

A LATE BABYLONIAN TRIBUTE LIST ?

By D. J. WISEMAN

It would seem appropriate in this fiftieth anniversary of the School to present a hitherto unpublished, though regrettably fragmentary, Babylonian text which provides new political and economic information concerning Egypt, Syria, Persia, and Babylonia, and possibly Anatolia (most of the area of studies covered by the present Department of the Languages and Cultures of the Near and Middle East). Such detail for the region in the middle or late first millennium B.C. is rare since, apart from the copying of traditional religious and legal texts, the Babylonian scribes now used the Aramaic script upon perishable writing-boards or parchment scrolls.¹ The tablet² (BM 82684 and 82685 which do not join) was acquired by the British Museum in 1894; its provenance may well have been Babylon itself.³ The original comprised more than six columns, written in a fine small 'Neo-Babylonian' hand, of which parts of three are extant. The text (p. 497) reads:

Text

col. i: traces only.

col. ii

1'[x x x x 2?]⁰,000 2'[x x x R]A pi-šu-ú ù 2,000 3'sisē^{me} li-bil-lu-nim-ma
 4'ina ^{a1}Dun-za-'a-i-du^{K1} li-iz-zi-zu
 5'^{mat}Gi-mi-ir ^{mat}Par-su-ú ^{mat}Me-luḫ-ḫa 6'[^{ma}]Kaš-sū-ú ^{mat}Ma-da-a-a šarrāni^{meš}
 7'[m]a-la ina muḫ-ḫi-šú-nu a-ba-'a-am 8'i-rib-šú-nu it-ti-ia ub-ba-lu-ni 9'u e-reb
 [x?]⁴ ^{mat}Kár-an-dun-ia-àš 10'li-dam-mi-qu-ma eli šá ma-ḫar 11'li-bil-lu-ni
 ki-iš-ri 12'ma-aš-šar-tu₄ dun-nu-nu-ut ^{mat}Kal-du 13'^{mat}A-ra-mu ^{mat}Kuš-ta-ri
 14'šá bīt re-du-ú-tú lu-ú na-as-qu 15'lu-ú bi-e-ri meṭ-la qar-du-tu 16'lu-ú kal-lim
 pu-luḫ-tu₄ lu(?)₁-ú ra₁[m]u-ú 17'a-mir-šú-nu lu-ú ga-lid a-na [x x x] 18'qaq-qar
 liš-ḫi-ṭu-nim-ma ina la me-la-an?⁵ 19'li-qa-mu-nu a-di ṭe-e-mu an-na-a 20'ú-gam-
 mi-ru ku-nu-ši na-de-e a-ḫi 21'lu-ú ti-šá-a lib-ba-ku-n[u lu-ú ṭa-ab]

col. iii

1'1,000 si[sē^{me}] 2'ù 2,000 sisē[^{me}] 3'li-bil-lu-[nim-ma]
 4'ina ^{a1}Sa-ad-Ē-x[x x x] 6 5'ul-tu Dūr-^dGIŠ-[x x] 7 6'šá kišad ^{nar}Pu-rat-tú a-di

¹ The use of leather scrolls is confirmed by reference to (*mašak*)*magillatu* in the colophon of two late Babylonian texts (BM, unpublished).

² Or possibly a prism; the slightly convex surface is now reinforced by plaster obscuring the inner surface.

³ Collection 94-7-17, 2 and 3. Published here by permission of the Trustees of the British Museum.

⁴ The reading *ša* or *šēr*? is uncertain (an erasure?).

⁵ This may be read as a place-name ^{UB}Til-la-an (cf. Til-la on the Ḫabur; *Archiv für Orientforschung*, xviii, 1, 1957, 29; *Orientalia*, xx, 1, 1952, 7). A specific locality would not, however, be expected in this context.

⁶ Place-names of the form *Sad-bīt*. X are otherwise unknown.

⁷ cf. Dūr-^aŠamaš, R. F. Harper, *Assyrian and Babylonian letters*, 147, 6; Dūr-^aSin-aḫḫe-eriba, Harper, op. cit., 1009, r.24. See also p. 498, n. 12.

*Da-ma-x[\bar{x}]*⁸ *'šá* *ma^tTE-E* *KI*⁹ *šarrāni^{meš}* *šá* *ma^tḤat-tu₄* *8'u* *ma^tMi-šir* *te-e-mu*
sa-an-qa *9'liš-ku-nu-ma* 1,000 *bilat kaspi* *10'1,000 bilat hurāsi* 1,000 *bilat gu-uḫ-lu*
11'bi-e-ri nu-us-su-qu *12'10,000 bilat šu-ud-da-tú erū^H* *13'1,000 bilat a-gur abari*
 6,000 *up-pu anāku* *14'10,000 ši-rip šipāti ta-kil-tu₄* *15'10,000 ši-rip šipāti* SAG
 10,000 *šipati ta-bar-ri* *16'5,000 šubat^llubušu amē^lrešu* *17'5,000 šubat^llubušu amē^lqur-*
ru-bu-tú *18'5,000 lu-bu-uš kiti* *19'5,000 šubat^lnah^llaptu bir-mu* *20'5,000 a-ri-tu*
mašak^kdušū... 21'4,0[00.....]

Translation

col. ii

1'... 2[?]0,000 white [horses?] and 2,000 [...] horses let them bring to me and put them in the town of Dunzai'du.

5'Let as many rulers of the lands of Gimir, Parsū, Meluḫḫa, Kaššu, (and) Media over whom I hold the responsibility, bring their gifts to me. Moreover, let them 10'improve the quality of their gifts (due to) Babylonia, bringing more than before. My guard-troops for keeping a close watch on Chaldaea, Aram, and Kuštari are chosen 15'and select men from the crown prince's establishment. Let them all display (?) virility and valour, spreading awe so that whoever sees them may be frightened at . . . Let them patrol over the ground continuously (?). Until they have fulfilled 20'this order can you allow slackness or be [content?]

col. iii

1'1,000 . . . hor[ses . . .] and 2,000 . . . horses let them bring [and put them] in the town of Sad-x[. . .] 5'From the city of Dūr-^d [. . .] which is on the bank of the River Euphrates to . . . [. . .] of the land of Qurte let the kings of Ḥatti and Egypt give definite orders [so that they bring to . . .] 1,000 talents of silver; 10'1,000 talents of gold; 1,000 talents of choice and select antimony; 10,000 talents in ingots of copper; 1,000 talents in bricks of lead; 6,000 'sticks' of tin; 10,000 'bales' of dark-blue wool; 15'10,000 'bales' of (violet-) purple wool; 10,000 'bales' of bright-red wool; 5,000 garments for officials; 5,000 garments for courtiers; 5,000 linen garments, 5,000 garments with embroidered trimmings; 20'5,000 leather shields; 4,000 [. . .].

The marked paragraphs are each devoted to different regions whose rulers are addressed in a poetic narrative style reminiscent of the epic in which Tukulti-Ninurta I boasts of his successes in Babylonia and the north.¹⁰ They are instructed to bring their tax-payments (*irbu*)¹¹ to a specified collection point. This had been the practice since Old Babylonian times when taxes or tribute

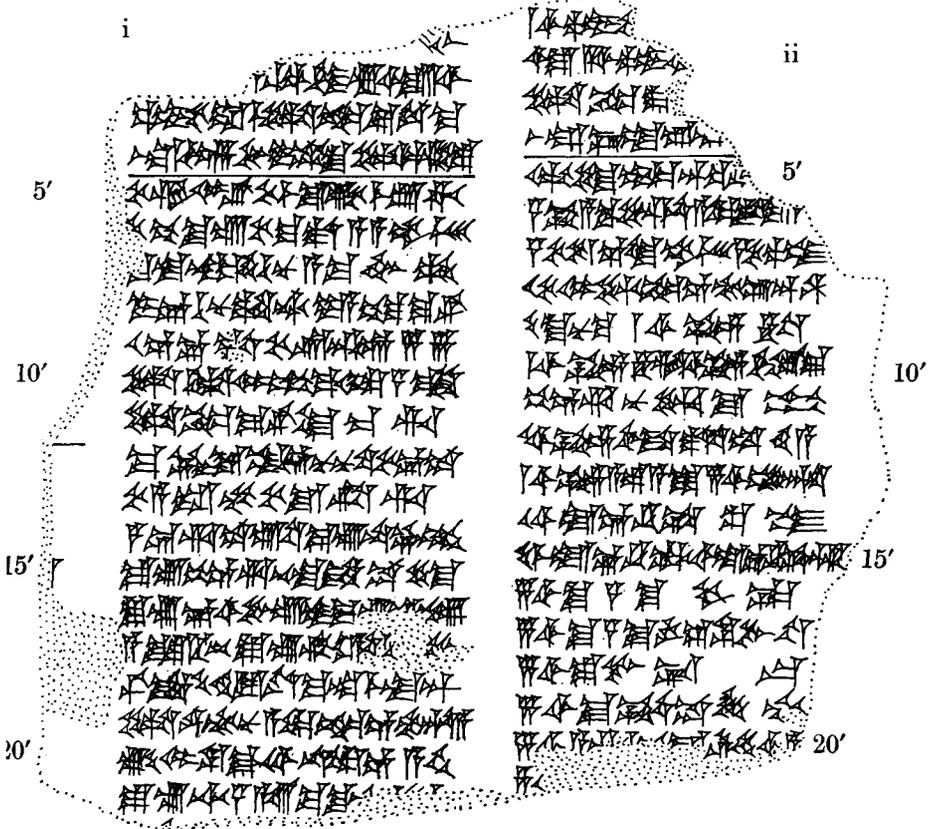
⁸ A reading *Da-ma-[ra]* is possible; i.e. Dūr-Europos (Syr. *Dūrā*, *Δοῦρα*, *Orientalia*, xx, 3, 1952, p. 275, n. 1). Cf. also the doubtful reading *URUDa-ma-ru-ut-rē'i* (S. Smith, *Statue of Idri-mi*, p. 18, l. 66).

⁹ Possibly *Qūr-te^{KI}*, but this spelling is unattested elsewhere.

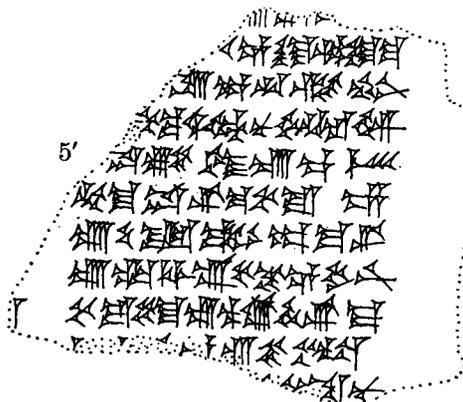
¹⁰ *Archiv für Orientforschung*, xviii, 1, 1957, 38–51.

¹¹ A gift made to a king as part of tribute or a present given in kind to a deity (A. L. Oppenheim, *JNES*, vi, 2, 1947, 117). Nabonidus appears to have demanded it from every hamlet (*irbi kal dadme*; *Vorderasiatische Bibliothek*, iv, 284, ix.18).

BM 82684



BM 82685



in kind were amassed at strategic points for use in times of famine or to supply the local economy or armed forces under orders from the central administration. None of the places named in this text is, however, elsewhere known in this connexion.¹² It can, however, be deduced that the first section (i. 1'–4') relates to territories lying in south-west Persia (possibly Elam) since Dunšaidu lay in the district of (Dūr-)Papsukkal in Babylonia adjacent to the lower East Tigris.¹³

The second section (i. 5'–21') names the lands of Gimir (the Cimmerians),¹⁴ Parsū,¹⁵ Kaššu, and Media and thus indicates the tribal areas in western Persia and north of the Zagros Mountains which were the target for frequent raids by the Neo-Assyrian kings. The inclusion of Meluḥḥa, which lay on the Persian Gulf,¹⁶ shows that no precise geographical sequence is followed. Specific orders are given in this same section¹⁷ for a display of military might against tribes in the deserts to the west (Aramaeans and 'tent-dwellers'¹⁸) and south-west (Chaldaeans) of Babylonia. In this case it would be expected that the small fragment (BM 82685) which mentions a rising of the Sutu (l. 8') in the Central Euphrates would follow in the text below this column.¹⁹

The broken lines commencing column ii (1'–4') do not enable either the type of tribute (white horses? ²⁰) or its destination to be determined. However, the remaining section (ii. 5'–21') clearly refers to Syro-Palestine (*Hattu*²¹) and

¹² Place-names with Dūr-PN are frequently given to specially fortified or garrisoned market-centres displacing the original native name. For a list see *Reallexikon der Assyriologie*, II, 241–55, supplemented by W. F. Leemans, *JESHO*, I, 1957, 144; Dūr-^dBēl-āli-ia (*Iraq*, XVI, 2, 1954, 191); Dūr-ili (*RA*, XIII, 1, 1916, 21). For Syrian place-names compounded with Dūr cf. Dūr-Ibla^{KI} (*RA*, XXXIV, 2, 1938, 65).

¹³ Occupied in the reign of Nebuchadrezzar II (J. N. Strassmaier, *Inschriften von Nabuchodonosor*, Nr. 246). For the name cf. *Dun-nu-za-i-du*, CT, XIX, 17, 3.19; *Dun-ni-sa-i-di*^{KI}, Rawlinson, *Cun. inscrip.*, II, 52, 9, iii.9; and for the location A. Poebel, *Miscellaneous studies*, 1947, 8–11.

¹⁴ First referred to in cuneiform texts of the eighth century B.C., although their entry into the region of Lake Urmia may well have been earlier (T. Sulimierski, *Bulletin of the Institute of Archaeology*, II, 1959, 45). Cimmerian bows and arrows are mentioned in late Babylonian contracts (*ZA*, NF, XVI, 1952, p. 207, n. 2).

¹⁵ The tribal area after which Fars (Persis) may have been named. Located by Weidner in the mountains east of Badrah (Dēr) in *Archiv für Orientforschung*, IX, 3, 1934, p. 103, n. 8.

¹⁶ A location on the Iranian shore of the Persian Gulf (Baluchistan?) is suggested by A. L. Oppenheim (*JAOs*, LXXIV, 1, 1954, 16), B. Landsberger (*Die Welt des Orients*, III, 3, 1966, 261–2), M. E. L. Mallowan (*Iran*, III, 1965, 4), and B. Buchanan (*Assyriological Studies*, XVI, 1965, 207–8). This text shows that, in the Neo-Babylonian period at least, Meluḥḥa was to be distinguished from the same name as applied to Ethiopia (contra T. Jacobsen, *Iraq*, XXII, 1960, p. 184, n. 18).

¹⁷ Similar orders are found in Harper, op. cit., 1257.

¹⁸ To be differentiated from the Kuštari, Kuštartum, near Khafaje in the Diyala (*JCS*, IX, 2, 1955, 39). See also p. 504, n. 70.

¹⁹ BM 82685, l. 9' reading ^{KUR}Su-tu ú-pa-aḥ-ḫi-ir-ma. Sutu in the Middle Euphrates area are mentioned in a Babylonian letter from Mār-Ištar to Ashurbanipal (Harper, op. cit., 629, 22).

²⁰ If 'white horses' (ANŠE.K[UR.RA pišūti^mes]) is to be restored here, as in col. i.2', this would be in keeping with the [x],000 such animals (though there with black blazes) demanded by Gilgamesh from the peoples of the high plateau (*Anatolian Studies*, VII, 1957, p. 128, l. 14). The Neo-Assyrians dedicated white horses to deities for ceremonial use (D. J. Wiseman, *Iraq*, XV, 2, 1953, 141).

²¹ cf. *Ḥa-at-tu*₄/*tu(m)* (Harper, op. cit., 629, 21.24; 337, r.15; 702, r.3).

Egypt (*Miṣir*). Indeed, interest must centre in the tribute demanded from this closely defined area,²² primarily on the amounts and forms of the commodities. The arrangement listing precious then basic metals followed by wools, garments, and equipment continues the pattern of earlier tribute lists.²³ The analysis which follows shows that the items are traditionally those exacted from countries bordering the eastern Mediterranean and that the amounts, though large, are not necessarily fictitious when compared with the annual tribute claimed in other texts by Neo-Assyrian, Neo-Babylonian, and early Achaemenid monarchs. These heavy dues represent a major imposition on vassal states at their initial submission or at a time of special requisition or must be the total amounts collected from the areas during an unstated period. The following notes are but a step towards the solution of the problems of authorship and date.

The tribute list

Gold and silver were the usual tribute demanded by the Assyrians and their successors from Egypt and Syria. Adad-nirari III (c. 803 B.C.) took 2,300 talents of silver and 20 talents of gold from Mari' of Damascus as part of the price for sparing that city.²⁴ Shalmaneser III received 150 talents of gold from Metenna of Tyre,²⁵ while Sargon II took 2,100 talents of gold from Carchemish alone. In 701 B.C., 30 talents of gold and 800 of silver were paid to Sennacherib by Hezekiah of Judah.²⁶ These figures must be judged in the light of Solomon's claim to an annual revenue of 666 talents of gold from local sources, to which must be added annual imports averaging at least 140 talents in fine gold brought by merchants from Ophir (1 Kings ix, 28; x, 14). In addition there were special tribute payments of 120 talents from the Arabian queen and other foreign rulers (1 Kings x, 10, 25).

Gold and silver were normally conveyed in the form of vessels taken from temples and storehouses. Ashurbanipal, who used 34 talents of gold to cover only two wooden columns in the Ashur temple, claims to have received gold from Egypt in dust form.²⁷ It was early conveyed in 'packets' (*nepēšu*),²⁸ but ingots, like those making up the 40,000 talents of gold found by Alexander in the Persian palaces, seem to be more common in the Achaemenid era.²⁹

²² A location on the Euphrates is certain but the place-name cannot be restored. See p. 496, n. 8, above.

²³ W. J. Martin, *Tribut und Tributleistungen bei den Assyriern*, 1936; J. Nougayrol, *Le palais royal d'Ugarit*, III, 181; IV, 37.

²⁴ D. J. Wiseman in D. Winton Thomas (ed.), *Documents from Old Testament times*, 51, 56.

²⁵ P. Rost, *Die Keilschrifttexte Tiglat-Pileasers III*, 72.

²⁶ D. Luckenbill, *Annals of Sennacherib*, 34, iii.41-2. The 300 talents of silver and 30 talents of gold given in 2 Kings xviii, 14 may show that this source copied from a defective manuscript or from one with the amounts shown in figures (cf. H. L. Allrick, *BASOR*, 136, 1954, 25-7).

²⁷ The form may be stated; e.g. 'axe' (*pašallum*); 'sickle' (*nigallum*), dust (A. G. Lie, *The inscriptions of Sargon II, King of Assyria*, I, 1929, Annals i.228).

²⁸ B. Landsberger, *JNES*, xxiv, 3, 1965, p. 295, n. 39; A. Goetze, *Kleinasiens*, p. 78, n. 15; P. Garelli, *Les assyriens en Cappadoce*, 265-6.

²⁹ Classical and later references are given in R. J. Forbes, *Studies in ancient technology*, VIII, 1964, 213.

A silver bar, with its weight of 1 mina stamped upon it, was found in eighth-century Zinjirli.³⁰

Stibnite, a native sulphide of antimony (*guhlu*; Arab. كُحْل) was included in tribute taken from the west by Assyrian kings, Tukulti-Ninurta II³¹ and Sargon II.³² Shalmaneser III received antimony from Jehu of Israel, showing it brought in 'blocks' carried on the shoulders of porters (Black Obelisk). Sennacherib claimed choice antimony (*nisiqtī guhli*) from Hezekiah of Judah;³³ and Ashurbanipal an unspecified amount in tribute from Arabia and 176 talents from Dilmun.³⁴ *Guhlu* (Sum. za.šim.bi.zi.da) was obtained in various forms or qualities: *egū* 'antimony paste', *katpū* 'antimony powder?',³⁵ and *amaū*.³⁶

Copper (*erū*) was acquired from campaigns in the west when it was abstracted from mines in Cilicia (Que), Syria, Cyprus (Alašia), and North Arabia. These rather than Magan, the traditional southern 'home of copper-mines',³⁷ would have been the sources of the copper used for casting eight lions weighing 11,400 talents to decorate the palace of Sennacherib at Nineveh.³⁸ The technical term *šuddātu* (pl. of *šud(d)ū* 'melted down') used of the tribute in this list may well be the word for the copper 'ingot' which B. Landsberger has hitherto thought lacking.³⁹ In earlier periods the circular flat disks of metal (*qaqqāru*), which later came to denote a large weight, the talent (Heb. פָּקֶד), were employed almost exclusively of copper, as at Alalāḥ in Syria.

Lead (*abāru*; Sum: a.bār) was the commodity commonly collected from the peoples of southern Anatolia by Tiglath-pileser I of Assyria and his successors. Adad-nirari III in 803 B.C. received 300 talents from Damascus alone. It was used in industry, for 'scientific' experiments, glass manufacture, pharmacopeia, and in instrument making.⁴⁰ Though Tiglath-pileser I had received his annual tribute of lead in the form of lead-lumps from the town of Milidia,⁴¹ the present list implies that it was transported in 'brick' form

³⁰ K. Regling, *Paulys Realencyclopädie*, VII, col. 979; see now F. von Luschan, *Die Kleinfunde von Sendschirli*, 1943, 119–21 and plate 58.

³¹ V. Scheil, *Annales de Tukulti Ninip II, roi d'Assyrie 889–884*, 77.

³² H. Winckler, *Die Keilschrifttexte Sargons*, p. 53, l. 12; plate 36, l. 183.

³³ Luckenbill, *Sennacherib*, 34 (ii.42), 60 (l. 56).

³⁴ M. Streck, *Ashurbanipal und seiner Nachfolger*, 134 (viii.28); Harper, op. cit., 791, 7.

³⁵ Rather than 'black saltpetre?' (F. Köcher, *Archiv für Orientforschung*, XVI, 1, 1952, 65).

³⁶ It (lexical text Hg.B.III.1.53) may be synonymous with *amūtu* 'meteoric iron'. This is more likely than any connexion with the place-name Amau in Syria (the home town of Balaam, *BASOR*, 118, 1950, p. 15, n. 13; *JCS*, IV, 4, 1950, 230) though Shamshi-Adad V refers to a *guhlu*-mountain in the neighbouring district of Gizilbunda.

³⁷ *JNES*, xv, 3, 1956, 132, 147.

³⁸ Luckenbill, op. cit., 97 (l. 83), 109 (vii.17).

³⁹ *JNES*, xxiv, 3, 1965, p. 295, n. 39; rather than **šidu* (pl. *šidānu*) postulated by J. N. Strassmaier, *Actes du 8e Cong. Int. Or.*, 1889, II^e partie, sec. I (b), 15.5.

⁴⁰ A. Draffkorn Kilmer, *Orientalia*, xxix, 3, 1960, 293, and references in CAD, I, 36–8.

⁴¹ E. A. W. Budge and L. W. King, *Annals of the Kings of Assyria*, I, 72, v.39. The word is used of a clod or lump of earth (*ZA*, NF, XVIII, 1957, 176; A. L. Oppenheim, *The interpretation of dreams in the ancient Near East*, 301). *q/kurbāni* could, however, be a general word for any form of 'gift' rather than a specific form of tribute.

(*agurru*) of a shape, and doubtless of a size, commonly made from moulds as used in making kiln-fired bricks. The same form is attested for transporting bitumen, glass, basalt, silver, and other metals in the reigns of Ashurbanipal and Nabonidus.⁴²

The logogram *an.na* (Akkadian *anāku*) is certainly to be identified as tin (rather than 'lead') on the basis of the evidence recently collected and discussed by B. Landsberger.⁴³ This was the commodity much used by the merchants in the Old and Middle Assyrian periods in their traffic between Cappadocia and their capital Assur.⁴⁴ Jehu of Israel included tin in his gift brought to Shalmaneser III in the Lebanon in 741 B.C., so that the amassing of 6,000 talents of tin (c. 175 tons) in the late Babylonian period, even if impressive, is not impossible. If *uppu* denotes the form in which tin was transported in quantity it is of special interest. The word is used of part of a door⁴⁵ and is usually interpreted as a 'key'⁴⁶ though W. G. Lambert has recently suggested a 'handle' (thong) in an Assyrian proverb which he translates 'Do you strike the face of a moving ox with a strap?',⁴⁷ and B. Meissner suggested 'goad'⁴⁸ which suits both this proverb and an unpublished lexical text.⁴⁹ Such a 'stick' or 'goad' could be used for drumming or duelling as it was by Shamgar.⁵⁰ Though R. C. Thompson argued for 'tube',⁵¹ it is suggested that our text shows that tin was transported in bulk in the form of 'sticks'.⁵²

The dyed wools (*šipāti*) of Phoenicia were highly prized and frequently

⁴² Streck, *Assurbanipal*, A.vi.28; *Vorderasiatische Bibliothek*, iv, 98.25; *Altorientalische Bibliothek*, p. 72, l. 29. It is likely that the *agurru* of iron (9 half-minas for the gates of the Ebabbar temple; J. N. Strassmaier, *Cyrus*, 84, 6) or of bronze (19 half-minas; Strassmaier, *Nabonidus*, 553, 3; 530, 6) were the shapes of the metal blocks used in the construction of doors rather than designations of a particular metal object (as CAD, I, 163b).

⁴³ *JNES*, xxiv, 3, 1965, 285-96.

⁴⁴ P. Garelli, op. cit., 284, indicates that quantities from 4 to 410 talents of tin (130 kg. to 12 tonnes) were transported. H. Limet, *Le travail du métal au pays de Sumer au temps de la III^e Dynastie d'Ur*, 80 ff., gives further references for transactions of large quantities in the Sumerian economic texts.

⁴⁵ A. Salonen, *Die Türen des alten Mesopotamien*, 90, 141.

⁴⁶ cf. S. Smith, *RA*, xxi, 1-2, 1924, 80.

⁴⁷ W. G. Lambert, *Babylonian wisdom literature*, 248-9 (text 242, iii.19-20).

⁴⁸ B. Meissner, *Forschungen*, I, 30, 39.

⁴⁹ In the author's possession; bulug šà.gud.ra za-bar: *up-pu*, i.e. a copper (tipped or studded) stick used by the ox-herd.

⁵⁰ *ZA*, NF, xviii, 1957, 313, cf. Judges iii, 31. I am elsewhere showing that the Heb. מְצוֹפֵף (Isaiah xiv, 29; xxx, 6) may refer to the 'prick' of the snake rather than to its ability to fly! (as RV).

⁵¹ R. C. Thompson, *Dictionary of Assyrian chemistry and geology*, 118. His alternative translation 'drum' is based on the synonym *lillisu*. More than one word *uppu* may well be in question.

⁵² Mr. W. R. Lewis, Assistant Director of the Tin Research Institute, kindly informs me that 'sticks' of tin (up to 20 inches in length) are still manufactured. In this form the tin is easily transported and cut down to size when making small additions to solders, bronzes, and other alloys of tin. The fact that tin has a low melting point makes it easy to cast sticks even with the most primitive equipment. Early sticks or 'straws' of tin from Nigeria are illustrated in *Tin and its Uses*, LII, 1961, 9.

claimed among tribute taken by the vanquishers of the coastal area from which they were the principal export. Large quantities of 100 talents were shipped at one time and the usual stock of a town merchant was 19–20 talents (600 kg.), often kept as whole fleeces. A talent of wool (30·3 kg.) was valued at 12 shekels of silver in the days of Ashurbanipal.⁵³ The colours of the wool are specified. The study by L. B. Jensen shows that the murex produced dyes of many colours ranging from green to blue, red, purple-red or blue-purple, and that the so-called Tyrian or royal purple could vary in antiquity from deep red to black or violet. It may well be impossible to recover an exact equivalent with our present colour scales.⁵⁴ The commonest wool dyes in Akkadian texts are *uqnu* (za.gin ‘blue’); *takiltu* (Hebrew תִּכְלִית ‘blue-purple’)⁵⁵ and *argamanu* (Ugaritic *argmn*, Heb. אֲרָמָן ‘(violet-)purple’). It is likely that the ideogram SAG stands here for *argamanu*.⁵⁶ There were a number of red dyes of which *hašmanu* (glossed Ugar. *phm*; SA₅; Nuzi Hurrian *hašmanuhhe*) may well be ‘dark-red’⁵⁷; *tabarru* has been interpreted as ‘red-purple’ (Speiser) or ‘purple’ (Brinkman), but there is some additional evidence from the medical texts that it was predominantly ‘bright red’.⁵⁸ If these tentative identifications are accepted, the tribute text would call for wools in the predominant colours—blue, purple, red; though in practice the range of colour within each vat-load would have varied.

This text provides valuable information for the standard by which dyed wools were measured and the form in which they were transported. Sheared wool was sold by the local shekel (weight). In Akkadian, as in Hebrew, a

⁵³ R. J. Forbes, *Studies in ancient technology*, iv, 1956, 6–9.

⁵⁴ *JNES*, xxii, 2, 1963, 104–18.

⁵⁵ O. Loretz and M. Dietrich, *Die Welt des Orients*, iii, 3, 1966, 229. The Sumerian equivalent GE₆ may indicate that it was a dark colour (‘dark blue’?).

⁵⁶ i.e. *reštu* or *šigri-iš* (A. L. Oppenheim, *Ancient Near Eastern texts relating to the Old Testament*, p. 311, n. 3); that is the principal or ‘royal’ colour (= *argamanu*). The equation with Hittite/Luwian *arkamman* ‘tribute’ is proved from parallel texts (A. Goetze, *Madduwattas*, 130). Hitt. *arkammas* = Akk. *irbu* according to a vocabulary (*Keilschrifttexte aus Boghazköi*, i, 42, v.17).

⁵⁷ So Loretz and Dietrich, loc. cit., *hurhuratu* and *inzahuretu* are used of red dyes; the Assyrian *tultu*, and possibly Heb. תוֹלֵעֵת, is the dye from the *Coccus ilicis*.

⁵⁸ E. A. Speiser, *AASOR*, xvi, 1935–6, 41; cf. *BASOR*, 102, 1946, 7; J. Brinkman, *JNES*, xxv, 3, 1966, 209 (he, however, takes *inzahuretu* to be ‘red’, *nabasu/tabarru* as ‘purple’, and *takiltu* as ‘blue’). Cf. *barāru* in medical texts. *šumma enē^{II}-šū dama malā ibarrura* ‘if his eyes are full of blood, they are inflamed (medically ‘injected’)’ rather than ‘become filmy(?) (said of the eyes)’ as in CAD, ii, 106. Similarly *šumma amēlu ināšu barra u dāmta ukalla* ‘if a man’s eyes are bloodshot and they water’ (F. Köcher, *Die babylonisch-assyrische Medizin in Texten und Untersuchungen*, 159, iv.28 ‘filmy’). *barāru* is elsewhere associated with fever and high temperature. In addition to the meaning of ‘to be bright red’ it may have the force of ‘flash out’ since it is used of the stars (A. Virolleaud, *L’astrologie chaldéenne*, ii, Suppl., 104, 5; cf. W. von Soden, *AHwb.*, 106, ‘flimmern’) and of youth (*mārišu anni ina libbi barār saḥurānūtu*; here ‘bright flush’—CAD, loc. cit., does not translate). *barāru* is explained as *ikkilum* ‘sudden cry’ (An. VIII.4 (RA, XLV, 3, 1951, 120) which suits *šumma ibrurra ušharrir* ‘if he flashes out (in loud speech; English slang ‘sees red’) and then lapses into silence’ describing mental illness (R. Labat, *Traité akkadien de diagnostics et pronostics médicaux*, p. 190, l. 25). If this interpretation of *barāru* (for both A and B in CAD, loc. cit.) were accepted, *barāritu* ‘evening watch’ may refer to the brief period of ‘red glow’ at sunset.

common local standard of measurement may be omitted as obvious.⁵⁹ In the treaty of Suppiluliuma with Niqmandu of Ugarit the latter pledges '500 of blue (*uqnu*) wool, 500 of red (*hašmanu*) wool'. The omitted measure is unlikely to be merely 'shekels'⁶⁰ since this would make this item of less value than those lower in a list scaled down according to value. It may well be that there, as in the present text, the reference is to *širpu* (constr. *širip*). Since *širpu* describes or qualifies wool of three different colours it cannot be interpreted as 'red-dyed wool (or fabric)'.⁶¹ In Neo-Babylonian texts ⁵⁹*širpāni* heads a list of different coloured wools distributed and designates the standard by which the following items may be interpreted. The translation proposed here is 'hank' since this strictly denotes a measure of wool, textile or twine, though the large quantity of 10,000 *širip* of the various wools would have been tied up in bales for transport.

The provision of garments or lengths of cloth (TÚG) to court officials is known also from tribute lists from Ugarit.⁶² Here the cloth is of wool (cf. l. 18', 'linen') and undecorated (for this is covered by *birmu*, l. 19'). Sennacherib's annals bear witness to the collection of armaments as part of tribute. He took 10,000 bows and 10,000 shields (*šaritu*) during his campaigns in Syro-Palestine in 701 B.C.⁶³ The prescription of tanned leather (*dušū*) here may imply that they would be newly manufactured.

Date and purpose

If it be granted that the foregoing examination of the tribute as detailed shows that the quantity and types of commodity might reasonably have been produced from the west to an overlord in Babylonia, it remains to try to determine more closely the aim and date of the document. The narrative instructions (col. ii) are closer in style to late Assyrian and Babylonian correspondence⁶⁴ than they are to the more grandiose demands of the epic of Tukulti-Ninurta II 'in whose sight gold and silver was not precious'.⁶⁵ There are no traces of vast claims like those in the fictitious letters of Gilgamesh demanding '... 24,000 white horses with black blazes, 70,000 black horses with white blazes, 100,000 whose bodies bear *kanaktu*-markings, 40,000 small calves... 40,000[...] of white tin... 90,000 talents of pure iron...'.⁶⁶

⁵⁹ As '50 of silver' in Deut. xxii, 29; cf. D. J. Wiseman, *The Alalakh tablets*, 13.

⁶⁰ As assumed by Loretz and Dietrich, op. cit., 277 (l. 22).

⁶¹ CAD, xvi, 208b, sub *širpu*. This is a nominal formation from *šarāpu* 'to dye' (without any reference to colour)—'a dyeing', i.e. standard 'vat-load?'. *Šarīptu* (Σαριπτα, mod. Šarafand) on the Phoenician coast 8 miles south of Sidon was a centre of the dye trade.

⁶² J. Nougayrol, *Le palais royal d'Ugarit*, iv, 38, 42 (ll. 23–37). TÚG can stand for the standard length of cloth which was itself the unmade garment. The *qurrubutu* was an official 'close' to the king, engaged in confidential matters (*HUCA*, xxii, 1949, 72).

⁶³ Luckenbill, op. cit., p. 60, l. 59.

⁶⁴ Harper, op. cit., 1237, r.16 (*lú gududānu lūšūma šabēšunu ša šēri lušabbituma liš'alu* 'let detachments make sorties to capture their semi-nomad troops and interrogate them').

⁶⁵ W. G. Lambert, *Archiv für Orientforschung*, xviii, 1, 1957, 51 (BM 98730, r.17).

⁶⁶ O. R. Gurney, *Anatolian Studies*, vii, 1957, 41; *Sultan Tepe tablets*, I.41, 14–25.

Moreover, that element of boasting over a predecessor's incapacities or denigration of his military or religious actions is entirely absent from what remains of this text.⁶⁷

The historical limits for dating the text are set by the reference to the lands of the Cimmerians and Medes, Parsū, Syria (Ḫattu), and Egypt. These territories were subject to Esarhaddon for a few years, but more firmly controlled by his son Ashurbanipal who conquered Lower Egypt in 664 B.C., campaigned in the Zagros Mountains (Kaššu), raided Media, and subdued his rebel brother Šamaš-šum-ukin who, as king of Babylon, claimed to be King of Akkad, Kaldū, Aramu, and Karanduniaš. Moreover, he so plundered the Arabs that he could justly claim that in his day 'Camels I distributed like sheep, sharing them among the people of Assyria. Throughout my land camels were bought for a shekel and a half of silver each at the gate-market'.⁶⁸

The Cimmerians, Media, Parsū, as well as the kings of the west, are named among all the Asiatics who, with the exception of the Arabs, were subject to Cyrus II, Cambyses, and Darius II.⁶⁹ Cyrus himself claimed that 'all the kings of the entire world from the Upper to the Lower Sea, those who are seated in throne rooms, (those who) live in other [types of buildings, as well as] all the kings of the west land living in tents (*kuštari*) brought their heavy tributes and kissed my feet in Babylon (Šu.an.na)'.⁷⁰ It is possible that the text discussed here is part of the orders to his subject-kingdoms which enabled him to put forward such a claim. According to Herodotus (III, lxxxix–xcii), during all the reign of Cyrus, and afterwards when Cambyses ruled, there were no fixed tributes, but the nations severally brought gifts to the king. By the time of Darius II the satrapies owed a fixed annual tribute payable, if in silver, according to the Babylonian talent. It may be noted that the fifth satrapy—'the country reaching from the city of Posiderium on the borders of Syria and Cilicia to the borders of Egypt' comprising all Phoenicia, Palestine, Syria, and Cyprus, is identical with late Babylonian Ḫattu whose annual tribute was by this time fixed at 350 talents. There are, as yet, too few correspondences with documents of the last days of Ashurbanipal and of his successors in Babylonia for a more precise identification of this tablet. Its exact nature must therefore remain a matter of speculation until a more complete text is discovered.

⁶⁷ S. Smith, *Babylonian historical texts*, 31–2. On the characteristics of propaganda texts see also I. M. Diakonoff, *Assyriological Studies*, XVI, 1965, 346–8.

⁶⁸ cf. A. C. Piepkorn, *Editions E, B_{1–5}, D and K of the Annals of Ashurbanipal*, 83, B.viii.16–19. The fragmentary prism which gives some details of tribute and possibly of collecting-points (Bu. 91–5–9, 218) has been assigned to the reign of Esarhaddon by R. Borger (*Asarhaddon*, p. 114, § 80). It could, however, be dated to the reign of Ashurbanipal.

⁶⁹ Herodotus, III, lxxxviii.

⁷⁰ Cyrus Cylinder; cf. A. L. Oppenheim, *Ancient Near Eastern texts and Old Testament parallels*, 316.