes, il est daté par un de ces mois étranges de la deuxième moitié du règne de Rim-Sin). On y ajoutera les n°° 41 (na-ap-ta-an a-wi-lim), 66 (na-ap-ta-na-um É MUNUS, texte daté de Sin-iddinam 7) et 162 (na-ap-ta-na-um DUMU LUGAL, texte daté de Sin-iribam).

Nanna, à Maššan-šapir. Le commentaire de ces textes a tenu compte des documents déjà publiés (sauf ceux de CUSAS 15, trop récents).


2  5 UDU 1 SILA.Š *kl* [ŠAH NIGA]
KI.SI.GA É (giš)[GU.ZA]
4  1 UDU KI.SI.GA ÉE [[d]EN.ZU-i-di-nam]

On notera que *Suma* 54 6 date du 25/v/Rim-Sin 8, alors que *Iraq* 74 5 date du 23/v/Rim-Sin 9, donc un an plus tard presque jour pour jour, ce qui n’est sûrement pas un hasard.

Que les textes de *Iraq* 74 (et donc aussi de *Suma* 54) puissent provenir du bâtiment B.22 de Larsa (comme il est proposé dans *Iraq* 74, p. 155) est très incertain. On notera en tout cas que ces tablettes, confisquées en Jordanie et restituées au musée de Bagdad (ce qui est très heureux du point de vue patrimonial), posent le même problème scientifique que celles qui se trouvent dans des collections privées, issues de fouilles illicites (anciennes ou récentes) : leur provenance exacte et leur contexte archéologique resteront à jamais inconnus. Leur intérêt, même s’il souffre de cette limitation, n’en demeure pas moins réel.

Nous voudrions pour finir attirer l’attention sur le fait que le projet ARCHIBAB tente de suivre l’actualité des publications le plus rapidement possible (le site www.archibab.fr étant mis à jour chaque trimestre); nous souhaitons que de plus en plus de collègues éditer des documents paléo-babyloniens pensent à tirer profit de nos efforts.

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05) A Late-Babylonian fragment of the Venus tablet of Ammisaduqa — BM 32107 (76-11-17, 1834) is a small, previously unknown Late-Babylonian fragment of Tablet 63 of the celestial omen series Enûma Anu Enlil, also known as the Venus tablet of Ammisaduqa. It was not included in the standard edition of the Venus tablet by Reiner and Pingree (1975; henceforth RP75) and it is not in the list of fragments of Enûma Anu Enlil published by Reiner (1998). BM 32107 is inscribed on one side which is assumed to be the obverse; the reverse is destroyed. The fragment measures 5.3 x 7.5 x 2.0 cm. It does not preserve any edge of the tablet, but not much clay is missing from the top and left sides. The lot 76-11-17 includes numerous Late-Babylonian astronomical tablets (diaries, mathematical astronomy) from Babylon. The same origin may be assumed for BM 32107 and for seven other, published fragments of the Venus tablet in the British Museum (RP75 E, F, H, J, K, N, O). BM 32107 does not physically join any of these, but it might belong to the same tablet as RP75 E, F, H, K, N or O. In the transliteration each x enclosed in square brackets represents approximately 1 missing sign, MN stands for a missing month name, n for a day number. In the translation, initial vertical wedges (DIŠ) are, as usual, represented as ¶.

Transliteration

*Obverse*
Omen 1
1’ [xxxxxxxxxx] "x AN? x" [xxxxxxxxxx]
Omen 2
2’ [DIŠ ina ITI.MN U₄,n.KAM ₄[Nin-si₃]-an-na ina ₄UTU.É³\* [it-bal xxxxxxxx]
3’ [xxxxxx ina] ITI.AB U₄,18.KAM ₄[Nin-si₃-an-na ina ₄UTU.ŠU₂,A IGI.DU₃ xxxx]
Omen 3
4’ [DIŠ ina ITI.MN U₄.n]¹.KAM⁴[Nin-si₄-an-na ina]⁴[UTU.ŠU₂:A it-bal xxx]  
5’ [xxxxxxxx] ma ina ITI.DU₆₈ U₄₁₃.KAM'U₄?¹ [xxxx⁴Nin-si₄-an-na]  
5a’ ina ⁴UTU.E₃ IG.ID[U₈ xxxxxxxxx?]  

Omen 4
6’ [DIŠ ina ITI.MN U₄.n]¹.KAM⁴[Nin-si₄-an-na ina]¹[U₄ UTU.ŠU₂:A it-bal xxxxxxxxx]  
7’ [xxxx ina] ITI.<KIN> U₄.₃.KAM⁴[Nin¹[Nin-si₄-an-na ina]⁴UTU.ŠU₂:A IG.IDU₈ xxx]  

Omen 5
8’ [DIŠ ina ITI.GU₄]¹.U₄.₂.KAM⁴[Nin-si₄-an-na]¹ [ina]⁴UTU.ŠU₂:A it-bal xxxxxxxxx]  
9’ [ina ITI.MN U₄.n]¹.KAM¹[Nin-si₄-an-na ina]⁴UTU.E₅ IG.IDU₈ xxxxxxxxx]  
9a’ : [xxxxxxx?]  

Omen 6
10’ [DIŠ ina ITI.MN U₄.n]¹.KAM⁴[Nin¹[Nin-si₄-an-na ina]⁴UTU.E₅ it-bal xxxxxxxxx]  

Translation

Obverse
Omen 1
1’ […]’…’ […]  

Omen 2
2’ [†] In month MN day n Ninsianna [disappears] in the East […]  
3’ […] in] month X day 18 [Ninsiana appears in the West …]  

Omen 3
4’ [†] In month MN day n] Ninsiana [disappears] in [the West …]  
5’ […] and in month VII day 13,¹ day?]¹ […] Ninsiana]  
5a’ appears in the East […]  

Omen 4
6’ [†] In month MN day n] Ninsiana [disappears] in [the East …]  
7’ […] in] month <VI> day 3 Nin[sianna appears in the West …]  

Omen 5
8’ [†] In month II] day 2 Ninsian²na¹ [disappears in the West …]  
9’ [in month MN day n] Ninsian[na appears in the East …]  
9a’ : […]?]  

Omen 6
10’ [†] In month MN]¹ day¹ [n]¹ Nins¹[sianna disappears in the East …]
Critical commentary:

1: Perhaps AN x belongs to $E_2^{-a}$ (cf. Omen 1 in RP75).

3, ’day 18’: The only duplicate preserving the second date of Omen 2, RP75 B, has ‘day 19’.

5: There is more space available at the end of this line, perhaps 4 signs, than needed for restoring the expected text (cf. RP75 A, B). Indeed it appears that ‘day 13’ is here followed by an alternative date or, if one interprets $U_l$ as a separation mark (·) followed by traces, perhaps a gloss.

7: KIN: the scribe forgot to write down this month name.

9a: ’As in 5a’, line 9’ seems to continue over the ruling below 9’ in 9a’, of which the first sign, perhaps a separation mark (.), is partly preserved. If so, there is more space available for Omen 5 then needed for restoring the expected text; perhaps there is an alternative apodosis or a gloss.

Various scholars have analysed the data reported on the Venus tablet for the purpose of establishing an absolute Mesopotamian chronology of the second Millennium BCE; for the latest such attempt cf. Mebert (2010). Since the fragment does not preserve any significant variants, it basically confirms the textual stability of the Venus tablet. The only variant of interest concerns Venus’s First Appearance in the West (Evening First) in Omen 2, which occurs on 18 X instead of 19 X. As reported by J. Mebert (private communication), this date is at least equally compatible with his favored chronology (Hammurapi year 1 = 1720 BCE). I wish to thank the Trustees of the British Museum for permission to study and publish this tablet, and C.B.F. Walker for making available his catalogue of astronomical fragments.

Bibliography


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Den Siegelinhaber kann man also folgendermaßen identifizieren: „Tarkasnaya, der pisuralla-“.

Hinweise


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(b) AuOr S-1 83 : Le texte parle d’un partage d’héritage à effectuer, sans doute au moment où les deux jeunes frères arrivent à un moment de leur vie où ils peuvent prendre en main leurs affaires et se libèrent de la tutelle de leur frère aîné. Ce dernier n’a cédé apparentem que devant le juge. Le grief que lui font ses frères est, selon D. A. : « Les maisons et les épouses n’ont pas été [par]tagéées. » Cela est repris l. 13 « Toutes les possessions de “Zaggatu” et les possessions de Rabbûn, en échange d’une épouse chacun et des maisons chacun, je [= le frère aîné] vous ai livré. »

La traduction de « 2-nu » par « chacun » ne me paraît pas évidente. On prévoit, de fait, normalement dans un testament que l’héritier aura à charge de marier ceux qui ne le sont pas, mais l’expression est plus explicite. Ne pourrait-on pas proposer qu’au lieu de dam-há, qui ajoute à la perplexité, on a sur la tablette mim-ma-há « les possessions meubles » en complément naturel de é-ha « les biens immeubles »? L’arrangement aura été que contre les biens sis à Emar, l’aîné abandonne toutes les possessions dans deux autres bourgades. Je proposerais donc les lectures suivantes :

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1. 5.-6: ē-hā,ā mīm*-ma*-hā la ˹zū˺*,-uc-zu-ni-mi = = «Les maisons ni les biens» ne sont partagées;
et dans la reprise par le frère aîné de ce sujet,
1. 13: ki-i-mu mīm*-ma*-ku* ‑nu à ē-hā-ku* ‑nu, at‑ta‑din‑ku-ne‑šī = = «Je vous donne présentement vosbiens et vos maisons.»

La copie du texte offre assurément une séquence nette « 2-nu » dont il est difficile de fairequelque chose. Le « 2 » risque de n’être qu’un KU mal nettoyé / incomplet. C’est du moins un suffixe de la sorte que l’on attend ici.

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(12b) aš-sum aša (13) an-ni diumu.me ˹zu-ba-la (14) ū lū,meš.su gi uru.su-mi (15) iš-tu ma-mi-ti diumu.meš
aḫ-ke-[p] (16) iš-tu ru diumu.meš zu-ba-la ū-pa an-n[a]-a (17) a-na pa-ni dirgīl ša-ar-ri-šī in sar-[a] (18)
aš-ḫur mašškur ma-li šu diškur-en ˹zu-aš-tar-ti (19) ū-na-ku ˺ki-ri-šu

Tsukimoto übersetzte die Passage folgendermaßen: „Regarding this field the sons of Zu-Ba’la [am] and the elders of the city of Šumu have withdrawn from the oath of the sons of Abi-kāpjī. The sons of Zu-Ba’la have written this document before the god of the king. (They are) Kapī-Dagan, Ba’al-malîk, Ba’al-bēlu, Zu-Āštartī, Tura-Dagan, Kiri-Dagan⁹. Anschließend erläuterte er dass „the formula ḫtu mamīti ... tāru is compared to ḫtu mamīti naḥāṣu (‘to withdraw from the oath’) in RS 17.341, 5’-6’ and others (see CAD N I 129b). So the text says that the sons of Zu-Ba’la have agreed to the claim of Abi-kāpi’s sons regarding the field⁹.


Verschiedene Autoren haben darauf hingewiesen, dass in den westlichen akkadischen Dialekten die Vermischung und/oder der Wechsel der G- und D-Stämme ein nicht unübliches Phänomen darstellt⁹. Man kann Fälle aufzeigen, in denen nur das Präfix ausgetauscht wird¹⁰ und Fälle, in denen die Verbalform insgesamt auswechselbar zu sein scheint¹⁰. Oft ist es aber nicht möglich, eine Wahl zwischen diesen beiden Möglichkeiten zu treffen, da die Formen sowohl als G- als auch als D-Grundformen analysiert werden dürfen¹⁵. Es sei andererseits betont, ohne den Kontext des Gerichtseides zu verlassen, dass die syro-hethitischen Texte aus Emar durchaus ungewöhnlich sind, indem sie den G-Stamm von magāru transitiv anwenden, „X wollte nicht dass Y schwört¹⁴.

Im Hinblick auf solche morphologischen und semantischen Verwechslungen der G- und D-Stämme wäre eine Deutung der Form ṭiṭṭār von Hir 43:16 im Sinne eines transitiv-fakitiven utērur₃ zu erwägen. Damit wäre die Passage als „Die Söhne von Zũ-Ba’la und die Älteste von Šumu haben den Söhne von Abī-kāpjī vom Eid zurückgehen lassen“ zu übersetzen, was zugleich den inneren Widerspruch der Satzaussage aufhebt.
1) Dieser Beitrag entstand während eines vom DAAD finanzierten Forschungsaufenthaltes an der Abteilung Altorientalische Philologie des Instituts für Archäologische Wissenschaften der Universität Freiburg. Für ihre kritischen Anmerkungen sei hier Regine Prusinszkzy herzlich gedankt.


4) Zur Typologie dieser Prozessurkunden in der altbabylonischen Zeit siehe Dombradi 1996 1, 192-194.

5) Vgl. TS 36:11.


8) Ausnahmsweise wird in altbabylonischer Sprache die Annahme von tuppī lā raḥmīm als eine Leistung der unterlegenen Partei dargestellt (Dombradi 1996 1, 361).

9) Siehe Dombradi 1996 1, 83-84 für einen weiteren altbabylonischen Beleg.


Cohen, Y., The Scribes and Scholars of the City of Emar in the Late Bronze Age. Winona Lake 2009 (HSS 59).


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09) Talmi-Šarruma Again. A Supplementary Note to NABU 2012/68 : « Une lettre d’Alep? » by J-M. Durand – An unpublished letter coming from the antiquities market was briefly mentioned and cited in Bassetti, SCCNI 8 (1996), p. 246. It was sent by Tal-mi-šarruma, he is probably attested to in another source. The letter RE 83, which discusses the business of merchants dealing in horses, commences so:

1 um-ma *Tal-mi-man-ša* a-na *Arad-dirig.meš Šeš-ia qa-bi-ma*

*Thus Talmi-Šarruma, To Abdi/Arad-ilāni, my brother, speak.*

The reading of the name Talmi-Šarruma here follows Durand’s correct (and now collated reading) of Beckman’s previous reading of the name Talmi-Kušuš.1 The way of writing the person’s name with MAN = šarru is typical, again, of Middle Assyrian scribal conventions. Indeed, in this regard note that the whole document is written in a non-Emarite, perhaps Middle-Assyrian/Mittannian script; consider the signs MEŠ (l. 2 and 8) and MU (l. 5) and possibly UM (l. 1); and note also Durand’s reading of and comment on na-su (l. 9) as an Assyrian form, to which one can add the form ku-a-ša (l. 4).
To conclude, both letters, the one cited by Bassetti, SCCNH 8, and RE 83, betray non-Emarite scribal conventions and perhaps can be considered to originate, with all due reservations of course, from the same scribal milieu although from a place different than Emar itself. Therefore, this leads one to believe that Talmi-Šarruma in both sources is the same person. It is not known when this person lived or where exactly his base of activities was. At the least we can say that 1.) he was a person of some standing because according to RE 83 he had some merchants working at his service; 2.) in both sources, it seems that he is located west to the persons he is writing to—to Nabuni in Suḫu and to Abdi/Adad-ilâni the procurer of horses, presumably in Kassite Babylonia. Note that the two sources make use of diplomatic parlance, hinting at Talmi-Šarruma’s high status: he calls Abdi/Adad-ilâni as ‘brother’, as in the Amarna or Ugarit correspondence for example, and does not fail to mention Nabuni’s status as equal to his (as šakin māāi). Surely, in both cases, it is not with an commoner that one is confronted.

If further identification for this person is wished for, there are three possibilities to consider: 1.) Talmi-Šarruma is to be identified with the Hittite viceroy at Aleppo, putting at his disposal the services of an Assyro-Mittani trained scribe; 2.) he is some high official responsible for Emar affairs, perhaps preceding Mutri-Teššub, the (lū) uguša kalam-ma (prior to 1220), even at the time of the so-called ‘aranā’-documents at Emar;3) and 3.) he is a merchant active in the environs of Emar, hence the reading gar Kur as šakin māāi is to be rejected, and simply read as ša māāi. Presently, all three options must be remain open, until more evidence becomes available.

1) As J.-M. Durand kindly informed me (Paris, October of 2006), the sign read by Bassetti as šá is actually šá. In regards to Nabunni’s city of origin (in Emar 26), see Durand and Marti 2003: 167, reading uruš. A[N-A]D* = al-ill-abī. Thanks are extended to Lorenzo d’Alfonso and Jean-Marie Durand for their comments and criticisms of this short note.

2) The particle ša is very rarely written as šá in Emar. I can add that identifying people in letterheads according to their place of origin is unknown to me, hence this is another support of the reading brought here.

3) Beckman amended the sign 20 or MAN to 30 to stand for Sin or Kašu. See Durand, NABU 2012/68.

4) See Beckman, RE, p. 106. Cf. RE 19 in regards to its cuneiform signs and verbal forms; it is an Assyrian document as Beckman explains in his edition of the tablet.

5) It is less likely to consider placing Talmi-Šarruma as an overseer after Aḫi-malik, Emar’s last overseer, at the very end of Emar’s history; see Cohen, Aḫi-malik, Fs Skaist (and thanks to J.-M Durand for correcting my mistake *Talmi-Šarruma to Talmi-Teššub in Fig. 1!)

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10) The (E)meslam in ‘The Epic of Erra’, Tablet I, Line 118 – Lines 109-118 in the first tablet of the ‘Epic of Erra’ have been recognized by various commentators as consisting of an independent poetic unit in which Erra embarks on a self-praise speech, describing his qualities.1)

All the lines of Erra’s speech are fairly well preserved apart from the last line, 118, only found in one manuscript (S = STT 16, obv. ii, pl. 21). The first part of line 118 presents no great difficulties, even if it is not fully preserved. It reads as follows:

\[a-na \, n[a]-me-e \, e\-ru-ub-ma\]

‘Into the st[el]pe I entered.’

However, the second half of the line is rather poorly preserved, crucially broken in one spot, requiring that the text be restored. Cagni (1977: 31, n. 30), following Schramm (1971: 271 [a review of Cagni 1969]), read and translated the broken second half of the line as follows:2)

\[[ina \, ta]r[ba]šu \, (tārā) \, rā-m[a]-k]ū \, šub-\, ta\]

‘[in the fo]ld I settle.’

Practically all translations of the poem known to me have followed this restoration since.3) However, this reading and the ensuing translations are to be rejected. The first almost fully preserved sign of the second half of l. 118, is not [t]ūr (tarbašu, ‘pen, fold’) but lam, leading us to restore the broken part of the line as [(ana) me]j.s.lam.4) See figures 1 and 2 below:
Fig. 1 (STT 16, pl. 21, obv. ii, line 118)

Fig. 2 (Detail of STT 16, pl. 21, line 118, reading (er-ru-ub)-ma [(ana) me]s.lam)

The restoration offered here is supported by the occurrence of very similar phrases to l. 118 in the ‘Epic’; see Tablet V, l. 22:

i-ru-un-ma [(ana) "es.mes.lam i-ru-ta-[me] "su-bat-su"
‘(Erra) entered and took up residence in the Emeslam, his home’.

Compare Tablet Iic 8 (KAR 169, rev. iii, 21 with copy, restored according to Al-Rawi & Black 1989; see below):

[a]-ši-b-ma an[a] es.mes.lam [(ir-ta-mi) "su-bat-su"
‘[sitting and occupying] the Emeslam, his home’.

And, most importantly, Al-Rawi & Black 1989: 118, 8/36’ (with copy):

a-ši-b-ma ina mes.lam ra-m[ea-k]u šub-ta
‘Sitting and occupying the (E)meslam, [his] home.’

Note how in the citation above the temple name was written without é. Such writing is paralleled in one of the amulet copies of the poem. Instead of the usual é.sag.íl, we find sag.gíl (Reiner 1960: 149, 12; Cagni 1969: 102). On the basis of such writing without é, since apparently there is not enough space in the Sultantepe manuscript to insert the é sign before [me]s.lam, we restore and translate accordingly line 118 of Tablet I of the ‘Epic’ as follows:

118. a-[-na n][a]-me-e er-ru-un-ma [(ana) me]s.lam ra-m[a-k]u šub-ta
Although to the deserted regions I enter, [in] the (E)meslam, (my) home, I dwell.’

This restoration and reading fits the traces of the Sultantepe manuscript and agrees with similar formulations of this phrase interspersed throughout the ‘Epic’, which mentions Erra’s dwelling place—none other than his temple in Kutha—the (E)meslam. It is also a suitable end of the poetic unit (ll. 109-118), which foresee in nuce things to come in the Epic—from Erra’s rage to his eventual appeasement, sitting in his temple.5


2) In Cagni (1969: 70) the line was not restored.

3) In Cagni (1969: 70) the line was not restored.

4) The diš sign (for ana) is probably to be fitted in the break, but collation is required for a certainty in this case.


6) Following the suggestion of N. Wasserman (personal communication), the –ma is taken here as concessive.

7) The content and structure of this poetic unit (ll. 109-118) is treated in detail by Cohen (forthcoming).

References


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11) Who is the client of the namburbi tablet with handle A 114 (LKA 128) in Istanbul?15 – F. Köcher copied the tablet A 114 (ca. 10.5 x 6 x 2 cm) from the Assur-Photo S 1611/2 = K 488/9, in LKA 128.2 It was impossible to him to copy correctly the signs on the badly visible upper edge of the tablet’s handle, where the last signs of the owner’s name are badly visible. Additionally, the upper part of the handle remains unpublished until now. Due to the lack of collations of A 114 there are two mis-leading readings of the owner’s name. First, E. Reiner read the client’s name as Nabû-zi-šēr-ibši with a question mark. Second, using the same photograph, as F. Köcher, S. Maul stated that the name is definitely (“eindeutig”) to be read as MUATI-NUHNUM-SUM. Consequently, he interpreted that A 114 comes from the house of the goldsmith Nabû-zi-šēr-iddina.3 He repeated this conclusion in KAL 4, and even connected LKA 128 with MS 3187.4 The collation of the tablet in Istanbul revealed that the client’s name should be slightly modified, which excludes a possible connection of A 114 with the house of Nabû -zi-šēr-iddina, and MS 3187. For the sake of convenience, I will provide a copy, and transliterate the text, which is interwoven in the double crisscross lines (called “magical diagram” after Reiner, see above), positioned on the tablet’s body and handle. The reading of these lines depends only on the perspective of the viewer, therefore no line numbering is given. The copy shows the present state of A 114. Some parts on the reverse have deteriorated since the excavation and the copy of F. Köcher; cf. LKA 128.
First rectangular field on the reverse of the main body of A 114:

[dingir silim-(ma)-mu]  
[My safeguard,]  
[DINGIR mušallim 4AMAR.UTU]  
[the deity, the safeguard is Marduk.]  
4[Asal-lü-хи]  
A[salluhi]!

Second field on the handle, which also continues on the top of the handle

[5I-šum]  
Išum,  
600  "DINGIR MEŠ×  
herald of the gods,  
(on the upper edge of the obverse)  'EN SILA'  
master of the street,

‘Third’ field on the top of the handle, continuing from the second one:

SILA ina 'DIB-ka  
when(ever) you pass by the street,  
‘UGU’  E  
over the house of  
(on the upper edge of the reverse)  a²šMUATI-NUMUN-BA-'ša×  
Nabû-zēra-igša

‘Forth’ field on the obverse of the tablet, continuing from the third one:

A 'DINGIR-ša×  
son of his god,  
GAR -un  
pla -ce  
AN:'DUL×  
protection!

This clearly shows that the client for whom the apotropaic tablet with pierced handle was manufactured, and whose house was thereby magically protected, was Nabû-zēra-igša, and not as estimated Nabû-zēra-ušabûi or Nabû-zēra-iddina. The client of the tablet with handle was probably identical with a scribe from Aššur, who wrote a tablet with Šurpu.  

1) I am especially thankful to Assuman Dönmez from İstanbul Arkeoloji Müzeleri for her hospitality, and for removing A 114 from the exhibition glass-case, and letting me study the artefact.  
2) Ebeling, Erich (ed.), (1953), Literarische Keilschrifttexte aus Assur (Unter Mitarbeit von Franz Köcher und Liane Rost, Berlin) p. XII, and no. 128.  
4) Ibid, on page 176 note 186 he writes Nabû-aja-iddina. On page 185 note 261 he writes again that he collated LKA 128, without saying if he used a photograph or he collated the real tablet in the museum.  
5) DINGIR mu- (l. 2), 4Asal-lü- (l. 3) and 5I-šum (l. 4) are well visible on the excavation photo Ass 1612.  
6) For persons with this name, see Baker, Heather D. (ed.), (2000), The Prosopography of the Neo-Assyrian Empire (The Neo-Assyrian Text Corpus Project, 2) p. 910.

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12) ŢA-BI-(GAL) in Babylonian King List A: an alternative proposal – The redactors of Babylonian King List A (BKL A) singled out Sennacherib and his prince, Aššur-nādin-šumi, with the unique designation “bala ŢA-BI-GAL.” Similarly, Merodach-baladan II was described as “erim ŢA-BI” in his second term as king of Babylon. Why did the Neo-Babylonian chroniclers describe these rulers in this way and what were they implying by doing so?  

While some scholars have offered possible suggestions of how to read ŢA-BI-GAL, none has made sense of what the odd epithet implied about the two Assyrian rulers and the Chaldean.

I would like to propose that the redactors of BKL A used ŢA-BI-(GAL) to condemn Sennacherib and his crown prince as a response to his sacking of Babylon and perhaps Merodach-baladan for his unsuccessful defence of Babylon.
The relevant section of BKL A is column IV: 7–23, which covers the period of the Neo-Assyrian domination of Babylonia. The text reads is as follows:

3 (years of rule for)Mukīn-zēri, dynasty of Šapī (kā-pī-i)
2
Pulū (i.e. Tiglath-pileser III)
5
Ultūliā (i.e. Shalmaneser V), dynasty of Aššūr (bal.til)
12
Merodach-baladan, dynasty of the Sealand (kur tam-<tim>)
5
Sargon
2
Sennacherib, dynasty of ḪA-BI-GAL
1 month (of rule for)
Marduk-zākir-šumi, son of Arad(-Enlil)
9 months
Merodach-baladan, a ḪA-BI-soldier
3 (years of rule for)Bēl-ibni, dynasty of Babylon (e)
6
Aššūr-nādin-šumi, dynasty of ḪA-BI-GAL
1
Nergal-uṣēzib
4?
Muṣēzib-Marduk, dynasty of Babylon (e)
8?
Sennacherib
[?]
Aššūr-aḥa (i.e. Esarhaddon)
[?]
Šamaš-šuma
[?]
Kandal (i.e. Kandalānu)
[?]
‘Sin-šumu-lēšir’
(The rest of the text is broken from here on)

The widely accepted reading of the signs is ḫa-bi-gal, which is said to be a short form of second millennium toponym, Ḫani-Rabbat. Ḫani-Rabbat is attested also as Ḫabi-Rabbat, and therefore could be an abbreviated form of the toponym. Greater support for this interpretation is found in the epithets of the few other rulers who received them: Mukīn-zēri’s capital was Šapīya (or Šapī-Bēl), Shalmaneser V (Ultūliā) was an Assyrian king, Merodach-Baladan II was from the Sealand, and both Bēl-ibni and Muṣēzib-Marduk were native Babylonians. However, the obscure ruler, Marduk-zākir-šumi II, is noted as a descendant of one Arad(-Enlil), which indicates that the scribes were not restricted to geographical designations for the rulers of Babylonia.

Turning to ḪA-BI-GAL, Brinkman, who in my opinion correctly argues that ḪA-BI and ḪA-BI-GAL in BKL A relate to the same concept, pointed out that we should not assume the dynastic designations always be taken at face value. He was referring to Merodach-baladan II’s double designation as part of the Sealand dynasty and as a ḪA-BI-soldier. While Brinkman accepted the geographical interpretation, he acknowledged that such a view leaves the historian with little understanding of why the Neo-Babylonian redactors described Sennacherib, Aššūr-nādin-šumi and Merodach-baladan II in this way.

Given that BKL A is concerned with dynasties, surely meaning must be found in the fact that Sennacherib and Aššūr-nādin-šumi were singled out from the Sargonid dynasty for this unusual designation. I suspect that the Neo-Babylonian scribes’ distinguished Sennacherib and Aššūr-nādin-šumi because of their poor relations with Babylonia. If this is correct, we need to offer a new interpretation of the signs ḪA-BI-GAL. The derogatory term might derive from the word ḫappu, which is used to describe bitterness or vile smells, and on one occasion is used to describe a man. Hence, we read the signs as ‘bala ḫa-pī gal’ and ‘erim ḫa-pī.’ While the use of the ḫappu as proposed here would be its only attestation in this context, the reading pali ḫa-pī rabi ‘of an evil (or wretched) dynasty,’ fits well the Babylonian attitude to the king who destroyed their capital city and its temples, and his son whom the Babylonians captured and probably murdered.

How then does the description of Merodach-baladan II as erim ḫa-pī fit in? Surely no one in Babylonia would have thought that he was a mercenary from Upper Mesopotamia as erim ḫa-bi dictates (and such a reading would be in contradiction with the statement in l. 10 which states that he was from the Sealand). Instead, one may read erim ḫa-pī (‘wretched soldier’) as an indication that the later Neo-Babylonian dynasty viewed Merodach-baladan’s second term as king of Babylonia negatively. If our reading is correct, then perhaps the Neo-Babylonians were critical of Merodach-Baladan’s repeated withdrawals, retreat and escape from the Assyrians in 710, 703 and 700 BCE. Given that it is Merodach-baladan’s second term as king which received the negative epithet, it was probably his retreat from Sennacherib and the subsequent installment of Aššūr-nādin-šumi, the ‘evil dynasts,’ which drew the
condemnation from the redactors of BKL A.

In sum, while the proposed reading of the signs ḪA-BI-(GAL) as Ḫa-pī (rabi) would be the only such occurrences of Ḫapū, it is no rarer than the reading ‘dynasty of Habigal’. The reading proposed here makes good sense within the history of Assyrio-Babylonian relations when Sennacherib and Aššur-nādin-šumi marked the most hostile phase of the period covered by this section of BKL A. Such a reading also casts new light on the reign of Merodach-baladan II, for it denigrates him as a ‘wretched soldier’. In this way BKL A becomes an important source for the Neo-Babylonian attitude to Assyria’s domination and Merodach-baladan’s rule.

1) On dating BKL A to the fifth or even early fourth centuries BCE see J. A. Brinkman, A Political History of Post-Kassite Babylonia 1158–722 B.C. AnOr 43 (Rome 1968), p. 16.


6) It seems that he could be identified with a Babylonian provincial governor of the same name who was the son of one Arad-Enil, attested on a kudurru from Merodach-baladan II’s reign, see Brinkman ‘Merodach-baladan II,’ pp. 24–25, n. 137; and Brinkman, ‘Marduk-zakir-šumi’, in PNA, p. 737.

7) Brinkman, PKB, p. 168.

8) It should be noted that E. Frahm’s statement in PNA s.v. Sin-ahhē-erība (p. 1114) that “Dalley’s idea about a Judean background of Sennacherib is too uncertain to justify speculations about the possibility that Habigal, possibly to be read Ḫabir-rabû or even Ḫabiru, assuming a scribal mistake, can somehow be linked to the ‘Hebrews,’” while correct, is slightly confusing and at first blush may read as a rebuttal of Stephanie Dalley. Dalley has not tackled the problem of ḪA-BI-GAL in her article ‘Yabû, Atalya and the Foreign Policy of Late Assyrian Kings,’ SAAB 12 (1998), nor anywhere else.

9) See CAD 6 (Ĥ), p. 85.

10) It has been noted that the use of erim to describe a king is rare and to be understood as ‘soldier’, see A. K. Grayson, Assyrian and Babylonian Chronicles (New York, 1975), p. 142; and CAD 16 (S), p. 54. It has also been pointed out that Ḫanigalbatu and Ḫanigalbatu can be used for a charioteer and a native of Ḫani-Rabbit, respectively. However, neither is attested with erim, see CAD 6 (Ĥ), p. 80.


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21 2 qa 3 šal-ša ninda siskur 1 (pi) 1 bān ḅi-pēš.hād.a ina maš-šar-ti ša iti du₈
22 ku-din a ḅen-pab₈₉-ba-ša iti.kin ud₃.kam mu₄.kam
...2 qū, 3 1/3 akalu Opfergaben; 1 pānu und 1 sātu getrocknete Feigen, von den Opfermaterialien des Monats Tašritu: Nādin, Sohn des Bel-ahhe-iqiša, 11. Ululu, 3. Jahr."

Leichtly schlägt vor, in der Inschrift eine Vorlage für die Handwerker zu sehen, die den Opfertisch herzustellen hatten; in den letzten zwei Zeilen sieht er die Angabe eines für Marduk bestimmten Opfers, das Marduk durch den Schreiber Nādin bei Ablieferung des Opfertisches darzubringen gewesen sein sollte (1983: 220); als Datum sei das dritte Regierungsjahr von Aššur-etellānī gemeint. Diese Interpretation ist freilich nicht sicher (Brinkman und Kennedy 1996: 103: „date uncertain"). Wir halten die Tafel für eine deutlich spätere Abschrift.

Die Tafel ist Teil der Sammlung des Princeton Theological Seminary und ist als solche Teil eines Ankaufs, dessen babylonischer Teil ganz überwiegend aus Eanna-Texten besteht, die in die Chaldäer- oder Perserzeit datieren; eine Vorlage einer neuassyrischen Königsinschrift aus assyrischer Zeit aus Babylon wäre innerhalb dieses Kontexts isoliert und überraschend. Die Tafel nicht als Vorlage, sondern als spätabibländische Abschrift zu verstehen, ist unter diesem Gesichtspunkt wesentlich wahrscheinlicher.


1) Eher des sechsten als des siebten Jahrhunderts, aber dieser Eindruck ist zum gegebenen Zeitpunkt kaum zu objektivieren.

2) Zwischen 10.2.3 Kam (TCL 13, 154) und 13.7.3 Kam (AnOr 8, 70) können wir Nadin nicht in Uruk nachweisen. Eine Reihe von Protokollen und Rechtsakten der Tempelverwaltung ist ohne seine Beteiligung geschrieben worden (z.B. YOS 7, 153 und 160, beide 5.3 Kam; YOS 7, 149, 19.6.3 Kam; BM 113249, 29.6.3 Kam), während sein Sohn Šamaš-mukš-apli als Schreiber erscheint – in Vertretung des Vaters (BM 114561, 23.5.3 Kam)?

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14) tūg-LUM-LUM = tūg-guz-guz ; a new interpretation of the « guzguzu » garment in first millennium BC Mesopotamia – A file of eight texts dated from the first millennium BC, including two documents from the Yale Babylonian Collection presented below by Elizabeth Payne, has shed some light on the meaning of the sumerogram 𒇵LUM-LUM.¹

According to R. Borger, the ideogram “lum” can be read “guz.”² Therefore, it is very likely that the expression “𒀭LUM-LUM” has to be read “𒀭guz-guz”, and understood as the equivalent of the Akkadian word “guzguzu”. The Practical Vocabulary of Aššur gives the equivalence “nim-ra-š’u” for the Sumerian “𒀭LUM-LUM”, but this term is never attested in Neo Assyrian and Neo-Babylonian texts.³

The ideogram “𒇵guz-guz” appears in four texts from the first millennium BC: a letter regarding a high dignitary who was abandoned by his escort on the road to Nippur (ABL 866), two marriage contracts from Sippar (Nbk 369⁴) and Susa (TBER 93-94⁵), and a small text from the archive of the temple of Uruk which records quantities of dyed wool given to craftsmen (UCP 9/II 12).

This new reading is supported by four other texts dating from the Neo-Babylonian period where a phonetic spelling of the word appears. The text YBC 3941, a list of properties stolen from a house in Uruk, dated from the 38th year of Nebuchadnezzar’s reign, records in line 6: “2 𒇵gu-uz-gu-za-nu”, or “two guzguzu-clothes/garments”. YBC 3819, dated four years later, gives the lists of the properties still due by the thief to the owner, and mentions the same two “guzguzu”. An undated list of garments, BM 29711⁶, contains “1 gu-uc’-zu” without description of the context. Finally, an inventory of supplies for a ritual, BE 8 154⁷, records “3 gu-uz-gu-za” on line 24, with various other objects.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Text</th>
<th>Place</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Writing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ABL 866</td>
<td>Uruk</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Letter regarding a high dignitary who was abandoned by his escort on the road</td>
<td>1-en 𒇵gu’-uz-gu’-uz (1.4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>to Nippur</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UCP 9/II 12</td>
<td>Uruk</td>
<td>Nbk16 XI.12</td>
<td>Note of Eanna’s administration recording textile materials given to craftsmen</td>
<td>1 𒇵guz-guz (1.3-4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YBC 3941</td>
<td>Uruk</td>
<td>Nbk 38</td>
<td>List of stolen properties from the house of Nabû-ahhe-šullim</td>
<td>2 𒇵gu-uz-gu-za-nu (1.6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nbk 369</td>
<td>Sippar</td>
<td>Nbk 40 X.18</td>
<td>Marriage contract</td>
<td>r𒇵guz’-guz (1.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YBC 3819</td>
<td>Uruk</td>
<td>Nbk 42 IV.22</td>
<td>List of stolen properties still due by the thief to Nabû-ahhe-šullim</td>
<td>2 gu-uz-gu-za-nu (1.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TBER 93-94</td>
<td>Susa</td>
<td>Achaemenid</td>
<td>Marriage contract</td>
<td>1+en 𒇵guz-guz (1.16-17)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BE 8 154</td>
<td>Central Bab.</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Inventory of supplies, probably for a ritual</td>
<td>3 gu-uz-gu-za (1.24-26)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BM 29711</td>
<td>Central Bab.</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>List of clothes</td>
<td>1-en gu’-uc’-zu (l. 7)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Two texts from Uruk provide information about the appearance and composition of the guzguzu. The first one, UCP 9/II 12, mentions that 53 shekels of red wool (tablarru) were given to craftsmen of the Eanna temple for the work of a guzguzu-cloth in order to cover the base of a chariot, or the pedestal ins-
talled in it (šabtu). The text indicates that the craftsmen had to decorate a guzguzu-cloth already manufactured with dyed wool. Coloured wool can be added to a fabric with different techniques such as embroidery or “passementerie” (trimming), creating elaborated decorations and patterns. The second text, YBC 3819, gives a weight of ten minas for each of the two guzguzu stolen in the house of Nabû-ahê-šîlîm, a notable from Uruk. Even if the weight and shape of a certain type of cloth can vary according to the context, these attestations suggest that the guzguzu was a heavy, multicoloured and finely crafted cloth.

The precise use of the guzguzu is rarely explained. Two texts mention a guzguzu used to cover religious furniture. The text UCP 9/II 12 is very explicit: the guzguzu is used to cover the base (šabtu) of a chariot, probably used during a religious ceremony at Babylon, since the materials are brought in this city. In the same way, the text BE 8 154, a long list of supplies, probably for a ritual, registers three guzguzu with textiles destined for a throne: “3 guzguzu, 1 linen fabric for the top of the seat of the throne, thread for the padding of the throne” (lines 24-26).

Other texts, less explicit, suggest that the guzguzu was sometimes used as a garment. For example, the list BM 29711 ranks the guzguzu among other garments: “2 uzâru covers, 6 šupâlîtu undergarments; 2 šîtu garments; 2 måzûnu sashes/belts; 2 na-ru/šab-bî/pu; 1 guzguzu garment, a gułênu coat” (lines 1-8). We find the same case in the list of item stolen from a house in Uruk, YBC 3941: “2 new guzguzu garments, 6 gułênu garments, 1 new x-baqqu garment, 2 belts, 1 head scarf, a neck scarf” (lines 6-11). In these two texts, the guzguzu was associated with a woollen coat called gułênu. They may be worn together or pertain to the same set of garments for an outfit. As a garment, the importance of its weight and decoration suggests that the guzguzu was worn over the outfit, probably as a coat. We can also note that in the marriage contract Nbk 369, the guzguzu appears beside the « musîptu ». While the musîptu is a generic name for a garment, the guzguzu should not be understood as a common item of clothing since it is listed separately.

The determinative “tûq” sometimes precedes the term guzguzu. It can mean a garment or a fabric covering the furniture. The temple’s archives show that the same textile can have two uses successively. In the two marriage contracts, it is not possible to decide between the two functions. In the first one, Nbk 369, the guzguzu is ranked after the furniture fabrics and before the garments: “a bed with a roll of fabric kirku, a guzguzu, a garment musîptu” (line 2). In the second one, TBER 93-94, it is mentioned among various textiles, including again a kirku: “a roll of fabric kirku woven in the house, a fabric/garment SU-DA-AB, a fabric/a garment LAM-LAM, a guzguzu” (lines 16-17). The text ABL 866 records how a high dignitary of Nippur was abandoned by his escort on his way. He had to deliver an order of the king about the intercalation of a thirteenth month in the year. The guzguzu is listed among his baggage: “his harness (and) [his …] were tied together. There were in it a guzguzu and a naṣbatu garment”. The guzguzu pertains here to the set of fabrics and garments of a royal agent.

On the one hand, this textile seems to be used for furniture in religious contexts. On the other hand, it appears as a garment or a fabric in the secular lists of textile. Nevertheless, one can deduce from this double use that the guzguzu is not cut and sewn with such features as sleeves for example. Its shape should be sufficiently standardized to be adapted for these different uses.

The guzguzu was a valuable textile, because it merited inclusion in the marriage contracts where daily clothes are not registered. Indeed, the guzguzu was decorated with dyed wool, a precious material. In the texts YBC 3941 and YBC 3819, it is the first textile item to be listed. In BM 29711, the guzguzu is the penultimate in the list; here, the scribe ranks the garments starting with underwear and finishing by outerwear.

The guzguzu should therefore be considered an expensive and heavy cloth, sometimes decorated with red wool. It can be used as a covering for a chariot or a throne in religious ceremonies. It seems also be worn as a coat by rich notables and royal agents. But in most of the texts, one cannot determine what its usage was. The fact that this term appears at the same time in religious and secular context is remarkable because the terminology in such contexts was usually different. All the eight texts mentioning the guzguzu come from different cities (Uruk, Sippar, Nippur and Susa), so this textile was widely known in Babylonia even if, according to the texts preserved, it remained a rare object. The term “guzguzu” exists only during the first millennium BC and reflects the change of textile vocabulary at this time.
ABL 866 (NA : Nippur)
1 obv. [……………………………………]
a-nalugal [……………………………………]
    *u*-mu-ur-tuš 3 ša-ganš-ša-unuš ki u ṣa-naa
    a-na din-zī-meš ša luqal bé-lil-ia
5 ú-ša-lu 4-še-na-na-a
    *qur*-bu-tuš ša-un-qu
    a-na ugu di-ri luqal bé-lil-ia
i-na ša1 ša-še-bi-laš10
i-na kaskaš nibruš ku-šú-ia
10 ėš-šu-meš ki-i ad-duš1
ki-i iš-mu-aš re-di-ia
ki-i iš-maš-ši-ruuš a-na unuš1i
it-tal-ku-niš re-di-[x]
[x]-qu ki-i šis-[tap-ru x]
15 [……..] *x x x* [………..]
[……………………………………]
1 rev. i-na kaskaš11 [……………]
er-šin-meš ki-i [……………]
ki-i iš-ba’-aš12
ša-en-du 1-en tugu gu’-uz-gu’-uc11
5 ú 1-en tugu na-aš-ba-tu
i-na lib-bi ad-duš
ša iš-baš-ši-ruuš
iş-šaš-meš ki-i ad-duš1
10 a-na luqal bé-lil-ia al-tap ša-rani
luqal en-a ki-i ša i-še-[u li-pu-usš]

‘[……………] for the king [……………] I pray every day Bel-ti-ša-Uruk and Nanaia, for the good health of the king, my lord. Arad-Nanaia, the qarrabatu, by the hands of whom the king, my lord, had sent a sealed document about an intercalary month, he was on the road to Nippur, […] when the escort men panicked and abandoned him. They came back to Uruk. […]

On the way […] the soldiers, when […], as they examined, his harness (and) [his …] were tied together. There were in it a guazguzu and a nashatu garment. Now, I have bounded in fetters the escort men and the men of Nippur who had abandoned him, and I [have written] to the king, my lord. May the king, my lord, [decide] what to do’.

BE 8 154 (NB : Central Babylonia)
1 obv. 1 gur še-bar 3 udu-nitā
    šar-tuš šigš1-iš
    šig.ta-bar-ri tuq-qu-na-a-tuš1
    hur-da-tuš a-ša-gu ab-lá-tuš1
5 la-ar-da a-di-ši-ša
    aš-tuš ša-haššur šigšēš
    ši-ṣu-ur-mar gis-geshš
    lú-te-e ša ši-ṣu-haššur12
    5 bán im ú.sal.la iš1
10 30 gi-izi-lā
1+en gu-un gi-meš qal-pu-tu
10 sik-kat ša mar-tuš1
lu-pu-šu duh-lāl
uzu-guš, uzu-udu-nitā
15 uzu-mušen kuš

lo. e. 5 gin ba-rū-un-du
1 gin ti-me-tuš
    ša šigš1-ša ar-par-ra-tuš1
20 1+en kap-ri hā’ x meš
1 (ū) gi-dūg ga
AOAT 5/2, Neukirchener Verlag, 1983, p.

mentioned with the Sippar according to the texts from the Ebabbar Archive twenty minas, according to S. Zawadzki,

not pr

AOAT

Centuries BC


9) F. Joannès, op. cit., p.74, note that the kirku is originally a roll of papyrus according to the AHw 468a, but that it also means a garment, quoted in the Practical Vocabulary of Assur (glossed ki-ir-ku). The kirku is mentioned with the guzguzu in the two marriage contracts TBER 93-94 and Nbk 369.

10) Line 5 to 8 see S. Parpola, Letters from Assyrian Scholars to the king Esarhadon and Assurbanipal, AOAT 5/2, Neukirchen Verlag, 1983, p. 285 note 525.


1) I present my thanks to E. Payne for her precious help and her advices.

2) R. Borger, Mesopotamisches Zeichenlexikon, AOAT 305, 2003, Münster, Ugarit-Verlag, p. 228-229. R. Borger has not proposed an Akkadian equivalent for the expression “LUM-LUM”.


7) This last text is the only one listed by the CAD in the article “guzguzu” (CAD G p.147). The CAD does not propose a translation for this word, which is attested only during the Neo-Babylonian period.

8) By way of comparison, the heaviest religious cloth (fabric or garment) at Sippar, the lubāru, weighed twenty minas, according to S. Zawadzki, Garments of the Gods, Studies on the Textile Industry and the Pantheon of Sippar according to the texts from the Ebabbar Archive, OBO 218, Fribourg, 2006, p. 88-89.

9) F. Joannès, op. cit., p.74, note that the kirku is originally a roll of papyrus according to the AHw 468a, but that it also means a garment, quoted in the Practical Vocabulary of Aššur (glossed ki-ir-ku). The kirku is mentioned with the guzguzu in the two marriage contracts TBER 93-94 and Nbk 369.

10) Line 5 to 8 see S. Parpola, Letters from Assyrian Scholars to the king Esarhadon and Assurbanipal, AOAT 5/2, Neukirchen Verlag, 1983, p. 285 note 525.


UCP 9/II 12 (Nbk 12 XI 16; Uruk)

1 53 gūn ḍūl-la šā {a-na}
sīg ṭab-bar-ri šā {a-na}
1 šū guz-guz šā maḫ-ḫi ša-ab-ṭi
šā šīgīgir 1 ma-na šīg ṭa-bar-ri
šā int-zaḫ-ḫu-re-eṭi
½ ma-na šīg ṭa-bar-ri
šīgīgir-me
pāp 2 ma-na 23 gūn
lāg-ga-unugšī bar-ma-na-a-ka[m
10 lū uṣ-bar-meš maḥ-ru
u ina šū šī-nu a-na tin-tīṭi
šu-bu-ul ẓī ṭīz
ša-nāg-du-urī, ṭīlug tin-tīṭi

“Fifty-three shekels (for) the work of red-purple wool intended for a guzguzu covering the base of the chariot, one mina of red-purple wool (dyed with inzahrētu), one half mina of red-purple wool pertaining to the chariots, a total of two minas and twenty-three shekels, were received from Tāb-Uruk and Nanna-erē, the weavers, and were delivered to them by Babylon. Month Šabatu, twelfth day, sixteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon.”
12) Lines 6-8 are quoted by B. Landsberger, “The Date Palm and its By-products according to the Cuneiform Sources”, AfO Beih.17, Graz, 1967, p. 17.

13) CAD M₁, “marrā”, p. 300.

14) For the use of maḫāru in the Eanna archive, see Jursa, Neo-Babylonian Legal and Administrative Documents, Typology, Contents and Archives, GMTR 1, Münster 2005, p. 46.

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15) Two tablets from the Yale Babylonian Collection mentioning the guzu-gu garment – The two texts presented here – YBC 3941 and YBC 3819 – concern the theft of property belonging to Nabû-ahlē-šullim son of Nabû-damiq, a man who at the time of these events worked with the Eanna temple’s livestock, but later worked in agriculture. YBC 3941 records an inventory of goods stolen from Nabû-ahlē-šullim’s house by another man, Zēru-ibni. It is dated by year only, with no month or day, and therefore provides only a rough date for the robbery. YBC 3819 is dated several years later and contains a witnessed transaction in which Zēru-ibni must return the stolen goods in his possession, and he must also either turn over his accomplices to Nabû-ahlē-šullim or return the property that is in their possession.

After the robbery, it is likely that only Zēru-ibni was caught or identified, thus only he is named in the full inventory of stolen goods (YBC 3941). But he did not actually have all of these goods in his possession; he had only his share of the goods, the rest having been divided between his accomplices. YBC 3819 provides that portion of the total that was his share, but the remainder (l. 18) is with the other three men. While the accomplices have been identified by the time the second text was written, Zēru-ibni continues to bear responsibility; and he must not only return the goods in his possession, but he must also either hand over his accomplices or return the goods in their possession.

These texts are presented here because they mention the guzu-gu garment, but they may also be of interest to those studying either the material culture or onomastics of the Neo-Babylonian period. The inventory recorded in YBC 3941 provides a record of the household items a mid-ranking temple employee could afford to possess, while YBC 3819 contains numerous West Semitic names, particularly among the patronyms of the thief and the witnesses.

YBC 3941 (Nbk 38) 5.0 x 7.2 x 2.4 cm

YBC 3941

obv. ū-de-e ša 1 numu-nu u-tu é
〈īg-sēšmesi-gi mu.38.k[am]
〈īg-nīg-du-urū lugal tin.tin2 iš ša-a
1 anē zi-ka-ri

5. 1-ta2 anē e-ri-ti
2 ṭu gu-az-gu-za-nu eš ša-tu
6 ṭu gu-li-nē-e
1 ṭu x-bu-aq-qa eš ša
2 tūg ša qab-lā-nu

lo.e.10. 1 tūg ša sag.du
1 tūg ša ti-ik-ki

rev. 1 du-ṭa-ḍa zabar
2 mu-šaḫ-hi-na-nu zabar ša 3 bān a4
2 mu-kar-ra-e-sa-nu zabar

15. 3 ka-sa-a- tū [x] zabar
1 qa-bu-tū zabar
2 sēr-pa2 4 am baš (written over erasures)
1 kal-ṭa-lu
1 pa-ra-ṭa-bu ša qab-la

20. 1 az₃ ma-ru-a
1/2 ki-ša-du
1 bān ši-bit-ti
The property (lit. equipment) that Zēru-ibni took from the house of Nabû-ahḫē-šullim in the thirty-eighth year of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon:

One female donkey, two new gezuçu-garments, six gulēnu-garments, one new garment, two belts, one head scarf, one neck scarf, one bronze didāu-vessel, two bronze braziers of three šatu each, two bronze nukarrīsū-vessels, three bronze cups, one bronze bowl, two iron shearing knives, one leather quiver, one iron dagger for the belt, one lance, one-half (cut of meat) of the neck, one šittu dill."

YBC 3819 (Nbk 42 IV 22)

4.6 x 6.4 x 2.2 cm

obv. 1 etsu 1 dumu-šū 2-ā 1 dumu-šī
dumu mu

pap 3 antī2 2 gu-az-ga-na
šā 10 ma-na-aq 1 mu-sāḫ-ḫi-in-nu zabar šā 3 bán

3 šāgšur ru, 1-en pat-ri šā qab-la

5. 1 az-ma-ru-ā a-nar u-de-e
šā 3-ul-ṭī 1 ag-šes-ne1, 1-nu-numun-dū
iš-štā-šī 1 ag-šes-ne1, a-nu šā 1 ag-sig₂, ša
ina muḫ-ḫi 1 nun-dū 1-a šā 1 lul-tar₂-ad
ina iti barāš a-na 1 ag-šes-ne1, gi

10. i-nam-dī šā šā šīl-la-a
lo-e. šēš-la-nu a-šī ša 1 en-sā-nu
uš mu-du a-šī ša 1 u-gur-sūr
šā it-tī 1 nun-dū a-na 1 ag-šes-ne1, gi

rev. 1-ru-bi-1 nu-numun-dī ib-ba-kam-ma

15. a-na 1 ag-šes-ne1, gi i-nam-dī
ki 1 iš-erī₂ mu-lu tab-kam-ma
a-na 1 ag-šes-ne1, gi la it-tan-nu
ri-ḫe-et ii-de-e 1 nun-dū a-na
šā iš-erī₂ gi i-nam-dī
duš mu-ki-nu šāgšur-gal-numun-dū
a-šī ša 1 is-qr-la-rī-im
1 ṯa-ri-br-ā šā ša 1 en-ba-sā
šā ṯa-mu-du-pa ša 1 man-dā₂-da-μu-šī
u-e. šā mat-tu šī ša šal-ti-šī

25. umbasag1 bu-nu-ša a-šī ša šā iš-erī₂, gi mušušu līši šu ud 22.kam
le-e. mu 42.kam
šā iš-erī₂ du-urū luqal tin.1.[3]

"One female donkey, its two-year-old offspring and a yearling, a total of three donkeys; two gezuçu-garments each of ten minas; one bronze brazier of three šatu; three šāgšur-garments; one dagger for the belt; one iron lance: (this is) the equipment that Zēru-ibni took from the house of Nabû-ahḫē-šullim and that Zēru-ibni son of Iltar-abī owes to Nabû-ahḫē-šullim son of Nabû-damiq. He will give (it) to Nabû-ahḫē-šullim in Nisānu. Zēru-ibni will (also) bring Ibni-īštar son of Sillaya, Aḫu-lumur son of Belšunu, and Šumu-ukīn son of Nergal-ēther, who entered the house of Nabû-ahḫē-šullim with Zēru-ibni, and he will give (them) to Nabû-ahḫē-šullim. If the men are not brought and given to Nabû-ahḫē-šullim, Zēru-ibni will give the remainder of the (stolen) property to Nabû-ahḫē-šullim.


Il. 1-2 Since YBC 3941 provides information about neither the month in which the text was written, nor how far into her 12-month gestation period the jenny mentioned in line 5 had progressed, it is impossible to
determine whether the two-year-old offspring mentioned in YBC 3819:1 represents the foal born of that pregnancy (which assumes that YBC 3941 was written at the end of Nbk 38 and the jenny was at the beginning of her gestation period at that time) or a foal born of a subsequent pregnancy (which assumes that YBC 3841 was written early in Nbk 38 and the jenny gave birth shortly thereafter). Either way, by the time of this text, she has given birth to an additional foal that is included among the property to be returned by Zeru-ibni.

1. 4 Since Hôtel KUR.ra-garments are not mentioned in YBC 3941, it is likely that the three Hôtel KUR.ra-garments mentioned here are equivalent to the six gulnā-garments mentioned in YBC 3941:7, pairs of which may have been sewn together to create these hôtel KUR.ra-garments.

1. 8 For references to this West Semitic personal name, see R. Zadok, On West Semites in Babylonia During the Chaldean and Achaemenid Periods: An Onomastic Study, Jerusalem, 1977, p. 378.

1. 21 West Semitic personal names with the pattern x-lartm (“Let x lift up”) are well attested, and here the honorific appears to be an (ancestral) house, though the reading of this ancestral name is uncertain (“Let the house of Isqar’ raise (to life) (the child”).

1. 23 The correct reading for this name is uncertain.

1. 24 For references to these West Semitic personal names, see R. Zadok, op. cit., pp. 382 and 395.

1. 25 Kümmel, Familie, Beruf und Amt im spätbabylonischen Uruk: Prosopographische Untersuchungen zu Berufsgruppen des 6. Jahrhunderts v. Chr. in Uruk, Abhandlungen der Deutschen Orient-Gesellschaft Nr. 20, Berlin, 1979, p. 113, includes a scribe from Uruk named Bānātu son of Nabû-ahḫē-bullit, who appears in a single text (BIN I, 123:15). This text has been collated and, rather than the TIN-sign that appears in the published copy, the name actually ends with a TIL-sign that runs directly into the text from the obverse. It is possible that both texts refer to the same individual and that the final sign of the scribe’s patronymic in BIN I, 123 should be read as –m₄c₂u₂.

1) I would like to thank B. R. Foster, Curator of the Yale Babylonian Collection, and U. Kasten, Assistant Curator, for permission to publish both texts here. While YBC 3941 was previously copied by E. Kingsbury, it was – to my knowledge – never published. Several colleagues provided valuable suggestions for interpreting these texts and it is a pleasure to thank them for their insights here: F. Joannès, M. Jursa, and L. Quillien, as well as M. Weszeli and R. Zadok, both of whom discussed these texts with me during their visits to the Babylonian Collection. Any errors that remain are my own.

2) H. M. Kümmel, op. cit., pp. 66₁²₀ and 101₁²₁.

3) I would like to thank M. Weszeli for suggesting this interpretation of the sequence of events.

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16) Toward a well established absolute chronology / On the relationship between modern Astronomy and Assyriology – In early December 2012 data on five millennium of solar and lunar eclipses₃¹ was published on the Wikipedia site². First the Goddard Space Flight Center⁵ of NASA published detailed information (catalog number, Saros cycle⁵⁶, Mem, Max, Date/Time, Type, Node, Gamma, Magnitude, Duration and Contacts) of eclipses between 2000 B.C. and 3000 A.D for the whole Internet community⁵. Earlier this date such kind of information was restricted to scholars and specialists in Astronomy⁶. This encyclopedic database allows everyone to identify past eclipses in written sources and predict them in the future with a great precision. Up to now the Mesopotamian cuneiform material was mostly used to date events, and on more abstract level to create chronologies⁷.

During the whole existence of Assyriology astronomical data from cuneiform sources was used to create chronologies⁸. The scarcity of the material did not enable Assyriologists to produce one single (absolute)⁹ but several (local)¹⁰ chronologies. This is why sources on solar and lunar from ancient Mesopotamia are divided into two several parts. Beside the well documented and deeply analyzed first millennium B.C. Babylonian tablets (text editions¹¹, terminology¹², astronomical background¹³, case studies¹⁴, adjacent regions¹⁵ and independent researches¹⁶) we also have material from Old-Babylonian Mari too now published. So there is the possibility to establish in some regions of Mesopotamia an eclipse based absolute chronology for the second millennium B.C.¹⁷. The cuneiform material of the third millennium B.C. at our disposal came from the second half of the actually generally used “medium chronology”¹⁸. This is why GSFC data is essential for the creation of absolute chronology.

On the other hand, the democratization of science by Internet allowed to create tight connections inside fields which were separated till now. The purpose, history and results of the Caeno Foundation¹⁹ prove the existence of such cooperation. The results proved by several fields of science could endure much longer in the time-space continuum.
3) <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Goddard_Space_Flight_Center>
6) <http://eclipse.gsfc.nasa.gov/eclipse.html>
18) Aström, P., High, Middle or Low? Acts of an International Colloquium on Absolute Chronology held at the University of Gothenburg 20th – 22nd August 1987, Gotthenburg 1989
19) <http://www.caeno.org/>
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