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„From Zero to Hero. The Adad-Šuma-Uṣur Epic in Its Late Babylonian Priestly Literature Context"

verfasst von / submitted by

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Abstract

Die Masterarbeit wurde im Rahmen des *Late Babylonian Priestly Literature* Projektes, entsprechend in englischer Sprache, verfasst. Sie beschäftigt sich mit dem Adad-šuma-uṣur Epos, einem spätbabylonischen literarischen Werk über einen kassitischen König. Da das Manuskript nicht sehr gut erhalten ist, wurde sowohl der Inhalt als auch der Kontext des Textes bislang nicht umfassend verstanden. Um ein besseres Verständnis vom Epos zu erlangen, legt die Arbeit daher zwei Ziele in Aussicht: Zunächst, wird eine neue Edition des Epos mit neuer Transkription, Übersetzung, und Handkopie präsentiert. Diese Edition bildet die neue Interpretationsbasis des Werkes und seines Kontextes. Als zweites Ziel sieht diese Arbeit vor, die Entstehung des Epos als spätbabylonisches Produkt zu motivieren, spezifisch als eine historisch-literarische Komposition des *Late Babylonian Priestly Literature* Korpus. Dieses Ziel wird durch einen thematischen, epigraphischen, und linguistischen Vergleich mit priesterlicher Literatur und diversen anderen Manuskripten aus spätbabylonischer Zeit angestrebt.

Abbreviations and Citation Conventions

This thesis includes two conventions for citation, dependant on the contents cited. Text editions are cited in the established 'Assyriological' style of ABBREVIATION, PAGE, PASSAGE (*column*, LINE). Secondary literature is cited following the Unified Style Sheet for Linguistics and in some cases, especially when the work in question is cited more frequently, in the Assyriological acronymic convention. All abbreviations used are listed in this section, apart from some abbreviations used by Brinkman (1976). For those, please refer to Brinkman's list.

Lexical Abbreviations

AŠU	Adad-šuma-uṣur
DN	Deity Name
EKU	Enlil-kudurri-uṣur
GN	Geographical Name
LB	Late Babylonian
LBPL	Late Babylonian Priestly Literature
NYF	New Year Festival
PN	Personal Name
SE	Seleucid date
SB	Spätbabylonisch
TN	Temple Name
TNI	Tukultī-Ninurta I

Bibliographical Abbreviations

ABC	Grayson, Albert K. 1975b. *Assyrian and Babylonian chronicles*. Vol. 5. New York: J. J. Augustin.
ABL	Harper, Robert F. (ed.) *Assyrian and Babylonian Letters Belonging to The Kouyunjik Collections Of The British Museum*. 1892-1914.
AHw	Von Soden, W. 1959-1981. *Akkadisches Handwörterbuch*. Harrasowitz, Wiesbaden.
AOAT	*Alter Orient und Altes Testament*. Kevelaer/Neukirchen-Vluyn. 1969ff.

AOF   Winckler, Hugo (ed.). *Altorientalische Forschungen. Verlag Eduard Pfeiffer,* Leipzig. 1893–1902.

BCHP   Finkel, Irving, R. van der Spek. *Babylonian Chronicles of the Hellenistic Period.* https://www.livius.org/sources/about/mesopotamian-chronicles/ (Accessed 11.11.2021).

BHLT   Grayson, Albert K. 1975. *Babylonian historical-literary texts*. University of Toronto Press.

BIN   *Babylonian lnscriptions in the Collection of J. B. Nies*. New Haven. 1917ff.

BiOr   *Bibliotheca Orientalis*. Leiden. 1943/44ff.

CAD   *The Assyrian Dictionary of the University of Chicago.* Chicago. 1956ff.

CT   *Cuneiform Texts from Babylonian Tablets in the British Museum*. London. 1896ff.

Iraq   *Iraq (British School of Archaeology in Iraq)*. London, 1934ff.

JTVI   *Journal of the Transactions of the Victoria Institute.* London. 1865-1957.

KBo   *Keilschrifttexte aus Boghazköi*. Leipzig and Berlin. 1916ff.

LBAT   Sachs, Abraham, Theophilius G. Pinches, Johann N. Strassmaier. 1955. *Late Babylonian Astronomical and Related Texts*. Brown University Press, Providence.

SAA   *State Archives of Assyria*. University of Helsinki. 1987ff.

TCL   *Textes cunéiformes, Musée du Louvre*. Paris. 1910ff.

VAB   *Vorderasiatische Bibliothek*. Leipzig. 1907-1917.

YOS   *Yale Oriental Series, Babylonian Texts*. New Haven. 1915ff.

Museum- and Collection-Abbreviations

A   Oriental Institute, University of Chicago

AD   Astronomical Diaries

AS   Objects from Susa, collection of the Louvre

B   Babylon (Babil) collection, Istanbul Arkeoloji Müzerli

BM   British Museum

CBS   University Museum, Philadelphia

IM   Iraq Museum, Baghdad

K	Kouyunjik collection, British Museum
MMA	Metropolitan Museum of Art
MNB	Musées nationaux B, Louvre
NT	American excavations at Nippur. 1948ff.
sp	Spartoli, British Museum
U	British-American excavations at Ur
VA	Vorderasiatisches Museum, Berlin
VAT	Vorderasiatisches Museum, Berlin

Linguistic Abbreviations

1	first person
2	second-person
3	third person
c	communis
C	consonant, in a cluster with a V
CSTR	construct state
D	D-stem
INF	infinitive
M	masculine
PL	plural
Š	Š-stem
ŠD	ŠD-stem
SG	singular
SUBJ	subjunctive
V	vowel, in a cluster with a C
/	syllable boundary

Additionally, pronunciation aids are given following the International Phonetic Alphabet.

1 Introduction[1]

All heroes start somewhere and in many a story that place is the bottom. Whether one thinks of Heracles who despite his inherent birth and gifts grew from a simple herd to the most celebrated hero in Greek mythology, or of any modern Young Adult fantasy hero or heroine, a place at 'the bottom', at 'zero' if one will, lets nearly any notable ascent appear heroic.

Heroes are no strangers to Mesopotamian literature, either. Immediately, Gilgameš jumps to one's mind. Deity or king, literary or real, we may still not know, but glorified nonetheless, he is a key example of a figure glorified for heroic deeds performed for his people. Glorified kings reappear in many other eras and provenances. For instance, one might think of Sargon and his 'king of battle'-legend, recalling his successful campaign to Anatolia[2], or also his successor Naram-Sîn[3]. These tales are typically echoed in literary texts, especially in epics, and the heroes of these texts were usually known cross-generationally, from multiple texts and multiple tales.

One rather unlikely candidate for the role may thus be found in our title character: Adad-šuma-uṣur, the last notable Kassite king, known for removing the Assyrian tyrant Tukultī-Ninurta I from the Babylonian throne in a rebellion. But as every hero who saved his nation deserves, the lesser known Adad-šuma-uṣur, too, got his very own epic.

The Adad-šuma-uṣur epic (BM 34104+), also known as BHLT 6[4], comprises another tale about a king—unlike Giglameš certainly historic—who was posthumously celebrated for his deeds for Babylon. But during times in which secret machinations, rebellions, and usurpations were not an uncommon political reality, one may rightfully ask oneself: why *him*?

Previous editions and discussions of the text have focussed more on its contents and on what historical and chronological information one may draw from it rather than on its

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[1] This thesis was written as a contribution to the *Late Babylonian Priestly Literature* (LBPL) project, conducted under the supervision of Michael Jursa (University of Vienna) and Nathan Wasserman (Hebrew University) from July 2019 to June 2021. The project worked to prove the hypothesis that a body of texts dealing mostly with events concerning the composing priests' temples and deities was of Late Achaemenid and Seleucid origin. For further information, and to access the texts studied, visit: https://lbplproject.com/ (Accessed 29.11.2021).
[2] See for instance Foster (2005: 107–112, 338–343).
[3] See for instance Foster (2005: 115–121).
[4] Grayson (1975a, n. 6).

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context or production history so that the question could not be simply answered by consulting yet existing literature. But behind the very broken fragments of a tablet lies more than first meets the eye—in every aspect imaginable—and precisely these somewhat hidden aspects shall concern us. This thesis will thus primarily strive to solve the following questions: Where, when, why, and by whom was the Adad-šuma-uṣur epic composed?

The hypothesis offers a preliminary answer: it was written in Esaĝila in Babylon, in the Late Babylonian period (ca. 500 BCE-75 CE), as part of the Late Babylonian Priestly Literature corpus to reflect and process contemporary political and socio-economic events, as experienced by the temple's priests. Thereby we assume that a very late (Hellenistic or Seleucid) composition date is likely.

Rightfully the reader may now ask how an epic about a Kassite king, who lived nearly a millennium before the supposed authors, could be of any interest to the Late Babylonian (LB) priests, let alone inspire the composition of an epic, based on their woes (as opposed to *his*). Granted, the manuscript has been previously identified as late, meaning it originated in the latter half of the first millennium BCE. But it could very well be a late copy of a much older text. Given the lack of direct and concrete evidence pointing us any other direction, to assume that the text originally comes, for instance, from the 8$^{\text{th}}$ century BCE, or the 6$^{\text{th}}$ century BCE, we shall look specifically at the evidence indicating a late to very late composition date and weigh out the arguments against any possible counterarguments.

Incidentally, there exists a late corpus, known for the composition of such anachronistic texts. The Late Babylonian Priestly Literature (henceforth LBPL) corpus has been studied for a long time, but only recently have some long-known manuscripts been identified with it. LBPL, a late corpus of the library of Esaĝila, was composed by Late Babylonian priests who for centuries saw their doom near. Unhappy with their present, their inspiration was drawn from the past, whether 'real' or not, and like the modern author, too, the priests processed their contemporary situations and conditions through their literary work. Thereby the most prominent themes include general catastrophes, times of upheaval, foreign rule, and 'evil' kings (mostly foreign or sometimes local), and the priest or temple community's (heroic) quest to restore balance and harmony to Babylonia and its temples.

The corpus's general character may be understood as a collective of writings creating a self-referential and self-empowering narrative for the Babylonian priesthood. This is

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done in two ways: both descriptively, in a way that recounts what the authors believed they once were, and what they now have become, as well as prescriptively, or aspirationally, with the hopes of how things might or should be done in the future. As such their texts are directed both those ways, yet still entirely internally, for they were not intended for 'outsiders' to be read.

The library of Esaĝila in the second half of the first millennium BCE was comprised of two larger sections: that of the astronomical diaries, and that of the family of Mušēzib, which was employed at the temple.[5] While most LBPL texts, including the Adad-šuma-uṣur epic, may be attributed to the priestly library of Esagila, it cannot be said with certainty to what exact subsection of the library the literary texts belonged. Not least, too, because many tablets—the fragments of the present epic, too—were not excavated on regular archaeological digs, but were acquired by the museum after having been illicitly excavated.[6]

To recap, the thesis seeks to accomplish the following goals: in the foreground of our interest lies the Adad-šuma-uṣur epic, as it was titled by A. K. Grayson, and its new edition. With it comes a new understanding of the text, what its contextual background might have been, both temporally, as well as culturally and politically, and what it conveys to us on multiple levels. For one, we are interested in the reason for this text's creation. But what it might tell us about Adad-šuma-uṣur, the historic king, as well as about the role Adad-šuma-uṣur was given by the authors post-humously will occupy us, too. Crucially, following the hypothesis that the Adad-šuma-uṣur epic is a product of LBPL, the priests' mindsets must be considered when answering these questions.

These two layers—of historic 'reality' and literary reprocessing—must be separated and kept in mind at all times. On the one hand, we are dealing with a Kassite king who came to the throne through a rebellion, while on the other hand, this thesis argues, we have a second layer of Late Babylonian priests processing contemporary problems through the composition of corpus-specific literary texts. The depicted story of Adad-šuma-uṣur in the epic can thus not be taken at face value, and certainly not as definitive evidence to prove any of the multiple theories trying to patch together the Kassite king's

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[5]   Clancier (2009: 169).
[6]   The fragments of the tablets belong to the Spartali (Sp.) collection of the British Museum and were purchased from Spartali & Co., which in turn purchased the tablets from illicit excavators. See Leichty et al. (2019: 9, 224ff., 250ff.).

fragmentarily attested life.

As such, the following questions arise:

1. How do we motivate the epic to be a (very) late composition and a product of LBPL?

2. What does this mean for our understanding of the LBPL mindset, regarding
   a. the priests' world views, both on the contemporary and the ancient worlds, and
   b. their image of themselves and the king, contemporarily and in ancient times?

3. How do we understand the *priests'* perception of Adad-šuma-uṣur?

4. What does this text mean for *our* understanding of Adad-šuma-uṣur, the Kassite king?

By answering these questions, the study will hopefully illustrate the texts's importance to our understanding of Late Babylonian Priestly Literature as a corpus attesting to the gradual decline of the Mesopotamian temple world. We will conceive a better idea of the priests' ideals and motivations, which will help us contextualise the Adad-šuma-uṣur epic. Thereby, we do not expect to make definitive inferences about the historic Adad-šuma-uṣur, but we will instead understand the Late Babylonian priests' perception of him.

This thesis is structured as follows: Chapter 2 will introduce the contextual background, which entails an introduction to Late Babylonian Priestly Literature (Section 2.1), split into an introduction to the historical context of the corpus (Section 2.1.1) as well as to the corpus and its contents itself (Section 2.1.2). Chapter 2 will also introduce Adad-šuma-uṣur (Section 2.2) and will present an improved and updated list of sources and attestations (Section 2.2.1), as well as a summary of all that is known about him (Section 2.2.2). An updated and improved edition of BM 34104+ will be presented in Chapter 3 (in Section 3.3), along with a new copy (Section 3.2), and philological commentary (Section 3.4). Chapter 4 is dedicated to providing the reader with further contextual aid to support the working thesis. Section 4.1 will discuss the epic line by line to clarify the way it is understood here. An epigraphic commentary is then given in Section 4.2, showing that the manuscript is definitely of very late origin. The last two subchapters will provide linguistic (Section 4.3), as well as thematic (Section 4.4) parallels with other late to very late literature, especially within the LBPL corpus to further back up the epic's affiliation

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to the corpus. Finally, we conclude in Chapter 5. In the Appendix (Section 7), both a glossary of all the lexical items in the epic (Section 7.1), as well as a palaeographical list of all readable signs used in the epic (Section 7.2)[7] may be found.

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[7]   The sign list provided compares the signs of BM 34104+ with other signs of the Late Babylonian period, extracted from Matthieu Ossendrijver's *Late Babylonian Cuneiform Signs* (2021) whose example the here presented list is following.

2 Historical Context of the Epic, Its Composition, and Contents

The Late Babylonian Priestly Literature corpus is notable among many of its curious facets for the address, reminiscence, and impression of older (in the priests' eyes 'better') times in new, contemporary compositions. Those compositions reflected the great interest shown by the priests for events—especially regarding kings and their relation to the divine—of the far past: a time associated with Babylon's greater power, as well as the prestige and recognition, which the temples and their communities enjoyed in its effect.

One such 'late' (re-)telling of an old tale is the subject of the present thesis: the Adad-šuma-uṣur (AŠU) epic telling of the Kassite king's successful rebellion against the Assyrian tyrant Tukultī-Ninurta I and the former's subsequent establishment as king of Babylonia.

To understand the epic, an understanding of its context is imperative: both of the historical figure it centres around, as well as of the historical context of its composition. Though the periods are separated by almost a millennium, Adad-šuma-uṣur offered great rhetorical potential to the Late Babylonian (LB) priests, albeit with a heavy focus on the role of the king. His tale includes a tyrant king facing a righteous king, a ruler dedicated to the cult of Marduk, and the preservation of temples in all of Babylonia, humbled and governed by the local elite. It thus includes all the main 'ingredients' of an LBPL composition.

As was mentioned in the previous Section 1 we assume that the present epic is not a late copy of an older manuscript but was in fact composed in LB times, and many arguments arise to support the theory. Why was AŠU a favourable main character of LBPL? What motives feature prominently in the corpus and what are its contexts? Which of the events in AŠU's life that had been passed down to LB times could have inspired the creation of the epic? And finally: how can we motivate our hypothesis both *historically* and (preliminarily) through *motives* and *themes* that the present text was a late composition and not a late copy of an earlier text?

To begin to answer the questions at hand, the following chapter shall attempt to outline the relevant historical context of the LBPL corpus in Section 2.1, especially with respect to the political and socio-economic landscape painting the motivational background of the compositions (Section 2.1.1). It will also introduce the textual genres included and present its contents and main themes (Section 2.1.2). Finally, this chapter will

introduce the historic person of Adad-šuma-uṣur in Section 2.2 (specifically Section 2.2.2) and revise the sources attesting his life (Section 2.2.1).

2.1 Late Babylonian Priestly Literature[8]

The composition of the corpus took place during the last centuries of Ancient Near Eastern temple culture (ca. 330 BCE-80 CE). As such, the political and socio-economic conditions wore heavily on the late priests' attitudes and greatly influenced their writings.

They took inspiration from the past, history or tales, to process the changing times and conditions through their literary work, which in a way reflects a conflict and discourse of self-assurance. The stories told serve the purpose of upholding the priests' self-awareness and explaining the present through the visual field of a somewhat construed past. Catastrophes, times of upheaval, foreign rule, and 'evil' kings (foreign or local) are thereby especially prominent and recurring themes. Central, too, are the priest or temple community's role in freeing Babylonia and its temples from those evils and leading a (legitimate) king onto the path of righteousness.

Chronicle 22/P[9], a late chronicle of the Kassite period, serves as an illuminating example of the events of interest to the priestly community, also specifically concerning our main subject Adad-šuma-uṣur.

> For seven years Tukultī-Ninurta (I) controlled Kaduniash. After the Akkadian officers of Karduniash had rebelled and put Adad-shuma-usur on his father's throne, Ashur-nasir-apli, son of Tukultī-Ninurta (I)—who had carried out criminal designs on Babylon—and the officers of Assyria rebelled against him (Tukultī-Ninurta (I)), removed him [from] his throne, shut him up in Kar-Tukultī-Ninurta in a room and killed him.

Foreign and tyrannical rule, upheavals and rebellions, and the liberation of a neglected and abused Babylon can be seen to have been leading concerns thematised in the works, and, as this section from Chronicle P demonstrates, AŠU und Tukultī-Ninurta I (TNI)

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[8] This section draws its contents from Jursa & Debourse (2020). Additional literature and references will be indicated where relevant. For a more detailed discussion on the corpus, the reader is referred to the respective publication.

[9] Refer to Section 2.2.1 for a supplemented bibliography of all sources attesting to AŠU's life. For the following citation, see specifically Chronicle P iv 7-11 in Grayson (1975b: 176). Note that Grayson's notation of PNs and GNs has not been altered to fit the notation chosen for the present thesis.

stood as model figures to promote the narrative of a community influenced greatly by its contemporary time of great change. To the great distress of the affected communities, these times were accompanied by the beginning of the decline of Babylonian temple culture as it was known and maintained for millennia afore.

2.1.1 *The Political and Socio-Economic Context*

The long-enduring fall of the Babylonian temples was i. a. effected by at times dire, at other times more lenient conditions imposed on their institutions by various conquerors.

Always at the cultural and economic core of Babylonian society, the greatest economic hardships for temples following the short heyday of the Neo-Babylonian expansion came with and due to the Achaemenid conquest in 539 BCE. Heavy taxations on the Babylonian institutions led to rebellions against Xerxes I, which in turn spawned repressive measures against the temples of northern Babylonia.[10] The aftermath was devastating for the institutions: the temples' economic scope diminished significantly, royal interest and engagement was minimised, and a general dismantling of self-ruled Babylonian institutions ensued. As a result, the temples became the last coherently functioning, natively Babylonian institution to retain a degree of independent local power.[11]

Hope for improvement of the ever-worsening conditions came with an eclipse observed and interpreted as a bad omen for Darius III. Indeed, he fell shortly thereafter following the battle of Gaugamela with the victorious Alexander quickly coming to be regarded favourably and auspiciously by the priests and his triumph interpreted as divine support. The ensuing contact between Alexander and the priests thereby proved beneficial for both sides: while the priests secured more funds and freedoms for the temple, Alexander could enjoy the local community's acceptance of his conquest.[12]

The first century of Hellenistic rule in Babylon indeed saw an increase in royal interest in the native temple institution and temple city. The literary works produced in the temples during that time reflect the numerous acts of royal euergetism[13], e.g. the portrayal

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[10] For further reading on the rebellions against Xerxes refer to various essays published in Waerzeggers & Seire (2018).
[11] Jursa & Debourse (2020: 257).
[12] Ibid.; see also R.J. van der Spek (2003: 289–342).
[13] Among such acts are for instance land donations and royal building projects (Jursa & Debourse 2020: 258).

of Seleucos as a ruler, beloved by Marduk, in a Babylonian "prophetic" chronicle[14].

But royal interest and engagement in temple affairs lessen drastically towards the end of the third century. Previously prominent Babylonian centres suffered neglect through the relocation of both economic and political focus to underexploited regions undertaken by the Greek colonialists. Further, the 'new' *poleis*[15] replaced the 'old' Babylonian administration systems, fueling the decline of temple culture, wherein administrators were placed under the supervision of royal officials. This new order remained so during and after the Parthian conquest in 141 BCE, as the new 'local power' was cooptated on the *poleis*.[16]

As an effect, temples lost their economic power, and intellectual output declined, along with the temple personnel.[17] Finally, the first century CE marked the ultimate end of the temples as "institutions of recognisably ancient Near Eastern character"[18].

These circumstances weighed heavily on the views, beliefs and moods of the people witnessing them, not least also the priests who composed the corpus of LBPL.

2.1.2   The Corpus[19]

The body of texts is dated to the late Achaemenid, Seleucid and early Parthian periods spanning from about the late 5th to the 1st century BCE, though the periods addressed by the priests reach from far into the mourned past to well into the pursued future. The manuscripts are most likely to be traced back to the Babylonian temple libraries, or the libraries of the priests of Babylon and Uruk, most notably to those employed at Esaĝila.[20]

Among the genres of library texts, are prophecies imagining an ideal future, ritual texts codifying the ideal present, chronicles of recent events (and of the past), and finally the historical literary compositions telling of the remote past; all while thematically one may observe a guiding thread in the roles assigned to the respective actors against the

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14   "Dynastic Prophecy", see Grayson (1975a: chap. 3), Neujahr (2012: 58–71), and Jursa (2020).
15   I thank Nicolaas Verhelst for his helpful comments on the needed research regarding these new political systems of which we seem not to know too much about.
16   Jursa & Debourse (2020: 258).
17   This can be seen for instance in the decline of textual genres, as towards the end of Babylonian temples culture the majority of texts composed were astronomical diaries.
18   Jursa & Debourse (2020: 258).
19   This subsection is a rough paraphrase as well, specifically from Jursa & Debourse (2020: 256–274). Further notes are given on further readings, but for a more detailed discussion, the reader is referred to the respective publication.
20   For the database of the texts, created within the scope of the project, as well as a brief introduction to the corpus visit https://lbplproject.com/ (Accessed 02.07.2021).

socio-economic and political background of the time. The central ideological components of LBPL revolve around the triangle of priest, king, and Esaĝila/Marduk, wherein it is the priest who defends both the cult, as well as religious (and moral) standards; contrary to older compositions in which this role is usually assigned to the *king*.[21] He, in LBPL, is a rather ambiguous figure: the king may be as good as he is bad, or somewhere in between as a potentially bad, or repenting ruler. The priest on the other hand is depicted as the ever-wise and righteous guardian of traditional and religious customs and knowledge, the envoy between Marduk and the king(s). In order to act on his judgement regarding whether or not Marduk's standards are met, the priest must seek royal recognition. It is his right and duty, however, to oppose a (foreign) king who, by his own judgement, disregards said standards.[22]

The corpus of historical literary compositions includes as its largest distinct group of texts pseudepigraphical letters that are attributed to past kings[23], most of them set around the period in which the Assyrian rule over Babylon came to an end through Nabopolassar's rebellion.[24] Several letters represent correspondences between rulers[25], some between a ruler and the priests of Babylon[26].

Prominent in many of those compositions are the previously mentioned rebellions, invasions, and the role of divine wrath in such events. Phases of transition and upheaval, quite generally, are a prominent political context of the compositions, reflecting the contemporary situation in which the authors found themselves.[27] Finally, the Dynastic Prophecy[28] belongs to this corpus, as well.

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[21] Jursa & Debourse (2020: 256); see also Waerzeggers (2011; 2015a: 187–189).
[22] Jursa & Debourse (2020: 256). Notable works on the ideologies of the corpus are i.a. Waerzeggers (2015b; 2015a) and De Breucker (2015).
[23] See Frazer (2015) for a treatment of a majority of these letters. See also Frahm (2005) who first described the genre.
[24] Jursa & Debourse (2020: 259).
[25] E.g. BM 55467 and BM 37465, treated in Frazer (2015: sec. 6.7, 6.8). Jursa & Debourse (2020: n. 27) suggest that the fragmentary letter CT 51, 73 (BM 34637, which is not treated by Frazer) perhaps belongs to this group of texts as well.
[26] E.g. BM 28825 and BM 45642 (see Frame & George 2005; Frazer 2015), as well as Frazer (2015: sec. 6.5) for the small fragment of BM 37579. For BM 34716 see Jursa & Debourse (2020), as well as Grayson (1975a: chap. 10).
[27] Jursa & Debourse (2020: 259f.).
[28] BHLT 3 (Grayson 1975a). The Dynastic Prophecy is as indicated by the name, a prophetically written text about the rise, reign, and downfall of several kings of the Neo- to Late Babylonian period.

Chronicles[29] from the recent and more remote pasts reflect the great interest of the priests in the history of their city and temple. The corpus of Babylonian Chronicles from the Hellenistic Period (BCHP), the largest body of texts among the chronicles, includes chronicles depicting the period of Macedonian conquests[30], but we also find chronicles of the late Achaemenid era[31] and from the Neo-Babylonian period[32]. Within these texts, too, the narrative of the priest guiding the king, legitimising him, and ensuring 'correct' execution of kingship is prevalent.[33]

Yet, as was mentioned above, the LBPL-texts did not only refer to the past but also addressed the future. Rituals may be dated mostly to the Hellenistic period[34], and—as with the BCHP corpus—some texts from the Achaemenid period[35] are preserved as well. The later texts are calendrical in nature with only short notes referring to the cultic actions that must be performed, while others may be described as more 'proper' ritual texts with more thorough instructions for single (longer) rituals.[36] Remarkably, many of the rituals were not known from earlier manuscripts; with the important exceptions of the Divine Love Lyrics[37] and the New Year Festival (NYF)[38] rituals, which are part of the cultic traditions of Mesopotamia, the ritual texts were novel creations of the Hellenistic period.[39]

References to the future found in the rituals do not exclude the interest in the past, which the LBPL-rituals share with the historical-literary compositions. They, thus, likely emerged within the same context, as can also be seen in the temporal frames and subjects chosen[40], as some texts refer to rituals no longer practised, while others also exhibit traits

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[29] For a list of the texts in question see Clancier (2009: 447f.), for editions, refer to Grayson (1975b), Glassner (2004), as well as the BHCP-corpus in Finkel & van der Spek "Mesopotamian Chronicles" *Livius* https://www.livius.org/sources/about/mesopotamian-chronicles/ (Accessed 08.06.2021).

[30] See Grayson (1975b: secs. 10, 11, 12, 13, 13B), as well as Finkel & van der Spek "Mesopotamian Chronicles", and an unpublished Fragment BM 34775 (Jursa & Debourse 2017: n. 39).

[31] See Grayson (1975b: secs. 9, 8).

[32] E.g. the Nabonidus Chronicle (Grayson 1975b: sec. 7; Waerzeggers 2015b).

[33] Jursa & Debourse (2020: 261).

[34] See for instance Linssen (2004) and George (2000). For an extensive list of literature refer to Jursa & Debourse (2020: n. 44).

[35] For instance BM 78076, a ritual for *Kislīmu*, edited by George (2000: 280–89). The colophon dates this text to the thirteen's year of Darius (I or II).

[36] Jursa & Debourse (2020: 262).

[37] See Edzard (1987), Lambert (1975), as well as Da Riva & Wasserman's current work on the corpus, accessible through *Oracc* http://oracc.museum.upenn.edu/lovelyrics/ (Accessed 03.07.2021).

[38] See Debourse (2020).

[39] Jursa & Debourse (2020: 262f.).

[40] Jursa & Debourse (2020: 263).

of antiquarianism[41]. One such text[42] refers to a historical event in a similar manner as historical-literary works and chronicles reference such events, indicating an especially strong coherence between these corpora.

Further similarities between the rituals and the historical-literary compositions are seen in language, orthography, palaeography, and the shape of the tablets: for the rituals, large library tablets with a minimum of two columns on each side were used, the same format was used for many historical-literary compositions. Paleographically, the majority of the tablets may be dated to the (late) 2nd century BCE. Both corpora exhibit similarities in the very distinctive language used. Thematically, the principal motifs of LBPL revolve around the aforementioned triangle of relationships between Babylon and the temples, the king, and the priests and their competencies.[43]

Furthermore, an important motif shared is the observance of cult in Babylon and at Esaĝila, with the priests as the main characters/leads whose role is the preservation of said cult, superseding the king in his former role as the supporter of the cult of Marduk.[44]

The historical-literary corpus is rather Babylon-centric, especially regarding the pseudepigraphical letters, where besides the city Marduk, Esaĝila, and the temple community's status are especially thematised.[45] The chronicles focus mostly on the city of Babylon, on the religious establishment within it, and its fate and development under (foreign) political powers. Events described that have taken place within the city are both of auspicious and ominous character and include the religious festivals[46] and matters that concern Esaĝila, such as building works[47], royal offerings[48], or at times even the activities

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[41]   E.g. the *Kislīmu* ritual (BM 32206+). It features multiple cultic agents (for instance the *nadītu*-priestess) who at that time no longer existed.

[42]   The text in question is BM 32656, in which a prayer to Šamaš references an Elamite invasion and the subsequent destruction of holy places. Jursa & Debourse (2020: 264) note a resemblance to the description of an Elamite attack on Babylonia by Kudur-Nuḫḫunte found in BM 34062. For the latter text, see Jursa & Debourse (2017).

[43]   Jursa & Debourse (2020: 264).

[44]   Ibid.

[45]   Ibid. See for instance BM 35404, a letter that is set in the Late Bronze Age: "Who is the king of Elam who cared for Esangila, has established [the freedom of corvée (kidinnu)] of the Babylonians and [declared] their freedom of taxes (šubarrûšunu)?" (Frazer 2015: no. 5.7), as well as BM 55467 (Frazer 2015: no. 6.7), wherein Nabopolassar describes the downfall of Babylonia through the Assyrian's plundering, the killing of the city's elders, as well as the sacking of Esaĝila (Jursa & Debourse 2020: 265).

[46]   For instance BM 36304 (Grayson 1975b: no. 8), or the NYF (see Bidmead 2002: 145–54; Debourse 2020; Grayson 1970).

[47]   E.g. BM 34660+36313, rev. 13, 33 (Grayson 1975b: no. 10), wherein rubble is removed following the Macedonian conquest.

[48]   E.g. BM 32440+32581+32585 (Grayson 1975b: no. 11).

of certain priests[49]. Finally, rituals focussed mostly on Esaĝila, however with consideration also being given to Babylon's 'lesser twin city,' Borsippa.[50]

The king was, compared to the priests, a more ambivalent figure whose behaviour could have been as commendable as it may have been wrong (though bad kings show a general tendency of being foreign) with divine approval versus punishment inflicted upon him, respectively. The 'good' king versus the 'bad' king are pitted against one another in various texts.[51] In the Dynastic Prophecy, we find such comparison, in which a good king should bring booty and wealth to his city and decorate the temples, while the evil king (there Nabonidus) would "oppress the land and [cancel] the festival of Es[aĝila] … (and) plot evil against Babylonia"[52].[53]

The first role of a king is to support Marduk, and when executed right, the favour would be reciprocated by the deity.[54] Thereby, the priest seemed to have played a mediatory role between king and deity, as may be seen for instance through a king's reference to good omens (a priest's competence) that he has received.[55]

Evil kings could be both foreign and legitimate, oppressing Babylonia, or not fulfilling their obligations to Marduk. To atone for his sins, a king may perform a 'negative confession'[56], wherein a priest removes his regalia, strikes his cheek and pulls his ear, and finally makes the king kneel before Marduk to make the negative confession that he has not sinned against Marduk, the temple, the city, or its privileged citizens. The confession may serve as an indication of what 'good' kingship looks like.[57]

The priest plays a central role in LBPL, often functioning as the lead actor, opposing older literature, where the position was usually filled by the king.[58] A passage from the NYF[59] illustrates the priest's importance through a eulogy spoken by Marduk on his chief priest, where he is practically depicted as superior to the king. His actions and tasks are

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[49] BHCP 10, 12.
[50] E.g. BM 40790 and BM 40854+ (Riva & Galetti 2018; Jursa & Debourse 2020: 266).
[51] This includes the present AŠU epic. Compare also with the King of Justice Text, which gives an example of a righteous king whose name is unfortunately lost (Schaudig 2001: 579–88).
[52] BHLT 3, ii 14-16 (Grayson 1975a).
[53] Jursa & Debourse (2020: 266f.).
[54] Jursa & Debourse (2020: 266–268).
[55] Jursa & Debourse (2020: 268). See for instance BM 55467 in Frazer (Frazer 2015: no. 6.7).
[56] See Debourse (2020: 133, 151).
[57] Jursa & Debourse (2020: 269). The passage in question is MNB 1848 rev. V 38-42, see Debourse (2020: 151).
[58] Ibid.
[59] BM 32655 obv. ii 2'-lo.e. See Debourse (2020: 168) and Jursa & Debourse (2017: 89–94).

individual and not overshadowed by the king's (who in most ritual texts has no agency at all)[60], and their importance may be observed for instance through the priest's role in the royal humiliation. He stands between king and deity being the king's intermediary to Marduk, performs the majority of rites, and manages the cult.[61] A reversed hierarchy seems to be indicated in a ritual text[62], wherein the priest who has a lower (social) prestige than the king leads the latter by the hand (as opposed to the actor with the higher prestige leading the priest). The priest was so central in LBPL that some are even found mentioned by name.[63]

In the end, in LBPL, the continuation and preservation of the native cult outweighed the importance of a king's partaking in it. The "wellbeing of Esaĝila and Babylon"[64] was the first of a priest's concerns. If a (foreign) king approached and meant to bring evil onto the deity, temple, and/or city, the priest could (and should) have rightfully stood up to him.[65]

The priestly community ascribed their authority in the vast, divine, and unrivalled knowledge they possessed, and the exclusiveness of its access.[66] They prided themselves on it, which may be seen, among other examples, in the pseudepigraphical exchange between Aššurbanipal and the Babylonian priests: the text states that the cultural and scholarly gifts bestowed by Marduk onto the Babylonians and specifically the priests are not available for foreigners or outsiders to acquire, not for learning, nor for tampering with.[67]

As was noted above, the corpus most central to the present thesis is that of the historical-literary genre, especially with respect to the group of texts that were composed contemporarily by the priests (or were copied off slightly older manuscripts), and which falsely claim ancient origins. The motivations for the genesis of those compositions are closely interwoven with the changing political and socio-economic landscapes of the time. On the grounds of the context given in this section, we can thus argue for a late composition date for the Adad-šuma-uṣur epic. As a next step, a thorough investigation

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[60] This is also because as part of the priestly community's lore, outsiders are not to be initiated into the performance of rituals.
[61] Jursa & Debourse (2020: 270).
[62] BM 32206+, see Çağirgan & Lambert (1991).
[63] See van der Spek BCHP 1, 8 https://www.livius.org/sources/content/mesopotamian-chronicles-content/bchp-1-alexander-chronicle/ (Accessed 30.06.2021), also ABC (Grayson 1975b: no. 8).
[64] See for an example of this focus the Amīl-Marduk epic (Grayson 1975a: chap. 8).
[65] As a courier does for instance in BM 34062.
[66] Jursa & Debourse (2020: 273f.).
[67] See Note 26, as well as Jursa & Debourse (2020: 274).

of the literary hero Adad-šuma-uṣur shall attempt to motivate the choice of his tale in the late epic.

2.2 *Adad-Šuma-Uṣur*

Especially when dealing with LBPL, it is important to differentiate between the historic Adad-šuma-uṣur, and the one portrayed by the later priests. In general, one must retain an awareness over contemporary and later sources, and when reviewing the later sources one must separate 'late' and 'very late' sources. Thereby 'contemporary' will refer to sources of the late Kassite period, *contemporary* with the historic AŠU. We understand 'late' sources to be post-humous of AŠU, but to tend temporally more towards the latter half of the first millennium, and 'very late' to refer to the Hellenistic and Seleucid eras.

This chapter strives to preserve these differentiae while attempting to draw a coherent picture of the historic king Adad-šuma-uṣur through both points (and times) of view. The lens through which the priests regarded the king will be discussed in Sections 4.1 and 4.4, where his depiction in the epic will be associated with the thematic core of the corpus. For now, we shall look at the attestations found thus far (Section 2.2.1), as well as the history that can be deduced from the sources (Section 2.2.2) to explore the foundatons with which the epic's authors worked and examine why the historic AŠU fit the LBPL narrative.

2.2.1   *Sources and Attestation*

Brinkman[68] has previously compiled a comprehensive list of sources mentioning and pertaining to AŠU. It will be briefly presented and summarised here, as well as augmented by the sources more recent research has identified. The sources will be differentiated by the type of source (chronological, epistolary, economic, votive, and miscellaneous sources), as well as the time of origin. As for literature, this list will provide the most recent/relevant publications but is by no means a complete bibliographical catalogue of the sources.

An asterisk* marks my additions to Brinkman's list. For a full list of abbreviations refer to Brinkman.

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[68]   Brinkman (1976: 89–94).

Chronological sources	Kinglist A ii 11'	E.g. Grayson (1983: 92).*
	A. 117, ii 7[69]	E.g. Chen (2020: 32, 67)*, copy i.a. by Weidner (1926: 66–77).
	Chronicle 21 1-10, CT XXXIV[70]	Tadmor (1958), Grayson (1972: 139; 1975b: chap. Chronicle 21), Glassner (2004: 176–183).*
	Chronicle 22/P, iv 7-9	Grayson (1972: nn. 874–875; 1975b: chap. chronicle 22), Glassner (2004: 278–281).*
	Chronicle 25 (BM 27796)	Walker (1982)*, Glassner (2004: 282–284).*
	Chronicle 21, CT XXXIV[71]	Tadmor (1958), Grayson (1972: 139; 1975b: chap. Chronicle 21).
Contemporary Sources	Several stamped bricks	
	CBS 8643	Copy by Hilprecht (1893: fig. 81), translation by Peters (1897: 165).
	IM 56103 (2 NT 482)	Copy by Hilprecht (1893: fig. 81), translation by Peters (1897: 165).
	4 NT 273	Oriental Institute photo No. 46677.
	5 NT 701	Oriental Institute photos Nos. 49063, 49208[72].
	IM 61768 (6 NT 1133)	Oriental Institute photo No. 50371.

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[69] Brinkman (1976: 89) notes that Weidner (1926: 70) copied [md]IM.MU.PAB, but that Brinkman's collation could only find traces of a *Personenkeil*.

[70] AŠU's name is badly broken in this passage, but, as Brinkman notes, the restoration seems to be the only one plausible given the traces and the chronology with Enlil-kudurri-uṣur.

[71] AŠU's name is badly broken in this passage, but, as Brinkman notes, the restoration seems to be the only one plausible given the traces and the chronology with Enlil-kudurri-uṣur.

[72] Photo of copy by Goetze.

	MMA 59.41.82 (6 NT 1134)	Spar (1988: 162f.)* & Plate 121.*
	Luristan bronze daggers, Foroughi Collection, Teheran	Dossin (1962: 151).
	XIII	Plate XIII.
	XIV	Plate XIV.
Kudurru		
	AS 3326	Scheil (1900: 97–98), Paulus (2014: 366–368).*
	BM 90827*	Paulus (2014: 402–415).*[73]
	IM 934*	Paulus (2014: 798–802).*[74]
	MAI I 9*	Paulus (2014: 480–484).*[75]
	CBS 9282+[?]*	Paulus (2014: 821f.).*[76]
	CBS 9469*	Paulus (2014: 823f.).*[77]
Economic texts[78]		
	U 7787d; I [?]-12-year 3	Copy by Gurney (1974: fig. 72).
	U 7789w; ?-18-year 3	Copy by Gurney (1974: fig. 37).
	U 7788m; ?-29-year 3+	Copy by Gurney (1974: fig. 10).
	U 7787v; III-25-year 7	Copy by Gurney (1974: fig. 9).

[73] In this *kudurru* of Meli-Šipak, AŠU is found mentioned multiple times, as well as his past actions.
[74] A broken name of a high officer in *i* 5 complicates the identification of the king. Paulus suggests Adad-šuma-iddina or AŠU (Paulus 2014: 798).
[75] In this *kudurru* of Marduk-apla-iddina, AŠU is mentioned in l. *i* 5, taking away land.
[76] This fragment of an inscription might be a fragment of the following *kudurru* CBS 9469. It is not clear when this text may be dated to, but Paulus (2014: 821) suggests the text either falls into the reign of Adad-šuma-uṣur or Nabû-kudurri-uṣur. Though no explicit information is given in either of the two fragments, they were included in the list for potential information one may draw regarding AŠU's period of reign.
[77] See Note 76.
[78] Brinkman (1976: 94) notes that it is unclear whether the Adad-MU-ŠEŠ from economic texts from Nippur (e.g. Ni. 6599 and Ni. 12453) is also the later king Adad-šuma-uṣur thematised here.

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IM 43981; II-4-year 12	Unpublished.
U 7788b, IV-22-year 12	Copy by Gurney (1974: fig. 8).
?; I-2[?]-year 13	Unpublished text in a private collection.[80]
IM 67708 = U 6715; V-25- year 13	Date partially published in Gadd & Legrain (1929: fig. 260).
U 7789f; X-2-year 6.kam.3.kam	Copy by Gurney (1974: fig. 33).
B. 69; IV-22-year 7.kam.3.kam	
B. 70; V-1-year 9.kam.3.kam	
U 7789h, IV 11+-?	Copy by Guney (1974: fig. 30).
U 7787n; ?-23-?	Copy by Gurney (1974: fig. 35); ´I`-20 mentioned in line 6.
U 7787[79]	Copy by Figulla & Martin (1953: fig. 259).
U 7787e	Copy by Gurney (1974: fig. 11); mentions RN in line 3.
U 7789b	Copy by Gurney (1974: fig. 41); mentions RN in line 3.
IM 85512*	Gurney (1983: 117f.).*
VA Bab. 4177 (137057)*	Transcription and translation by Paulus (2014: 364f.), as well as copy: Tafel 13c and Photo Tafel 13b.*

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[79] The date on this tablet is broken off. Brinkman (1976: 92) notes that despite his comments in ZA 59 (1969: n. 10), this and the following text should be assigned to AŠU's reign. He notes that for an unknown reason in these texts concerning water ordeals, the king bears the title *šakkanakku*.

[80] Brinkman remarked on a planned publication of an edition of this text in a later volume of the series, which however was never published.

	Letters	
	KBo 28.61-64*	Editions by Freydank (1991), Mora & Giorgieri (2004: 113–127); historical contextualization by Singer (2008).
	MS A$_2$ (Sm 2116 + BM 104727)*	Either a real or literary letter, likely earlier than the 7th c. BCE. Edition by Llop & George (2001)*; chronological contextualisation by Bányai (2015).*
Later Sources	Letters	
	VAT 17020*	Late copy(?)[81] of a letter sent by an Elamite king; van Dijk (1986).
	K. 3045	Neo-Assyrian copy of a letter by AŠU to Aššur-Nirari III; printed cuneiform characters by Harper (1909: fig. 924); transliteration and translation by Weidner (1959: 48). See also Borger (1964: 99) and Grayson (1972: nn. 888–91).
	Inscriptions	
	BM 36042	Late copy of an inscription of a bronze statue; partial translation by Winckler (1889: 46), copy by Winckler (1887: 19).
	Kudurru	
	BM 90827	Transliteration and translation by King (1912: 7–18); mentions the adjudication of a previous lawsuit

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[81] Pedersén (2005: 259f. no. 146). This is part of the 'N15' archive from Babylon. The tablet is from "Grube 31", which has provided tablets dated to Assurbanipal through to Darius (Pedersén 2005: 248). This conforms to the epigraphical dating of the tablet into the (later part of?) the Long Sixth Century (M. Jursa, personal communication).

	by AŠU.
AS 6035	Transcription by Scheil (1905: 42–43); Paulus (2014: 465–470)*.[82]
Historical-literary texts	
BM 34104 + 34126 + 34219 +34230 +34256 + 34339 + 34644 +34657	Published with a copy, transliteration, and translation by Grayson as BHLT 6 (1975a: 56–77).

For the various spellings of Adad-šuma-uṣur's name, refer to Brinkman (1969: 233–238; 1976: 93f.).

2.2.2   *The Historic Adad-Šuma-Uṣur*

Adad-šuma-uṣur (1216-1187 BCE) was the 32nd Kassite king mentioned both in the Babylonian king list (A ii 11), as well as in the synchronistic king list (ii 7).[83] His governor was Enlil-šuma-imbi.[84] Not much is known about his origins and the knowledge present is inconsistent. A bronze dagger inscription filiates AŠU as the son of Kaštiliašu (IV)[85], while his father's name is given as *Dunna-Saḫ* (*du-un-na-*[d][*za*]*-aḫ*) in a Neo-Babylonian copy of a letter of an Elamite nobleman to Babylonia[86]. It also mentions that he hailed from a region at the bank of the Euphrates (l. 30).[87] No such man, however, is attested to have been king, and if we follow Chronicle P/22 iv 9's claim that AŠU was placed on his father's throne, it would lead to one of three possible conclusions: a. the information is incorrect, meaning Dunna-Saḫ was *not* AŠU's father, b. the mentioned individual is only

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[82]   This *kudurru* mentions an unsealed land grant by AŠU to Adad-bēl-kala.
[83]   Radner (2008: 235).
[84]   Beaulieu (2018: 146).
[85]   See Dossin (1962: 151) for a transliteration and translation and Plate XIII for the photos. Beaulieu (2018: 147) seems to support the idea that AŠU was a son of Kaštiliašu IV, but as will be shown below, the evidence is inconclusive.
[86]   The letter VAT 17020 was sent from Elam to the *rabûtu* of Babylon. It tried to convince the recipients that the succession to the Babylonian throne should go through the Elamite-Babylonian union/line. The answer is preserved in a 'Kedor-laomer Text' in the British Museum and rejects those claims to the throne, claiming an Elamite-Babylonian coexistence to be 'absurd' (Singer 2008: 230f.).
[87]   Van Dijk (1986: 160f.). Singer (2008: 233) suggests that *šá aḫi* [íd]*Puratti*[ki] 'bank of the Euphrates' may refer to the narrow-irrigated trough of the Middle Euphrates. That would suggest that AŠU was not of Babylonian origin, which in turn would go against the Elamite idea of an heir descendant from Babylonian-Elamite matrimonies.

a distant relative of AŠU[88], or finally c. that AŠU was not the son of a king at all[89]. Singer suggests that an Elamite letter might not be a bad source to determine the filiation of the Kassite king, given that it would not seek to uphold an image in favour of AŠU's claim to the throne.[90] Though the very same reason might also speak against the reliability of the so-called 'Elamite Letter' (as a means to further the argument of an installation of an Elamite-Babylonian heir to the Babylonian throne), Singer notes the scribe's thorough knowledge of the Babylonian succession line and points out that at times it is even more reliable than Chronicle P/22.[91]

Singer suggests further backing of the Elamite Letter's claim of AŠU's origin through the reference to the Suḫaeans in the Adad-šuma-uṣur epic. The Land of Suḫi, following Brinkman, "stretched from the border of Babylonia at Rapiqu […] to about Hindanu on the middle Euphrates"[92], where Singer postulates *aḫi* [iD]*Puratti*[ki] to be, whence Dunna-Saḫ supposedly came from.[93] We find mention of Suḫaeans in the epic (iv 10, 18), though the context remains obscure. Singer, however, suggests those mentions of Suḫaeans might be explainable by AŠU's Suḫaean origin, but as will be argued in Section 4.1, this suggestion is acknowledged but rejected here. Following our present interpretation of the epic, they are more likely to refer to enemies defeated by Adad-šuma-uṣur following his coronation. Further, in a letter from TNI to Šuppiluliuma[94], an ìr *ša* [kur]*su-ḫi* 'servant of Suḫa' is named on multiple occasions and is portrayed as an opponent of TNI. Contrary to Durand & Marti[95] who propose the 'servant of Suḫa' refers to Kaštiliašu, Singer proposes that it is, in fact, AŠU[96], whom TNI sought to delegitimise as an heir to the throne after he had

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[88]   Radner (2008: 235).

[89]   Another fourth suggestion is given by van Dijk (1986: n. 17), in which *Dunna-Saḫ* is, despite the male determinative, AŠU's mother, and the wife of Kaštiliašu, given as genealogies in the document are given through the maternal line. Bányai (2015: 13) also adopts this interpretation. The suggestion is, however, rejected by Singer (2008: 232) on the basis that a. Babylonian Chronicles and King Lists cannot be taken definitively regarding their filiation statements, b. the dagger from Luristan, on the assumption that it is authentic, must have been ordered by AŠU who would have wanted to portray himself as Kaštiliašu's legitimate heir. Singer also notes that this is the only contemporary source of AŠU's that lists his filiation. If indeed AŠU had been Kaštiliašu's legitimate heir, one would expect to see this filiation on the king's various inscriptions, as well.

[90]   Singer (2008: 233).

[91]   Singer (2008: 231).

[92]   Brinkman (1968: n. 1127).

[93]   See also note 87 above.

[94]   KBo 28.61-64, see Mora & Giorgieri (2004).

[95]   Durand & Marti (2005: 128).

[96]   Singer (2008: 239). His argument is that if indeed Kaštiliašu were referenced here, the letter would

already robbed him of it. AŠU would not have had any right to a legitimate succession to the Babylonian throne as a Suḫaean of non-Babylonian origin, and thus was perhaps deemed undeserving of being mentioned by name.

Ultimately, one may conclude that AŠU's origin is highly obscure, and though a legitimate claim to the throne is possible, several circumstances, such as the noticeable lack of filiation mentioned in his inscriptions and his possibly Suḫaean or Middle-Euphratean origin, suggest he had no prior (filial) relations to the Kassite dynasty.

No less complicated is the reconstruction of his reign. Preceded by three puppet kings installed on the Babylonian throne by TNI[97], AŠU is perhaps best known for his accession through the rebellion against the Assyrian king who had reigned for seven years over Babylon[98]. Following Chronicle P, the rebellion was led by the 'great' of Babylon, whose plot involved the insertion of a new, *Babylonian* king[99] who ascended the throne directly after the Assyrian retreat[100]. One should acknowledge Bányai's suggestion that the uprising was initiated after Kaštiliašu V's 'peaceful' death, but perhaps consider TNI's brutal reign over Babylon as the more likely reason for rebellion.[101]

Unfortunately, the section between AŠU's accession and his war with Enlil-kudurrī-uṣur (EKU) is badly broken, so that it is impossible to say what exactly happened after the rebellion against TNI.

Despite the powerful backing AŠU supposedly enjoyed, he brought Babylon and Northern Babylonia under his control only after 1192, particularly after the defeat and

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have had to be written a decade earlier than it was. It would have had to be composed during the "apex of Tukultī-Ninurta's victories", which would contradict the contents of the letter that describe TNI's low point. Further, the eponym given with the letter, namely that of Ilī-padâ, who was a prominent grand vizier of Assyria and father of EKU's successor, hints even more to a dating in the latest part of TNI's reign, perhaps even after the loss of Babylon to AŠU.

[97]   The supposed puppet kings were Enlil-nādin-šumi, Kadašman-Harbe, and Adad-šuma-iddina, who altogether 'reigned' for 9 years prior to AŠU's ascent (Singer 2008: 227). See the discussion further below on Babylon's reign prior to AŠU's rebellion against Enlil-kudurri-uṣur.

[98]   In the Elamite letter, ll. 30-32, he is called an "usurper who seized the throne of Babylon after eliminating another claimant […], 'the son of the daughter'" (Singer 2008: 232).

[99]   See Grayson (1975b), Chronicle 22/P iv 8, but also refer to Sections 4.1 and 4.4 below for further discussion on the responsible *rabbanê*, the rebellion, and AŠU's role in the undertaking.

[100] Singer (2008: 227). Unfortunately, the crucial part concerning the overthrow of TNI is not preserved in Chronicle P, as the text continues with AŠU und EKU's battle, which is mentioned further below.

[101] See Bányai (2015: 21).

22

capture[102] of EKU (1196-1192), the successor of Aššur-nārārī[103], and the deposition of a puppet king following another rebellion.[104] Bányai mentions that the earliest attested regnal year of AŠU's would be his tenth and that a few years after the interregnum he still waited in Assyria for an opportunity to claim power over Babylon.[105]

Chronicle 25[106] suggests that AŠU conquered Babylon and northern Babylonia only after his defeat over and capture of EKU[107], which would have taken place about 25 years after the revolt against TNI:

> Prior to his defeat of Enlil-kudur-usur Adad-shuma-usur had not been in control of Babylon nor recognized as king there. This suggests that for the whole of his [first] twenty five years he had been recognized as king only in southern Babylonia, leaving the Assyrians or their nominees in control of Babylon.[108]

The altercation between AŠU and EKU was, following Walker, likely provoked by EKU who launched an attack on Babylon (where the battle would have taken place, thus allowing AŠU to conquer it).[109] Chronicle 25 ll. 9-10 then speaks of a revolt raised by AŠU, finally placing him firmly on the throne. An eleventh line mentions the murder of a 'him', which following Bányai[110] can only refer to AŠU.

The AŠU epic thus tells of an anachronistic tale by linking the rebellion of the 'great'

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[102] EKU was supposedly turned over to AŠU by the *rabûtu*. This is known from a latter manuscript of a literary letter K. 212+4448, and parallels, section MS A₂ Rs. 2'-8' (Llop & George 2001; Radner 2008: 236). Chronicle 25 3-5 documents EKU's arrest, as well, though the actors handing him over are not specified.

[103] Grayson (1975b), Chronicle 21 ii 3-8.

[104] Radner (2008: 235f.), Walker (1982: 400f.). Whether or not a puppet king was defeated during the rebellion is unclear. See further below the discussion of the "son of a nobody". It is notable at this point that we find mention of at least two grand rebellions at the forefront of which was AŠU. I will return to this point later discussing the temporal and thematic context of the AŠU epic.

[105] Bányai (2015: 17).

[106] See Walker (1982: 405) and Glasner (2004: 282f.). Specifically Chronicle 21, ll. 7-10.

[107] AŠU's establishment as king in Southern Babylonia may, however, be confirmed through the many economic texts dated to the earlier years of his listed 30-year reign, excavated in Southern Babylonia. Refer to the list of sources on AŠU in Section 2.2.1 above.

[108] Walker (1982: 405).

[109] Chronicle 21 *ii* 3-6 (e.g. Tadmor 1958: 131) backs this assumption, through the mention of Ninurta-apil-Ekur's return to Assyria. If it did not take place in (Northern) Babylon(ia) specifically, one could, at the very least, rule Assyria out.

[110] Bányai (2015: n. 20). Lines 10 and 11 are divided by a ruling, which would normally be atypical for two lines referring to the same person. Bányai (2015: 13), however, mentions that, as also suggested by Walker, Chronicle 25 draws its contents from an atypical source, and follows the notational concept of 'Babylonian offence against Assyria' 'the then following punishment'.

of Babylon against Tukultī-Ninurta to the, here, subsequent coronation of AŠU in Babylon. This rightfully raises the question of whether the rebellion depicted in column *i* (and possibly the beginning of column *ii*) was the rebellion AŠU raised in Chronicle 25, ll. 9-10. That, however, seems unlikely. Although we do not find TNI mentioned by name anywhere in the epic, his central role in LBPL as well as the synchrony with the *rabûtu* orchestrating the rebellion against him in Chronicle P and the epic prompts the interpretation that *he* is the tyrant defeated in the present text.[111]

Opinions diverge on who ruled Babylon and Northern Babylonia during the 25-year interregnum of Adad-šuma-iddina and AŠU. Walker[112] believes that Assyria retained its control over Babylon during that time, perhaps, as suggested above, until 1192[113], employing puppet kings to rule the city and its surrounding lands. He bases this assumption for instance on the mention of a "son of a nobody" in Chronicle 25, l. 8. This opinion was later also held by Grayson who claimed about the AŠU epic that it described "an account of the revolt in Babylon against the *Assyrian nominee* [emphasis added] and in favour of Adad-šuma-uṣur"[114], the 'Assyrian nominee' likely being synonymous for a puppet king. Singer[115] refutes the assumption, admitting that although an Assyrian rule (with its nominees) is a possibility, a continuous power struggle within the city may have also been a likely reality. He suggests there was a power vacuum within which various parties tried to promote their candidates for the Babylonian throne.[116] With the period preserved very poorly (at least as far as can be said for political history), Singer argues that it would be difficult to say who reigned and for how long. As for the "son of a nobody", Singer claims that it might well have been AŠU himself (or his father) who was addressed, given his unclear and dubious lineage.

From the political struggles, both locally and internationally, one may deduce that the king's relations to Assyria remained tense.[117] Later, Ninurta-apil-Ekur (1191-1179), a

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[111]   The anachronism should not bother us too much, as the epic does not claim to be historically accurate or informative, as for instance a chronic would. LBPL motivations for the compositions of such texts may clarify any doubts regarding the historicity of the epic's contents. Refer to Section 4.4 for further discussion.

[112]   See Walker (1982: 408f.).

[113]   Radner (2008: 236).

[114]   Grayson *apud* Walker (1982: 407).

[115]   Singer (2008: 229).

[116]   Singer (2008: 237).

[117]   In a letter from AŠU to the "kings of Assyria" Aššur-nārārī III (1202-1197) and Ilī-padâ (grand vizier

son of Ilī-padâ, an Assyrian grand vizier, became an ally in the war and AŠU later supported him accordingly in his accession to the Assyrian throne[118], likely bettering the relations. In the chronicle's manuscript, two rulings divide the section of AŠU's rebellion from a section on a campaign against Mari (the middle section being broken) which includes the removal of the "the king of Mari in a rebellion".[119] This conquest of Mari might thus refer to a different king.

AŠU built or at least strengthened Imgur-Enlil, a Babylonian wall, giving the city (then at the latest) its familiar rectangular shape.[120] He is also known to have renewed Nippur's city walls from Chronicle 25 l. 2[121], as well as renovated Ekur[122]. Following Tukultī-Ninurta's reign, he is said to have 'peacefully' rebuilt Babylon.[123]

The circumstances of AŠU's death are unclear. Earlier editions of Chronicle 21[124] suggested that the phrase *ina qabli tidūkuma* (col. ii 5) be interpreted as AŠU and EKU having both been killed in combat (possibly killing each other[125]). Tadmor[126] rejects this interpretation suggesting *tidūku* refers to the noun 'battle', as opposed to a verbal form. He suggests that after a fire broke out in AŠU's camp, he returned to Babylon, and did not die. Three rulings after the chapter on AŠU and EKU's battle, Chronicle 25 mentions the killing of a person in a rebellion (l. 18), though it is uncertain whether the individual is AŠU or a later ruler.[127] Finally, he was succeeded by his son Meli-Šipak.[128]

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and "King of Ḫanigalbat") he mocks the recipients as drunkards and idiots (Harper 1896: 924), depicting at the very least a fraction of the nature of Babylonian-Assyrian relations. It must be noted, however, that the only beginning of the letter is extant and the context is rather difficult to determine. (Radner 2008: 236).

[118] Radner (2008: 236), Grayson (1983: 111), King List 9 §50.

[119] Chronicle 25, ll. 12-13, see Walker (1982: 401, 410). It is unclear who the king of Mari was at the time. Ḫana and Mari were still seen in some way synonymously (by some) at the time (Podany 2002: 74) and were also often listed together (compare Grayson 1972: 119). Following TNI's conquest of the regions (and his later defeat), no records of new kings remain until Tiglath-Pileser's reign, nearly a century later (see Podany 2014: 57). It is thus difficult to contextualise, though a link to a later king than AŠU seems most plausible (see also Singer 2008: 229).

[120] Radner (2008: 236); George (1999: 551).

[121] Walker (1982).

[122] Attested through the stamped bricks: CBS 8643, IM 56103, 4 NT 273, 5 NT 701, IM 61768, MMA 59.41.82 (Brinkman 1976: 90). Refer to Section 2.2.1 above for the numerous sources of AŠU.

[123] BM 27796 (Chronicle 25) l.2. See Walker (1982: 405).

[124] E.g. Winckler AOF, II, 343, Schnabel (1908).

[125] Weidner (1917: 76); Tadmor (1958: 131).

[126] Tadmor (1958: 131f.).

[127] Since the next section deals with Enlil-nādin-apli's campaign to Aššur, it is more likely that the killed individual might be Nebuchadnezzar II or a different individual of the Neo-Babylonian or Neo-Assyrian period.

[128] See Radner (2008: 235).

Adad-šuma-uṣur provided an ideal narrative to the Late Babylonian priests: with the guidance of (and dependency on) Babylon-based leaders/figures, he rebelled against the tyrant king Tukultī-Ninurta I who is no stranger to the LBPL corpus. The AŠU epic is thus not to be seen as a historical source for the Kassite's time, but actually for that of the Late Babylonian period. The various historical inconsistencies observed in the epic should not confuse us with the Kassite king's chronology; the story depicted here serves a narrative unrelated to Kassite politics and ideologies, but very well related to Late Babylonian ones.

3 Edition

3.1 The Tablet

The physical tablet originally measured approximately 19x19cm. Its remains had to be reconstructed through several joins: to BM 34644 (an old museum join of sp II, 127 + 81-7-6. 191) Lambert joined BM 34104 (sp 204), BM 34230 (sp 228), and BM 34339 (sp 454), Grayson added the joins of BM 34219 (sp 325), BM 34230 (sp 336), and BM 34657 (sp II, 140), and Sollberger joined BM 34256 (sp 363).[129] No further joins were made for the present edition. Previous copies of the epic include those of BM 34657 by Pinches, published as CT 51 by Walker[130], and that of all the (known and/or joined) fragments by Grayson in BHLT 6, to which is now added a new copy in the present edition.

As far as the dating of the tablet goes, the tablet is of (very) Late Babylonian origin. A further, more detailed discussion will follow in Sections 4.2 and 4.3. The provenance is quite certainly Babylon, and we can probably assign the text to the historical-literary section of the temple library of Esaǧila. Following Grayson, the manuscript shows very similar handwriting to various other texts featured in BHLT[131], thus suggesting the same scribe or several similarly educated ones to have produced them, and in turn prompting the same provenance, which, however, cannot be determined more precisely than 'Babylonian'.[132] In its LBPL context, we can say with more certainty, however, that the manuscript belongs to a section of Esaǧila, making its provenance Babylon.

Though the tablet is badly broken—Grayson noting that about a third to half of it is missing[133]—the contents are roughly intelligible: the epic recounts Adad-šuma-uṣur's ascent to the throne through the rebellion again Tukultī-Ninurta I, from his choosing as the next king by the *rabbanê* to his establishment as king over the vast lands of Babylonia. Though Grayson initially assumed the rebellion depicted to be one aimed at AŠU himself, he later revised his assumption to the text being "an account of the revolt in Babylon against the Assyrian nominee and *in favour* of Adad-šuma-uṣur".[134]

The historical epic shows no mythological themes, though its historicity should be

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[129]   Grayson (1975a: 59).
[130]   Grayson (1975a: 59); see Walker (1972: fig. 77).
[131]   Grayson (1975a: 41). Refer to Section 4.2 for a more thorough epigraphic commentary.
[132]   Grayson (1975a: 44).
[133]   Grayson (1975a: 59).
[134]   See Grayson *apud* Walker (1982: 407).

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considered critically. Given multiple of its thematic and linguistic features, the epic was previously assumed to be pseudepigraphical, an assumption supported here, too. Falling under the historical-literary corpus of LBPL, it is posed that the epic was composed much later than the period during which its hero lived. Refer to Section 54.4 for further discussion.

3.2 Copy

i

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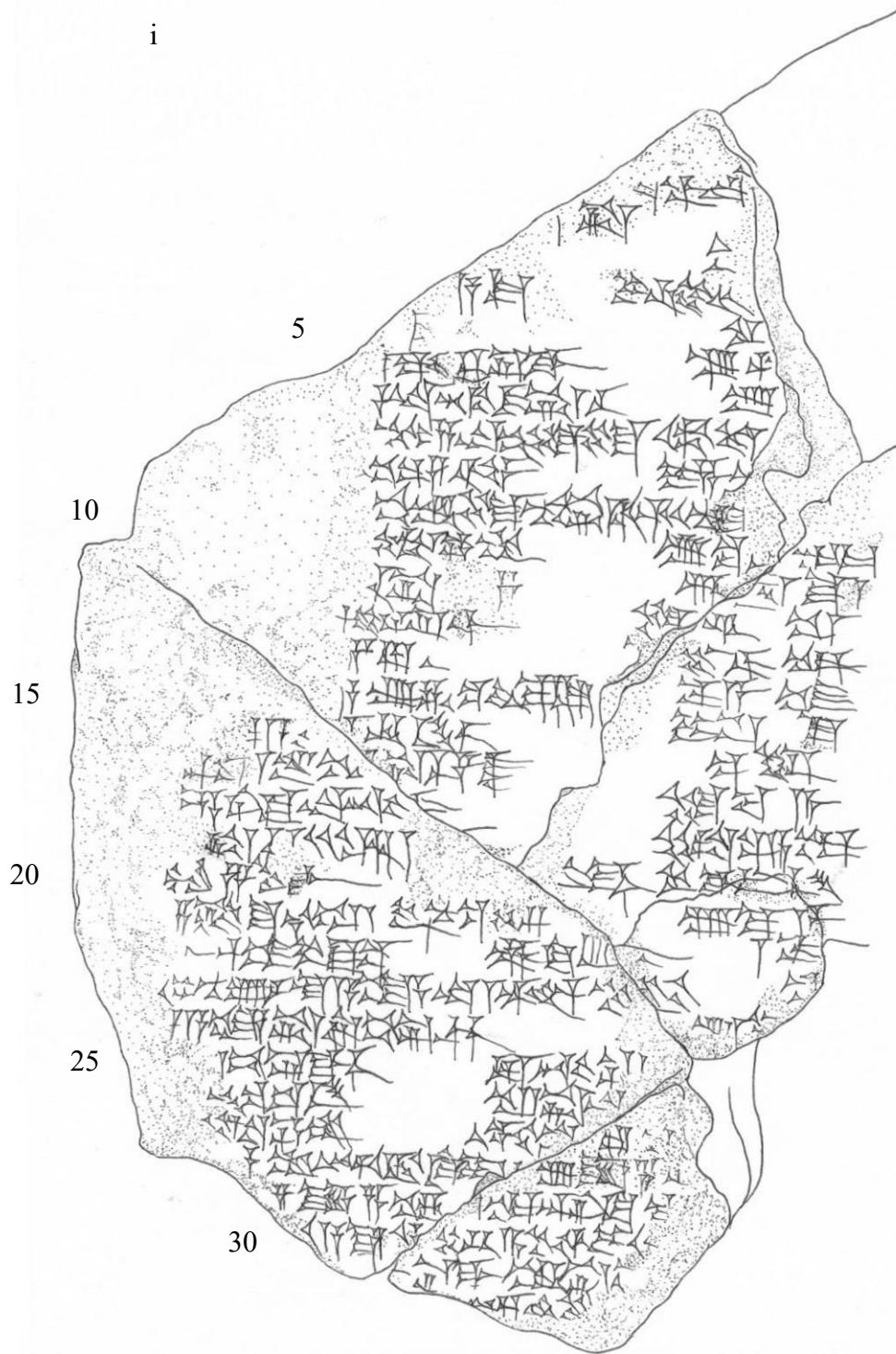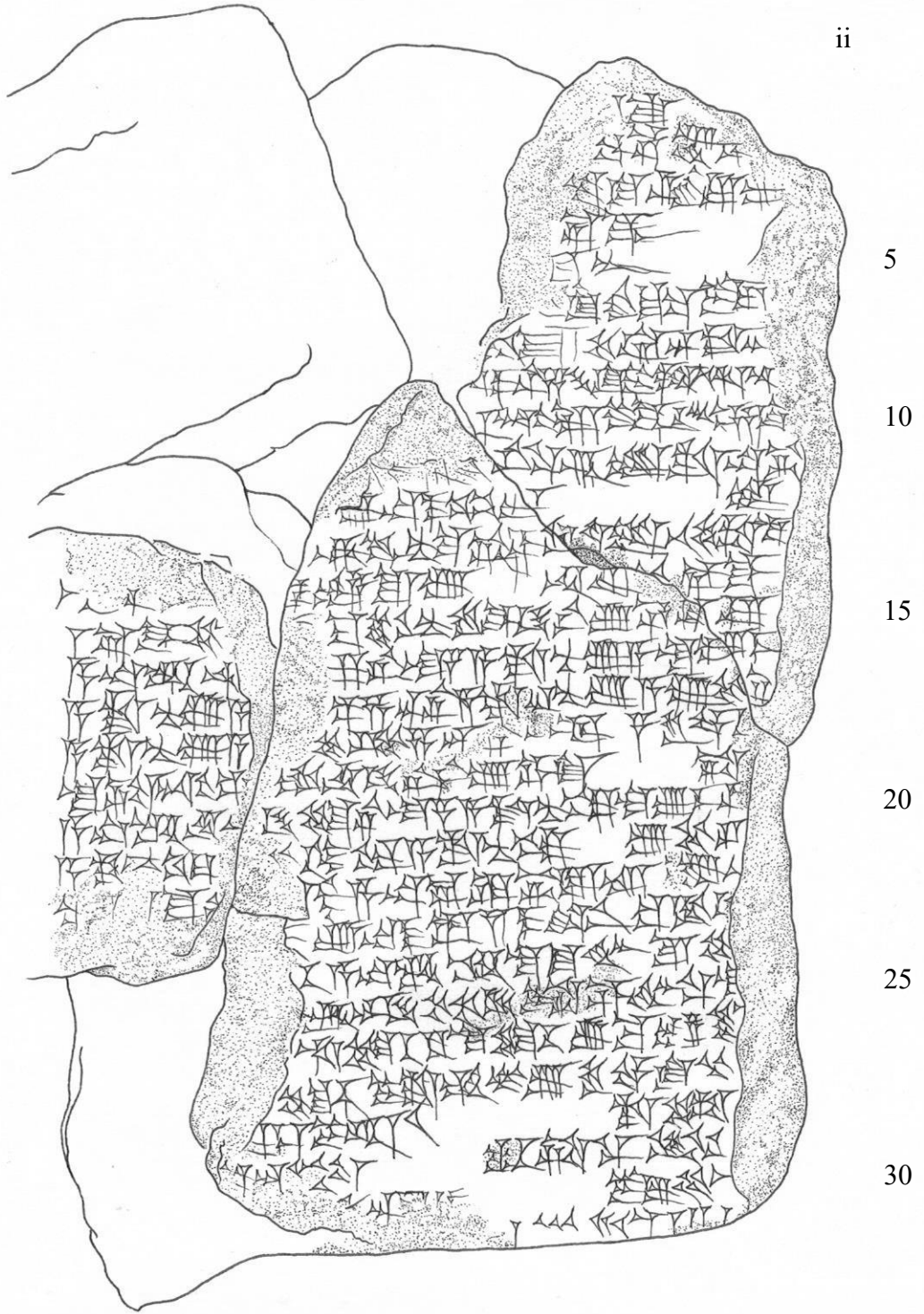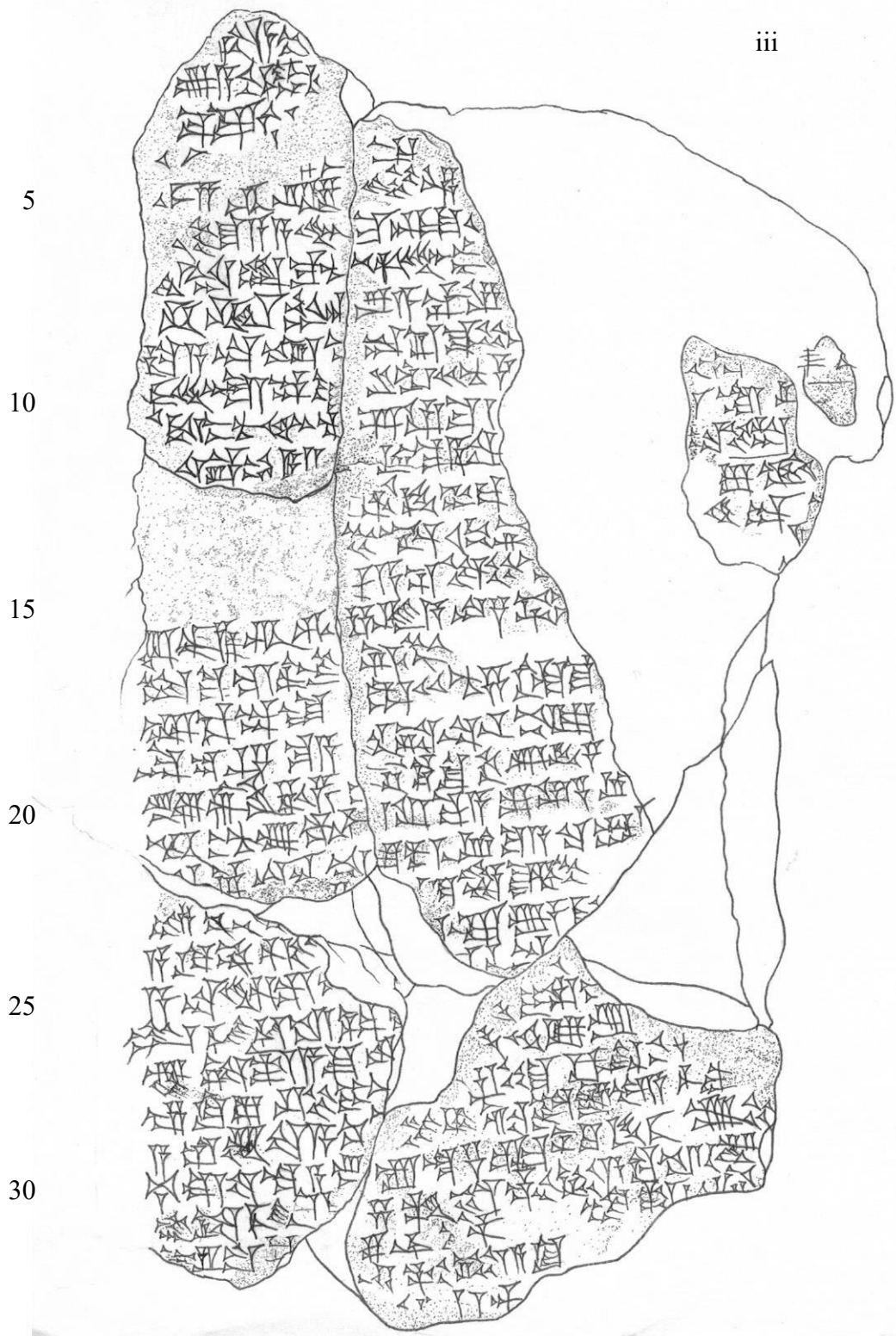
3.3 Transcription and Translation

The base of the present edition formed the one published as A. K. Grayson's BHLT 6. Differences to Grayson's edition are indicated through an asterisk (*) following the differing reading (this includes also signs which are identified in Grayson's edition but are given a different reading). Not marked are the added normalisations of unspecified Sumerograms, and vice versa the added signs of logographic readings.

3.3.1   i

Obverse

Lacuna (min. 5 lines)

1   [… …] x pi lam(?) [...]

2   [… …] ta [...]

3   [… …] *i*-[...]

4   [… …] a ku *i-nam-din*-[x x x]

5   [… …] (empty space) r[u x]

6   [… …] x ˹*ana*(diš)*˺*kirî*(giš.kiri$_6$) *ekalli*(é.gal) *ú-r*[*i*(?)-*id*/*du*(?)]

7   [… …]-*a na-bal-kát-ta-šú ú-b*[*a*(?)-*a*]

8   [… …] *mu-un-na-bi-tu-tu ul-te-l*[*i*]*

9   [… …] x *egirrê*(inim.gar) *damiqi*(sig$_5$) *i-za-a*[*m-mur*(?)]

10   [… …] x-*bi* ^{d}*Bēl*(en) *tu-kul-ta-ka man-nu ki*-[*i*(?) *šá**-*a**-*šú**]

11   [… … *ḫa*(?)-*a*]*l*(?)-*le-e šarri*(šàr) *ú-ma-a*[*k*]-*ka-ku*

12   [… … *i*]*t-ta*-[*aṣ**-*ṣ*]*a** *ri-gim-su**

13   [… … *ana*] *kirî*([*gi*]š.kiri$_6$) *ekalli*(é.gal) *tu-ri-du*

14   [… …] *šá ur-ru-šu-u*ʾ *l*[*u*]-*bu-ši-ka*

15   [… …]-*ia ú-ḫa-am-ma-ṭu* ([0]*) *ma-a-tu$_4$*

16   [… …] x a x x *bēlē*(en)^{meš}-*šú i-du-ku*

17   [… … *i-n*]*a*(?)* *muḫḫi*(˹ugu˺$^{?}$)* *šēpē*(gìr)-*ka ta-maš-šá-áš kirâ*(giš.kiri$_6$)

18   [… … *du*(?)*]-*un*(?)*-*ni-ku na-bal*-[*k*]*át tu-ba-a*

19   [… …]-*ta ki**-*niš tat*-[*taš**-*š*]*i** *li-qa-a-ka*

20   [… …]*mun-iá* ^{lú*}gal* ([x (x)]) ^{lú}gal ^{lú}*rabbanê*(gal.dù)^{meš}

21   [*ana*(diš)* ^{lú*}]*za**-*qap at-tar-du ana*(diš) ^{lú}*nukaribbi*(nu.giš.kiri$_6$) *ú-ba-a*

33

Lacuna (min. 5 lines)

1-3   Too broken for translation.

4   [… …] … he gives/will give […]

5   [… …] … […]

6   [… …*he w*]*ent down to the* garden of the palace,

7   [… …] … […] he seeks his *rebellion*.

8   [… …] (the) fugitives he has then brought [up].

9   [… …] (of?) good reputation he *sin*[*gs*]/*will sin*[*g*]:

10   "[… …] … Bel is your help, who (is) like [*him*]*?*

11   [… … that(?) the *le*]*gs* of the king he *spreads*/will *spread*."

12   [… …*he*] let out his shout.

13   "[*When/after* …] you descended […*to*] the garden of the palace.

14   "[… …] (you?) whose garments are very filthy.

15   "[… …] my […] they (will) burn down the land

16   "[… …] … his lords they killed.

17   "[… …] … you will wipe the garden from your feet.

18   "[… …] (through) your strength, you seek rebellion.

19   "[… …] (the) … rightfully you supported in a trustworthy manner—take (it) for yourself!"

20   [… …]-MUN-ya the chief (…) *the rabbanê/great ones*.

21   "' [To the] fruit gardener I descended. The gardener, I sought.

22 [*ultu*(ta)* *ḫi*-]ˊ*ṭì*ˋ*-tu₄* ˡú*ašlāku*(túg.ud) *un-de-sa-nu ana-ku*

23 [x x (x)] *mi-nu-ú šú-la-a-tu₄ a-na* ᵐᵈ*Adad-šuma-uṣur*(im.mu.šeš) *šar*[*ri*](lu[gal])

24 [*šú-l*]*a-a-tu₄ šá ultu*(ta) *lìb-bi ekalli*(é.gal)*-šú* [*l*]*a ú-ṣ*[*u-ú*(?)]

25 [*i-n*]*a*(?) [*l*]*ìb-bi ekalli*(é.gal)*-šú ib-bal-kit* [(*ana*) *šarri*(lugal)…]

26 [… …]ᵐᵉš ᵍⁱš*narkabāti*(gigir)ᵐᵉš *iš-ta-k*[*a-an* …]

27 [… …*šu*]*-le-e šarri*(šàr) *ina*(aš) *kišādi*(gú)*-ka ú-*[*šaššāka** (?)]

28 [*áš-šú* (?)* *šu*-*le*]-ˊ*e*ˋ *šarri*(šàr) *ina*(aš) *ti-ik-ki-i*<*a*>* ŠUBᵘ *qabli*(múru)*-iá i*[*p*-*paṭ*-*ṭa*-ˊ*ra**]

29 [*a*-*šaḫ*-*ḫaṭ** *ṣubātu*(túg)*] *šá qabli*(múru)*-iá il-la-ka-an-ni di-*ˊ*ma-a*-ˋ*-*[*ti/tu*-*ia/a**]

30 [… …] x(*ḫa*?*)*-a pur-ru-us a-mat pi-i* x […]

31 [… …] *ina*(aš) *ekalli*(é.gal) *il*-*ta*-x(*ka*?*) […]

32 [… …] x *muḫ-ḫi* L[Ú…]

Lacuna (min. 1 line)

3.3.2   ii

Lacuna (min. 2 lines)

1 [… …] x [… …]

2 [… …] x *su* [… …]

3 [… …] x *pe-e* Iḫ x [… …]

4 [… …*ul**]-*te-di-gi-lu ú* [… …]

5 [… …] *ekallu*(é.gal) [… …]

6 [… …] ˊ*ku*ˋ-*nu* [… …]

7 [… …] x* *itti*(ki) ˡú*ašlāki*(túg.ud) *i-dab-*[*bu-ub/bu*]

8 [… …]-*tu₄* ᵏᵘʳ*Kár-*ᵈ*da-an-*[*ni*-(*iá**)-*áš**]

9a [… …] x *pa-ni-iá*

9b *ki-i it-ti* ᵐᵈ[x* x* x*]

10 [… *šá** *i*]*b-bal-kit* ˡú*rabbûti*(gal)ᵐᵉš *un-de-*[*su*-*in*-*nu**]

11 [… …] ˊx̌ˋ* [*ina*(aš)*] *qaq-qa-ri uq-ṭa*-*na-ta-*[*ru*-*in*-*nu**]

12 [… …]-*ú na-áš-qu-ú šēpē*(gìrᴵᴵ)-ˊ*e*ˋ*-*[*a**]

13 [*za*-*qip*-*tu** *ina** sag*-*iá**] *il-tak-nu-ma ga-ši*-*ru*-ˊ*tú*ˋ *uk-tel*-*li-lu-*[*in*-*nu**]

14 *amātu*(in[im]*ˊᵐᵉšˋ*) ˊ*šá**ˋ*lu*[gal(?)* *i-š*]*á-as-su-ú adi*(en) *lìb-*ˊ*bi*ˋ *ekalli*(é.gal) [*iššemmâ**]

35

22 "'It is me who the washerman cleansed [of the e]vil deed.'

23 "[*(I said):*] 'which garrisons are (would be?) (on the side) of a king Adad-šuma-uṣur?'

24 "'[The *gar*]risons, which did [*not*] co[*me out*] from his (the present king's) palace

25 "'[With]in his palace *they* rebelled [against the king]

26 "'[… …] chariots he/they? established […]

27 "'[… …the *re*]moval of the king I [make] your [*responsibility*]'

28 "[*Because the re*]moval of the king was charged against me, [*I ungird*] my loins,

29 "[*I take off*] my loin[*cloth*], my tears flow."

30 [… …] the interpretation of the utterance […]

31 [… …] in the palace he/they […]

32 [… …] upon/against […]

Lacuna (min. 1 line)

Lacuna (min. 2 lines)

1-3 Too broken for translation.

4 [… …th]ey transferred …

5 [… …] palace […]

6 [… …] your […]

7 [… …] … with the launderer he spea[ks … …]

8 [… …] … Kārdun[iaš … …]

9a "[… …] … before me:

9b "When/as with [PN …]

10 "[… (*those*(?) *who*)] *rebelled*, the(se) officers *clea*[*nsed me*]

11 "[… …] …on the ground, they constantly fumigate [*me*]

12 "[… …] …they are kissing [my] feet [… …]

13 "They put [the (royal) emblem on my head] and they crowned [*me*] with (the sign of?) superior power"

14 The words that the *ki*[*ng sh*]*outed* [*were heard*] inside the palace:

36

15   *ana*(diš) *ekalli*(é.gal) *l*[*i*-r*]*u*-ba-in-nu rabbanû*(^{lú}gal^{meš} dù^ú) *Bābìli*(e)^{ki} *lu-*[*uš*-me**]

16   *a-na* ^d*Bēl*(en) *bēl*(en) [*bēlē*(en)^{meš}] ⸢*lu*⸣-*ṣal-la šá a-da-nu-ú-a la ú-maš-*[*šá*-ra*-an*-ni**]

17   *a-da-nu-ú-a* [*ú-š*]*e-eṣ-ṣa-an-ni a-da-an-nu-ú-a ú-še-reb-*[*an*(?)*-ni*]

18   *a-da-nu-ú-a* [*ú*]*-še-ze-za-an-ni ina*(aš) *puḫri*(unkin) *šá* ^{lú}*ummāni*(érin)^m[^{eš} (^{lú*})*rab-banê*(gal*.dù*) *iqbi*(e)*]

19   *la ta-pal-là*[*ḫ*] *šar*(lugal) *bēlē*(en)^{meš}-*ni banû*(dù)^ú *Bābìli*(e)^{ki} *ta-*[(*šemme*)*]

20   *a-na* ^d*Bēl*(en) *bēl*(en) *b*[*ēlē*](en?)^{meš} *tu-ṣal-la šá a-da-nu-ka la ú-maš-ši-*[*ra*-ka**]

21   *a-*⸢*da-nu*⸣*-ka* [*ú*]*-še-ṣu-ka a-da-nu-ka ú-še-r*[*e-ib*(?)**-ka*]

22   *k*[*i*-i**] ⸢*ana*(diš)*⸣ *rabbanê*(gal*.d[ù*) *i*]*q*-*[*r*]*u-ub a-na É-sag-íl iš-kun pā*[*nē*(ig[i])*-šu*]

23   [… …] x *ú-na-aš-šaq šá pa-paḫ* ^{giš}*dalāti*(ig)^m[^{eš}*-šú** …]

24   [… …]*-šú a-na* ^d*Bēl*(en) *il-la-ku-*ʾ *su-p*[*u-ú-šú* (…)]

25   [… …] ^d*Bēl*(en) *ilāni*(dingir)^{meš} *mātāti*(kur.kur)^{meš} *i-ta*(?)*-mar-u*ʾ *qa-l*[*a-al*-šu**]

26   [… …*ḫi*]*-ṭa-tu-šú gíl-la-tu-šú ú-ba-as-sa*[*r* …]

27   [… …]*-tu-šú i-da-am-mu-ú* ^{lú}*ṣābē*(erin) *ki-din-*[*ni* (0*)]

28   [… …*šá* É-sa*]*g-gíl i-dal-lal da-li-*[*lu/i** (0*)]

29   [… *a-n*]*a* ^d*Marduk*(amar.utu) *it-ta-qa nīqē* (siskur⸢2*⸣) […]

30   […] ⸢x x⸣ *a*-mat** ^d*É-a i-dab-bu-*[*ub*/bu**(?)]

31   [… …] x x x x x x x […]

Lacuna (min. 5 lines)

3.3.3   iii

Reverse

Lacuna (min. 2 lines)

1   [x x g]*a*(?) *a*-t*[*u*₄* … …]

2   [x]*-ú-a pi-i-šú** [*īpuš** … …]

3   [*i*]*t*-ba*-lu* ⸢*šal*-lat**⸣ […]

4   x *u* [x] x x [x] x ⸢*bàd**⸣ [… …]

5   [*l*]*u-*⸢*lim*(?)⸣ ⸢*ṣa*⸣*-*⸢*ri*⸣*-ri ḫurāṣi*(kù.[g]i) *in-za-*[*ḫu*-re*-tu*₄* (?)… …]

6   [*u*]*l*-tu a-a-*⸢ʾ⸣*-iš*₆* ^d*Nusku*(pa.túg) *m*[*i*(?)*-*… …]

7   *id-du-uk ba-nu-ti i*ʾ*-ár-m*[*a** … …] x x […]

37

15 "Let them come to me in the palace, I wish [to hear] the *rabbanê* of Babylon.

16 "To Bel, lord of [lords], let me pray that on my behalf he might not *aba*[*ndon me*]

17 "That on my behalf [he] might bring me out and on my behalf, he might bring [me] in,

18 "That on my behalf [he] might cause me to stand." In the assembly of the people [the *rabbanê* said]:

19 "'Do not fear, O king of our lords, the *nobles* of Babylon, you [*will hear*].

20 "'To Bel, lord of l[ords], you may (lit. will) pray that on your behalf he might not *abando*[*n you*],

21 "'That on your behalf [he] might bring you out, on your behalf he might bring [*you in …*]'"

22 After approaching the *rabbanê*, he turned to Esaĝil.

23 [… …] he kisses, the doors of the shrine […]

24 […] his […] to Bēl go(es) [his] prayer[s (…)]

25 [… …] Bēl (and) the gods of the lands saw how [he humiliated himself]

26 [… …] he declares (all) his misdeeds (and) his crimes […]

27 [… …] the people under divine protect[ion…] bemoaned his [*evil deeds*]

28 [… …Esa]gil he praises.

29 […] to Marduk he made an offering […]

30 [*to the gods* …] … the word of Ea they are speaking […]

31 [… …] … … […]

Lacuna (min. 5 lines)

Lacuna (min. 2 lines)

1 (Too broken for translation)

2 "… my … sa[id …]

3 "'[T]hey carried off booty […]'

4 (Too broken for translation)

5 "A (flashing) reddish-golden deer of red dye [… …]

6 Wherefrom (?) … Nusku … [… …]

7 "He killed the nobles, he went [… …]

8   [*b*]*ēl*([e]n)* ḫu*-muṭ ana(diš)* šàr(lugal) il(dingir)-ˊú ˋ-a e-ru-[ub*-ma(?)* … …]

9   [*k*]*aspu*([k]ù.babbar) a-na nak-k[an]*-du ekalli(é.gal) l[*i*-ru*-ub*]

10   š[*i*]*- ʾ-su nap-ḫa*[*r*] ˡúum-man-nu šá [… …] x x [x] x x […]

11   [*l*]*i-tab-nu-* ʾ gišnalbatta(ˊù ˋ.šub.ba) ˊa ˋ-[gur-ru šá* sa*-ma*-a*-tú(?)*] par(?)*-ṣi é(?)* […]

12   [*šu*-u]*d*(?)*-dan-*<*nin**> íl(BIᴵ*-ṬU)-[*áš*-š*]*ú sa-ma-a-tú* [*dūri* … *l*]*i-li-*[…]

13   [*zu*-qu*-up** (x x?) gišš*dalāti*(ig)ᵐᵉš *dūri*(bàd) a[*bullāti*(k[á.gal])ᵐᵉš *dūri*(?)*] lu kaṣ-[*ra*-a ʾ*]

14   […] ˊe ˋ(?)-pu-uš ul t[a … …] ḫi-du-[tu (0?)]

15   [*šá*] ˊx x ˋ [x iq*-b]a*-a e-te-pu-u[š …] x x […]

16   [*l*]*u-lim ṣa-ri-ri ḫurāṣi*(ˊkù ˋ.gi) a-na makkūr(níg.ga) ˊÉ ˋ-[sagil… …] x […]

17   ⁿᵃ4*unqu*(šu.gur) *bēlet*(ninˀ)* *Ekurru*(é.kur) [… …]

18   al-si ˊnap ˋ-ḫar [ˡ]ú um-man-nu za*-nin šu(?) [… …]

19   *kīma*(gim) kakkabāni(mul) šá-ma-a-<me> [*i*]t-ta-na-an-bi-ṭu [x* x* x* x* x* (…)]

20   al-sa ˡúḫa-za-ˊan ˋ-ni *Bābili*(e)ᵏⁱ ˡúrubê(nun)ᵐᵉš šá [… …]

21   [*i*]*l-tab-nu-ú* gišnalbatti(ˊú ˋ.šub.ba) a-gur-ru šá sa-[ma-a-tú(?)… …]

22   ˊuš ˋ-dan-na-an íl(BIᴵ*-ṬU)-áš*-šú sa-ma-a-tú dūri(bàd) [li*-li*- …]

23   az-qu-u[p gišš]d[alāti(ig)ᵐᵉš] dūri(bàd) abullāti(ká.gal)ᵐᵉš [dūri(?) ikkaṣṣarā*]

24   a-di LUGAL ZI [x x ú*-r]aṭ*-ṭib ú-pa*-ˊáš ˋ*-[šá*-áš*] [… …]

25   a-na Im-gur-ˊd ˋ[En-líl x] al(?)* ti(?)* [… …]

26   šarru(šàr) ana(diš) Bar-sìpᵏⁱ iš-šak-k[a-nu pānū(igi)-šu] i-ru-u[b ana(diš) Ezida(?) …]

27   aḫ-ta-ṭa-a-ku bēl(en) [bēlē(?)]ᵐᵉš ḫi-ṭu-ú-a* [… …]

28   un-ṭi-ib zi-i-m[u(?)-šú(?)*…]-šú* x šub-tu-šú pa-paḫ šá [ᵈEN/AG(?)*… …]

29   a-ra-aḫ ūma(ud)-a-tu4-mu ik*-ta-pil* as-kar-šu dumu(?)* x [… …]

30   sūq(sila) āli(uru) tam-la-a ú-mál-la šá dūri(bàd)* rēšē(sag)ᵐᵉš-šú ú-t[e*-li* … …]

31   šarru(šàr) ultu(ta) Bar-sìpᵏⁱ ú-ṣa-am-mu ana(diš) Kutêᵏⁱ iš-kun [pānēšu … …]

32   i-ru-ub ana(diš) É-[mes-l]am ina(aš) qaq-qar uq-ṭa-ˊna ˋ-ta-[ar*… …]

33   [… …] bēl(en) Kutê(gú.duḫ.a)ᵏⁱ [… …]

34   [… … tukulᵀ]-ˊta-ka ˋ ᵈNer[gal](u.g[ur)] [… …]

39

8   "'Lord, hasten, to the king, my god, *ent*[*er and* … …]

9   "'Let silver [enter] into the palace treasury.

10 "'Call all the craftsmen that [… …] … […]

11 "'Let them make with the brick-mould the baked *b*[*ricks of the crenels*] (of the) rituals […]

12 "'Strengthen (and) carry it (the bricks, collective?) so that the crenels [of the wall … may] grow high […]

13 "'[Install …] the doors of the wall, the g[ates *of the wall*] … let them be *const*[*ructed*…]

14 "'[…] make, do not [… …] *jo*[*y*…]'

15 "[What] … […he order]ed me I executed […] … […]

16 "A deer of (flashing) reddish gold to the property of E[*sagil* … …] … […]

17 "A stone seal of the lady of Ekur[… …]

18 "I called all the craftsmen, (those) who provide (for…) [… …]

19 "Like the stars of heaven, they will constantly shine [… …]

20 "I called the mayor of Babylon, the princes of [… …]

21 "They made with the brick-mould the baked bricks of the *cr*[*enels* … …]

22 "I strengthen (and) bring it (scil. the brickwork) [so that] the crenels of the wall [might grow high …]

23 "I installed the d[oors] of the wall, the gates *of* [*the wall were constructed*]"

24 Until the king […] he *washes* and annoin[ts… …]

25 To Imgur-[Enlil] … [… …]

26 The king hea[ds] towards Borsippa, he entere[d *Ezida* …]

27 "I have continually sinned against you, O lord *of* [*lords*], my sins [… …]"

28 *He gladdened his* face, his […], his dwelling, the shrine of [… …]

29 Indeed, a full month his crescent circled around(?)[… …]

30 He builds up the city street(s) with fill, the top of the wall is r[aised… …]

31 The king came out of Borsippa and hea[ded] toward Cutha [… …]

32 He entered E[mesl]am, on the ground they *fumi*[*gated* … …]

33 [… …] lord of Cutha [… …]

34 '[… …] *your* [*help*], O *Ner*[*gal*, … …]'

40

Lacuna (?)

3.3.4   iv

Lacuna (min. 6 lines)

1   [… …] x [… …]

2   [… …] x x […*i*]*š*(?)-*kun pāni*(igi)*-*šu*(?)* [… …]

3   [… …] x […] x [… …]

4   [… …] t [x] uš(?) […] x [… …]

5   [… …] x x x ṭu(?) […] x [… …]

6   [… *m*]*a*(?)*-ʾ-*diš* ^d*Nusku*(pa.túg) *mi-*ʿ*nu*ʾ* […] x *ú** [… …]

7   […] x-*tu-*ʾ *bēl*(en) *da-ba-b*[*u*]-[*šú** … …]

8   […] x x-*šú*(?) ^{tú}*ikkaru*(engar) ka x [*ú*[?]*-ṣa*]-ʿ*al**-*lu**-*ú*ʾ* x* [… …]

9   [… ^l]*ú̯pahāru*(báḫar/dug.ʿka.burʾ) *iš-pur-*ʿ*ru*ʾ ʿ*a*ʾ-*n*[*a*(?)] ʿ^{lú}*ṣābū*(éren)*ʾ^{meš} *pit**-*qu-du*(?)*-[*tu*(?)*…]

10   [*um**-*ma** *m*]*i*[?]*-*ʿ*nu*ʾ*-*ú šá** ʿ*el*ʾ*-*ʿ*le*ʾ*-*tu** *ana*(diš) *pāni*(igi) ^{MÍ}*su-ḫa-ʾ-i-tu*₄ ʿ*tal*ʾ*-[*lik**]

11a   [… …]-*ú-tú* x [x] x

11b   *a-na* ^{lú}*ašlāki*(túg.ud) gal ka x […]

12   […] ^{lú}*paḫāru*(báḫar/dug.ka.bur) x [x x x] ʿ*ana*(diš)ʾ *su-ur-ru* en be […]

13   […] lugal x [… …] x*-*šú** *ma-nu-*ʿ*ú*ʾ*

14   [… …] x *it-ta-din na-gi-tú ekalli*(é.gal)-*šú*-[*ma*(?)]

15   [… …*ultu ma*]*ḫ*[?]*-*rat** ^{uru}*Ḫu-da-da adi*(en) *sa-pan na-šá**-*a*ʾ*-[…]

16   [… …] *É-sag-gíl iṣ-bat it-ta-din Dūr*(bàd)-*an-ki ki-ṣir* kur(?)* […]

17   [… …]-*a it-ta-din ālu*(uru)* *bir-tú šá-na-an ma-a-tú* ^{lú}*ardu*(ir)* *šarru*(lugal) *ú-šat*[?]*-*ʿ*ba**-*a*ʾ *ʾ*^{?!}

18   […]-*bur*(?) ^{lú}*Su-ḫa-ʾ ina*(aš) *epri**(saḫar) *ṭe*₄*-*em** *ālāni*(uru)^{meš} *u ap-pāru*(suk)^{meš}

19   [… …] x *ip-qíd**-*du it-ta-din a-na* ^{lú}*tar-din-nu ba*(?)-*ab* x *iḫ*(?) x

20   [… …*i*]*t-ta-din*[!] *ma-ad-bar-šú šá* ^{uru}*Ḫu-da-*ʿ*da*ʾ

21   [… …] x *šá*(?) kur *ana*(diš) *šadî*(kur)ⁱ *šá Ḫa-ši-mur mi-ṣir* [[?]*Za*(?)-*a*]*b-bi elî*(an)ⁱ

22   [… …*i*]*l-tak-nu-ʾ āla*(uru) *ina*(aš) *rē*[*ši*(s[ag])]-*šú*

23   [… …] x-*šú ši-i am-rat-su rabītu*([g]al*-*tu*₄)

24   [… …]-*ú-tú u* x *mādu**/*šadû**(kur)^{du}*

41

Lacuna (?)

Lacuna (min. 6 lines)

1   Too broken for translation.

2   [… …] … […*he*] *headed* (towards) [… …]'

3-5   Too broken for translation

6   […] very much Nusku …[…] … [… …]

7   […] … his enemy [… …]

8   […] *his* ... the farmer … they [*bes*]*eech* [… …]

9   […] the potter sent *t*[*o*] (the) pruden[t…] people.

10   [saying thus: "w]hy did you go to a Suḫaean woman, you who are pure?"

11a   [… …] … …

11b   To the launderer … […]

12   […] the potter […] soon … […]

13   […] (the) king [… …] his … are counted

14   [… …] he gave, the *district* of his palace [*and*]

15   [… … from] before Ḫudada to the plain he carried

16   [… …] Esaĝila he seized/stood, he gave Duranki the band of (the) land)[…]

17   [… …] he *allowed* the city to be a fortress equal to the land, (and) the slave *will remove* the king.

18   [… …] the Suhaean(s), into dust(?), news of cities and marshes

19   [… …] he entrusted, he gave, to the second son, a gate… …

20   [… …he] gave, his desert of Ḫudada.

21   [… …] … to the mountain of Hashimur, border of the *Upper* [*Za*]*b*

22   [… …] they established the city at its top

23   [… …] that […] of his, his great inspection.

24   [… …] … and … land/mountain

42

25   [… …LU]GAL(?) *bēl*(en)-*šú ta-kar-rab*

26   [… …*r*]*u*? *-ku bil-tú*

27   [… …] *bāb*(ká)-*ka*

28   [… …] x [x] *pa-na e-pu-šú*

29   [… …] *appāru*(suk)ᵐᵉˢ

30   [… …] xᵐᵉˢ-*šú*

31   [… …] x

32   [… …] x

Lacuna (min. 4 lines)

43

25   [… … the *ki*]*ng* his lord you will bless

26   [… …] … tribute

27   [… …] your gate

28   [… …] … [*which*] previously he/I had made

29   [… …] marshes

30   [… …] his […]s

31-   (too broken for translation)

32

Lacuna (min. 4 lines)

3.4 Philological Commentary[135]

3.4.1 Column i

8: · *ultēli*: though elû Š is often translated as 'oust' when found combined with a human object (e.g. 'person', 'oneself', etc.)[136], the nuance of the form here is suggested to be understood more literally. As fugitives only become fugitives after they have been ousted, the translation is unfitting in the present context.

9: ·[…] *egirrê damqi i-za-am-mur*: *egirrû* and *zamāru* are not otherwise attested in combination, thus raising reasonable doubt to the reconstruction of *i-za-a*[*m-mur*]. Instead of interpreting *egirrâ* as the direct object, indicating 'good reputation' being sung, the phrase is better understood as '[…] of good reputation he sings', perhaps in a hymn, which is directed at Bēl and follows in the next line 10.

11: · *ú-ma-ak-ka-ku*: the verb is typically used to denote building work, such as spreading soil. Under the related forms of *magāgu* the connotation of 'stretch out', also of limbs, is found.[137] Those forms are accompanied by the connotation that one stretches out their arm/hand *towards* a target; an association that would be difficult to make in the present context. Perhaps the spread of the king's legs is to be understood as a preparatory step, such as the spreading of soil to prepare the laying of bricks for a foundation. It would indeed fit well with the narrative of the preparation of a rebellion, the actor seeking out AŠU 'laying the foundation' for the uprising.

It might be better to understand the verb figuratively, which has a bearing on the question of which king is referenced here: the current (TNI) or the future (AŠU) one. *makāku* might denote an extreme gesture of fear or prostration by referring to a 'weakening' of the king's legs. With the preceding line addressing Bēl in praise, perhaps the speaker here asks for help in his planned rebellion through the weakening of the tyrant king, allowing a faster and more successful accession to power.

12: · *it-ta-aṣ-ṣa*: new in the present edition is the reconstruction of this form. The phrase is found in one more instance in a 7th-century copy[138] of Gilg. VIII ii 23: PN *ana māti rigmu ultēṣi* 'Gilgameš sent forth a call to the country'[139].

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[135] Breaks are indicated if relevant to the comment and are otherwise omitted for readability.
[136] For several examples refer to CAD E, 134: *elû* 11d.
[137] E.g. BiOr 28 8 ii 6 (see Borger 1971: 8).
[138] Gurney (1954: 26).
[139] Gurney (1954: 94); George (2003: 656f.).

45

· *ri-gim-su*: note the final *-su*, indicating perhaps a late phonetic shift. The alveolarization of nš→s is known from examples such as *lid-din-su* (<*liddinšu*)[140], or *i-din-su-nu-tu*[141]. mš→ms is otherwise unattested, but perhaps another m→n shift is found here (see ii 10 *un-de-*[*su-in-nu*] below), though left unindicated by orthography. A phonological motivation for the shift in the given environment is difficult to ascertain, but perhaps an articulatory *approximation* took place here, triggering in effect also the nš→ns shift.

16:      · x a x x: perhaps one may reconstruct this broken section, immediately preceding bēlešu as [*b*]*a-a-ˈlu-aˈ* 'without me', resulting in a derived understanding of 'without me [my presence] they killed his lords'.

17:      · 'you will wipe the garden from your feet': what the speaker may suggest here is that AŠU leaves his position as the gardener to take on his role as the rebellion leader. See the next comment regarding the preposition *ina muḫḫi*.

      · *ina muḫḫi*: an alternative reading, if the preposition were to denote an instrumental use of the feet, would be as follows: 'with your feet you will wipe the garden' in which case one may consider the wiping as 'smearing', with the connotation that the feet sully the ground as they wipe them. This would present the 'washerman' or 'launderer' with more reason to 'cleanse' AŠU. The former reading given above of wiping the garden *from* AŠU's feet is preferred, however.

18:      · *du-un-ni-ku*: discernible with certainty were at first only the signs *ni* and *ku*. Slightly broken but nonetheless discernible is the sign *un*, following the break. As for the reconstruction of *du*, not many possibilities are available for *-unniku*. *Dunniku* 'your strength' is a semantically coherent reconstruction, as opposed to say, *kurunniku* 'your wine(?)', or *šunnīku* 'your repeating'.

19:      · *ki-niš*: some changes in the reading of this line have been made in opposition to Grayson's edition, beginning with *ki-niš*, which he read as *-ku* niš. The unassigned niš is connected in the same reading to its preceding sign, here read *ki* as opposed to *ku*. The *ta* preceding it belonged to a broken word, perhaps *tukulta*, as suggested by Grayson, though it uncertain, and is thus left untranslated with no suggestion as to what may have preceded *kīniš*.

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140   TCL 9, 104 l. 10. YOS 21, 20 l. 22.
141   YOS 21, 39 obv. lo. e., see Frahm & Jursa (2011: fig. 39).

· *tat-taš-ši*: the change above is followed by the reading of *tat*, read dad by Grayson, and again left unconnected. He suggested it is followed by two broken signs. This edition suggests a reconstruction of *taš-ši* giving *tat-taš-ši*. Given that both *liqâka*, and *tattašši* should refer to the same object, it would stand to reason to assume that it is connected to the Babylonian crown; perhaps it refers to the very *abstractum* itself. The implication here is that AŠU supported the idea of a *Babylonian* ruler, as opposed to an Assyrian and should thus take for himself the Babylonian rule.

· *li-qa-a-ka*: note the final *-ka*, the same suffix observed in the previous like in *dunniku*, indicating the known late Babylonian *Auslaut*-drop.[142] The usage of *-ka*, as opposed to *-ku* indicates here, too, the gradual loss of *Auslaut* (and in effect the drop of grammatical case).

20:      · ˡᵘ*rabbanê*(gal.dù)ᵐᵉˢ: though glossed an 'administrator of temple property, especially of orchards'[143], it is likely that the term was used to refer to the 'nobles of Babylon', also found in Chronicle P *iv* 8, for instance. For a more detailed discussion, refer to Sections 4.1, 4.4, and especially Section 5 below.

· ˡᵘgal […] ˡᵘgal ˡᵘgal.dùᵐᵉˢ: the reading of the first of the many ˡᵘgal in this line is an addition made by the present edition. Grayson does not address or translate any of the other ˡᵘgal, and indeed their meaning in the present context remains unclear. The *rabbanê* appear to be the main 'masterminds' behind the revolution (c.f. Chronicle P *iv* 8, as well as section 4.1). The scribe is probably confusing the Babylonian term *rab-banê* and the Aramaic word *rabbān* 'great one', which forms a reduplicated plural *rabrabanē*—which may be what is intended by ˡᵘgal ˡᵘgal.dùᵐᵉˢ—technically this may be best under-stood as an Aramaic loanword rather than as 'the chief of the rab-banê'.[144] The *rab-banê* mentioned here might perhaps, but not necessarily be connected to the *rab-bānê* who functioned as owners of prebends and who had to provide agricultural produce for offer-ings, in Neo-Babylonian and Achaemenid times.[145] The first ˡᵘgal will have referred to the

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[142] See Section 4.3.1 below.
[143] CAD R 4.
[144] See Note 238. Note that despite the long *ā* in *rabbān*, we will continue to use the notation of *rabbanê*, with a short *a*. Whether the vowel was long or short cannot be said with certainty, given the likeliness of the scribe having unconsciously thought of both terms at the same time.
[145] See Monerie (2017: 300f.). Three sources from the Seleucid period attest to their very late preserva-tion within the scope of the cultural economy of the Bīt Rēš, too. The first two, the date of which is unfortunately not preserved, mention parcels close to Uruk, while the third one, dated to 263 BCE, documents the sale of a plot, also in the proximity of Uruk.

chief of another group of people lost in the break.

Another possibility would be to read any of the two ^{lú}gal as *rabûti* as they are read in *ii* 10 for instance (see Section 3.4.2 below). As becomes clear in column *ii* 10 through the parallel use of *mesû*, *rabûti* and *rabbanê* likely refer to the same group of high-standing people. It would be more difficult to motivate the same reading for the first ^{lú}gal, though perhaps the missing motivation lies in the lost broken part between the two ^{lú}gal.

21:          · *ana*: there is likely nothing (else) missing at the beginning of this line, except for the reconstructed *ana*, used here as a *nota accusativi*. This gives us an idea of the approximate line boundaries prior to the tablet's breaking.

          · *za-qap*: the word is understood here as an, as yet, otherwise unattested variant of Late Babylonian *zāqipānu* 'fruit gardener.' Multiple reasons speak for such an interpretation. Through the following *nukaribbu* in the next phrase of the line, parallelism with a similar profession is expected in the first phrase, and it would be met with *zāqipānu* 'fruit gardener'[146]. What we see however is a participle *zāqap*, not a form such as *zāqip*, which could pass for an odd form of *zāqipānu*. As Streck (2001: 81) notes, however, CVC-syllables are vowel-indifferent, meaning that the scribe could have very well also intended for a reading of *zāqip*. Thus the reconstruction of the determinative ^{lú} preceding *za-qap* is also accounted for.

22:          · *-ṭì*: this reading is a correction made in this edition to Grayson's reading of *ma*. An alternative suggestion would be *bil*. With *tì* the reconstruction of *hiṭīti* 'crime' is facilitated, fitting quite well with the figurative understanding of *mesû* (see the next comment).

          · *un-de-sa-nu*: Two interesting phonetic shifts have taken place here, namely a. t→d, a voicing process to assimilate to the preceding voiced bilabial, and b. m→n, an articulatory shift to assimilate to the following alveolar. Note, too, the form *un-de-[su-in-nu]* reconstructed parallelly to the present form. *mesû* is understood figuratively here. A Neo-Assyrian example for instance would be: *ku-um da-me i-dan da-me i-ma-si* 'instead of blood (money) he will give (a woman), (and thus) he will wash off the (guilt of) blood'.[147]

23:          · *šú-la-a-tu₄*: understood here as a form of *šulūtu* 'garrison'.[148] The word is

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146   AHw, 1513.
147   ADD 321: 5-6, SAA 14 125 5-6.
148   See for reference CAD Š3 264f.

attested, though rarely. See for instance Grayson's ABC (Chronicle 4 ll. 15[149], 16, 18, and Chronicle 7 *ii* 17, 18).

25:    · (*ana*) lugal: obscured by a break two possible reconstructions stand to reason: either *ana šarri* or *ana* PN in which case the PN would refer to whomever the rebellion is directed towards (the current king).

26:    · […]^meš: the plural-marker indicates that a logogram (most likely designating people) is missing, so one might suggest restoring a word for troops or cavalry; such forces might have assisted in the rebellion that is at issue here.

· *iš-ta-k*[*a-an*]: against common expectation, the usual št→lt shift has not taken place here, and instead of *iltakan*, we find the 'old' form *ištakan*. This phenomenon is also found in CT 22, 58 for instance: *iš-tap-ri*, as well as with *kiništu*, a class of low-ranked priests, and *mērēštu* 'wish, desire', where *št* is often found instead of *lt*.[150]

Alternatively, we might suppose the present *št* derives from a former *rt* in which case perhaps *iš-ta-k*[*a-as*] <*rakāsu* 'tie, bind' is to be reconstructed, resulting in 'he/they harnessed the chariots',[151] though semantically it would be preferable to have animals harnessed to chariots, and not vice versa; also the expected verb for such a phrase would be *ṣamādu*, not *rakāsu*.

27:    · [*šu*]-*le-e*: The reconstruction of the form is an addition to the present edition and is to be understood as an infinitive. Grayson suggested [*ḫa-al*]-*le-e* resulting in 'the legs of the king on your neck', but it is semantically odd. Under consideration of the phrase *ina tikki nadû* (see comment below for l. 28), the word desired here should refer to an action, which AŠU would have to perform concerning the king. In that case a removal (*šūlê*) is deemed fitting, given the context of a revolt. Note, too, the parallel reconstruction in the following l. 28, where the word may alternatively also be understood with a connotation of 'accuse' or 'burden' (cf. *ina tikki nadû*).

· *ušaššāka*: this suggestion can be connected to another possible parallelism with the following l. 28, where *ina kišadika ušaššaka* corresponds to *ina tikkia iddinu*. The similarities between the lines quite elegantly denote the turns taken in the dialogue:

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[149]   Note that the form is reconstructed as [*šil-lat*-s]u.
[150]   Compare for insance for *kiništu* as opposed to *kiniltu* YOS 3 57: 6 (Clay 1919), for *mērēštu* as opposed to *mēreltu* see for example YOS 6 52: 11 (Dougherty 1920).
[151]   Compare with ABL 408: 10 (Harper 1896): 2 *kūdinī ina šapal* PN *artakas* 'I harnessed two mules for PN'.

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'*your* neck' vs. '*my* neck', '*I* cause you to bear responsibility' vs. '*they* threw against me (the task)'. In l. 27 the 'employer', likely a *rabbanê*, is quoted issuing his order, while in l. 28 AŠU recounts the task he was assigned. Refer to section 4.1 for an in-depth discussion of speech allocations.

28:    · *ti-ik-ki-i<a>*: Grayson: saw *ki* written as *di*, though I disagree. The scribe wrote *ki*.

· *ina ti-ik-ki-i<a>* ŠUB^ú: the phrase *ina/ana tikki nadû*, may be understood as 'to frame sb. for sth.', see CAD N1 88 j), compare also *šá a-na ti-ik-ki-[ia] id-du-ú* 'what is being thrown at me'[152].

· *qabli-iá ip-pa-aṭ-ra*: the choice of reconstruction for *ippaṭra*, as well as for *ašaḫḫaṭ* túg in the following l. 29 is motivated by the symbolic demonstration of lament AŠU performs here, indicated by his shedding of tears in l. 29 (*illakkanni dimmātia*).

30:    · *pur-ru-us*: is understood here as a D.INF.CSTR, but it could also be a stative. Interpreted as a stative it would be coupled with a preceding (broken) word, while understood as an infinitive, it would be coupled with *amāt pî* in which case the verb may have to be understood as "decide".

3.4.2   Column ii

4:    · *ul-te-di-gi-lu*: the connection of the signs is an addition to the present edition. The presence of the consonants d-g-l in consecutive order leads to the reasonable assumption of a *dagālu* form. The reconstruction of *ul* is attributable to the vocalism of the following *-te-di-gi-lu*, suggesting a Š-form. The translation of 'transfer' comes from the LB connotation of 'answer', which the root developed (a transfer of words or thoughts if one will).[153]

7:    · *i-dab-*[*bu-ub/bu*]: Note that the verbal form *i-dab-*[*bu-ub/bu*] may be reconstructed and interpreted either as a 3.SG, PL, or perhaps even 1.C, but given the context of the previous column in which AŠU speaks with a *rabbanû* who refers to himself as a washerman, it is deduced that the form is a 3.SG. See section 4.1 below for a discussion of the direct speech allocation in the epic.

It is likely that no other sign(s) followed after the *ub/bu*, indicating the approximate

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[152]   BIN 1, 22. See Levavi (2018: 422).
[153]   Compare for instance with CT 22, 87 (AOAT 414/1, 94) l. 6: *ši-pir-tu₄-šu a₄ ul šu-ud-gu-lat* 'dieses Schreiben wurde nicht beachtet' (Hackl et al. 2014: 207).

original line boundary.

9:　　　　　· *pa-ni-iá*: the suffix here is the main indication for AŠU's speech in which he retells his coronation. The reconstruction of the following *-innu/i* forms (cf. ll. 10, 11, 13, etc.) is backed by this assumption that AŠU explains actions performed *for* him, in his favour.

10:　　　　· ^{lú}*rabûti*(gal)^{meš}: these people are understood to be the same actors mentioned in Chronicle P iv 8, appearing here also as the *rabbanê*. See Section 4.1 below for a more detailed discussion on the actors behind the revolt and the metaphors used to refer to and describe their actions.

　　　　　· *un-de-*[*su-in-nu*]: understood as a 3.PL form of mesû D. Note, too, *un-de-sa-nu* in *i* 22 following which the present form was reconstructed. As for the assumed ventive and 1.SG suffix, it is assumed here that AŠU speaks again, recounting his coronation. As the 'great ones' have done previously, they cleanse him here once more. Given the coronation context, the verb might even denote an actual, as opposed to a figurative washing. See the next comment on *uqtanattaru*.

11:　　　　· *uq-ṭa-na-ta-ru-in-nu*: the reading and translation of this verb are updated in the present edition. As opposed to Grayson's presumed *katāmu* 'cover', *qatāru* D 'fumigate' is suggested, fittingly with the cultic cleansing in preparation for the new king's coronation. Thus the t→ṭ in the environment of an emphatic consonant can be accounted for, as opposed to Grayson's suggestion of *uk-da-na-ta-*[…], wherein the t→d shift would be difficult to motivate.

The fumigation of humans usually took place for medical purposes.[154] But as Maul (1994: 39) notes, it was also a means of 'purifying' a participant of a *Löseritual*, i.a. to please the gods. The fumigation of AŠU in preparation for his coronation would thus be a logical step in the procedure, for he (and his supporters) would wish to secure divine blessing and support.

13:　　　　· [*za-qip-tu ina* sag-*iá*]: this reconstruction is parallel to BHLT 7 *iii* 10, where the coronation of Nabopolassar is described and fits well with the following *kulūlu* 'crown'.

　　　　　· *ga-ši-ru-*ˊ*tú*ˋ: the sign *ši* is a little problematic, but appears to, *faute de mieux*, have been written over an incomplete erasure. Grayson understandably read *tuk*

154　　Cf. LBAT 1593: 18 (Reiner 2000).

but had to leave the word untranslated, as it does not seem to exist. The reading of *ši* is contextually backed by the word's semantic environment with the following form of *kulūlu* 'crown'. Either *gaširūtu* 'appurtenances' or *gašrūtu* 'supreme power' would work well in the context of a coronation in which the king is either bestowed with various physical regalia or the abstract concept of regency itself.

· *uk-tel-li-lu-in-nu*: Grayson's edition read the sign *uk* as belonging to the preceding word, and the sign *tel* as *be*. It is this new reading that supports most strongly the hypothesis that the present event described is a coronation and also backs the reading of *ga-ši-ru-tu* preceding it.

14:     · *amātu šá* lugal *i-šá-as-su-ú*: an addition of the present edition, this phrase somewhat 'licenses' the *šemû*-form at the end of the line.

· [*i-š*]*á-as-su-ú*: as regards the reading of *šá*, possible traces of two horizontal lines cast some doubt on the reading, though they are not sufficient to suggest a different reading. Perhaps the sign was written over an erasure. The verb would surely fit the preceding object *amātu*. An alternative reading would be *ka*, as in [*i-k*]*a-as-su-ú* 'bind', though the meaning of the rest of the sentence would then become problematic.

· *iššemmâ*: this reconstruction is suggested based on the sentence-initial *amātu ša šarru išassû* after which it still needs to be clarified what exactly happens with said words cried out by the king. This sentence introduces AŠU's next speech, his proclamation to Bēl.

15:     · *l*[*i-r*]*u-ba-in-nu*: one cannot exclude the possible reading of *l*[*i-še-r*]*i-ba-in-nu*, though space and epigraphy would favour *l*[*i-r*]*u-ba-in-nu*.

· *lu*-[*uš-me*]: parallelism with l. 19, here in the 1st person. Given the repetitions and the visible *lu* (l. 15) and *ta* (l. 19), we assume the same verb to have been used in both reconstructions.

16:     · *a-da-nu-ú-a*: note that the usage of the word is somewhat redundant here, except if Bēl were to not abandon AŠU on behalf of somebody else, and AŠU wanted to make sure that the bond between Bēl and him was 'exclusive'.

· *u-maš*-[*šá-ra-an-ni*]: suggested following the parallelism with l. 20.

17:     · *a-da-nu-ú-a*: ligature of *ana dinānua* 'in my interest'.[155] The form, technically, is a suffixed locative adverbial to which a (pleonastic) preposition *ana* was added.

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[155]   Cf. Hackl et al. (2014: 375).

Furthermore, the form was quasi-haplologically shortened (from *ana dinānūʾa* > *add(in)ānūʾa*, cf. *di-na-nu-ú/u-a* as cited in AHw. 171b, SB prayer).

18: · [(lú)gal.dù *iqbi*(e)]: reconstructed following the line's parallelism with l. 22.

· *ú-še-ze-za-an-ni*: the verb is perhaps, here, to be understood here as 'he might appoint me' or 'he might cause me to stand' figuratively as king, as opposed to a literally understood 'he might cause me to stand' (say for instance, '… before the temple').

20: · ᵈ*Bēl bēl bēlē*: note that here, just as in l. 16, the last en-sign is either entirely or partially broken. An alternative reading could thus be: ᵈ*Bēl*(en) *bēl*(en) *ilī*(dingir) 'Bēl, lord of gods'.

22: · *ki-i ana* gal.dù *iq-ru-ub*: an improvement by the present edition, Grayson read instead: x x x ŠUᴵᴵ [*i-r*]*u-ub*. Traces of both *ki* and *i* are discernible, while the readings of GAL and the broken DÙ following *ana* are quite certain. The DIŠ in between is, though damaged, rather clear. Its reading may be disputed due to a faint horizontal line crossing it, although it is likely just a scratch. Thematically, AŠU approaching the *rabbanê* and then finally turning to Esaĝila to conclude his prayers and the ceremony is semantically more coherent than the previous readings.

25: · *bēl ilāni*: note the genitive case of *ilāni*. Instead of reconstructing an <en> before *ilāni* to translate to 'lord of gods', to account for the suffix, the words might be understood as connected by a 'covert' conjunction translating to 'Bēl (and) the gods'. A reconstruction of [en] en dingir is possible too, but unlikely given the clearly visible determinative ᵈ before the first visible en.

· *qa-l*[*a-al-šu*]: this suggestion leans on the practice of the royal humiliation, which for instance also took place during the Neo-Assyrian royal coronation ritual.[156] Central here is the king's (possible) faultiness, central to LBPL literature. Refer to Sections 4.1 as well as 4.4 for further discussion.

27: · ˡú*ṣābē*(erin) *ki-din-*[*ni*]: the term of *ṣābē kidinni* is understood as 'privileged citizens'[157], or 'persons under the standard of divine protection'[158].

· *i-da-am-mu-ú*: this form is understood here as something like *idammuwū*

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[156] SAA 20 7: i 28.
[157] Debourse (2020: 104f, 128f.).
[158] Debourse (2020: 300; see also Tadmor 2011: 118).

<*idammumū* <*damāmu*. Grayson refers also to (likely) the same phenomenon in *šu-ú*, a late Babylonian form of *su-mi* in Lambert's *Babylonian Wisdom Literature*[159].

30:    · *a-mat*: an addition of the present edition.

· *i-dab-bu-*[*ub/bu*(?)]: the reading of *dab* differs from Grayson's reading of *ṭeb* and leans on the reading of *amat*. Unclear is here, however, who exactly speaks. An argument against Ea speaking would be that *dabābu* usually is only used to refer to human speech, not to that of gods. Hence is suggested that the word of Ea is spoken by, likely, humans, perhaps the assembly attending the king's humiliation/inauguration. The exact form is thus open for interpretation.

3.4.3   Column iii

2:    · *pi-i-šú īpuš*: though an admittedly vague sign, the visible *pi-i-šú* gives rise to suggest another speech may be announced here, thus *pî epēšu* 'open the mouth (to speak)'. A direct speech is thus expected to follow, at the latest in the following line, but perhaps already in l. 2.

3:       · *it-ba-lu sal-lat*: an addition of the present edition.

· lu sign: an additional wedge at the top right corner is visible, which is usually omitted in later texts. It is thus a little obscure.

5:       · *in-za-*[*ḫu-re-tu₄*]: suggested reconstruction based on semantic parallelism with *ṣa-ri-ri* 'flashing red'. There are not many options for *in-za*-initial words fitting the context of the seemingly valuable, coloured objects, perhaps here carried off as booty (cf. l. 3).

6:       · *iš₆*: this sign was previously read as *ma*. Collation favours (tentatively) GIŠ over MA/BA.

8:       · *bēl ḫu-muṭ ana šar ilūa*: a correction of the present edition, Grayson read ᵐ*Remut* ᵐ*Šàr-ilu-ú-a*. He traced *Remut* to a contemporary *kudurru* of Adad-šuma-uṣur's, and *Šar-ilūa* to multiple Neo-Babylonian inscriptions.[160] Instead, I propose the introduction of a speech within the speech in which AŠU is first urged to hurry to the temple,[161]

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159   Lambert (1996: 40:30, 290). See also Grayson (1975a: 70).
160   See Grayson (Grayson 1975a: n. iii 8). Grayson interpreted these names as ones belonging to priests. Priests, however, do not feature in the epic, and their role is taken by the *rabbanê*. See Section 4.3.1 for further discussion.
161   Note that in that case the king referenced here would be the deity immediately thereafter. One could also assume a different lord is called to support his king, the speaker's 'god', in the temple, though it may be somewhat blasphemous to refer to an earthly king as divine in an actual deity's temple.

perhaps to defend it from a robbery (cf. l. 3) but given the following lines in which building works are described, and l. 15, where the repetitions of the previous lines begin and where AŠU likely announces that what he has executed what he has been ordered, it is more likely that this embedded speech is a recount of said order given to the new king. An alternative interpretation could suggest these cries belong to the defeated who are being robbed by AŠU's army, though the first interpretation is preferred.

9: · *nak-kan-du*: suggestion of the present edition opposing Grayson's *nak-kam-du*, as one would expect the same assimilation processes to have taken place as observed for instance in *un-de-sa-nu* in i 22 above: *nakkamtu→*?nakkamdu→nakkandu*.

· *l[i-ru-ub]*: suggested reconstruction on the basis that a movement of some sort occurs of the silver *into* the palace treasury. Spacing would allow for such a reconstruction, likely marking the end of the line.

10: · *š[i]-ʾ-su*: in terms of sign-ordering, a scribal error has likely occurred. The preferred order would be *ši-su-ʾ*. Note also, that the reading of *šu* is a correction of the present edition, opposing Grayson's original reading of *il*.

11: · *a-[gur-ru šá sa-ma-a-tú]*: reconstructed following a parallelism with l. 21. For the reconstruction of the phrase in l. 21, refer to the relevant comment below.

· *par-ṣi*: a new reading of the present edition.

· é: the final é of the line, perhaps continued as Esaĝil. As it is unclear where the scene takes place (Babylon, Nippur, or perhaps a different city altogether), other options include Ekurrate and Ekur. Given the setting of renovations and of course also the preceding ritual, a TN (or perhaps even a generic temple) is plausible.

12: · *[šu]-ud-dan-<nin>*: the (suggested) present form, as well as its parallel in l. 22, constitute perhaps the only attestations of a ŠD[162] of *danānu*. The reconstruction of *šú* follows the parallelism with l. 22. The omission of the sign *nin* (or a different nVn-sign) was perhaps a scribal mistake. The lack of a similar form attested anywhere else renders a confident reconstruction of the form conjectural.

· íl(BIᴵ-ṬU)-*áš-šú*: the sign íl misses two vertical wedges going through the lower horizontal line of the GA, giving BI instead, though, obscured by the break, perhaps traces of one such wedge might be discernible below the sign. A reading as íl still seems

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[162] Grayson also notes that no other ŠD-forms are attested (BHLT: 72). To my present knowledge there are no Š-forms of *danānu* attested either.

likely. Grayson read du₈ ṭu, leaving the signs untranslated. As for the following *áš* reconstructed here, it opposes Grayson's *pa* but follows the more clearly visible *áš* in the parallel form in l. 22.

· *sa-ma-a-tú*: this is a form of *samiatu*, *samitu* 'parapets', which in late Babylonian is attested as *samāti* in the plural.

· [*l*]*i-li*-[…]: this is likely a precative form of *elû* 'rise', reconstructed for l. 22 below, too, and also first suggested by Grayson.

13:    · *zu-qu-up*: addition of the present edition. Following the previous line in which building work, likely on a wall, is described, it seems logical to assume further building descriptions, e.g. the installation of doors.

· [*dūri*] *lu kaṣ*-[*ra-aʾ*]: addition of the present edition. The reconstruction of *dūri* is uncertain and remains a suggestion. As for *lu kaṣ-ra-aʾ*, clearly visible are *lu* and *kaṣ*, which Grayson read as gaz. Though naturally again only a suggestion, it is a more confident one, as a form of *kaṣāru* 'join, construct' would certainly fit semantically with the context of buildings and construction of walls and doors. Cf. for instance *dūrānišunu dunnunūma salḫūšunu kaṣrū* 'their (inner) walls were reinforced, the (outer) walls well joined'[163].

· *iq-ba-a*: this suggestion is an addition to the present edition. It would conclude the embedded speech. The angles of the horizontal lines of the broken *ba* make the reading fairly certain. Very faint traces of a preceding sign are discernible, though they are too broken to confidently ascertain an *iq*.

17:    · *bēlet*(nin?): the reading of this sign is very uncertain, but no 'better' alternatives may be suggested at this point. Grayson suggested *sal-te* 'carved', but comparisons with *te* signs in the present text, for instance in i 8 and ii 4, show four more slanted and more neatly arranged wedges (and lines) than is present here. Compare:
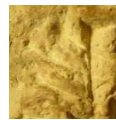
iii 17 nin   *i* 8   te   *ii* 4 te

18-20:   · *alsi/alsa*: though differently written, the words share the exact same meaning. Refer to Section 4.3 for further discussion of case-drop.

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163   TCL 3 190 (Thureau-Dangin 1912). For more building contexts see for instance VAB 88 No. 8 ii 10, and Layard (Layard 1851: 94: 131).

19:        · *za-nin*: correction of the present edition, Grayson read *šá-nin* 'rival'. There is, however, very clearly a fourth wedge present giving *za*.

21:        · *sa-ma-a-tu₄*: plural of *samītu* 'battlement parapet'. Reconstructed following Grayson.

22:        · ˹*uš*˺*-dan-na-an*: a parallel form of *šudannin* in l. 12 above. For further discussion refer to the relevant comment above.

        · *íl-áš-šu*: in the repetition, we find the same odd spelling of *íl*, as seen above in l. 12. Refer to the relevant comment above for further discussion.

        · [li-li-…]: reconstructed following the parallelism with l. 12 above.

23:        · *ikkaṣṣarā*: reconstructed following the parallelism with l. 13. For the reconstruction of the form in l. 13, refer to the relevant comment above.

24:        · [*ú-r*]*aṭ-ṭib*: the reading of *rat* is suggested here based on a visible horizontal wedge preceded by a clearly visible vertical wedge, as well as traces of a further horizontal and a vertical wedge, respectively. Due to the break, a possible reading of *mar* must be considered as well (wherein a further horizontal wedge should be expected), but with the reading of LU as *ṭib*, the suggestion of *raṭ* seems reasonable in the present context of the king before a temple entrance. The *raṭābu* D form can be understood here as 'moisten' but may be perhaps also understood as something along the lines of 'wash'. As for the vocalism of *ṭib* in the context of a likely present tense form, recall the vowel-indifference of CVC-syllables mentioned above.

        ·*u-pa-áš-šá-áš*: addition of the present edition. In the following line, the king again enters a temple, confessing his sins to Marduk in typical LBPL fashion. A context in which the king is washed (see *raṭābu* in the previous comment) and anointed before he enters a holy space thus seems reasonable.

25:        · al ti: corrected reading of the present edition, though unfortunately not helpful to the translation. Perhaps a 1SG verbal form *primae* š.

27:        · *ḫi-tu-ú-a*: the *a* is an addition of the present edition and indicates a direct speech beginning in this line.

28:        · *un-ṭi-ib*: this form could also be read *un-di-ib* in which case another mt→nd shift is observed. The form remains obscure, however, with the best guess orienting itself at Grayson's idea of some dissimilated form of *ṭiābu*. Instead of *ib* one may consider a *lu*, resulting in *un-ti-lu*, perhaps a form of *têlu* 'pronounce', though the verb's

use here seems obscure both semantically, as well as from the viewpoint of the chrono-logical distribution of its attestations.[164]

29:      · *a-ra-aḫ ūma*(ud)*-a-tu₄-mu*: though no Akkadian parallel was found, the phrase reminds one of the very common Hebrew phrase ירח ימים (ˈjeraχ jaˈmim), which denotes one month (i.e. the number of days in a moon's cycle). With the emphatic particle *-mu* at the end, a reading of 'indeed, one full month', with emphasis on its fullness, is plausible.

      · *ik-ta-pil*: the reading of this verb seems certain. A reading of *iq-ta-pil* is ruled out due to a t→ṭ reflex caused by an emphatic q (cf. Section 4.3.1), which is absent here. Despite the clarity of the reading, the semantics is problematic. The Gt *kitpulu* is understood as 'wind around each other', 'circle around', but is predominantly used to describe the behaviour of animals[165]. Due to a lack of alternatives, this understanding of 'circling around' must suffice.

30:      · *dūri*(bàd) *rēšē*(sag)ᵐᵉˢ*-šú ú-t*[*e-li*]: I understand the phrase as another con-struction with an anticipatory genitive.

      · *ú-te-li*: addition /correction of the present edition. In this line, the king's doings are described, and as was suggested for ll. 12 and 22, the walls (and their crenels) have been built high. Thus it is likely that here, again, a form of *elû* is to be reconstructed.

3.4.4 Column iv

8:      · [*ú-ṣa*]*-al-lu-ú*: this is a suggestion motivated by the context of several com-munications with not many alternatives for possible reconstructions. Clearly visible are in any case the final *lu-ú*, the *al* is slightly broken.

9:      · ˡᵘ*ṣābū pit-qu-du-tu*: correction of and addition to Grayson's initial reading of xᵐᵉˢ *qur-qu* x […].

      · *iš-pur-*ˋ*ru*ˋ: the final *u* may either be understood as subjunctive or as an 'unnecessary'/archaic Auslaut.

10:      · *um-ma*: due to the 2.ꜱɢ form suggested for the end of the line (cf. next comment) the need for a direct speech arises. As not much may precede the sign *mi* spa-tially or *mīnû* semantically, *umma* would make for a reasonable suggestion.

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[164]   See for attestations CAD T 333f.
[165]   See for reference CAD K 174f. 2.

· *mi-nu-ú šá el-le-tu*: addition/correction of the present edition.

· *tal*-[*lik*]: due to the short remaining space of the line, not much could have followed the sign *tal*, making a verbal form very likely. This 2.SG form gives rise to the reconstruction of a direct speech in this line.

12:      · *su-ur-ru*: for the interpretation of this form, multiple options are at hand. Firstly one may take the form on its own and read either *surru* 'canal, ditch'/'deceit, false-hood', or *surrû* 'lamentation priest', though the latter option seems rather unlikely, given the context. A canal ditch mentioned in the same line as a potter, too, seems to be less likely, though certainly not impossible. However, the form may be also read with a pre-ceding *ana*, giving *ana surri/u* 'soon'. Traces of a DIŠ are visible just after the break, thus this last reading stands to reason and is preferred over the other contextually less likely options.

13:      · *ma-nu-ú*: added translation in the present edition due to newly read *nu*, though the word fails to contribute to a better understanding of the context.

14:      · *na-gi-tú*: read *nagit*, here another superfluous *-u* is suffixed.

· *ekalli*(é.gal)-*šú*-[*ma*(?)]: the possible reconstruction of the end of the line suggests perhaps that sentences exceeded the line boundary, though it remains unlikely that the same may be said of phrases. See, for instance, also *ii* 16-18 where a few preca-tives are listed; either one or two pleas per line, with a sentence end in the middle of l. 18.

15:      · *maḫ-rat*: addition of the present edition.

· *na-šá-aʾ*: addition of the present edition. Grayson initially suffixed the sign *na* to the preceding *sa-pan* and read the signs *šá-aʾ* as the untranslated DIŠ DIN.

16:      · *Duranki*: Duranki is a ceremonial name or the epithet of Nippur[166] and translates to 'band of heaven and earth' (it is typically translated in Akkadian as *markas šamê u erṣeti*). The corresponding expression found in the present text would be *kiṣir māti*. In parallelism to Esaĝila, this may thus be a reference to Babylon rather than Nippur, in line with the general tendency of 'Babylon theology' taking over 'Nippur theology' in the late period.[167]

17:      · *ú-šat*?-⌈*ba-a*⌉ʾ: one vertical wedge is superfluous in the sign *aʾ*.

· *it-ta-din*: this highly obscure sentence makes a little more sense if the verb

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[166]   See George (1993: 80; 1992: 261).
[167]   Compare with George (1992: 262).

is understood here as 'allow'.[168] Compare for instance *ul i-nam-din-an-ni a-na e-peš ṣēri* 'he will not let me do the work of the wild'.[169]

18: · *ina eperi*(saḫar) *ṭe₄-em ālāni u appāru*: Grayson suggests *ina našpante*[te] *šāri alāni u appāru* 'with the destruction of the wind, cities, and marshes'. The thought behind the different readings is that the Suḫaeans, often referred to as foreign enemies, were defeated and made 'into dust', and that subsequently news from further cities and regions that were conquered similarly reached the king who might not have led each of the conquests. It is, however, only a suggestion. See the related comment on a possible form of *šarāku* in l. 26.

19: · *ip-qíd-du*: a correction of the present edition, Grayson read *ib-bu-du* and left the form untranslated. Indeed it is difficult to derive such a form of any known root as *b-d* sequences are very rare. A possibility would be perhaps *nābudu* 'escape', though it is semantically odd in the context. Instead one may read *bu* as *qíd*, allowing the more coherent translation of 'he entrusted, he gave to the second son …]…'.

· The sentence structure is understood to be divided between the first and second verbs, *ip-qíd-du* and *it-ta-din* respectively, *ipqid* belonging to a preceding subordinate clause of uncertain dimension, and *ittadin* opening the main clause with *tardinnu* as a direct object.

21: · [Za-*a*]*b-bi*: a suggestion of Grayson, which he ascribes to an entry on the black obelisk, an inscription of Shalmaneser III[170] in which mount "Ḫašimur is mentioned in connection with the Lower Zab".[171]

23: · *rabītu*: correction of the present edition. Grayson read ḪAR-*tum* instead of gal-*tu₄* and left the term untranslated.

26: · [-*r*]*u-ku*: perhaps one may reconstruct a form of *šarāku* 'present, give'. This would go well with the idea that the king was not present in all the conquests and that tribute was presented to him.

168 Compare for instance with the examples given in AHw 102b *nadānu* II 6'.
169 Gilg. *iii* 133 (George 2003: 546).
170 See for reference WO 2 154: 110-111 (Michel 1955).
171 Grayson (1975a: 77).

4 Further Commentary

4.1 Thematic Commentary

To understand the text better, this section provides a 'walkthrough' of the contents in respect to how it is understood and why.[172] As large parts of the texts are broken, obscure, or ambiguous this walkthrough is a suggestion of one or more possible interpretations and can by no means claim to have arrived at a definitive final reading of the epic. Where necessary, further information and clarification will be given to support the arguments; for a more thorough discussion of the motifs and themes that support the following interpretation, refer to Section 4.4.

Each column is roughly designated a thematic frame. In column *i*, Adad-šuma-uṣur is sought out in the palace gardens, possibly his place of work, by the *rabbanê* (represented by one individual) and exhorted to participate in (and lead) a rebellion, likely against the Assyrian king TNI. Column *ii* references the coronation of AŠU as the new king and its acceptance by the 'nobles' (*rabbanê*) who had rebelled against TNI (following Chronicle P). It then conveys an exchange of vows between the king and the nobles, and the king's appeal to Marduk. The third column *iii* features mostly a, i. a. *nested*, direct speech, likely that of the newly appointed king recounting the assignment (given by an unknown actor) to rebuild Babylon and increase its temple's treasury, which he then executed. The last column *iv* is the worst preserved of the four and thus rather speculative. With the mention of some professions, neighbouring regions and landscapes, as well as an enemy (l. 7) and tribute (l. 26), perhaps this column refers to the establishment of the new king in outer-Babylon(ia).

Traces of column *i* begin after a lacuna of at least five lines but are difficult to shape into words, except *i-nam-din* in line 4. A plot is first recognisable starting line 6 with the descent of an unknown actor to the palace gardens. The setting there involves two participants. It is probably the new arrival to the garden who is the subject of ll. 5-9, seeking out the other man, who must be our hero, AŠU, to instigate him to rebel, (promising to) bring(ing) up the refugees, and singing of good reputation.[173] The refugees mentioned here may refer to people who have fallen from grace and might be useful to the instigator

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[172] Note that multiple scholars have interpreted parts of the epic that were relevant to their topic of research. I will not address these many interpretations, but instead only provide mine.

[173] A hint as to who seeks out AŠU is given in l. 20. See the relevant discussion further below.

of the planned rebellion.

In the following two lines (ll. 10-11[174]) a direct speech begins, in which probably the newly-arrived instigator of the rebellion[175] eulogizes the other man—AŠU—, promising him Bēl's support (l. 10). This is followed by a precative to see the current king's legs spread (a metaphor for his weakening, perhaps). In a narrative intermediate line (l. 12), an unidentified person lets out a shout—it might be AŠU responding to the exhortation.[176]

Determining the speakers in the following direct speech parts (ll.13-19, 21-29) is a little more difficult. On the assumption that the king against whom the rebellion is directed is TNI, it must be AŠU who is sought out in the gardens to lead said rebellion. A reason to find him in the palace gardens would present itself if AŠU were assumed to work as a gardener, particularly the gardener sought later in l. 21 (i.e. a *fruit* gardener). But following this assumption, the speech allocations become unclear, mostly because perhaps here, but certainly in the following direct speech (ll. 21-29) the speech of at least one more person is embedded in another. If one assumes l. 20 to be included in the direct speech, joining both speeches into one, one will have to interpret the first speech (ll. 13-19) as one embedded in, likely, AŠU's.

To clarify, I suggest the following segmentation[177]: in ll. 13-19, the recruiter of AŠU speaks to the latter. He calls his lowered rank (*AŠU*'s descent) to his attention, as well as his filthy garments and then mentions either the dire circumstances suffered under TNI (l. 16) and awaiting in his future rule (l. 15), or the first advances towards a rebellion undertaken thus far. Those announcements are then followed by a suggestion that the addressee (AŠU) wipe the garden from his feet (l. 17), a persuasion that AŠU, too, sought rebellion through his strength (l. 18), and an exhortation (l. 19) to "take for [him]self" perhaps the lead or right of power to overthrow the current ruler. The next line (l. 20) is badly broken, making it difficult to ascertain whether the *rabbanê* mentioned here are a

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[174] Whether or not l. 11 belongs to the direct speech is unclear. *umakkaku* may be read both as 'he spreads', i.e. in a descriptive sense, or as 'he will spread' in which case a possible precative must be considered, which in turn might belong to the speech in the preceding line. As is illustrated further below, I interpret l. 11 as a continuation of the unknown singer's plea to Bēl.

[175] The singer is most likely an active member of the rebellion. In the sense of *non sunt multiplicanda entia praeter necessitatem*, the possibilities of who speaks here are restricted to the two actors featured in this column: AŠU, or his recruiter. As the following speaker is quite surely the recruiter (whether embedded in AŠU's speech or not), I assume the same speaker to sing here.

[176] Alternatively, one may include this line in the previous speech in which case the shouter becomes the subject of the speech. As most of the line is broken, a further discussion is not possible at this moment.

[177] For an overview over the direct speech allocations, refer to Table 2 at the end of this section.

part of any speech. If it is, then the entire speech described above, along with the following (ll. 21-27) is embedded in Adad-šuma-uṣur's speech further below (ll. 28-29), meaning the speech in ll. 13-27 is a quotation of one speaker: the *rabbanê*-representative. Alternatively, line 20 would be part of the narrative, re-introducing (for us, having just the damaged text, introducing explicitly for the first time), the agent who had arrived in the garden. In both interpretations, the subject of ll. 21-22 must be identical with that of *arādu* in l. 6: l. 21 echoes l. 6 (and 7). That man claims to have been cleansed of an evil deed by a 'washerman', which is perhaps to be understood as a priestly profession.[178] While we cannot be certain, one might hypothesize that this is a reference to collaboration with the evil foreign king: an evil deed to Marduk and Babylon.

Here it begins to become a little more unclear. It would make sense for AŠU to speak in l. 23 to voice his concerns as to who would support and be on the side of a king named Adad-šuma-uṣur, him, hence the conjecture "I said".[179] The answer would then follow in ll. 24-27, by the same speaker quoted earlier, with an explanation that garrisons[180] from outside the current king's palace (non-Assyrians?) have already rebelled.[181] The speaker then concludes by assigning AŠU the task of removing the king permanently (l. 27). Here, from ll. 28-29 (at least) it is then AŠU who explains that he tore off his (gardening?) clothes and cried copiously, apparently overwhelmed by the task he was assigned. From here on the preserved text becomes difficult to contextualise, though the direct speech may continue. The legible text ends with a lacuna of at least one line.

Now, a clue as to who is seeking out AŠU to recruit him for the rebellion may be found in l. 20 with the unclear (*rab*) *rabbanê*, (a group of) people who return in the next column as well. Chronicle P/22 iv 8-9 accounts of the "Akkadian officers [*rabûti*] of Karduniash [… putting] Adad-šuma-uṣur on his father's throne".[182] Now, the term *rabbanê* usually refers to priestly gardeners in first millennium sources, especially from the long sixth century; in Hellenistic times, however, we find the term (in the phrase *rab-banê* (*ša*)

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178 Refer to Section 2.1.2 for a discussion of the priests' role in LBPL.
179 Which in turn is based on the assumption that line 20 is part of a longer speech. If it is part of the narrative, and 21-22 are direct speech of the agent who had come to the garden, then we would need to have a third person verb at the beginning of 23.
180 As per the hypothesised reconstruction troops or cavalry may (have?) participate(d) as well.
181 Against whom the rebellion of the garrisons is directed is not preserved, but it stands to reason to assume a rebellion directed towards the current king. Perhaps instead of lugal, one should reconstruct a PN (Tukultī-Ninurta?).
182 Grayson (1975b: 176).

muḫḫi āli) employed as a designation for high-ranking city officials.[183] This is probably the background of our text here, which sometimes (*ii* 10) uses rabûtu instead. We take both terms to refer to 'Babylonian officers' or lords, i.e.: the 'administrators of Babylon''.[184]

A lacuna of at least two lines heads the second column, followed by largely unintelligible lines, too broken or incomplete to allow a coherent context assignment. It is thus difficult to determine where exactly AŠU's direct speech resumes; at least, however, it begins from l. 9, *before* the line division, given the form *pānīa*. His speech goes on until l. 13 and resumes after a short intermission (l. 14) from ll. 15-21. A likely 2.M.PL suffix in l. 6 suggests that an earlier speech existed, or an earlier onset of AŠU's altogether. The launderer with whom AŠU speaks in l. 7[185] is likely the agent mentioned by the *rabbanê* in the previous column. L. 8 indicates a wide-ranging focus of the speech in that it claims relevance for all of Karduniaš.[186]

Between ll. 9-12 AŠU describes the preparations for his coronation, performed by the *rabûti/rabbanê*. Temporally, the phrase [*ša i*]*bbalkit*(*ū*) *rabûti* in l. 10 implies that at the time of those preparations the rebellion has already taken place. Although only one *rabbanê* was present in column *i*, the verbal forms in the following lines hint at the presence of multiple *rabbanê* in the present context. We find here a ritual of purification before the coronation: the *rabûtu* cleanse him (literally or symbolically as washermen would do; l. 10), fumigate him (l. 11), and finally kiss his feet (l. 12).[187] The actual coronation then follows in l. 13.[188] It is indicative of the vision of the text's priestly authors that the coronation envisaged here involves some ritual acts for which technical expertise would have been required: the *rabbanê/rabûtu* envisaged included priests in their numbers.

The new king (now AŠU) is then heard calling out to the *rabbanê* of Babylon to come to him, hear his plans and placate the anxiety he feels. He tells them of his wish to pray to Bēl, asking the god to support him and to guide him in all his undertakings (ll. 15-

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183   CAD R s.v. rab banî 2.
184   As in chronicle P *iv* 8.
185   Note the remarks on *idabbub* in Section 3.4.2 above.
186   Again, the setting would be in accordance with Chronicle P ll. 8-9. The *rabûti* of l. 10, are also referred to in Chronicle P iv 8.
187   Possibly the same *rabbanê*, though undeterminable due to a break.
188   Note that apart from BHLT 7 and SAA 20 7 28, no coronation rituals are known to have survived, making this account a valuable source of information on the topic. Refer to Section 5 for further discussion.

18). The *rabbanê* in the assembly of the people then tell the king not to fear, hark their advice (19) and indeed do as he had suggested, in which way he would gain Bēl's support (20-21).

What follows is then a description of AŠU's prayer to Bēl at Esaĝila, within what appears to be a royal humiliation (ll. 25-27) within a rite of passage in which he prostates himself before Bēl and confesses to his crimes. It is followed by a sacrifice made to Marduk (l. 29), and a recitation of 'the word of Ea' (l. 30), though it is unclear what exactly is meant here, and what the word of Ea is. The following line is too broken to read. It is followed by a lacuna of at least 5 lines.

Column *iii* begins, after a lacuna of at least 2 lines and one line which is too broken for translation, with what appears to be, again, a direct speech (l. 2), followed by an *embedded* speech (l. 3)[189], wherein booty is reported to be carried off. The assumed speaker is AŠU, who recounts unclear events. The speaker quoted by him is unknown. L. 4 is again nearly entirely broken, but likely of similar content as the following l. 5, where a valuable object, a reddish-golden deer(-statue), is described, likely an item of the booty carried off. The whole section is roughly taken up again later in the column (ll. 16-23, probably), where the speaker (we think AŠU) reports his execution of the other speaker's commands (as explicitly introduced in l. 15).

In l. 6 is a question "from where Nusku…?", though it is not clear as no verb is preserved. The following line describes the actions of an unknown actor, who killed nobles and then went to a place obscured by the break. This actor is either AŠU conquering the surrounding regions of Babylon, subduing resisting rulers, or an actor challenging AŠU's reign.[190] Another option would be to regard this section from ll.4/5-7 as a recount of the destruction TNI brought upon Babylonia and its temples, which AŠU then later in this column rebuilds/rectifies.

An embedded direct speech commences at l. 8 in which a noble is asked to go to "the king my god"—a striking epitheton, likely of AŠU, given his coronation in the previous column *ii*, and enter an obscured place, perhaps the place that is under attack. If the section of ll. 4/5-7 refers to TNI's ravaging over Babylonia, then one must assume that AŠU's

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189   The argument here is rather tentative and relies on the previous line in which an indirect speech might be introduced with *pîšu īpuš*.

190   Cf. the interregnum of TNI and AŠU, where many have attempted to usurp the throne. Refer to Section 2.2.1 above.

coronation took place before TNI, or, at least, his supporters were entirely defeated. Alternatively, this narration might look back to a time before AŠU's rebellion. This question cannot be resolved at the moment. Any possible former mention of TNI's defeat in the epic is lost through the many breaks, but, as we have seen, the end of column *i* or the beginning of column *ii* may recount the actual rebellion.[191]

The following ll. 9-13, possibly even until l. 14, are directions for AŠU to rebuild Babylon. They are given by an unknown speaker, but perhaps again the *rabbanê/rabûtu*. Although both this section, as well as l. 8 are embedded direct speeches, they do not necessarily belong to the same speaker. It might well be that the call in l. 8 is, if not spoken by a specific, unknown person, one heard within the turmoil of the situation. Even if both speeches are performed by the same speaker, I understand them as separate 'sections', in which l. 8 is to be assigned to the preceding context of danger/robbing, and ll. 9-13 are a prequel to the following section of building works. Some of the parallelisms that then follow, however, are connected to l. 5, and possibly l. 6, which are within the context of turmoil. The status of l. 14 is unclear, though it may belong to the speech of ll. 9-13. The *ūl* before the break indicates a negative statement of some sort, which would fit into a continuation of the instructions given to AŠU. The mention of "joy" would bring these instructions to a positive conclusion. L. 15 is a speech of AŠU, so it is in l. 14, at the latest, that I place the conclusion of the embedded speech.

The change from imperatives to past tense 1.COM verbal forms between l. 13 and 15 marks most clearly the change of speakers. It can be said with relative certainty that l. 15, though badly broken, commences AŠU's narrative speech of his deeds. L. 15 hints at the embedded speech, with AŠU declaring the execution of the orders given to him in the previous section. As the orders were given to the king, high-ranked individuals have likely assigned them. To conform with the uniformity of actors in the narrative thus far, the assigners were likely again the *rabbanê/rabûti*.

The following table lists the respective parallel lines in this column:

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[191] This idea is based on i 31-32 and ii 4-5, where something seems to be happening in the palace (where TNI would have resided), but it is impossible to make more precise guesses.

Table 1: Parallel lines in column iii*:*

l. 5	l. 16
l. 6	l. 17[192]
l. 10	l. 18
l. 11	l. 21
l. 12	l. 22
l. 13	l. 23

AŠU restores or improves previous conditions in this section of ll. 15-23. L. 16 hints at the deer of (flashing) reddish gold, seen also in l. 5, to be a valuable object of an institution, most likely a temple, and, if so, almost certainly Esaĝila. Perhaps the respective following lines refer to the theft and recovery of another valuable, namely a stone seal related to Nusku and the 'lady of Ekur'. Ll. 7-9 have no parallels, but one may draw a possible line between ll. 9 and 19, wherein the silver mentioned in l. 9 would be the object that shines brightly in l. 19. However, the innumerableness of silver makes it difficult to link it to the plural subjects shining in l. 19. In l. 20 AŠU calls for important high-ranking city officials, perhaps to observe and spectate his renovations. Generally, AŠU's reparations concern on the one hand the restocking of a temple (Esaĝila?) (ll. 16-19) and on the other hand the rebuilding/strengthening of walls (ll. 21-23). Those walls may be either those of the city or those of the temple.

The direct speech ends with l. 23, and a new narrative section begins (ll. 24-34), in which AŠU travels his realm to establish himself as king by renovating more cities (e.g. l. 30) and seeking the approval of further deities. He prepares for the journey through another ritual purification (l. 24) and then likely heads to the city gates (at Imgur-Enlil, in l. 25).

AŠU goes to Borsippa to enter Ezida in l. 26, where he then confesses to his sins in l. 27 in an inserted direct speech.[193] The exact context of ll. 28-29 is a little unclear, but it appears AŠU perhaps performed some sort of ritual for one whole month, did some restoration work (l. 30) and then moved on to the next city: Cutha (l. 31). There he enters a fumigated Emeslam in l. 32. In l. 34 he seems to speak again to a deity, this time Nergal.

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[192]   This is a tentative guess that will be discussed further below.

[193]   The reason for the confession is not directly mentioned in the text. It could be due to his subordinate position, or due to doubts he might have regarding Marduk or the rebellion. Another possibility will be proposed later on, having to do perhaps with an attempt at seeking legitimisation.

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These last ll. 33-34 are badly broken, a possible lacuna of further lines would have followed.

Column *iv* is the worst preserved in the epic and thus also the most puzzling. AŠU's journey through Babylonia likely continues here. The actor headed somewhere in l. 2 is probably him. Nusku again finds mention here in l. 6, but the context is irretrievable. There is mention of an enemy in l. 7, perhaps one of AŠU's. In ll. 7-8 and 11-12 various professions are listed, perhaps indicating that on his travels AŠU met with the various groups of people of his newly conquered lands, or perhaps with professions represented in a (temple?) institution. The latter alternative is perhaps preferable owing to l. 10. The 2.M.SG verbal form there hints at a direct speech in which a person is asked why he went to the Suḫaean woman when he is so pure. Given the probably 'proverbial' foreignness of non-Babylonian women such as those of Sutean or Elamite origin, who are often cast as 'witches,'[194] something similar may be implied here for the Suḫaean woman. In any case, this episode should probably be associated with (the inspection of?) a priestly context where concerns with purity were paramount. Conceivably, a connection exists between this line and the mention of the *enemy* in l. 7.[195]

L. 13 is too broken for contextualisation. Something of the king's possession is counted, perhaps his riches, or subjects (in connection with the professions mentioned in the lines above). From at least l. 14-22, a new section begins in which AŠU seems to improve all regions of Babylonia, secular and religious. In l. 14, he gives something, and there is mention of the "district of his palace." This is unclear, but it is at least worth mentioning that "district," *nagītu*, is a distinctly LB word.[196] He then carries something from the plain of Ḫudada (l. 15)[197], seizes Esaĝila (or something of Esaĝila) and gives Duranki, which is explained as the band of the land (l. 16) and may be Nippur, or possibly

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[194]   See, e.g. for the references to the Sutean witches in Maqlû Abusch (2015: 75, 97, Maqlû III 77, IV 127).

[195]   Recall the quiet suggestion made by Singer (2008: 229f.) that a connection between AŠU possible Suḫaean origin and the mention of the Suḫaean woman. While we acknowledge the suggestion of a Suḫaean origin for AŠU, the idea that his origin would be mentioned at such a passage is doubtful, as also rejected by Bányai (2015: 18).

[196]   See CAD N1, 119.

[197]   See Zadok (1985: 164). According to Zadok, there are two place names bearing that name: Ḫudada 1. is only attested in our text and lies probably between Sippar and the Tigris. Zadok identifies it with OB Ḫudadum (whence the localization). Ḫudada 2. is attested several times in Late Babylonian texts from Uruk and is probably located somewhere close to that city. The implicit argument is that an historical-literary composition is more likely to refer to a place with a role in historical memory rather than to a non-descript small village in the southern countryside.

Babylon[198], to a deity—most likely Bēl, but perhaps also Enlil.

It is not entirely clear what happens in l. 17, but it appears as though AŠU 'upgrades' a city. The connection to the slave removing the king is puzzling but perhaps refers to AŠU himself (?). The Suḫaeans find mention again in l. 18, where they are likely turned into dust. This recalls the negative connotation of Suḫaeans discussed above. There is then news of cities and marches, likely continued on the broken parts of l. 19, where it is legible that AŠU entrusts and gives unknown things to a second son (possibly his). There is then mention of a gate; and as the donations continue in l. 20, that gate, too, is perhaps an endowment of some sort.

In l. 21 AŠU then heads to the mountain of Ḫašimur on top of which he possibly builds the city that is built in l. 22. From here on no particular plot is discernable anymore: there is an inspection in l. 23, another direct speech from ll. 25-27 (or in ll. 25 and 27, respectively), given the 2.SG forms, in which the addressee is instructed to bless the king. There is mention of tribute (l. 26) and the addressee's gate (l. 27). Perhaps it is a deity or a ruler that is addressed here, not however AŠU, as he is likely the king that is meant to be blessed. As the 'second son' is in possession of the gate (cf. l. 19), he is a likely addressee of this speech.

The following table summarises the direct speech allocations, as understood here.

Table 2: Direct Speech Allocation in the Adad-šuma-uṣur Epic

Column	Line	Narrative	Unclear	Direct speech	(Embedded)Speaker
i	1-5	probably	x		
i	6-9	x			
i	10-11			x	(*rabbanê*)AŠU
i	12	x			
i	13-19			x	(*rabbanê*)AŠU
i	20		x		
i	21-22			x	(*rabbanê*)AŠU
i	23			x	(AŠU)AŠU
i	24-27			x	(*rabbanê*)AŠU
i	28-29			x	AŠU
i	30-32		x		

ii	1-5	maybe	x		
ii	6		x	probably	?
ii	7-8		x		
ii	9-13			x	AŠU
ii	14	x			
ii	15-18			x	AŠU
ii	19-21			x	(*rabbanê*)AŠU
ii	22-31	x			
iii	1	x			
iii	2			x	AŠU
iii	3			x	(?)AŠU
iii	4		x		
iii	5-7			x	AŠU?
iii	8			x	(?)AŠU
iii	9-14			x	(?)AŠU
iii	15-23			x	AŠU
iii	24-26	x			
iii	27			x	AŠU
iii	28-32	x			
iii	33		x		
iii	34			x	AŠU?
iv	1-24	x			
iv	25-27			x	?
iv	28-30	x			
iv	31-32		x		

4.2 *Epigraphic Commentary*

As can be said from the epigraphy of the text, the manuscript is dated to the Hellenistic, possibly even as late as the Seleucid-Parthian era. This section discusses certain features typical and diagnostic of such late texts, which are observable in the current manuscript.

4.2.1   Flattening of Signs

The flattening of signs is seen often in the sign *ḪI* and the ones containing a *ḪI*-element. Take for instance the following sign *uʾ* in *i* 14, compared with a more 'traditional' form:

We see a levelling of the diagonal wedges with the horizontal writing line. The three wedges do not form one consecutive line, however, but are somewhat tiered behind one another.

Compare for instance also with the sign *ḪAR* (ḪI+ŠU), as found in *iii* 18, compared again with an earlier form:

We find not only a lowering and near entire levelling of the *ḪI*-element with the horizontals of the *ŠU*-element, but also an offset between the two sign-elements, a trend discussed further below in Section 4.2.3.

One can see further instances in the text with the following signs:

AḪ, where both the *ḪI*, and the *NUN*-elements show significant flattening, taken here from column *iii* 27:

BU, shown here from column *i* 14 where we see particularly elongated nearly horizontal wedges:

IG from column *ii* 23. Note the position of the first diagonal wedge, which is nearly parallel to the horizontal wedge at the bottom.

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KAR from column *iii* 29:

NE, read *pil*, in column *iii* 29. The *ḪI*-element, here too, is very flat:

The levelling of diagonals is not restricted to *ḪI*-signs, however. In the sign *UB*, read here as *ár* in column *iii* 7, we see the flattening of the two diagonals, as well. Note especially the upper diagonal:

4.2.2 *Alignment of Horizontal Heads with Vertical Lines*

Another epigraphic trend of the Late Babylonian period is the offset of horizontals to the right, which often lines their heads with vertical lines/wedges. The sign *ÁŠ*, here from column *i* 17, offers a clear example:

The same process in the sign *BAR* makes the sign confusable with *ŠÚ*. Here from column *iii* 26:

Compare with an instance of *ŠÚ* from column *i* 7:

Another instance is the sign *PA* in column *ii* 9:
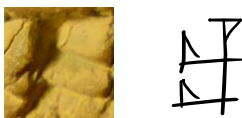
4.2.3 *Spacing Between Composite Signs*

As was shown in Section 4.2.1 above with the example of *ḪAR* (ḪI+ŠU), composite signs

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often feature a gap in between the sign-elements, thus sometimes appearing as two separate signs. See the example of *ḪAR* (ḪI+ŠU) from above, repeated here for convenience:

See also the late sign *AM* (IS+ḪI), here from column *i* 15, which resembles two separate signs. Note, too, the flat ḪI-element:

Another example in the epic is *MUL* (NAB+AN), here from column *iii* 19:

4.2.4 Miscellaneous Developments

Various signs underwent developments specific to them. One such particular development is the rearrangement of the *Winkelhaken* of the sign *MEŠ*[199], taken here from column *i* 16:

As one can see, an opposite development to the flattening of wedges seen in Section 4.2.1 above is observable here with the *Winkelhaken* moving from a horizontal arrangement to a diagonal one. Composite signs assume the ordering, as well.[200] Compare for instance *DINGIR^MEŠ*, here from column *ii* 25:

In late manuscripts, the sign *DI* resembles the sign *KU*. Take here, for instance, the sign *DI*, read as *de* in column *i* 22, followed by the sign *KU* in column *i* 16:

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[199] See Jursa (2015).
[200] Jursa (2015: 190) shows that in composite signs such as *DINGIR^MEŠ* the *MEŠ*-element may remain levelled as it was traditionally. Such is not the case here.

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Note the flattening of the diagonal of *DI*, which give it its similarity to *KU*.

The tiering of wedges at the end of a sign is typical for Late Babylonian Palaeography. See for instance the sign *GI*, taken here from column *ii* 4:

Finally, the upper horizontal wedge of the sign *LU* is missing in later forms or is at least barely visible. Take here an instance from column *ii* 4:

4.2.5 Conclusions

These epigraphic trends are strongly indicative of a late composition date. A comprehensive comparison with Matthieu Ossendrijver's[201] *Images of Late Babylonian Cuneiform Signs* and with predominantly very late signs extracted from the online database *Late Babylonian Signs* (LaBaSi)[202] has shown the manuscript to most likely be of *very* late origin, indicating it was written around or after 330 BCE.

4.3 Linguistic Parallels

In his discussion of the epic's date that accompanied his edition, Grayson already suggested a composition date for the AŠU epic that post-dated the events it purported to narrate. He based the assumption on an anachronistic term (*bēl bēlē* in *ii* 20). Grayson further argued that the tablet gave us clues (for instance line breaks in *ii* 9 and *iv* 11) indicating that it was not the first manuscript of the text, which in turn led him to believe the contents were of older origin.

Now, the idea of a late to very late composition has been introduced in Section 1 above, the main arguments for which we draw from the thematic content of the epic and its parallels with other LBPL pieces (discussed in the next Section 4.4), but to some degree, several linguistic properties attributable to the very late period may help us underline

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[201]   Ossendrijver (2021).
[202]   See the Appendix (Section 7.2) for the full comparison list.

and emphasise the hypothesis.

But what can the language of the epic tell us about its origin? While the palaeography discussed in the previous section helps us pin down a period of creation of the manuscript, it does not tell us much about the composition date of the text. On the other hand, the linguistic features of the epic may very well be such indicators. Several points must be kept in mind, however, while tracing the text's origin through its language:

Firstly, written and spoken language must be strictly differentiated, as neither may account for the reality of the other. Additionally, written language oftentimes harbours archaisms for a significantly longer time than spoken language.[203] Secondly, while one would like to trust the copying skills of the scribes, the possibility of scribal errors or the incorporation of one's more modern speech into the possibly more archaic text cannot be excluded, nor can the full scope of such incorporation be determined. It is probable though that morphological corrections were more easily incorporated than syntactic or even lexical ones. In the same thought, some scribes may have chosen to adhere to more traditional language to either mimic or honour the times lamented in the corpus, perhaps also with the intention of making the text seem older than it is.

Nonetheless, an accumulation of certain phenomena attributed to a certain time period may serve as beneficial support to the other points of evidence for a late composition, as presented in the next section.

4.3.1 *Orthographic Morphological, and Phonological Characteristics*

A useful guideline for late orthographic and consequently also morphological developments is given in Streck (2001). He determines seven phenomena indicative for the period (not all of which are found in the epic, however):

1. CV-CV for /CVC/
2. (C)VC-CV for /CVC/
3. vowel-indifferent CVC and CV-signs
4. complementation of CVC signs
5. lacking notation of vowels
6. morphophonological spellings

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[203] Compare for instance with the modern example of *ne* in French negative clauses, which is virtually entirely omitted in common speech, but still preserved in written language and formal speech.

7. the usage of aleph for vowel elongation

Vowel-indifferent spellings are found especially in CV-syllables, for example in *ii* 8: ^kur*Kár*-^d*da-an*-[*ni-ia-áš*]. Another instance is found in *iii* 31 *ú-ṣa-am-mu*, where one would expect a final *-ma*. Grayson[204] also notes a few instances of the usage of the suffix *-ku* for *-ka*, e.g. in *i* 18 *du-un-ni-ku* 'your strength'[205] and *iii* 27 *aḫ-ta-ṭa-a-ku* 'I have continually sinned against you'.

For a typical late form and a morphophonological spelling, we find *li-ru-ba-in-nu* "let them come to me" in *ii* 15. This is a rendering of *līrubūʾinni* corresponding to 'classical' Babylonian *līrubūni*(*m*) and later Babylonian *līrubūninni* (where the Ventive, whose second function as a dative of the first person had been bleached, is 'reinforced' by the accusative suffix).

The last mentioned phenomenon of vowel elongation through a final aleph is especially common and may be even observed word-internally. Take for instance the following examples: *i* 14 *ur-ru-šu-*ʾ 'dirty', *ii* 24 *il-la-ku-*ʾ 'he/they go(es)', but also *iv* 6 *ma-*ʾ-*diš* 'many'.

Another very common feature of Late Babylonian is the advanced decline of case.[206] Streck describes a merge of initial singular suffixes *u/i/a* to eventual *u/i/u* and plural *ū/ī* to *ī*. The gradual loss of case can be seen not only in the apparent 'confusion' some scribes (including our epic's scribe) had with its correct usage but also in the complete omission of case endings altogether (also seen here).

The former phenomenon can be observed for instance in terms of possessive suffixes in *i* 19 *li-qa-a-ka*, where in classical Akkadian one would expect a dative *liqâ-**ki***. In *ii* 11 we find *qaq-qa-ri*, an apparent genitive in place of a syntactic accusative. Two lines below in *ii* 13 we find a late accusative ending in *-u*, following Streck's generalisation above: *ga-ši-ru-tú*. Such inconsistencies are seen throughout the epic.

Examples for the latter phenomenon can be seen for instance in *i* 18 *na-bal-kát*, which can grammatically not be construct state form in its position immediately preceding

204   Grayson (Grayson 1975a: 59, n. 8a).
205   Note that although this is mostly a new reading introduced in the present edition, the relevance of the *-ku* suffix remains. Compare for more instances in the late corpus with Debourse (2020: 179): in the NYF texts this usage is observed in great frequency, for instance in MNB 1848 rev. *v* 16 [*liḫdu*] *libbaku ana ṣabāt qātēku* '[May] your heart [rejoice] over the taking of your hand.'
206   See Streck (2014) for a thorough and detailed discussion.

a verb. The syntactic accusative here takes the 'form' of -∅. Paired with the case-'confusion' exemplified above, it is feasible to assume case had died out by the time of the manuscript's creation and was no longer an (overt) component of verbal speech.

If we again follow Streck, this time in his temporal categorisation of Late Babylonian case usage[207], the AŠU epic would fall into the *Endstadium* of case-loss.

An orthographic and likely also phonological feature of LB would be the multiple assimilations observed. In *ii* 11 we see the emphatic assimilation qt→qṭ[208], in *i* 22, we see the interesting *un-de-sa-nu* where likely first a voice assimilation took place turning t→d and then an alveolarization took place. resulting in m→n. The same process might be supposed for *nak-kan-du* in *iii* 9. The same phenomenon is observed in the New Year Festival texts[209] and is a strong indication of the late date of (at least) the manuscript.

Finally, an orthographic but not as much a morphological characteristic of the later Assyrian and Babylonian texts is the spelling *Bar-sìp*, as noted by Grayson[210].

4.3.2 Lexicon

The vocabulary featured in the epic might be the more solid indicator for a time frame of composition, as it would seem rather unlikely for the scribes to have switched entire terms for the sake of 'modernisation' while lamenting the past.

Grayson first brought up the term of *bēl bēlē* in *ii* 20 with the argument of its theological anachronism, as Marduk's status of 'kings of the gods' was not recognised until Nebuchadnezzar I who ruled a little less than a century after AŠU[211]. Although this finding does not hint at a very late composition date, it at least assures us of a non-contemporary one.

Terms typical of the late(r) periods are *addānua*, which is attested since about the sixth century[212], and *nagītu*[213], but also the confusion of the term *rab-banê*. As was explained above in Section 3.4.1 a confusion took place between the Babylonian *rab-banê* and the Aramaic *rabbān* 'great one'—a sign that Aramaic had long become the common

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[207] See the table in Streck (2014: 285).
[208] Compare for instance with the same process happening in BM 34062 *rev.* 20' (Jursa & Debourse 2017: 84).
[209] See Debourse (2020: 182) for parallels.
[210] Grayson (1975a: 59, n. 8d).
[211] See Grayson (1975a: chap. 4, especially p. 43ff.).
[212] See under Section 3.4.2, line 17.
[213] See Footnote 196 above.

language leading to 'false friend'-scenarios with Akkadian terms.

4.4 Thematic Parallels

Likely the strongest argument for a late composition of the epic comes from the thematic parallels found between our present text and other texts from the corpus of LBPL, indicating that the AŠU epic would be part of said corpus.

The main motifs of LPBL literature, discussed in Section 2.1.2 above, serve as a guideline for the themes that constitute these parallels. They are briefly reiterated here, for convenience: Texts of the LBPL-corpus draw heavily on the relationships between king, priest, and Marduk/Esaĝila/Babylon. It was the king's duty to serve Marduk, both in the cult and in the worldly mission, which meant to upkeep Babylon (and its associated cities) and protect and provide for its citizens. He could be an evil figure, just as he could be good and righteous, often with the two examples pitted against one another in the compositions. Marduk, Esaĝila, and Babylon stood at the centre of the plots, as they stood at the centre of the priests' lives. Actors acted *for* Marduk, the temple, or the city, *because* of Marduk, the temple, or the city, or had to suffer consequences for their actions implemented by Marduk. Finally, there was the priest, who as the wise and knowledgeable defender of the cult was usually the most central figure in LBPL. He acted independently, guided the good king, and opposed the (often foreign) tyrant to ensure the wellbeing of Marduk and Babylon.

With these rough structures in mind, we turn to the more specific motifs of the themes of *king*, *Marduk, Esaĝila, and Babylon*, and finally *priest*.

Perhaps one of the most prominent and striking motifs concerning the king is the juxtaposition of the good king, here AŠU, versus the bad, TNI. Compare for instance the textual fields of *i* 15-16, in which the evils of TNI (and his garrisons) are referenced.

"[…] they (will) burn down the land [… …] … his lords they killed."

Though this broken passage cannot be said with full certainty to refer to TNI's doing, it likely refers to the evil king AŠU is supposed to defeat. A fuller account of an evil king's evil doings may be found in the 'declaration of war'-text BM 55467, a literary letter, apparently from Nabopolassar to Sîn-šar-iškun:

[The proper]ty of Esagil and Babylon you exposed and sent [to Nineveh. You kill]ed the elders of the city; you captured the one who rose up (against you).

Your [. . .] you abandoned; you filled the lands with [disorder. The def]eat of the Babylonians you inflicted and you brought dark[ness]. You imposed punishment; you incited un[rest], you fomented [re]bellion in the land; you did not create peace.[214]

TNI was nonetheless a common negative example and was depicted thus in the literature. To further motivate him as the main adversary of the epic[215], we have first and foremost the parallel sources attesting his accession to power through a rebellion.[216] As no rebellion *against* AŠU is (admittedly perhaps *yet*) attested, there is per Occam's razor no apparent reason to assume one. Secondly, the earlier hypothesis for a reason for the uprising, namely AŠU having neglected his duties towards Marduk, which has been deduced from the confession recorded in column *ii*, may be renounced through the negative confession of the Late Babylonian period.

TNI fits the role of the evil king perfectly. He has been featured as the negative example of a king in LBPL, and chronologically (with reference to Chronicle 22/P) he fits the context of a rebellion, too. Although his name is never mentioned in the preserved part of the epic, the event of the reclamation of Babylon would have been grand and impactful enough in the eyes of the LB scholars (wishing perhaps for the same to happen in their times) to deserve an epic retelling. Though again a different uprising could have been thematised here, which is not recorded in any surviving chronicles, it is again preferable not to presume any event we have no direct evidence for while disregarding an existing well-fitting option, especially when TNI's demise in an uprising can be found addressed in LBPL literature:

> "'– [now,] Tukultī-Ninurta, son of Arad-Esagil whom a slave girl [. . .], sat [on] the royal throne and was killed in an insurrection.'"[217]

It would be unreasonable to assume any other of AŠU's adversaries, who have not been

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214   See Gerardi (1986: 31, 38), ll. 4-9, and Price (2015: 186). While Gerardi claims that the letter is a late copy of a real correspondence between two kings, Jursa & Debourse (2020: 259) classify it as a product of LBPL. For the translation cited here, see https://lbplproject.com/node/26775 (Accessed 02.09.2021).

215   Note that Grayson (1975a: 56) first believed the epic to recount a rebellion against AŠU, perhaps due to his neglect of Marduk but since Grayson *apud* Walker (1982: 407) it has been generally (but not without exception) accepted that AŠU was on the rebelling side.

216   Mostly Chronicle 22 but brokenly also Chronicle 25.

217   JTVI 29 84–85 (BM 35404) obv. '19-'20. Edition by Jeremias (1917: 92–95)

involved with him within the scope of revolutions to have taken the role. Likewise, it would not be logical to imagine a new character, undocumented by any of the contemporary sources, to have only shown up here, unnamed again. We can thus motivate TNI as the bad king through contemporary documentation, his link to AŠU in the chronologies, as well as his known persona in LBPL literature.

In contrast to the evil king, we see the depiction of the good and exemplary king, AŠU, who acts on the Babylonian elite's instigation (*i* 27-28) and removes the tyrant from his position (*i* 25), freeing Babylon, Marduk, and the citizens, and thus bringing back order to to the lands (columns *iii* and *iv*). In column *iv* 15, 18-22[218] we find possible references of successful conquests initiated by AŠU, speculatively re-conquests, which would allow an even closer comparison with the following excerpt from BM 55467:

> I will avenge Babylon. [The prop]erty of Esagil and Babylon from the enemy land I will bring down; an encampment [. . .] the wall of Nineveh which is made of hard stone [by command] of Marduk, the great lord, I will pile up like a mound of sand. [The city] of Sennacherib, son of Sargon, offspring of a house slave, conqu[eror of Babylon, plund]erer of Akkad – its roots I will pluck out, and the foundations of the land I will obliterate. [The . . .] from his family I will exile from Assyria forever.[219]

To be a good king, one had to take care of Babylon, which included its reparations after an invasion. Indeed Babylon and the king's devotion to the city are both featured prominently in the epic and just as the king in the excerpt above, AŠU, too performs either reparations or renovations in column *iii* 16-23, after heeding his superior's orders (*iii* 15):

> "[What] … […he order]ed me I executed […] A deer of (flashing) reddish gold to the property of E[sagil …] A stone seal of the lady of Ekur […] I called all the craftsmen, (those) who provide (for…) […]. Like the stars of heaven, they will constantly shine […] I called the mayor of Babylon, the princes of […] They make with the brick-mould the baked bricks of the cr[enels … …] I

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[218] For reference, the lines read: "[…] the Suhaean(s), into dust(?), news of cities and marshes […] he entrusted, he gave, to the second son, a gate … […he] gave, his desert of Hudada. […] … to the mountain of Hashimur, border of the Upper [Za]b […] they established the city at its top".

[219] *rev.* 3-8, see Gerardi (1986: 36). In this text we see, perhaps clearer than in any other LBPL manuscript, a direct contrast of and comparison between the bad king (the supposed receipient) vs. the good king (the supposed author).

strengthen (and) bring it (scil. the brickwork) [so that] the crenels of the wall [might grow high …] I installed the d[oors] of the wall, the gates of [the wall were constructed]"

AŠU's good conduct is comparable for instance with the account of a just king from the 'King of Justice'-text (BM 45690/CT 46 45):

(Now, the king) was not negligent in the matter of true and righteous judgment, he did not rest nig[ht] or day. With counsel and deliberation, he persisted in writing down the judgments and decisions pleasing to the great lord, Marduk, for the betterment of all the people and the settlement of the land of Akkad. He drew up regulations for the betterment of the city. He built anew the court of law (and) drew up (its) regulation.[220]

And the perception of such exemplary behaviour is also accounted for in the text:

He made the heart of Sîn, Šamaš and Ištar, who are Bēl, Bēltiya (and) Nabû, the ones dwelling in Esagil and Ezida, his lords, rejoice in his just reign, and he propitiated with regular offerings those (gods) who love his kingship.[221]

Not only Marduk, but various other prominent deities are pleased with the king's virtuous deeds. AŠU, too, seeks the approval not only of Marduk, but of several other deities, such as Nergal (*iii* 34), and almost certainly also Nabû, seeing as AŠU goes to Borsippa and enters Ezida during his post-coronation travels (*iii* 26).

Another point exemplified in the excerpt is the importance of the preservation of cult. The unnamed king propitiated the gods with offerings, an important task, also carried out by AŠU in *ii* 29.

Esa]gil he praises. […] to Marduk he made an offering […][222]

The king also fulfils his duties in the preservation of the cult, which is another LBPL-endorsed virtue of a good ruler. The continuation of the religious activity, the care-taking of Marduk, and the ensurance of good fortune befalling Babylon(ia) are all essential

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[220] *ii* '22-26. See Schaudig (2001: 579–88), as well as https://lbplproject.com/node/26856?tid=339 (Accessed 01.09.2021).
[221] BM 45690 *iii* '17-'20.
[222] Cited here are ll. *ii* 28-29.

themes of LBPL to which AŠU's endeavours may only be added as a positive model of exemplary kingship. Not only the reparations or renovations of Babylon's walls, however, but also those of the temples, especially Esaǧila, were crucial to the good disposition of the gods (and the priests) towards the king. Especially after a rebellion against a tyrant, a new king would need to prove himself worthy of his throne in the eyes of the deities who disapproved of the previous ruler. Securing their divine support would have been a pressing issue for AŠU, which is why he, as the good king, is depicted here to have taken care of his religious duties immediately after his coronation, and even before he set out for conquest.

BHLT 8 (BM 34113)[223], an account of Amīl-Marduk, is interesting to us for two reasons. The first comparison we may draw with the text is that of the king's devotion to Esaǧila and Marduk.

> When it came to the welfare of Esangila and Babylon and the es[tablishment] of the sanctuaries of the great gods, (the king now) constantly recalled [his cr]eator in his heart. […] He paid no attention to all sweet things (of life), (because) his attention was focused on establishing the wellbeing of Esangila [and Babylon].[224]

This full dedication to the deity was seen as most exemplary for a good king, especially in its juxtaposition with the bad king, which Amīl-Marduk used to be before he was converted for the better.

The second comparison that may be drawn with BM 34113 is that of the proselytising figure. Previous interpretations attributed the role to Nabonidus[225], given the fragment's LBPL-classification, however, another reading opened up: the advisor could have also been a priest[226].

As was mentioned in Section 2.1.2 above, a priest's duties revolved around the

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223 For the most recent edition, see Debourse & Jursa (2019: 171–173). Further editions, see Grayson (1975a: no. 8), and Schaudig (2001: 589f.).
224 BM 34113, ll. '9-'15.
225 See von Soden (1975: 283). Given the similar orthography of the texts von Soden believed the Amīl-Marduk epic to be a fragment of the „King of Justice" text, the role of which he attributed to Nabonidus. See Debourse & Jursa (2019: 176) for arguments against the join. Another suggestion for Nabonidus being the advising king in question is found in Schaudig (2001: 589), based on his different reading of the fragment.
226 Debourse & Jursa (2019: 177). For the full argumentation of the interpretation refer specifically to pp. 177-179.

preservation of all religious affairs, ensuring the wellbeing of Marduk and Esağila. This included, if necessary an intervention with the king, either through guidance or by standing up to him. Take thus the following excerpt from BM 34113:

> He [st]ood before [the king] and the (next) morning he proposed (again) what is good for [Esangila and] Babylon to Amīl-Marduk (but) he did not list[en to him]. He (then) made a second attempt to give advice and no-one would listen to what he said, (but still) he changed his (the king's) position (on the matter), and he (the king) did no longer pose resistance (to his advice).[227]

In general, the priest held an advisor's role:

> "I am one who averts (evil) portents, who tells of your valor."[228]

Now, the attentive reader may have noticed that the AŠU epic does not feature a priest at all. With the king as the main hero of the epic, one may be reminded of older literature (see Section 2.1.2 above), which in turn might serve as a counter-argument for a late composition.

Two arguments speak against this objection. For one, the king's ambiguity is a strong motif of LBPL, justifying AŠU's prominence in the narrative. Secondly, the priest's role is not completely omitted: the part of the guiding figure is instead assumed by the *rabbanê/rabûti*, the local elite of Babylon. They, too, undertake the task of freeing Babylon, Esağila, and Marduk of their tyrant, as seen was previously in Chronicle P, too, for instance:

> After the Akkadian officers [^lú^*rabûti*^meš^] of Karduniash had rebelled and put Adad-shuma-usur on his father's throne […].

Their political role as the 'Akkadian officers' and Babylon's elite can be observed during AŠU's coronation. Marduk's approval is reflected, among many things and aspects, in the approval of one's subjects, especially in those that could potentially overthrow one. The support of the political powers of Babylon was thus decisive and had to be ensured early

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[227] BM 34113 ll. '3-'8. See Debourse & Jursa (2019: 173).
[228] BM 32656, ll. 12'-13'.

on. Such a support request is seen in column *ii* 15, when AŠU asks to hear the *rabbanê* pledge their loyalty to him publically (cf. *ii* 18):

> "Let them come to me in the palace, I wish [to hear] the *rabbanê* of Babylon."

Assuming parallelism between the account of Chronicle P and the AŠU epic, the *rabbanê* are understood to be the *rabûti* mentioned there, as was already suggested in Section 3.4.1. To reiterate, the *rabbanê* function as the orchestrators of the rebellion in the epic, the same role assumed by the Akkadian officers in Chronicle P. In Section 4.1 above the term of the *rabbanê* was already briefly discussed. While the term normally refers to priestly gardeners,[229] it is, in our text, a stand-in for *rabû*, via the Aramaic *rabbān*, with the priestly function perhaps still in the backmind of the priests. The *rabbanê*'s function as Babylon's elite is to work on behalf of Marduk, and in that sense, there is of course overlap with the role of the priest. It is possible to query to which degree a non-priestly elite was still conceivable to the authors of our text at all.

Accordingly important are the roles the priests/*rabbanê* occupy and the tasks, which they perform. Most prominently stands the capacity not only to choose a king from 'behind the scenes' but also to crown him. Strong parallels are observable between our present epic and the Nabopolassar epic[230]. Take for instance:

> They kept putting the zaqiptu on his head. They had him sit on the royal throne [(. . .)]. They took the royal seal [(. . .)]. The eunuchs, the staff-bearers [. . .]. The noblemen of Akkad approached in the kummu. When they had drawn near, they sat down before him [and] The noblemen in their joy [exclaimed]: "O lord, o king, may you live forever! The land of your enemies [may you conquer!]"[231]

This may be compared with our passage from column *ii*:

> "They put [the (royal) emblem on my head][232] and they crowned [me] with (the sign of?) superior power."[233]

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[229]   CAD R 2.
[230]   See BHLT 7 (Grayson 1975a, no. 7), as well as da Riva (2017) for the latest edition of the text.
[231]   Nabopolassar epic ll. rev. 10-17, translation by da Riva (2017: 83).
[232]   Note that this passage has been reconstructed based on the Nabopolassar epic *rev.* l. 10.
[233]   Note that these two passages constitute two of very few records of crowning rituals attested in the first millennium BCE. Another account is SAA 20 7 28, where we also find the *rabûti* (gal.meš) calling out to the king following his coronation, just as was observed in the present epic.

Added to the task of crowning the king is that of the performance of ritual activities, including cleansing duties. Two instances of the ritual preparation of AŠU are preserved in the text. The first mention is found in *ii* 11:

"… on the ground, they constantly fumigate [*me*]"

The second instance is found in *iii* 24:

[…] he *washes* and annoin[ts …]

Not wanting to assume an additional actor not attested in the text, these descriptions of ritual duties performed, likely by no other than the *rabbanê*, can serve as additional backing for their association with the priests.

The lack of a priest should thus not worry us too much. Or to rephrase: the lack of an *overt* priest is of no concern to our understanding of the epic as a product of LBPL. Though our most important heroes (next to AŠU) may be 'great ones' or the 'notables', and not obvious priests, for a Late Babylonian priest the 'elite in Babylon' means, per definition, almost certainly 'priest'; it is their self-identification. This view is quite typical of LBPL, especially at a time when historical-literary texts with non-royal heroes first come to the fore.

Adding to the LBPL ideology of what constitutes a good king is a king who listens to the priest. AŠU's obedience to the *rabbanê*, so in other words to the priest, and thus his 'good kingliness' can be observed for instance in column *i* 28-29, where despite his hesitations, and even fear and uncertainty (compare *i* 23), he does as he is told:

"[Because the re]moval of the king was charged against me, [I ungird] my loins,
[I took off] my loin[cloth], my tears flow."

Another perhaps even clearer example of his obedience is found in *iii* 15:

"[What] … […he order]ed me I executed […]"

A priestly guiding role as a moral compass to the king is well observed in LBPL, for instance in the the literary letter Iraq 67/1 268 (ll. 13-14), in which priests instruct Aššur-banibal on how to act:

Let enquiries now be made before our lord the king. [You should] send word to the citizens of Babylon.

85

His humbleness is found i.a. in the form of a royal humiliation, as seen in *ii* 25-26:

> [… …] Bēl (and) the gods of the lands saw how [he humiliated himself] [… …]
>
> he declares (all) his misdeeds (and) his crimes […]

The royal humiliation is a motif found also in the NYF texts, though it is there accompanied by a negative confession. The priest's instruction is as follows:

> He will go out and strike the cheek of the king. He will place [the king] behind
>
> him. In the presence of Bēl, he will make him enter.[234]

As well as:

> He will strike his cheek.[235]

As for the NYF, this ritual humiliation is agreed upon to have served both to re-establish and legitimise a king's rule. A similar conclusion may be drawn here, given the situational need for the legitimisation of a newly crowned ruler.

To summarise, he strong thematic parallelism observed between the present text and LBPL texts makes perhaps the strongest point for an attribution of the AŠU epic to the corpus. The king, the temple community, Marduk, Babylon, and their most prominent motifs all find themselves represented in the composition, and the composing priest's motivations, inspirations, and wishes are transparent: to lament an unjustly ruled Babylon(ia) by a king who likely did not listen to the temple community's pleas and did not follow their guidance, and did not revere their deities, or take care of their cities.

Granted, some of the themes recur in earlier texts as well, as was for instance shown in multiple Old Babylonian fictional letters edited by Schaudig,[236] but it is in the precise combination and the simultaneous occurrence of all these otherwise (in earlier texts) separately occurring themes and motifs where the character of LBPL is defined. This combination is not least also observable in our epic.

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[234] NYF 4 (MNB 1841) *rev. v* 34-36. See Debourse (2020: 151).
[235] NYF 3 (BM 32485+DT 109) *rev. vi* 9. See Debourse (2020: 133).
[236] Schaudig (2019). See specifically sources 1-3, as well as pp. 85ff. for a discussion of their contents and the conclusions drawn, which closely resemble the theme of the ignorant king in need of priestly guidance observed in LBPL, too.

5 Conclusion—The Epic in Context

Every tale must come to an end, every hero's story must conclude, but while the classic Greek epic usually takes a rather tragic end, ours takes an illegible one.

Nonetheless, we have come a long way. What started with a broken and misunderstood tablet, ended with a broken but less misunderstood story. The initial questions that guided the thesis have all been answered, along with several new questions that arose in the process.

1. How do we motivate the epic to be a (very) late composition and a product of LBPL?
2. What does this mean for our understanding of the LBPL mindset, regarding
   a. the priests' world views, both on the contemporary and the ancient worlds, and
   b. their image of themselves and the king, contemporarily and in ancient times?
3. How do we understand the *priests*' perception of Adad-šuma-uṣur?
4. What does this text mean for *our* understanding of Adad-šuma-uṣur, the Kassite king?

Now, to answer the first question, let us recall the arguments both for and against a late composition. The most prominent argument *for* a late composition arises from the thematic comparison of the epic with LBPL texts, discussed in Section 4.4. It is hard to imagine that the authors of the text thought centuries ahead of their time, mostly because the contents do not match earlier texts or agendas furthered by authors of earlier periods of Babylonian priestly literature. This main argument is backed up by less solid arguments regarding the very late epigraphy of the manuscript, as well as the linguistic character of the text, although the lexicon at least would strongly back a composition date of the Neo-Babylonian period as the latest possible era the epic originated from.

Against these arguments one may weigh the claim that the thematic parallelism is not entirely uniform: after all, the priest who so heavily features in LBPL texts is absent here and is instead replaced by the king who is typically the hero of older epics. But as was shown in Section 4.4, the *rabbanê*, 'the great ones', take on the role of the priest to perform his LBPL-designated duties. We can thus dismiss this counterargument, though we still acknowledge that it exists.

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Regarding the epigraphy, it must be acknowledged that BM 34104+ is a copy of another (lost) manuscript, and as can be always claimed against an epigraphic argument, the text could be a late copy of an older text. But while a late epigraphy cannot be taken as the sole argument for a late composition, it certainly may be used to back up stronger claims.

As none of the counterarguments is strong enough to invalidate the arguments *for* a late composition, we may safely conclude that the epic is a late work, and coupled with its very evident LBPL themes, it positively belongs to this corpus.

As such, we can draw further conclusions on the LBPL mindset depicted in the epic. For one, the priest appears as a hidden figure, wisely leading the prospective king to act righteously and save Babylon(ia). This concealment of perhaps the 'true' hero shows the LB priests' feelings of hiddenness in a society where, opposite to the way depicted in the epic, they had no political power at all and were not revered and respected as they had imagined their ancestors had been. After all, if we follow the narration of the epic, in the olden days the (Kassite) king listened to the priests' instructions, in the old days the temple had the influence to remove a foreign king from behind the scenes and install a different one of its choosing, and during these ancient times, the temple could exert its well-established political power. The epic essentially depicts an imagined relationship between priest/temple, king, and Babylon(ia). A relationship no longer in existence. The king no longer listened to the priest, the temple had lost its (imagined) absolute political influence, and the priests could no longer remove a foreign king they did not like and install in his place a local one of their choosing.

The king, although seemingly treated a little like a pawn in the epic, was of great importance to the priests, as he was a central figure in the cult in which he had traditional roles to fulfil. Upkeeping the cult served the purpose of serving and appeasing Marduk who in return would protect and see to the wellbeing of Babylon, alongside the king. The returning trope of the evil foreign king neglecting Marduk, his cult, and Babylon and its citizens might be connected to the idea that a foreign king could not possibly care for and feel the connection to and responsibility for Marduk and Babylon as a local (king or citizen, in the case of AŠU in the epic) could. It would lead to the idea of a 'local king for a local deity'; why would a foreign king dedicate himself to a deity and a city he is not a native of? The local AŠU's dedication to the Babylonian cult, his reverence for Marduk,

Nergal, Ea, and Nabû (and possibly other deities not preserved in the text), and his dedication to Babylon and its fellow temple cities is noteworthily different from his tyrannical predecessor. A foreign (and unjust) ruler, however, would not care nor understand the immense importance of these cultic duties.

It is feasible that the priests who composed the epic faced an especially challenging time with the then reigning foreign ruler and felt inspired by AŠU's tale. What one might deduce from the text is the sentiment that foreign rulers were not as invested or even interested in the cult as the priests expected them to be. Instead they perhaps only offered nominal and financial support in return for acceptance and societal support, which given the temple's central role in Babylonian society was a tactical move, more than one that portrayed interest and sought integration. A certain degree of frustration with the lack of royal participation in temple activities could be deduced from the prominent focus on AŠU's exemplary conduct. If we think about how such treacherous literature against foreign rulers could have been permitted to be composed, the answer might lie in the suppositions that it was not read by these rulers, or more precisely: by the governors who watched the provinces.

The success of the Babylon-internal machinations in the rebellion against TNI would have been a desirable outcome to the LB priests' dilemmas. Whether this was indeed the political reality or not may not ever be proven with full certainty, and we might not be able to reconstruct the actual context and background of the composition of this specific epic, but the priests' sentiments remain clear.

From the authors' perspective, AŠU was a perfect rhetorical figure to further their ideals and wishes: they saw him as the righteous king who followed the Babylonian elite's (which they wished to be) guidance and defeated the tyrant ruler who (likely) did not dedicate himself or even a fracture of his time to the wellbeing of Marduk and Babylon(ia). He also served as a good metaphor to tell of their own possible ordeals.

Finally, what conclusions may we draw for our understanding of the historic Kassite king Adad-šuma-uṣur? For one, the epic rather unspectacularly confirms to us what we were already quite certain of: that AŠU was placed on the throne by the Babylonian elite during the uprising against Tukultī-Ninurta I. Given that the *rabbanê* mentioned in the epic were likely not the orchard administrators their name referred to in earlier times but instead to the *rabûti* of Chronicle P, and the Aramaic *rabbān*, we can exclude the heavily

temple-centric narrative furthered in the epic by the late scribes and should perhaps imagine a collaboration of worldly and religious circles, in more 'traditionally Mesopotamian' fashion to have taken place during the rebellion.

The epic also presents us with possible clues to previously introduced hypotheses, most notably the idea that AŠU spent a long time in the periphery before actually conquering Babylon, as might be hinted by the highly obscure column *iv*. Any information provided by column *iv*, however, is difficult to understand, and no premature conclusions should be reached. Instead, we should acknowledge the passages as a possible hint.

The origins of AŠU remain obscure. Whether indeed he was the 'son of a nobody' as suggested by Singer and as suggested by the legible parts of the epic through the king's exhortation when he was nothing but a simple palace gardener, might depend on the resurfacing of further sources, not least because we also do not know what the source material was from which the scribes drew their knowledge on AŠU. The epic may suggest, however, that his lack of a noble family background was known or at least the established knowledge of the priests at the time of the epic's composition. To the authors he may very well have depicted a case of 'From Zero to Hero', a case which they must have wished to find in their contemporary times, too.

All in all, the epic does not provide any new information on AŠU, but as the thesis has hopefully made clear: it was not the authors' intention to document AŠU's life. We find confirmation of information provided by chronicles and letters, perhaps, however, because the authors drew on these sources themselves to compose the epic. Instead, the epic provided us with the many insights into LBPL mindsets and world-views listed above, giving us a better picture of the late Babylonian world. Our canvas of Hellenistic Babylonia may still demand further restoration, but we have at least varnished some of its craquelures.

We further sought to answer two points of debate:

1. Who rebelled against whom? Who was the evil king?
2. The role of the *rabbanê*, and finally
3. Can we determine a date of composition?

Given LBPL and chronological parallels, we have determined Tukultī-Ninurta I to be the main adversary of the story, though he was never mentioned in it by name. This is mostly because no rebellions *against* AŠU have been attested (yet) but we know of his participation in one against TNI, and that TNI was a well-known figure for the 'evil king' in LBPL.

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The *rabbanê* were determined to be the stand-ins (by name) for the priests. As was mentioned in Section 3.4.1 above, the term of the *rabbanê* is glossed as 'administrator of temple property, especially of orchards'[237], but could also under wider circumstances be associated as the *rab bānê* that were owners of prebends in slightly earlier times. In any case, the connection with the priests through the late *rab-bānê*'s (administration of prebends and) involvement in the temple cult should be clear. In the context of our text, we see the word alternate with forms of rabû "great one, notable". This interchange is certainly facilitated by the assonance between *rab-banê* and Aramaic *rabbān* "great one," and the probable usage of the particular reduplicated plural of *rabbān* once in our text shows that this very word was foremost in the author's mind. [238] This is indicative of the merging of the (economic and political?) elite with the priestly community in the world-view of LBPL authors: namely that the 'great ones' of Babylon are necessarily priests (even if not mentioned or linked directly). This view in itself is anachronistic for a period of Babylonian self-rule, which one would have to suppose for an earlier composition date of the corpus. The authors of the AŠU epic, as well as of the rest of the LBPL corpus never experienced such an era, however.

As regards the date of the composition, we cannot be too sure, but we can place it within the time range of LBPL (ca. 330 BCE-80 CE). In an ideal world, we could say what exact event inspired the composition of the text, but this very general estimate must suffice.

LBPL constitutes a collection of works framing an auto-referential and self-empowering narrative for the Babylonian priesthood; both in a descriptive way, recounting what the scribes believed their ancestors once were, and what they, their descendants have now become, as well as in a prescriptive or aspirational way, with the hopes of how things might or should be done, if ever their situation improved.

Adad-šuma-uṣur's origin and reign remain disputed to this day and were likely disputed during his time, too. Many kings in ancient and modern history have gone by without any recognition or mentionable remembrance in cultural memory, and though to some of his contemporary peers and adversaries, as well as to some recent scholars he might have been a 'zero', to the Late Babylonian priests, second only to their own people, he

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[237] CAD R 4.
[238] For *rabbān* see e.g., Beyer (1984: 690). The reduplicated plural *rabrabānē* may be found in col. i 20: ˡᵘgal ˡᵘgal.dùᵐᵉˢ.

certainly was a 'hero'.

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7 Appendix

7.1 Glossary of Lexical Items in the Adad-šuma-uṣur epic

The lines of reconstructed forms are listed in cursive script.

Word	Translation	Line(s)
abullu	gate (of city or large building)	*iii 13*, iii 23
Adad-šuma-uṣur	PN	i 23
addānua[239] /-ka	in my/your interest	ii 17, ii 18, ii 20, ii 21
adi	until, as far as	ii 14, iii 24
agurru	baked brick	*iii 11*, iii 21
alāku	(to) go, walk	i 29, ii 24, iv 10
ālu	village, town, city	iii 30, iv 17, iv 18, iv 22
amāru	(to) see	ii 25
amātu	word, matter	i 30, ii 14, ii 30
amirtu	inspection, checking, choice	iv 23
ana	to, for	i 6, *i 13*, *i 21*, i 21, i 23, *i 25*, ii 15, ii 16, ii 20, ii 22, ii 24, *ii 29*, iii 8, iii 9, iii 16, iii 22, iii 26, iii 31, iii 32, iv 9, iv 10, iv 11, iv 19, iv 21
anaku	I, me	i 22
appāru	reed-bed, marsh	iv 18, iv 29
ardu	slave, servant	iv 17
arḫu	moon	iii 29
askāru	crescent (moon)	iii 29
ašlāku	washerman, fuller	i 22, ii 7, iv 11
aššu	because (of)	*i 28*
ayyiš	where?	iii 6
Bābilu	GN	ii 15, ii 19, iii 20
bābu	gate, door	iv 19, iv 27

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[239] Note that this form derives from dinānu, specifically: ana dināni > addāni (Hackl et al. 2014: 375).

banû I	(to) build, create	ii 15, ii 19, iii 11, iii 21
banû II	(to) grow, act like a noble-man	iii 7
Barsip	GN	iii 26, iii 31
Bēl	DN	i 10, ii 16, ii 20, ii 24, ii 25
bēltu	lady	iii 17
bēlu	lord	i 16, ii 16, ii 19, ii 20, iii 8, iii 33, iv 7, iv 25
biltu	load; talent; yield; rent; trib-ute	iv 26
birtu	fort, castle	iv 17
bussuru	(to) bring, send a message	ii 26
bu''û	(to) look for, seek	i 7, i 18, i 21
dabābu	(to) speak, talk	*ii 7*, ii 30, iv 7
dagālu	(to) see, look	ii 4
dâku	(to) kill	i 16, iii 7
dalālu	(to) praise	ii 28
dalīlu	praise	*ii 28*
daltu	door	ii 23, iii 13, iii 23
damāmu	(to) wail, moan	ii 27
damqu	good	i 9
danānu	(to) become strong	*iii 12*, iii 22
dimtu	tear	*i 29*
dunnu	power, strength	i 18
Dūranki	temple epitheton	iv 16
dūru	(city) wall	*iii 12*, iii 13, iii 22, iii 23, iii 30
Ea	DN	ii 30
egirrû	utterance	i 9
ekallu	palace	i 6, i 13, i 24, i 25, i 31, ii 5, ii 14, ii 15, iii 9, iv 14
Ekur	TN	iii 17

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eli	on, over, above	*ii 30*
ellu	pure, clean	iv 10
elû I	(to) go up, arise	i 8, *i 27, i 28, iii 12, iii 22, iii 30*
elû II	upper	iv 21
Emeslam	TN	*iii 32*
eperu	earth, soil; dust	iv 18
epēšu	(to) do, make, build	*iii 2*, iii 14, iii 15, iv 28
erēbu	(to) enter, come/go in	ii 15, ii 17, *ii 21, iii 8, iii 9*, iii 26, iii 32
Esaĝila	TN	ii 22, *ii 28, iii 16*, iv 16
Ezida	TN	*iii 26*
gašrūtu	great strength, power	ii 13
gillatu	sin, sacrilege	ii 26
ḫallu	crotch thigh	i 11
ḫamāṭu I	(to) burn (up)	i 15
ḫamāṭu II	(to) hasten, be quick	iii 8
Ḫašimur	GN	iv 21
ḫaṭû	(to) do wrong, commit a crime	iii 27
ḫazannu	mayor, village headman	iii 20
ḫidûtu	joy, rejoicing	*iii 14*
ḫiṭītu	crime, shortfall, loss	*i 22, ii 26*
ḫīṭu	error; lack; crime	iii 27
Ḫudada	GN	iv 15, iv 20
ḫurāṣu	gold	iii 5, iii 16
ikkaru	farmer, ploughman	iv 8
ilu	god, deity	ii 25, iii 8
Imgur-Enlil	PN	*iii 25*
ina	in, on, by, from	*i 17, i 25*, i 27, i 28, i 31, *ii 11, ii 13*, ii 18, iii 21, iii 32, iv 22

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inzahurētu	a red die	*iii 5*
itti	with	ii 7, ii 9
izuzzu	(to) stand	ii 18
kakkabu	star	iii 19
kapālu	(to) roll up, wind up	iii 29
karābu	(to) pray, bless, greet	iv 25
Kārduniaš	GN	ii 8
kaspu	silver	iii 9
kaṣāru	(to) tie, knot; gather	*iii 13*, *iii 23*
kī	like, how?	ii 9, ii 22
kīma	like; when, as, that	iii 19
kidinnu	protection, aegis	ii 27
kiniš	reliably, genuinely	i 19
kirû	fruit plantation, orchard	i 6, i 13, i 17
kiṣru	knot, bonding	iv 16
kišādu	neck, bank	i 27
kullulu	(to) veil, crown	ii 13
Kutâ	GN	iii 31, iii 33
lā	not	ii 19, ii 20
leqû	(to) take	i 19
libbu	inner (body), heart, interior	i 24, i 25, ii 14
lubušu	garment	i 14
lulīmu	red deer, stag	iii 5, iii 16
madbaru	steppe, desert	iv 20
maḫrātu	front part, forepart	*iv 15*
makāku	(to) extend, spread	i 11
makkūru	property, possessions	iii 16
malû	(to) be(come) full	iii 30
mannu	who	i 10
mānu	counted	iv 13
Marduk	DN	ii 29
mašāšu	(to) wipe off, clean	i 17

mātu	land	i 15, ii 25, iv 17
mesû	(to) wash, clean	i 22, *ii 10*
mīnu	number	iv 6
mīnû	what	i 23, iv 10
miṣru	border, boundary	iv 21
muḫḫu[240]	skull, top	i 17, i 32
munnabtu	fugitive	i 8
nabalkattu	crossing, uprising	i 7, i 18
nabāṭu	(to) be(come) bright, shine	iii 19
nabalkutu	(to) cross (over), traverse	i 25, ii 10
nadānu	(to) give	i 4, iv 14, iv 16, iv 17, iv 19, iv 20
nadû	(to) throw (down), lay down	i 28
nagītu	district	iv 14
nakkamtu	treasure, treasury, store-house	iii 9
nalbattu	brick mould	iii 11, iii 21
napḫaru	total, sum; (the) whole entirety	iii 10, iii 18
naqû	(to) pour (a libation), sacrifice	ii 29
narkabtu	chariot	i 26
našāku	(to) kiss	ii 12, ii 23
našû	(to) lift, carry	*i 19, i 27, iii 12*, iii 22, iv 15
Nergal	DN	*iii 34*
nīqu	offering, sacrifice	ii 29
nukaribbu	gardener, date-grower	i 21
Nusku	DN	iii 6, iv 6
paḫāru	potter	iv 9, iv 12
palāḫu	(to) fear, revere	ii 19
pānu	front, face	ii 9, *ii 22, iii 26, iii 31*, iv 2

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[240] Only in the prepositional phrase *ana*/*ina muḫḫi*.

pānû	first, earlier	iv 28
papāhu	cella, shrine	ii 23, iii 28
paqādu	(to) entrust; appoint	iv 9, iv 19
parāsu	(to) cut (off), decide	i 30
parṣu	a ritual	iii 11
pašāšu	(to) anoint	*iii 24*
paṭāru	to loosen, release	*i 28*
pû	mouth	i 30, iii 3
puḫru	assembly	ii 18
qablu	hips, middle	i 28, i 29
qabû	(to) say, speak, command	*ii 18, iii 15*
qaqqadu	head	*ii 13*
qaqqaru	ground, earth	ii 11, iii 32
qatāru	(to) smoke, fumigate	ii 11, iii 32
qerēbu	(to) become close	ii 22
qullulu	(to) despise, humiliate	*ii 25*
rabbanê	administrator of temple property, here: great one	i 20, ii 18
rabbûtu	great ones	ii 10
rabû	big, great	i 20?, iv 23
raṭābu	(to) be damp; D (to) moisten	iii 24
rēšu	head	iii 30, iv 22
rigmu	voice, cry	i 12
rubû	prince	iii 20
samītu	battlement parapet	*iii 11*, iii 12, *iii 21*, iii 22
sapannu	flatland, plain	iv 15
suḫāʾītu	Suḫaean	iv 10
suḫu	Suḫaean	iv 18
supû	prayer	*ii 24*
sūq	street	iii 30
ṣabātu	(to) seize, take; hold	iv 16
ṣābu	people, troops	ii 27, iv 9

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ṣāriru	flashing red	iii 5, iii 16
ṣubātu	textile, garment, cloth	*i 29*
ṣullu	(to) pray, beseech	ii 16, ii 20, *iv 8*
ša	relative pronoun	i 14, i 24, i 29, *ii 10*, ii 14, ii 16, ii 18, ii 20, ii 23, *ii 28*, iii 10, *iii 11*, *iii 15*, iii 20, iii 21, iii 28, iii 30, iv 10, iv 20, iv 21
šadû	mountain	iv 21, iv 24
šaḫaṭu	(to) tear away, off, down	i 28
šakānu	(to) put, place, lay down	i 26, ii 13, ii 22, *iii 26*, iii 31, *iv 2*, iv 22
šallatu	plundered thing(s), booty	iii 3
šamû	sky, heaven	iii 19
šanānu	(to) equal, rival	iv 17
šapāru	(to) send; write	iv 9
šarru	king	i 11, i 23, *i 25*, i 27, i 28, ii 14[?], ii 19, iii 8, iii 24, iii 26, iii 31, iv 13, iv 17
šasû	(to) shout, call	*ii 14*, iii 10, iii 18, iii 20
šâšu	him	*i 10*, *iii 10*
šemû	(to) hear	*ii 14*, *ii 15*, *ii 19*
šēpu	foot	i 17, ii 12
šī	she; that, this same	iv 22
šubtu	seat, dwelling	iii 28
šūlûtu	garrison	i 23, *i 24*
tamlû	fill, filling	iii 30
tardinnu	second(ary) (son)	iv 19
tebû	(to) get up; Š (to) remove	iv 17
tikku	neck	i 28
tuklu	help	i 10, *iii 34*
ṭēmu	(fore)thought; instruction; report	iv 18

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ṭiābu	(to) be(come) good	iii 28
u	and	iv 18
ul	not	iii 14
ultu	from, out of; since, after	*i 22*, i 24, iii 6, iii 31, *iv 15*
umma	saying	*iv 10*
unqu	ring; (stamp-)seal	iii 17
urrušu	dirty, filthy	i 14
ūmu	day	iii 29
ummānu	army, troops; common people	ii 18, iii 10[?], iii 18
wabālu	(to) carry, bring	iii 3
warādu	(to) go down, descend	i 6, i 13, 21
waṣû	(to) go/come out	i 12, i 24, ii 17, ii 21, iii 31
wuššuru	(to) release, set free, abandon	ii 20
Zabbu	GN	iv 21
zamāru	(to) sing	i 9
zanānu	(to) provision, provide	iii 18
zāqipānu	fruit gardener	i 21
zaqāpu	(to) fix upright, plant, impale	*iii 13*, iii 23
zaqiptu	standard	*ii 13*
zīmu	face, appearance	iii 28

7.2 Palaeographical Sign List

The following list serves as a supplement to the previous Section 4.1 discussing the epigraphical classification of the Adad-šuma-uṣur epic. Following Ossendrijver's[241] *Images of Late Babylonian Cuneiform Signs*, it lists for reference one of each of the signs found in the epic, alongside a respective sign of a. Ossendrijver's list and b. the online databank LaBaSi (Late Babylonian Signs)[242], whereby the selection of signs was carefully curated to be of Babylonian or Urukaean origin to allow for a useful comparison. An asterisk (*) indicates a sign of non-Babylonian or Urukaean provenance.

Where possible (and needed), a date or period of origin is added both to Ossendrijver's signs, as well as to those found in LaBaSi. If not otherwise indicated, dates attributed to the LaBaSi signs. Ossendrijver's signs are, if not indicated otherwise from the late Achaemenid, or Seleucid and Parthian period.

Sign	AŠU	LaBaSi	Ossendrijver
579 A	a (BM 34104)	a (AD -362)	a (BM 32167) – early Seleucid?[243]
334 Á (ID)	it (BM 34104)	it (AD -330A+B)	eṭ (BM 56605) – late Seleucid / early Parthian[244]
397 Aʾ	uʾ (BM 34104)	ʾi (AD -366A)	ʾ (AO 6453) – SE 99[245]

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241   Ossendrijver (2021).
242   https://labasi.acdh.oeaw.ac.at/ (Accessed 25.11.2021).
243   Ossendrijver (2012: 364).
244   Heeßel (2000: 112).
245   TCL 6 2. A date is given in the tablet discriptions, and colophon.

Sign	AŠU	LaBaSi	Ossendrijver
120 AB	ab (BM 34104)	ab (BM 87266)	ab (VAT 7852) – 188 [246]
145 AD	at (BM 34104)	at (BM 87266)	ad (BM 40621)
398 AḪ	aḫ (BM 34104)	eḫ (BM 87250)	iḫ (BM 41485) – Hellenistic[247]
298 AL	al (BM 34104)	al (AD -168A)	al (BM 32167)
170 AM	am (BM 34104)	am (AD -168A)	am (BM 38434)
437 AMAR	amar (BM 34104)	amar (BM 82556)	amar (BM 55471)
13 AN	dingir (BM 34104)	dingir (AD -171B)	an (AO 6481) – SE 123[248]

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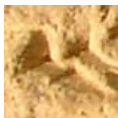
[246] Schnabel (1923: 215).
[247] LBAT 1611.
[248] TCL 6 27. An estimated date is given in the tablet discriptions.

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Sign	AŠU	LaBaSi	Ossendrijver
56 APIN	engar (BM 34104)	apin (BM 77839) – 5th c. BCE	apin (BM 32211)
1 AŠ	ina (BM 34104)	ina (BM 87228)	ina (AO 6477) – Seleucid[249]
339 ÁŠ	áš (BM 34104)	áš (AD -144)	zíz (A 3433)
131 AZ	as (BM 34104)	as (AD -362)	aṣ (BM 32287)
5 BA	ba (BM 34104)	ba (AD -155A)	ba (A 3451)
152[8] BÀD	bàd (BM 34104)	bàd (YOS 21 203)*	-
9 BAL	bal (BM 34104)	pal (AD -362)	bal (BM 35072)
74 BAR	bar (BM 34104)	½ (AD-96A)	bar (BM 32167)

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249   TCL 6 30. An estimated date is given in the tablet discriptions.

Sign	AŠU	LaBaSi	Ossendrijver
69 BE	tel (BM 34104)	til (AD -96A)	múd (BM 47755)
214 BI	bi (BM 34104)	bi (AD -366A)	bi (A 3413)
400 BIR	bir (BM 34104)	bir (AD -270B)	bir (BM 35381)
371 BU	bu (BM 34104)	bu (AD -362)	bu (AO 6451) – 2nd c. of Seleucid rule[250]
335 DA	da (BM 34104)	da (AD -266A)	da (BM 32269)
457 DI	de (BM 34104)	de (AD -266A)	di (A 3413)
465 DIN	din (BM 34104)	tin (AD -168A)	din (AO 6492) – Seleucid[251]

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[250]   TCL 6 38. An estimated date is given in the tablet discriptions.
[251]   TCL 6 25. An estimated date is given in the tablet discriptions.

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Sign	AŠU	LaBaSi	Ossendrijver
123 DIR	mál (BM 34104)	dir (BCHP 11)	diri (BM 55546) – SE 186[252]
480 DIŠ	ana (BM 34104)	gí (BM 30270)	1 (AO 6418)
206 DU	du (BM 34104)	du (AD -330A+B)	du (BM 40095)
309 DUG	dug (BM 34104)	luṭ (BE 10 26)* – 423 BCE	dug (AO 6451) – 2nd c. of Seleucid rule[253]
308 E	e (BM 34104)	e (AD -330A+B)	e (A 3413)
324 É	é (BM 34104)	é (AD -330A+B)	é (VAT 9154)
99 EN	en (BM 34104)	en (AD -96A)	en (BM 32167) – early Seleucid?

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[252] Ossendrijver (2012: 242)
[253] TCL 6 38. An estimated date is given in the tablet discriptions.

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Sign	AŠU	LaBaSi	Ossendrijver
393 ERIM	érin (BM 34104)	zálag (BM 30370)	rín (BM 34088)
319 GA	ga (BM 34104)	ga (AD -330A+B)	ga (BM 36647)
167 GAB	duḫ (BM 34104)	gab (AD -330A+B)	du$_8$ (BM 42964)
230 GAG	dù (BM 34104)	dù (AD -366A)	dù (BM 47755)
343 GAL	gal (BM 34104)	gal (AD -366A)	gal (BM 36647)
333 GÀR	qar (BM 34104)	Nicht in LaBaSi	qar (AO 6451) – 2nd c. of Seleucid rule[254]
192 GAZ	gaz (BM 34104)	kàs (BM 42299)*	kas (AO 6451) – 2nd c. of Seleucid rule[255]

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[254] TCL 6 38. An estimated date is given in the tablet discriptions.
[255] TCL 6 38. An estimated date is given in the tablet discriptions.

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Sign	AŠU	LaBaSi	Ossendrijver
85 GI	gi (BM 34104)	gi (AD -168A)	gi (BM 41004) – Seleucid-Parthian or Old Persian[256]
486 GIGIR	gigir (BM 34104)	Nicht in LaBaSi	gigir (BM 48627)
440 GIM	gim (BM 34104)	gim (AD -144)	gin$_7$ (BM 34067)
595 GÍN	ṭu (BM 34104)	gín (AD -330A+B)	ṭu (BM 36414)[257]
444 GÌR	gìr.II (BM 34104)	Not in LaBaSi	gìr (BM 47755)
296 GIŠ	giš (BM 34104)	giš (AD -330A+B)	iṣ (A 3451)
106 GÚ	tik (BM 34104)	gú (BM 77839)	gú (BM 34452)

[256] Neugebauer & Sachs (1967: 185)
[257] This is an unpublished astronomical procedure text, likely Hellenistic (M. Jursa, personal communication).
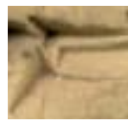
Sign	AŠU	LaBaSi	Ossendrijver
111 GUR	gur (BM 34104)	gur (AD -137D)	gur (AO 6451) – 2nd c. of Seleucid rule[258]
589 ḪA	ḫa (BM 34104)	ḫa (AD -330A+B)	ḫa (AO 6448)
401 ḪAR	ḫar (BM 34104)	ḫar (BM 87285)	ḫur (BM 34719) – Hellenistic[259]
396 ḪI	ḫi (BM 34104)	ḫe (AD -328)	ḫi (BM 36722) – early Seleucid[260]
78 ḪU	ḫu (BM 34104)	ḫu (AD -362)	ḫu (BM 36647)
142 I	i (BM 34104)	i (AD -266A)	i (A 3413)
598a IÁ	iá (BM 34104)	iá (BM 30270)	-
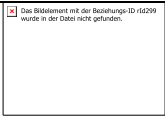
[258] TCL 6 38. An estimated date is given in the tablet discriptions.
[259] M. Jursa, personal communication.
[260] Ossendrijver (2012: 350). Perhaps attributable to the reign of Philip Arrhidaios (ibid.) in which case the date would fall somewhere between 323 and 317 BC.

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Sign	AŠU	LaBaSi	Ossendrijver
535 IB	ib (BM 34104)	ib (AD -168A)	ib (BM 36647)
80 IG	ig (BM 34104)	ik (AD -362)	gál (VAT 7809)
449 IGI	ši (BM 34104)	ši (AD -330A+B)	igi (AO 6451) – 2nd c. of Seleucid rule[261]
205 IL	il (BM 34104)	il (AD -183A)	il (BM 36394)
320 ÍL	íl (BM 34104)	No entry.	íl (BM 36712)
399 IM	im (BM 34104)	im (AD -330A+B)	im (BM 32167) – early Seleucid?
148 IN	in (BM 34104)	in (AD -266A)	in (BM 35325)
212 IŠ	iš (BM 34104)	iš (AD -266A)	iš (BM 32269)

[261] TCL 6 38. An estimated date is given in the tablet discriptions.

Sign	AŠU	LaBaSi	Ossendrijver
15 KA	ka (BM 34104)	ka (AD -330A+B)	ka (BM 34719)
133 KÁ	ká (BM 34104)	ká (AD -330A+B)	ká (AO 6448) – Seleucid[262]
63a KÁD	kát (BM 34104)	Not in LaBaSi	-
322 KAL	dan (BM 34104)	kal (AD -328)	dan (VAT 4958)
376 KAR	kar (BM 34104)	kar (AD -140C)	kar (AO 6486) - Seleucid[263]
105 KÁR	kár (BM 34104)	Not in LaBaSi	gán (BM 35381)
461 KI	ki (BM 34104)	ki (AD -330A+B)	ki (A 3413)
313 KID	kit (BM 34104)	qid (BM 95597)	líl (BM 32269)

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262   TCL 6 12. An estimated date is given in the tablet discriptions.
263   TCL 6 18. An estimated date is given in the tablet discriptions.

Sign	AŠU	LaBaSi	Ossendrijver
63d KÍD	tat (BM 34104)	tat (AD -366A)	tag₄ (A 3413)
536 KU	túg (BM 34104)	ku (AD -330A+B)	ḫun (A 3424)
191 KUM	ku (BM 34104)	qu (BM 78273)	qu (BM 41004) – Seleucid-Parthian or Old Persian
77 KUN	kun (BM 34104)	kun (AD -226A)	kun (BM 32167) – early Seleucid?
366 KUR	mat (BM 34104)	mat (AD -366A)	kur (AO 6477) – Seleucid[264]
55 LA	la (BM 34104)	la (AD -168A)	la (AO 6492) – Seleucid[265]
483 LAGAB	gíl (BM 34104)	kil (PTS 2253) – 6th c. BCE	ḫab (BM 34079)

[264] TCL 6 30. An estimated date is given in the tablet discriptions.
[265] TCL 6 25. An estimated date is given in the tablet discriptions.

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Sign	AŠU	LaBaSi	Ossendrijver
481 LAL	lal (BM 34104)	lá (BM 78425)	lá (A3413)
59 LI	li (BM 34104)	li (AD -270B)	li (BM 32287)
537 LU	lu (BM 34104)	lu (AD -96A)	dib (BM 37266) – early Seleucid
330 LÚ	lú (BM 34104)	lú (AD -366A)	lú (VAT 9154)
151 LUGAL	šàr (BM 34104)	lugal (AD -362)	lugal (VAT 4958)
355 LUL	paḫ (BM 34104)	lib (BM 30256)	lul (BM 32211)
342 MA	ma (BM 34104)	ma (AD -330A+B)	ma (AO 6451) – 2nd c. of Seleucid rule[266]
471 MAN	niš (BM 34104)	man (AD -137D)	20 (BM 46233)

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[266] TCL 6 38. An estimated date is given in the tablet discriptions.

121
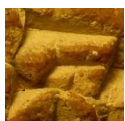
Sign	AŠU	LaBaSi	Ossendrijver
307 MAR	mar (BM 34104)	mar (BM 78425)	mar (BM 36712)
533 MEŠ	meš (BM 34104)	meš (AD -330A+B)	meš (A 3413)
427 MI	mi (BM 34104)	mi (AD -330A+B)	gi₆ (BM 36722)
61 MU	mu (BM 34104)	mu (AD -330A+B)	mu (VAT 4958)
81 MUD	mut (BM 34104)	mut (BE 9 61)*	mud (AO 6492) – Seleucid[267]
129a MUL	mul (BM 34104)	Not in LaBaSi	mul (BM 36685)
95 MUN	mun (BM 34104)	Not in LaBaSi	mun (BM 47755)
554 MUNUS	sal (BM 34104)	šal (AD -183A)	mim (BM 32167)

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[267] TCL 6 25. An estimated date is given in the tablet discriptions.
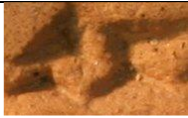
Sign	AŠU	LaBaSi	Ossendrijver
337 MÚRU	múru (BM 34104)	Not in LaBaSi	murub$_4$ (BM 36705)
374 MUŠ	ṣir (BM 34104)	muš (AD -328)	muš (BM 47755)
70 NA	na (BM 34104)	na (AD -330A+B)	na (BM 34757) – early or pre-Seleucid[268]
229 NA$_4$	na$_4$ (BM 34104)	Not in LaBaSi	na$_4$ (BM 47755)
129 NAB	nap (BM 34104)	nap (BM 87285)	nap (BM 55540)
35 NAG	nag (BM 34104)	Not in LaBaSi	naq (AO 6451) – 2nd c. of Seleucid rule[269]
79 NAM	nam (BM 34104)	sim (AD -168A)	sín (BM 47755)
172 NE	pil (BM 34104)	ṭè (AD -330A+B)	ne (BM 34128)

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[268] Ossendrijver (2012: 302).
[269] TCL 6 38. An estimated date is given in the tablet discriptions.

Sign	AŠU	LaBaSi	Ossendrijver
231 NI	ni (BM 34104)	ni (AD -362)	zal (BM 36712)
597 NÍG	gar (BM 34104)	šá (AD -366A)	šá (BM 36705)
556 NIN	nin (BM 34104)	nin (BCHP 5)	nin (BM 32107)
75 NU	nu (BM 34104)	nu (AD -362)	nu (A 3451)
72 NUMUN	kul (BM 34104)	kul (AD -168A)	numun (AO 6492) – Seleucid[270]
87 NUN	nun (BM 34104)	nun (AD -261B)	nun (A 3413)
295 PA	pa (BM 34104)	pa (BM 87228)	pa (BM 33453)
439 PAN	pan (BM 34104)	pan (BE 9 36)*	ban (BM 35381)

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[270] TCL 6 25. An estimated date is given in the tablet discriptions.

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Sign	AŠU	LaBaSi	Ossendrijver
383 PI	pi (BM 34104)	pe (AD -270B)	pi (BM 34079)
328 RA	ra (BM 34104)	ra (AD -330A+B)	ra (A 3451)
149 RAB	rab (BM 34104)	rap (BM 78425)	rab (BM 40621)
89 RI	ri (BM 34104)	ri (AD -330A+B)	ri (VAT 4958)
68 RU	ru (BM 34104)	šub (AD -270B)	ru (VAT 4958)
104 SA	sa (BM 34104)	sa (AD -270B)	sa (AO 6451) – 2nd c. of Seleucid rule[271]
115 SAG	sag (BM 34104)	sag (AD -330A+B)	sag (BM 37056)
331e SAR	kiri₆ (BM 34104)	sar (AD -328)	sar (BM 34719)

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[271]   TCL 6 38. An estimated date is given in the tablet discriptions.

Sign	AŠU	LaBaSi	Ossendrijver
112 SI	 si (BM 34104)	 se (AD -96A)	 si (BM 36705)
454 SIG$_5$	 sig$_5$ (BM 34104)	Not in LaBaSi	 sig$_5$ (BM 32461)
62 SÌLA	 qa (BM 34104)	 qa (AD -270B)	 sìl (BM 34452)
438 SISKUR	 siskur (BM 34104)	Not in LaBaSi	 siskur (BM 35785)
7 SU	 su (BM 34104)	 su (AD -362)	 su (A 3451)
522 SUG	 sug (BM 34104)	Not in LaBaSi	-
384 ŠÀ	 lìb (BM 34104)	 lìb (AD -366A)	 šà (BM 34067)
367 ŠE	 še (BM 34104)	 še (AD -330A+B)	 še (VAT 7852) – 188 BCE[272]

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[272]   Schnabel (1923: 215).

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Sign	AŠU	LaBaSi	Ossendrijver
331 ŠEŠ	šeš (BM 34104)	šeš (AD -132B)	muš₅ (BM 47755)
354 ŠU	šu (BM 34104)	šu (AD -362)	šu (A 3433)
545 ŠÚ	šú (BM 34104)	šú (AD -330A+B)	šú (BM 50508) – around 400 BCE[273]
139 TA	ta (BM 34104)	ta (AD -96A)	ta (BM 36722)
124 TAB	tab (BM 34104)	tab (AD -140C)	tab (VAT 7828)
126 TAG	tak (BM 34104)	tak (BM 17304)	šum (BM 35325)
12 TAR	tar (BM 34104)	qud (AD -330A+B)	tar (A 3413)
376 TE	te (BM 34104)	te (AD -270B)	múl (A 3428)

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[273] Schreiber (2018: 521).

Sign	AŠU	LaBaSi	Ossendrijver
73 TI	ti (BM 34104)	ti (AD -330A+B)	ti (BM 47808)
58 TU	tu (BM 34104)	tu (AD -273B)	tu (AO 6451) – 2nd c. of Seleucid rule[274]
207 TUM	tu₄ (BM 34104)	tu₄ (AD -330A+B)	tum (A 3413)
411 U	u (BM 34104)	u (BCHP 18)	10 (BM 46233)
318 Ú	ú (BM 34104)	ú (AD -330A+B)	ú (BM 35399)
306 UB	ár (BM 34104)	ub (AD -330A+B)	ár (BM 34790) Seleucid-Parthian or Old Persian[275]
381 UD	ud (BM 34104)	ud (AD -328)	u₄ (AO 6451) – 2nd c. of Seleucid rule[276]

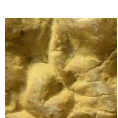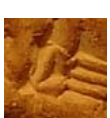[274] TCL 6 38. An estimated date is given in the tablet discriptions.
[275] Neugebauer & Sachs (1967: 185) as LBAT 1502.
[276] TCL 6 38. An estimated date is given in the tablet discriptions.

Sign	AŠU	LaBaSi	Ossendrijver
130 UG	uq (BM 34104)	uk (AD -183A)	uq (AO 6451) – 2nd c. of Seleucid rule[277]
412 UGU	muḫ (BM 34104)	muḫ (AD -362)	muḫ (BM 33552) – early Seleucid[278]
441 UL	ul (BM 34104)	ul (AD -330A+B)	ul (BM 32287)
134 UM	um (BM 34104)	um (AD -330A+B)	um (BM 34719)
312 UN	un (BM 34104)	un (AD -330A+B)	un (BM 41485)
40 UNKIN	unkin (BM 34104)	Not in LaBaSi	-
575 UR	ur (BM 34104)	lik (AD -330A+B)	taš (BCM A1845-1982)

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[277] TCL 6 38. An estimated date is given in the tablet discriptions.
[278] Ossendrijver (2012: 224).

Sign	AŠU	LaBaSi	Ossendrijver
38 URU	uru (BM 34104)	uru (AD -330A+B)	uru (AO 6452) – SE 91[279]
372 US	us (BM 34104)	us (AD -362)	us (BM 41485)
211 UŠ	uš (BM 34104)	uš (AD -273B)	uš (AO 6477) – Seleucid[280]
586 ZA	za (BM 34104)	ṣa (AD -168A)	za (VAT 9154)
84 ZI	ze (BM 34104)	zi (AD -273B)	zi (BM 32167)
147 ZÍ	ṣi (BM 34104)	ṣi (AD -330A+B)	ṣi (BM 36722)
395 ZIB	sìp (BM 34104)	sìp (AD -155A)	zib (A 3432)
555 ZUM	ṣu (BM 34104)	su (AD -330A+B)	ṣu (BM 32287)

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[279] TCL 6 1. A date is given in the tablet descriptions, as well as in the colophon.
[280] TCL 6 30. An estimated date is given in the tablet discriptions.

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