THE SIN OF SARGON AND SENNACHERIB’S LAST WILL (*)

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Benno Landsberger (1890-1968) — Chicago
Simo Parpola — Helsinki

In Commemoration
of the 100th Anniversary
of the Birth
of Benno Landsberger

INTRODUCTION

The history of this joint venture was described by B. Landsberger as follows: “The uniqueness of the text edited and analyzed in the present article was first recognized by H. Winckler, who already appreciated the importance of lines 10' and 16' of K.4730, the main fragment of the text. He published it in 1893 as no. 52 of his Sammlung von Keilschrifttexten II and attempted a historical interpretation in Altorientalische For-

(*) As explained in detail in the Introduction, this article, containing an important posthumous contribution by Benno Landsberger — the last scholarly study from his pen — has grown out of a manuscript originally intended for publication more than 20 years ago. It was put at the disposal of D. A. Foxvog and Anne D. Kilmer for “Benno Landsberger's Lexicographical Contributions”, JCS 27 (1975), pp. 3 ff. A tiny portion of the paper, viz. a transliteration and translation of K.4730(+), has already been made available in Volume III of the State Archives of Assyria series. As stated there (p.77), it was originally foreseen that the article itself would be published in JNES as a tribute to Landsberger’s long association with the Oriental Institute. However, it turned out that the manuscript, because of its size, would only have fitted with difficulty in the publication schedule of the JNES; therefore this plan was abandoned in favor of the present solution. We are indebted to the editors of the SAA Bulletin for their generosity and cooperation in making this avenue of publication available to us. We gratefully acknowledge the assistance of W.G. Lambert, who copied Sm. 1876 for Tadmor’s study and showed keen interest in Landsberger’s and Tadmor’s work. We also wish to extend our thanks to Thorkild Jacobsen, who studied K.4730(+) with Tadmor and improved the English style of Landsberger’s manuscript during his two sabbatical stays in Jerusalem, in 1980 and 1983. We are most grateful for the encouragement we have received from him throughout the years, especially in the recent stage of our cooperation.
Perhaps over-audaciously, he combined the motif of the unburied king with Isaiah 14: 4-20a\(^1\), dismissing the explicit reference of this chapter to a king of Babylon as a later *Umdeutung*.

Trusting Winckler’s translation, A.T. Olmstead, in his *Western Asia in the Days of Sargon*, p.145, writes: “The king fell... Later his body was recovered and after much opposition for some unknown cause by the priests, his son buried it with the necessary pomp”. Besides our misunderstood text, the letter *ABL* 473, likewise misinterpreted, served as a source for this statement.

W. von Soden, to whom the historical research of the Neo-Assyrian empire owes a great deal, due to his correct understanding of related compositions, called by him “propagandistic”, in his *Herrscher in Alten Orient* (1954), pp. 103-5, interprets our text in the following way:

“His (Sargon’s) body remained ... unburied, eaten by the predatory birds... This end of the great conqueror ... caused the deepest concern among his people and his family. We learn about it from a proclamation, unfortunately very badly preserved, of his son and successor Sennacherib. According to it, Sennacherib ordered several groups of priests and haruspices to investigate, independently of each other, in what way his father, otherwise so pious and generous to the temples, could have sinned against the gods to such a degree that they in their anger decreed for him such a disgraceful end: The answer or answers of the priests are not transmitted to us. But we may conclude from the fact that the new capital Dur-Sarrukin was given up immediately after the death of Sargon that the founding of Dur-Sarrukin was interpreted in those answers as the ‘sin’\(^2\).

\(^1\) “See how the oppressor has met his end and his frenzy ceased! The Lord has broken the rod of the wicked, the sceptre of the ruler who struck down peoples in his rage with unerring blows, who crushed nations in anger and persecuted them unceasingly ...

How you have fallen from heaven, bright morning star, felled to the earth, sprawling helpless across the nations! You thought in your own mind, I will scale the heavens; I will set my throne above the stars of God (...). I will rise high above the cloud-banks and make myself like the Most High. Yet you shall be brought down to Sheol, to the depths of the abyss. Those who see you will stare at you, they will look at you and ponder:

Is this (...) the man who shook the earth, who made kingdoms quake, who turned the world into a desert and laid its cities in ruins, who never let his prisoners go free to their homes, the kings of every land? Now they lie all of them in honour, each in his last home. But you have been flung out unburied, mere loathsome carrion, a companion to the slain pierced by the sword who have gone down to the stony abyss...” (Isaiah 14: 4b-6, 12-19a, cited from the translation of the *New English Bible* [Oxford/Cambridge 1970]).

\(^2\) Von Soden upheld this view in his contribution to *Propyläen-Weltgeschichte* II (1962), p. 102: “His son Sennacherib ... full of horror asked the priests in what way his father, who did so much for the temples, could have angered the gods so much that they prepared this end for him. The text of this report is very badly preserved. But, undoubtedly, it was in founding the new capital, according to the interpretation of the priests, that his greatest guilt lay".
In 1957, during his stay in Chicago, Hayim Tadmor studied the text in detail as part of his effort to revive the long-neglected historical study of the Neo-Assyrian empire. Together with Landsberger, he collated Winckler’s hand copy of the text from a photograph and subsequently checked the collations in the British Museum. His edition of the text, in Hebrew, with a long historical introduction dealing with the relations between Assyria and Babylonia from Tiglath-Pileser III through Sennacherib, appeared under the title “The Sin of Sargon” in the Mazar Festschrift, Eretz Israel 5 (1958). In this study Tadmor reached, after weighing different possibilities, almost the same conclusions about the character of the document as is presented here. In June, 1961, upon Landsberger’s request, he sent him an English translation of his paper.

Shortly before that, W.G. Lambert had discovered that a further fragment, Sm.1876, belongs to the same tablet as K.4730, and very kindly made his copy of the new fragment available to Tadmor. Though this little fragment only added to the difficulties of comprehension, it confirmed, by its line 5’, the restoration $\text{sa-lam}$ [4Marduk] already proposed by Tadmor for rev. 6’ of K.4730, and thus became a clue for the whole composition.

In Spring, 1963, Landsberger obtained by the courtesy of E. Sollberger of the British Museum a new photograph of the two fragments and a diagram indicating their relative position, based on the supposition that Sm.1876 provided the beginning of the text. He started to become increasingly intrigued by the numerous problems the text presented.

Landsberger’s preoccupation with the text shows on several occasions in his study Brief des Bischofs von Esagila (Amsterdam, 1965). E.g., on p.22 n.30, he discusses obv. 21’ and rev. 11’ of K.4730 side by side with the parallel Borger, Esarh., p.82, 14-20. The assertion on p.15 that the much discussed differences between the Assyrian and Babylonian parties at the court of the Assyrian emperors consisted essentially of a gespaltete Schreiberkaste was based on rev. 22’ of the present text.

Later on, Landsberger analyzed the background of the text anew, focusing on two problems in particular: “Esarhaddon and the Babylonians” and “Esarhaddon and the Priests”. The results of these analyses are included in the present article 3).

Landsberger’s original idea was to expand his studies into a “Bischof-style” monograph to be published in collaboration with Tadmor, who was to complement the work with relevant historical discussions extracted from his Eretz-Israel article 3). Work to-

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3) The monograph was planned to be structured as follows:
Introduction (by BL and HT)
Part I: Text “A” [K.4730] (BL and HT)
Part II: The Sin of Sargon (HT)
ward the monograph had been in progress for several years when it was abruptly halted by Landsberger’s death in 1968. However, conscious of his faltering health, and anxious to relieve the pressure of his commitments, Landsberger had, luckily enough, already sent his preliminary manuscript to Tadmor for editing earlier in the same year. Thus it was not lost, and several colleagues familiar with the monograph plan subsequently urged Tadmor to finish the work on his own.

Unfortunately, the completion of the work was seriously delayed for various reasons, including Tadmor’s other heavy commitments and his failure to solve satisfactorily the problems posed by the beginning and the end of the document. These problems were not cleared out of the way until April 1984, when Simo Parpola, who was then visiting Jerusalem, pointed out that the top part of Sm. 1870, which had hitherto been taken to be the beginning of the obverse, in fact belonged to the reverse of the tablet. Hence this fragment does not represent the beginning and the end of the text but its middle part, containing the last lines of the obverse continued over the edge to the reverse.

During the following months, Parpola studied the text in detail in Helsinki, making use of a transliteration and a photograph provided by Tadmor but without access to Landsberger’s and Tadmor’s translations and analyses. This work resulted in a new transliteration and an independent new translation and interpretation of the document, which turned out to agree generally with Landsberger’s and Tadmor’s conclusions but contained several new insights, improvements and modifications over their work. In March 1985, Parpola sent his results to Tadmor, proposing collaboration so that the long-awaited edition and study of the text could finally be made available in print. This suggestion was taken up by Tadmor, and work on the present joint article was started in August, 1988, when Tadmor briefly visited Helsinki.4

Finding a suitable formula for the article was not altogether easy. The tremendous progress of Neo-Assyrian studies and Assyriology in general over the past 20 years had rendered parts of the Landsberger-Tadmor manuscript obsolete; many philological and lexical observations included in it, for instance, while once novel, are now common

Part III: The Political Testament of Sennacherib (BL and HT)
Part IV: Appendices (BL)
Part V: Excursuses (BL)

This structure has on the whole been retained in the present article, which is also divided into five parts following the introduction. However, Parts III-V of the monograph manuscript, all by Landsberger, have been combined into a single chapter in the present article.

4) In the course of a three-day intensive working session, we agreed on the principles to be followed in preparing the article, harmonized our understanding of K.4730(+), wrote the concluding chapter, and edited portions of the Introduction and Parts II and IV. The final manuscript was prepared for press by Parpola. The responsibility for the contents of the individual manuscript sections of course rests with the respective authors.
knowledge long since incorporated in our dictionaries. Further, our present understanding of the nature of Sargon’s “sin” and of the structure and purpose of the document differs in some key elements from the views earlier expressed by Tadmor and Landsberger. Eliminating the discrepancies would have required heavy editing and would have been very difficult, if at all possible, since one of the authors could no more be consulted in the editing process.

Accordingly, after careful consideration, we have decided to present the contributions by the individual authors separately, yielding to the fact that we are dealing with three individual manuscripts completed separately over an extended period of time. The order of presentation is basically chronological, and editorial changes have been kept to a minimum.

Thus most of the present introduction (up to 1968) has been directly taken over from the Landsberger-Tadmor manuscript, only the concluding paragraphs having been provided by Parpola. Part II (The Historical Background) has been excerpted verbatim from the English translation of Tadmor’s Eretz Israel 5 article made available to Landsberger in 1961. It makes the central ideas expressed in the original “Sin of Sargon” article available for the first time in English, and is essential for understanding the scenario of K.4730(+) as later elaborated by Landsberger. Part III (The Political Testament of Sennacherib) contains Landsberger’s original contribution virtually in...
extenso. Part IV (Synthesis) is a slightly revised version of Parpola's study of the text completed in 1984-1985, and is followed by an exposition of our present understanding of the document (Part V: Conclusion), written jointly by Tadmor and Parpola in August 1988.

The only deviation from the chronological scheme is Part I (philological edition of K.4730), which has been updated to reflect our present understanding of the text and is largely the work of Parpola. The line references throughout the older parts of the article have been adjusted to correspond with the numbering of lines established in this section.

In spite of a certain amount of inconsistency and repetition that the adopted way of presentation leaves in the paper, we believe its merits outweigh its defects. Not only has it made it possible largely to retain the original structure of the monograph planned by Landsberger and Tadmor, but it also makes it easier for the reader to follow the progress made over the years in the interpretation of this difficult text. We regard all three contributions as important steps forward in this process, and believe it would be a pity, if not a "sin", if each of them were not properly documented in the article. In particular, would it not be a "sin" approaching in gravity the one allegedly committed by Sargon II, to efface the originality of such a coherent and forceful study as Landsberger's, in order to make it better conform with our present views — themselves certainly in many respects mašt hašt, "deficient and faulty", as the haruspices say?

omitted in this process. My only hope is that I did not go too much beyond Landsberger's original intention of presenting the reader with some insights into the tragic and intricate problems of succession of the Sargonid emperors of Assyria.

The manuscript edited by Tadmor has been included here in its entirety with the exception of Part V (the Appendices), which contained an edition and discussion of the Neo-Babylonian letter ABL 1216 referred to in fn. 12 below. Since this letter is only of marginal relevance to Landsberger's argumentation and the edition provided in the manuscript contains several mistakes, we considered it wisest to exclude it from the present article. We hope to be able to make it available later in a different context.

8) The analysis of Sargon's sin included in this section has profited from discussions with Tadmor and was entirely rewritten during his visit to Helsinki. Otherwise the wording of the original text has been modified only slightly.

9) Alternative textual interpretations and suggestions by Landsberger, Tadmor and Jacobsen, largely taken over as such from the Landsberger-Tadmor manuscript, are taken into consideration in the philological commentary included in this section.

10) Landsberger's main contributions lie in the recognition that the text was not composed in Sennacherib's reign but under Esarhaddon, in the elaboration of the Cuthaean legend connection, and in pointing out the text's affinities with Esarhaddon's inscriptions and other related texts bearing on the restoration of Babylon and the refashioning of the statue of Marduk.
PART I

PHILOLOGICAL EDITION

Synopsis

[Heading or short introduction]

Obv. 1-2: Sennacherib identifies himself.

3-6: He stresses his piety, underlining his fervent desire to submit to the will of gods, however difficult that may be.

7-13: He tells about his worry at the fate of his father who, having somehow offended the gods, met an infamous death, and explains how he decided to determine the nature of this offense by extispicy in order to avoid his father's fate.

14-15: He divides the haruspices into several groups, apparently intending that each group should give him its answer independently.

16-24: By extispicy, he finds out that Sargon had honored his own gods at the expense of the gods of Babylonia and violated a divine covenant, thereby upsetting the cosmic order. For the expression “treaty of the king of the gods” used here see the commentary below.

25-29: By repeated extispicy, he discovers that harmony can be restored if Aššur and Marduk are both honored with new statues and the cultic ordinances of both Assyria and Babylonia are “set aright” (cf. rev.13-15).

30-35: Concluding the obverse, the king stresses his happiness at learning the will of the gods. A solemn invocation of the main gods of Assyria leads to the reverse, addressed in its entirety to a listener whose identity is concealed in the break, but who logically cannot be but the king’s own son.

Rev. 1-5: Warning against ill-conceived advices.

11-12: The son is told to rely on extispicy only.

13-20: Detailed instructions as to how the will of gods can be most reliably found out.

21-23: The king makes a sensational disclosure: having finished the new statue of Aššur, he was prevented by Assyrian scribes from making one for Marduk, thus in effect committing the same sin as his father. For this he too had to pay with his life.
24-27: He now urges his son to get out of the vicious circle and finally reconcile the gods of Babylonia with those of Assyria. Should he do this, he would be blessed with a long reign, power, fame, and peace of mind.

K.4730 (+) Sm.1876
Transliteration

Obverse

Beginning (probably about three lines only) broken away

1. [30-PAB-] **SU** ma'-'al'-k[u₄] pit-qu-du x x x x x x x
2. **pa-lih** DINGIR**MES** šá AN-e u DINGIR**MES** KUR Aš-sur**KI** a-na-ku i-na
3. šu-te-mu-qi-ia u ki-nu-[ti-ia ū-mi-šam it-ti ŠA-bi-ia ad-(da-na-)šu-ub]
4. um-ma man-nu mim-ma ep-še-e-t[í DINGIR**MES** i-ha-ak-kim DINGIR-ut-su-nu]
5. pa-la-hu a-ha-zu si-ir-du²šu-³[šu-nu x x x x x áš-ra-šu-šu-nu]
6. ši-te-'u-šu-šu rib-an-ni-ša."[u₄] x x x x x x x x x x x
7. ina šu-ta-bu-lum šá ep-še-e-tí DINGIR**MES** šá it-tí ŠÁ-bi-ia pal-hiš
8. uš-tab-ba-lu mi-tu-tu šá 1 LUGAL-GIN [AD-ia šá ina KUR na-ki-re de-ku-ma]
9. ina É-šá la qeb-ru a-na ŠÁ-bi-ia [m-qut-am-ma ki-a-am aq-bi a-na ra-ma-ni-ia]
10. um-ma hi-tu šá 1 LUGAL-GIN AD-ia ina bi-[í lu-ub-re-e-ma ar-ka-ta]
11. lu-up-ru-sa-am-ma a-na-ku lu-[u-l-mad x x x x x x x]
12. hi-tu a-na DINGIR ih-[u-s-kun-ma x x x pu-tí]
13. u pag-ri it-tí DINGIR lu-še-e-sí al-[lík-ka ú-pah-hir DUMU**MES** LUGAL**MES**]
14. na-šir pi-riš-tí DINGIR u LUGAL man-za-[az É.GAL-ia a-na 3-šá a-na 4-šá]
15. a-šu-us-su-nu-ti ma la it-[hu-ú-šu la i-bu-bu it-tí a-ha-mes]
16. hi-ta-a-tí 1 LUGAL-GIN AD-ia ina "bi-[ní ab-re-e-ma ⁴UTU u ⁴IM áš'-a-al]
17. um-ma a-na ¹UGU šá DINGIR**MES** šá KUR Aš-sur**KI** ma-a'-diš ú-kab-bi-šu-ma
18. a-na ¹UGU DINGIR**MES** šá KUR URIK**KI** iš-ku-nu x x x x x a-na ¹UGU
19. šá a-de-e LUGAL**MES** u la'[ís-su-ru ¹LUGAL-GIN AD-ua ina KUR na-ki-ri]
20. de-ke-e-ma ina É-šá la q[é-be-e-re x x x x x x x]
21. [DU] M**MES** LUGAL**MES** šá a-na [3-šá a-na 4-šá a-zu-zu-šu-nu-tí]
22. [pa-₄][e'-da iš-sak-nu-[ma i-pu-lu-in-ni an-na ke-e-nu x x x x x x x]
23. [ap-tí up-n]a'-ia áš-[S[ŠI**H**.**MES**]-ia ina ut-nen-mi la-ban ap-pi ú-sal-li]
24. [a-na ¹UGU ¹LUGAL-G]IN A[D-ia um-ma x x x x x x x x x x x x x]

approximately seven lines broken away

32. [x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x]
33. [x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x]
34. [x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x]
35. [x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x]
36. [āš-ši ŠI**H**.**MES**-ia x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x]
Translation

(Beginning destroyed)

(Obv. 1) [I am Sennacherib, the [devout] king, ...... ] who revered the gods of heaven and the gods of Assyria].

(3) [In] my devoutness and righteousness, I daily spoke with my heart], saying: “Who can comprehend any of the deeds of the gods? Let me introduce into myself the fear of their godhead, seize their shaft [ ...... ], frequent their holy places, and let me ...... ”.

(7) While thus [reverently] pondering [in my heart] over the deeds of the gods, the death of Sargon, [my father, who was killed in the enemy country] and who was not interred in his house, occurred to my mind, [and I said to myself]:

(10) “[Let me examine] by means of extispicy the sin of Sargon, my father, let me then determine [the circumstances] and learn the ...... ; let me make] the sin he committed against the god an abomination to myself, and with the god’s help let me save myself”.

(13) I went and collected the haruspices, who guard of the secret of god and king, the courtiers of my palace, divided them [into several (lit. three or four) groups] so that they could not approach or speak to one another, and [investigated] the sins of Sargon, my father, by extispicy, [inquiring of Śamaš and Adad] as follows:

(17) “Was it because [he honored] the gods of Assyria too much, placing them] above the gods of Babylonia [ ...... , and was it because] he did not [keep] the treaty of the king of gods [that Sargon my father] was killed [in the enemy country and] was not buried in his house?”

(21) [ ...... ] The haruspices whom [I had divided] into [several groups] unanimously [gave me a firm positive answer]. [ ...... I opened the palms of my hands and lifted [my hands, and prayed in supplication and humility on account of Sargon, my father: “ ...... ]

(Break)

(32) [ ...... ] placed ...... ]

(33) [ ...... checkings ... [ ...... ]

(34) [ ...... ] of the temple, the shrine of the assembly of gods]

(35) [ ...... After] I had inquired (the will of) Šamaš and Adad, [I lifted my hands and prayed on account of the statue of Marduk, saying: “May it be done!”]"
PLATE I

K 4730 (+) Sm 1816, Obverse
Courtesy Trustees of the British Museum

Scale 1.5:1
K 4730 (+) Sm 1816, Reverse
Courtesy Trustees of the
British Museum
about seven lines broken away

Reverse

1  [at-ta ma-ri ki-i x x mil-ku šá la ma-la-ki mam-ma šum-ma la ina bi-ri
2  [šum-ma la ina x x x i-nal-l] ku tē-e-mu ka-a-ta ū-šá-an-nu-ka
3  [x x x x x x x x šá] ina bi-ri 4UTU u ûIM ud-du-ú-ni
4  [x x x x x x x x šum-su-ku ū-pa-an-zi-ir-[m] a
5  [x x x x x x x x la] ū-šá-áš-me-ka u AD-ū-ša
6  [šá a-na x x x x x pa-n]i-ššu iš-ku-n[u]  x x  x x  x x ]
7  [x x x x x x x x x UG] U a[n x x x x x ]
(37) [The gods ...... accepted my prayer, and how radiant was [my mood! I said: “Let them make peace and [ ...... ] to him; let the gods of Babylonia set their minds [ ...... ].

(40) [By Assur, the divine king, the god who created me; (by) queen Mulissu, [the divine empress; (by) Istar, who vanquishes all] enemies; (by) Sin, who glorifies [my exalted priesthood; (by) Šamaš ... ], who stabilizes my royal throne:

(Rev.1) [Should] anyone, [my son, ...... give you] an ill-considered [counsel] and (try to) change your mind without either [having performed] an extispicy or [ ...... , be on your guard]:

(3) [Perhaps ...... wh]at Šamaš and Adad have revealed in extispicy [ ...... ] he has concealed [like] a rejected [ ...... ] and has [not] announced you [ ...... ].

(5) My father, too, [who/after he] had made up his mind to ...
(Break)

(10) [ ...... ] you anything [ ...... ]

(11) [Just as I], when I was to ask Šamaš and Adad, [ ...... ], listened to th[eir ..., so you too make] the haruspices [to report [to you!]

(13) [Just as I], when I was to make [the statue] of Assur, the great lord, and the statue of [Marduk, the great lord], and to set aright the rites and ordinances of Assyria and [Babylonia], in performing the extispicy divided the haruspices into several groups, so you too, like me, divide the haruspices into several groups, announce your query to [the haruspices who stand [at the site], and have them [perform] the extispicy [and look at the features].

(19) Let (then) the remaining haruspices who were divided as a separate group study the features, [find out] the will of Šamaš and Adad, [and tell it to you].

(21) As for me, after I had made the statue of Assur my lord, Assyrian scribes wrongfully prevented me from working [on the statue of Marduk] and did not let me make [the statue of Marduk, the great lord], and (thus) [shortened my life. [ ...... ]

(24) (However), I have (now) communicated to you the grand scheme of mine which from times immemorial none of my royal predecessors had realized; [ ...... ].
26' šu-ut ú-šāh-ki-mu-ka ina ŠU₂⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻~-~-~
27' it-it DINGIRΜΕŚ-ka sul-lim AN.ŠAR MAN 'DINGIRTΜΕŚ ul-tu ṅUTU.Ē EN ṅUTU.ŠU.Α]
28' šal-ți-iš i-ta-lak DINGIRΜΕŚ AN-e 'u' [KI-tim x x x li-šal-bi-ru]
29' pa'-lu'-ka si-ir-de-e ṅUTU u [düM x x x x x x x x]
30' li-pii ŠU₂ šá DINGIRΜΕŚ [x x x x x x x x x x x]
31' e-li ka-li-šú-n[u ma-al-ki x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x]
32' nu'-u-ú-da-at x [x x x x x x x x x]
33' ú-še-du-ka ina' b[i?]-x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x
(26) Take heed of what I have explained to you, and reconcile [the gods of Babylonia] with your gods! Aššur, the king of the god[s], has victoriously marched [from sunrise to sunset]; the gods of heaven and [the gods of Assyria will prolong] your reign; the shaft of Šamaš and [Adad ...... ]
(30) the creation of gods [ ...... ]
(31) above all the [kings ...... ]
(32) will be extolled [ ...... ]
(33) will let you know [ ...... ]
(34) relief [ ...... ]
(Rest destroyed)
Commentary

a) The original tablet

The numbering of the lines and a good many of the restorations made above are dependent on our ability to determine: 1) the correct place of the fragment Sm. 1876 in relation to K. 4730, and 2) the format of the original tablet. Both can, as a matter of fact, be established reasonably reliably and accurately by structural analysis. As shown in detail below (see also Part IV, below), in its structure K. 4730 follows the general pattern of three well-established literary genres: funerary inscriptions, the so-called narû-literature, and royal decrees. While different in details, all these genres have an important structural feature in common: they all begin with a self-identification and a historical narrative in the first person singular, and end with an address to posterity in the second person singular. First person forms and suffixes can also occur in the concluding part, but no second person forms or suffixes are ever found in the introductory historical part.

This rule is strictly observed not only in K. 4730(+) but in Sm. 1876 as well. Suppose 'B' indicates the face of Sm. 1876 following the edge, 'A' the other side of the fragment. The seven fragmentary lines of 'B' contain three 2nd person singular forms, two of them right in line 2. By contrast, the eight lines of 'A' contain 1st person singular forms and suffixes only. By the rule just formulated, 'B' hence cannot be the obverse but must represent the reverse of the tablet.

This conclusion is corroborated by other considerations. If 'B' 1 were the first line of the text, we would be dealing with a structurally unique composition presenting serious problems of interpretation, and beginning and ending curiously and abruptly. This difficulty disappears once 'B' is recognized as the reverse. The narrative of 'A', starting with a reference to check-up extispicies, now smoothly links up with that of K. 4730.

More importantly, K. 4730 opens with a royal self-identification which, by analogy to the other literary genres just mentioned, must have started immediately after a short introductory statement opening the composition. The length of this opening statement does not exceed three lines in any epitaph, narû, or royal decree known to us. Accordingly, 'B' being seven lines long, there is no room for it in the break preceding the first line of K. 4730.

Finally, it should be noted that the script at the end of the reverse of K. 4730 is smaller (5 lines to 12 mm) and more cramped than elsewhere in the tablet (5 lines to 17 mm). This is to be naturally expected at the end of a composition, the scribe trying to fit the remaining text in the rapidly diminishing writing space available to him. At the end of Sm. 1876 'A', the script is also small, but slightly bigger than at the end of the reverse
of K. 4730 (5 lines to 14 mm). It does not, accordingly, qualify for the end of the reverse, but makes a good end of the obverse — supposing the scribe had decided to fit the whole historical part on the obverse, reserving the lower edge exclusively for the invocation of gods (see note on line 40').

While neither K. 4730 nor Sm. 1876 contain a single complete line, the original width of the tablet can be accurately determined from the restorations in Obv.8' (cf. 19'f.) and Rev. 13'-18' and 22', all of which can be regarded as virtually certain. In the reconstruction of the outlines of the tablet (see Pls. I-II) it is assumed that the ratio between the short and long axis was approximately 1:2, as usual in egirtu-shaped one-column tablets. This would imply that the gap separating K. 4730 and Sm. 1876 is approximately seven lines long, which seems realistic considering the overall structure of the narrative.

The exclamation marks in the transliteration indicate corrections to Winckler's copy in SKT II 52f. Those in Obv. 17', 19', 23', Rev. 4', 18'f., 24', 29' and 33' are based on a collation of the original by Tadmor and were already included in the Landsberger-Tadmor manuscript; those in Obv. 1', 5', 18', Rev. 10', 12', 17', 21'f. and 26'f. originate with Parpola and are based on a study of the photographs reproduced in Pls. I-II.

b) Textual details

Obv. 1': An introductory self-identification of the pattern “PN titles anāku” (or “anāku PN titles”) “I am PN” is a structural feature of many literary genres, particularly royal inscriptions (passim) and decrees (Postgate, NARG, nos. 9-12), narûs (AnSt 5, p. 98) and the Sargon birth legend, further the Šulgi-narû (Borger, BiOr 28 pp.14ff. and the related text ibid., pp.5ff.) and funerary inscriptions (AnSt 8 p.46); it is also attested in other types of texts like petitionary letters (cf. ABL 1216, 7, “I am Bel-ušezib, your servant and dog, who fears you”, and see LAS2, p. 227), but then occasionally only and not in the beginning of the text. By contrast, in the genres where it is a structural feature, it either opens the text or comes right after a heading or a short introductory statement.

Examples of attested (A) headings and (B) introductory statements:

(A1) “RN, titles, son of RN2, titles, son of RN3, titles” (followed by seal impressions), Postgate, NARG, no. 11, 1-3;

(A2) “Tomb of RN, title”, YOS I, 43, 1;

(A3) “PN, title, this is his picture”, Nerab B 1f.;

(B) “Open the tablet container and read the stele” (AnSt 5 p. 98, 1, cf. Walker, JCS 33 [“1981”] pp.193f. and Parpola, JNES 42 [1983], p. 28).

It is unlikely that any of these or like openings are to be restored in the present text. Judging from the curvatures of the tablet, there is no room for A1 in the break preceding Sennacherib's name. B, on the other hand, is unlikely for logical reasons (see at the beginning of Part V below). A heading like “[The words of Sennacherib, king of Assyria, which were spoken by his ghost (to NN) in a dream]” (cf. discussion below, pp.
32 and 50) appears theoretically possible, but cannot be supported by any parallels. In any case, the evidence of the related genres makes it clear that much text cannot have been lost at the beginning of the tablet.

The restoration of the title *malk[u pitqudu]* after the king’s name can be regarded as certain, *pitqudu* being the only adjective attached to *malku* in Sennacherib’s titulary (cf. Liverani, *ARINH*, pp.248f.). Seux, *Épiphètes*, p.157, cites three occurrences of this title from the inscriptions of Sennacherib and only a single one from those of other kings (Sargon II). The discontinuation of the use of the title after Sennacherib indicates that it was closely associated with this king and may have been tabooed after his tragic death.

At the end of the line restore possibly *[re-ē-um kib-ra-a-u]* “shepherd of the four quarters” on the basis of 1R, 43, 2; there is no room in the break for the phrase *[šā UGU LUGAL]<sup>MES</sup> a-šib pa-rak-ki nu-’u-da-at be-lut-su] following *malku pitqudu* in the Akitu inscriptions *KAH* II 122, 20f. and 124, 6 (see note on Rev. 31f. below). The “pietistic-pastoral” title “shepherd” (with various adjectives) also follows *malku pitqudu* in Sennacherib’s Nineveh inscriptions (see Liverani, *ibid.*, p. 246) and precedes *piłih ilání rabūti* (cf. next line) in several Nineveh inscriptions (*ibid.*, p. 244).

2': Cf. *šā pa-la<h DINGIR<sup>MES</sup> šā AN-e u DINGIR<sup>MES</sup> KUR-As-šur<sup>K1</sup> ra-biš mu-du-u* “who full well knows to fear the gods of the heaven and the gods of Assyria” in the Assur inscriptions *KAH* II 122, 7f. and 124, 4f., referring to Sennacherib as the “maker of the image of ‘Anšar’”.

Stressing the king’s piety right after his self-identification is a *topos* taken over from funerary inscriptions. Cf. “I am (anâku) Adda-guppi’, mother of Nabunaid, king of Babylon, who revered (*piłihtu*) Sin, Nikkal, Nusku and Sadarnunna, my gods, and from my childhood sought after their divinity”, *AnSt* 8 p. 46, 1, 1ff.; cf. also the Aramaic epitaph Nerab B, stressing the “righteousness” (*şdqj*) of the deceased priest immediately after his identification. The same topos also occurs in the formulary of royal decrees (cf. “I am Assurbanipal, great king, .... true shepherd who does good, king of righteousness”, *Postgate, NARG*, nos. 9-12, 4ff.), but it is not attested in the *narā* literature. Cf. note on line 40’ below.

4': For the restoration and the passage in general cf. *milki ša anzanunê mannu ihakkim / alakti ili mannu ilammad* “who can understand the mind of the abyss, who can learn the ways of the gods?” *BWL* 40, 37f.

5': Cf. *erdi āški išādu likāna / sir-da-(a-)ki āhuzu lubēl ūbī liibi / ūbīl apšānaki pašāha šukni* “I have followed your path, (so) let prosperity be with me; I have seized your shaft, (so) let me have happiness; I have carried your yoke, (so) bring me relief”, *BMS* 8/5, 25 (prayer to Istar).

8': Restored from line 20’. Despite the long final vowel, the form *dēkē* there is not to be derived from *dekā*, “aufwecken”, (thus Landsberger) but from *dāku*, “to kill”. The phonological structure of the 3rd person singular stative of *dāku* required a paragogic vowel both in Neo-Assyrian (/dēk/ → *dēkē*) and in Neo-Babylonian (/dik/ → *diki*), which was lengthened under interrogative intonation. Cf. *ki-ni-i, “is it true?”*. 
THE SIN OF SARGON AND SENNACHERIB'S LAST WILL

PRT 46, 6' (from /kūn/ “it is true”), ku-ni-i, ku-un-i, “is it confirmed?”, AGS 147, 11 and passim (from /kūn/ “it is confirmed”), ta-bi-i, DUG.GA-i, “is it good?”, BM 98975, 7, AGS 91, 8, and passim (from /tāb/ “it is good”), etc.; note also [t]a-a-bi-ma RMA 205A, r.5'. de-ke-e for expected di-ki-i is an Assyrianism paralleled by numerous similar forms in SB/NB texts written by Assyrian scribes, e.g. dib-bē-e CT 53 175, 5, HÛL-e AGS 34, 10f. Another clear Assyrianism in the present text is the subjunctive form ud-du-u-ni in Rev. 3.

9: For ana libbiṣa imqut see AHw. p. 606, two examples cited sub II. The restoration aqbi ana ramanājīa is tentative only; cf. ki-a-am aq-bi ana Šā-bi-ia, Cuthaean Legend ll. 79 and 89 (AnSt 5 p. 102).

12': Cf. aṣē abul ālišu utirra ik-ki-bu-us, “I made coming out of the gate of his city an abomination to him” (i.e. totally prevented him from coming out of the city), Luckenbill, Senn., 33, 30; ṭelē dūr ālišu ana ik-ki-bē-e-šu āškun, “I made climbing upon the wall of his city an abomination to him”, Borger, Esarh., p. 104, 1, 38.

12f.: See the discussion below, p. 42 (Excursus 4).

13f.: For the restoration and the passage in general cf. ū-pa-ah-hi-im-ra ... DUB-.SAR mi-na-a-ti en-qu-ū-ta a-šī-ib Ė mu-im-mu na-sir πi-rīš-ii DINGIR MES GAL MES, “I assembled the wise mathematicians of the temple academy, who guard the secret of the gods”, Langdon, VAB 4, 254, 32f. (Nabunaid). Note, however, al-si DUMU MES LUDUMMES HAL MES ū-ma′-i-ir, “I summoned the haruspices and gave them orders”, Cuthaean Legend, ll. 78 and 108 (AnSt 5, pp.102ff.).

15′, 17f.: The restorations in these lines must be regarded as tentative only.

19′: The sign u following MES, clearly written, renders the proposed restorations, otherwise consistent with the requirements of the context and the available space, somewhat doubtful. Lansdberger restores [aššu lā nasāri] ša ađē (cf. below, p. 34), but this too is doubtful since aššu does not belong to the vocabulary of the Neo-Assyrian haruspical queries. The expression “king of the gods” (šar ’ilānī) here refers to the god Aššur, as in documents dating from the reign of Sargon (with the exception of his Babylon inscriptions, where for traditional reasons it appears as an epithet of Marduk). In the reign of Sennacherib, the title, used as an appellative of “Anšar”-Aššur, appears in documents connected with the building of the Akitu House. This title is related, therefore, to the theological reform that took place in Assyria in the reigns of Sargon and Sennacherib (see below, p. 31). [HT]

20′: For de-ke-e-ma see the note on line 8′ above.

22′: Cf. pa-a e-di iš-šak-nu-ma intahharā Šamāš u Illīl, “(The fox and the wolf) unanimously (lit. with a single mouth) prayed to Šamaš and Illīl”, BWL 207, 14; see also CAD E, p.37, c 2. For the restoration and the passage as a whole cf. LU DUMU MES HAL MES ... qa-ta-a-te a-hi-in-na-a û-ki-in-ma UZU UR š . US MES ki-i pi-i iš-ten in-da-har-a-ma e-pu-lu-in-ni an-nu ke-e-nu, “I placed the haruspices in separate parts, but the oracles agreed perfectly (lit. like one mouth) and they (the gods) gave me a firm positive answer”, Borger, Esarh., pp.82, 21ff.
23', 36': The restorations are based on Borger, *Esarh.*, p. 82, 13, and similar passages.

33': *piqittāti* here certainly referring to check-up extispicies (logogram: SI.LAL).

37': For *[imgur]rā qibītu* cf., e.g., Borger, *Esarh.*, p. 43, 60; the variant *kikiya* for *kiki*, "how?" (*CAD* K, p.351) is also attested in Iraq 27, 6, IV 10 (SB lit.).

40': Restoring Aṣṣur at the beginning of the god chain imposes itself. For the epithet "king of the gods" cf. Rev. 27', and see above, note on line 19'; the restoration is consistent with the available space. For "the god who created me" as an epithet of Aṣṣur cf. Streck, *Asb.*, p. 20, II 12, *a-mat AN.ŠĀR DINiR DŪ-iā*. Note that this epithet is not attested in the inscriptions of Sennacherib, and was apparently introduced only by Esarhaddon, who calls himself "a creation of Aṣṣur" (*bi-nu-ut AN.ŠĀR*) in his Nin. A inscriptions (Borger, *Esarh.*, p.45, II 16). For the passage in general and the restorations in the following lines cf. Streck, *Asb.*, p. 258, I 31ff., (Esarhaddon praying to) AN.ŠĀR LUGAL DINiR MES EN gi₇-mi₇ ₁N.LIL ³S-e-ru-a ru-bat i-la-a-ti be-let GAŠAN²MES²UTU ⁴IM ... ⁴AG ⁴AMAR.UTU na-di-nu-te ⁴GISPA ⁴GISGU.ZA Mu-kin-nu LUGAL-tī. Save for the substitution of Šamaš and Adad for Sin, and the fact that pairs of gods, rather than single gods are enumerated, the sequence and epithets of gods here provide a remarkable parallel to the present passage. This may be due to more than just a coincidence, since the prayer of Esarhaddon referred to concerned Assurbanipal's appointment as crown prince in Iyyar 672. If the parallel passage is based on an earlier inscription of Esarhaddon, which seems perfectly possible, then the latter would have been approximately contemporary with the present text and Borger, *Esarh.*, *AsBbA*, written in 671 or 672 (see Part IV, p. 47 below). The restoration of Aṣṣur's name and epithets in line 40' leaves room for no more than two signs at the beginning of the line. Line 42', on the other hand, ends in a divine epithet, and is immediately followed by an independent structural unit, the Address to Posterity (Rev.1 ff.). This considered together with the Asb. parallel just discussed means that the whole passage, i.e. the edge of the tablet (ll. 40'-42'), consisted of a simple enumeration of important gods preceded by a short word, probably a particle, and hence can only have been an oath formula. The restoration *ni-is* at the beginning of line 40' accordingly imposes itself.

An oath formula of this kind, embedded in the Address to Posterity, occurs in the royal decrees, although it there occupies a different position (coming right before the terminal curses). Cf. *ni-is* ⁴Aṣ-sūr ⁴IM ⁴Be-er ⁴EN.LIL Aṣ-sūr¹K¹-i₇ ¹K¹-i₇-i₇-tu Postgate, *NARG*, no. 10, 66ff., also *ibid.*, 9, 66f. and (with partly different gods) 1, r.6ff.. According to A.R. George (personal communication), the funerary inscription of Yabā, wife of Tiglath-Pileser III, recently discovered in Nimrud, also contained an oath formula beginning with *niš* (written MU), but there opening the text.

41': For the restoration *[rubat iłatāt]* see above. A female deity, most likely Ištar, is probably to be restored in the following portion of the line, cf. *Iš-tar ka-šī-da-at na-ki-ri* Streck, *Asb.*, p. 194 r.16, and note the sequence Mullissu — Ištar of Arbela in the curse section of the Baal treaty (*SAA* II, p. 27).
42': For the restoration cf. mušarbâ šarrâti, a well-attested divine epithet attached to various deities including Aššur, Ea, Ilšil, Marduk and Šamaš (see K. Tallqvist, *Akkadische Göttenerpitheta*, p. 169). The destroyed element has been restored as šangûtu (the sacerdotal aspect of kingship) rather than šarrâtu, since the latter word occurs at the end of the line, and tautology is for stylistic reasons unlikely in a text of the present literary quality. For the juxtaposition of šangûtu and šarrâtu as a stylistic device cf., e.g., *ABL* 1285, 6f. (Parpola, *AOS* 67 [1987] [Fs Reiner], p. 280). In view of the parallel Streck, *Asb.* p. 258, I, 34 (above, 40'), the last deity in this line may actually have been Marduk rather than Šamaš; note that according to Tallqvist, *op. cit.* (p. 109), mukin šarrâti is not otherwise attested as an epithet of Šamaš. If so, this deity, followed by a short epithet, has to be restored in the preceding break, since it is inconceivable that the god of justice would have been omitted from the oath, particularly after an invocation of the moon god Sin.

Rev. 1: The 2nd person singular forms in the next line indicate that this is the first line of an Address to Posterity, and as such probably followed the related literary genres in its formulation. A study of the relevant texts establishes that this section was regularly opened with the 2nd p. singular personal pronoun *atta*, mostly preceded by the indefinite pronoun *mannu*, "whoever" and followed by other specifications:

1) *mn t* Nerab A 5, B 8 (epitaphs)
2) *mannu atta lä šaknu lä šāpiru* YOS I, 43, 4 (epitaph)
3) *atta mannu lä iššakku lä rubû* Cuthaean Legend, 147 (narû)
4) *atta lä šarru lä rubû* AnSt 8, 52, III, 44 (epitaph)
5) [*mannu atta*] ina šarrâni mārêja *NARG* 9, 42; 10, 42 (royal decree)

The indefinite pronoun *mannu* was understandably necessary in epitaphs and royal decrees addressed to future generations, but as example 4) shows, it was occasionally omitted even in such texts. In the present passage, which was almost certainly addressed to a specific person, viz. Esarhaddon (see Parts IV and V below), it was very probably omitted. The restoration *ma-ri*, "my son", imposes itself; for the spelling cf. *BWL* 102, 81 (Counsels of Wisdom, SB) and K. 13770, 3 (ibid., p. 106).

Lines 1-3 seem like warnings against (ill-advised) counsel not based on extispicy; hence the restoration *ki-i "if"*. Th. Jacobsen in his unpublished study of the text restores the beginning of the line [nēš 4x at-ma šum-ma la ina m]a-là ma-la-ki, obviously taking the first lines of the reverse for a 1st person singular assertory oath; however, this is unlikely in view of the literary parallels just quoted.

2: For *tēmu šunnû*, "to change mind", see *AHw.*, p.1167a, 10a-b.

4: For *panzuru* in the special meaning "to keep silent about bad portents", etc., see Deller, *ORNS* 35 (1966) p.317, especially *ABL* 1250. (BL)

21'ff.: *HT*, 1958 This passage relates that the king set up the image of "Anšar"-Aššur and was about to set up some other cult object, but the Assyrian ‘scribes’ [i.e., astrologers] prevented this act. Here also this cult object may have been in fact an image, which Sennacherib wanted to erect and was not permitted to. Since the passage
PART II

THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

[Hayim Tadmor, 1958]

Sargon and Babylonia

The ascendancy of Marduk in the hierarchy of gods, as it appears in the Assyrian royal inscriptions of the 9th-8th centuries, corresponds to the actual involvement of certain Assyrian monarchs in the affairs of Babylonia. A comparative table, showing the order of the gods in the prologues of the annals and summary inscriptions (from Ashurnasirpal II to Sennacherib) is presented and analysed in fig. 3 [p. 151].

Whereas in the texts of Ashurnasirpal II, Shalmaneser III and Adad-nerari III, Marduk is listed either after Sin, Šamaš or Adad, in those of Tiglath-pileser III from the time of his involvement with Babylonia, Marduk (šEN) together with his spouse Zarpanitu appears in the third position, after Aššur and Šerua, or Aššur and Šamaš. In the inscriptions of Sargon from the beginning of his reign — several years before he conquered Babylon from Merodach-Baladan II, the Chaldaean — Marduk appears in the second or in the third position after Aššur, or Aššur and Enlil. Cf. the “Charter of Aššur”, ll. 10-13 [now Saggs, Iraq 37 (1975), pp.11 ff.] and the slab from Calah composed shortly after the conquest of Carchemish in 717: Winckler, *Sargon*, p. 168,2. [The latter text was written in duplicate — one is in Assyrian, the other in the Babylonian character.] It would thus seem that Sargon had put a claim for domination of Babylon even before he conquered it.

In the twelfth year of his reign (710), apparently without any provocation, Sargon declared war on Merodach-Baladan, defeated him in battle, conquered Babylon, made himself its king, and, like Tiglath-pileser III in his day, played a leading role in the *akītu*-festival. In Sargon’s Annals (Lie, *Sargon*, p. 42, 268-272), the conquest of Babylon is justified by the assertion that Merodach-Baladan ruled over Babylon against the will of the gods: “Marduk, the great lord … decreed that his royal scepter and throne be
deals with images of gods, not of the king, we suggest the following restoration: “and [the image of Marduk].” If our restoration [now confirmed by Sm. 1876] is correct, it then bears out the supposition that the Assyrian ‘scribes’ were more obstinate in their opposition to Babylon and Marduk than was Sennacherib himself. The novelty and uniqueness of such a statement hardly need to be stressed. There is no parallel in Assyrian documents to the information that scribes had the power to force the king to reverse his decisions. It is instructive to note that it was the ‘scribes’ — and not the bārā haruspices — who imposed their will on the ruler.

23': The restoration bal[āti uqattā] is implied by the context but remains conjectural.

24'-26': There is a clear stylistic connection between these lines and KAH II, 122 (Luckenbill, Senn., pp.135ff.) and K. 1356 (ibid., pp.139ff.), which are related to the building of the bīt akītu in Assur (see Part II below). For l. 24', cf. K. 1356, 6, ina niklat ramānija, “in my wisdom” (implying that Sennacherib was not assisted by the advice of his artisans, but did all the work [the copper gates] of his own accord). For l. 25', cf. KAH II, 122, 15-17, ajumma lā idā šīt mahri lā ṭuṣu “(which) none (of the former kings of Assyria) had known, no(ne of my) predecessors had made”. For l. 26', cf. K. 1356 r.8f., ana ithuranētī ašīt liḥhakim annaka ina libbi uššaī'id ina libbi annimma hikim ki pita ānu ušabšīlu, “for future generations, in order that it may be recognized, I increased the tin in this (cast); understand through this that I myself have prepared the mixture of alloys for this cast” (coll. CAD H, p.32f., s. v. hakamu). [HT]

26'f.: The restoration is based on Borger, Esarh., p. 46, 27 (ultu šit Šamši adē ṣerē Šamšī šal-tīš at-ilak māhira ul īsi).

28'f.: For the restoration cf., e.g., ABL 716, 5.

31'f.: These lines may refer a standard title of Sennacherib, see note on obv.1.

34': tapšuhti: this may be a reference to the mausoleum of Sennacherib, built by Esarhaddon, and called “the palace of repose” (ekal tapšuhti) or “the tomb of repose” (kimah tapšuhti) on bricks found on the site (Luckenbill, Senn., p. 151).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ashurnasirpal II (884-859)</th>
<th>Shalmaneser III (859-824)</th>
<th>Adad-nerari (811-783)</th>
<th>Shalmaneser IV (783-773)</th>
<th>Tiglath-Pileser III (745-727)</th>
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Fig. 3: Table of Gods (for a list of sources, see next page).
taken from him. He truly chose me, Sargon, the humble king, from among all the princes and elevated me ... At the command of the great lord Marduk ... I ordered to march against the Chaldaeans, wicked enemy”. There is something novel in this statement, which ascribes the conquest of Babylon by the king of Assyria to a command from the mouth of Marduk, the god of Babylon. One might even consider the possibility that there existed a prior agreement between Sargon and the priests of Marduk in Babylon, who, for some reason, preferred the Assyrian emperor to their Chaldaean monarch.

Though king of Babylonia, Sargon never calls himself by that title in his royal inscriptions in Assyria. A new title was designed for that purpose: šakkanakku Babili, “The governor of Babylon”, shaped from šakkanakki māt Šumeri u Akkādī, “the governor of the land of Sumer and Akkad” of Merodach-Baladan.

The new title may have emphasized that Marduk himself was the king of Babylon, whereas Sargon was only his deputy [p. 152]. The title “king of Assyria, governor of Babylon” appears to have supplanted the title sakin Illii (GAR-ni 4BE) employed by Sargon in his early inscriptions. Indeed, the latter title is never used in the Khorsabad Annals and Summary Inscriptions, composed several years after the conquest of Babylon [p. 153].

Another title employed by Sargon, apparently before the conquest of Babylon, was šakkanakku of Nabû and Marduk: thus in his inscription from Nineveh, while commemorating the building of the temple for Nabû and Marduk (cf. Campbell Thompson, Archaeologia 79 [1929] p.124, no.69). The care for the cult of Nabû and Marduk, and the new title were to show Sargon as dependent on those Babylonian gods, and his increasing involvement in the Babylonian affairs. [p. 153]

**The Death of Sargon**

Sargon’s politics came to an abrupt and tragic end with his death on a battlefield, against a certain Es-pai the Kulummean (‘Eš-pa-\textsuperscript{a}L\textsuperscript{U} Ku-lum-ma-a-a), referred to in the Eponym Chronicle (K. 4446 in Ungnad, RLA II. p.433, see Tadmor, JCS 12 [1958], p. 97 n. 311). It is suggested that this last campaign of Sargon had been conducted against Tabal (thus according to the entry in the Babylonian Chronicle II:6’ [JCS 12 p.97 n.312 and now Grayson, ABC, p.76]) and it was often believed (e.g. Olmstead, Sargon, p.15, Diakonoff, Istoriya Midii, p.236) that Sargon’s enemies were the Cimmerians. In the course of that battle the king was killed (šarru dék) and the royal camp was captured and looted (ma-dak-tu ša šar KUR Aš-šur\textsuperscript{K1} ʔxr’ [ ...... ], C\textsuperscript{b} 6:10). From K.4730 obv. 20’ one learns that Sargon’s body was not buried according to the law, either because it fell into the hands of the enemy or because it was lost on the battlefield; alternatively it may have been cremated in the absence of the means of embalment. The burying of the king “at home”, that is, in his own palace, may reflect the custom of the kings of Assyria [p.158].
A similar practice is attested in Babylonia, where it is stated that certain kings were “buried in the palace of Sargon (of Akkad)” (thus King, Chronicles I, pp. 52:4; 56:14 [now in Grayson, ABC, pp. 142:4; 143:14]).

From the political as well as the religious points of view, there are grounds to the belief that Sargon’s tragic death strengthened the opponents to his Babylonian policies in Assyria. Indeed, Sargon was the first and only Assyrian king in the Assyrian Empire to fall on the battlefield and not to receive fitting burial. Followers of the Assyrian nationalist trend would of course tend to believe that it was “Sargon’s sin” that caused him to be killed and not buried in his home. Sennacherib’s abandonment of Dur-Sarruken, therefore, is far from being a purely political act, intended to appease the inhabitants of Aššur, Calah or Nineveh, and gains additional meaning.

The Maker of the Image of Aššur/Anšar

Since “Sargon’s Sin” in K.4730 is closely concerned with making the image of Aššur, written AN.SÁR, a detailed discussion follows on this new manner of writing Aššur’s name, as well as on the title “The maker of the image of Anšar”, common in certain inscriptions of Sennacherib.

1. Aššur = Anšar

In most of the royal inscriptions of Sargon the name of Aššur is given the regular spelling ḏA-šur, ḏAš-šur, but in several inscriptions dating from the beginning of his reign, all connected with the city Aššur, the spelling is sometimes AN.SÁR. In the Nimrud prisms, composed at the close of Sargons reign, the spelling AN.SÁR is regularly employed.

The identification of Aššur with Anšar has led to far-reaching results. Anšar and his spouse, Kišar, belong to an earlier generation of gods in the Babylonian version of Enuma Elis, and they are placed after Apsû-Tiamat and Lahmu-Lahamu. Anšar, father of Anu, is called in this version “father of the gods”. He chooses Marduk, son of Ea and grandson of Anu, elevates him above the other gods and commands him to fight against Tiamat. The innovation introduced by the scribes of Sargon is that henceforward Anšar is identified with Aššur, chief god of Assyria, and in this form, he appears in inscriptions of Esarhaddon and Ashurbanipal. It seems that identifying Anšar with Aššur, the protagonists of Babylonian trend in the court of Sargon intended to blur the pronounced “national character” of Aššur.

The last expression of this “theological” process is marked in the Assyrian version of Enuma Elis, in which Marduk is replaced by Anšar and the struggle with Tiamat, as
well as the rest of Marduk’s deeds, are henceforward ascribed to Anšar. This process seems to have taken place already in Sennacherib’s reign and represents a reaction against the predominance of Marduk during the time of Sargon.

In Sennacherib’s inscriptions one can differentiate with certainty between those which regularly use the spelling “Anšar” and those in which the name of Aššur appears in its traditional form. The spelling “Anšar” is found only in inscriptions from Assur, whereas in the other documents of Sennacherib, almost all of which come from Nineveh, the name is spelled in the usual way. [pp. 159-160]

2. The image of Anšar

In inscriptions of Sennacherib from Assur, the king is given the title ēpiš šalam Anšar u šalam ilāni rabûte, “maker of the image of Anšar and the image of the great gods” — a title which is nowhere found in contemporary inscriptions from Nineveh. The Assur inscriptions were composed in connection with the following building activities of Sennacherib: 1) The erection of palaces for the king’s sons; 2) the repairing and enlarging of the main temple of Aššur; 3) the building of “Bit akūtu to Marduk in Assur. According to the Bit akūtu inscriptions, Anšar’s image was made (and the temple built) by order of Šamaš and Adad, conveyed through liver portents — in the words of the inscription: ina bīri ina qibīt Šamaš u Adad “according to the extispicy, according to the command of Šamaš and Adad”. This parallel to K.4730 (Rev. 4) as well as the making of Anšar’s image, show an affinity between K.4730 and the inscriptions from Assur in general, and especially those dealing with the Bit akūtu. [p. 160]

Another document from Assur (KAH 1, 49), a short inscription commemorating the building of a palace to Aššur-nadin-šumi, Sennacherib’s eldest son, helps us to fix the date when the king erected the statues of Anšar and of the great gods. This document was composed when Aššur-nadin-šumi was still crown prince (that is, before he became king of Babylon, in the fifth year of Sennacherib — 700). Hence, the images of Anšar and the great gods were made between 704-700. [p. 160]

3. The theological implications

The ritual-religious background of the making of the images of Anšar and the great gods has not yet been explained. It is not clear whether these were statues of the gods or merely their representation upon a relief. On the other hand, the similarity between Sennacherib’s act and that of Ashurnasirpal II and Shalmaneser III, who say that they have made the image of the gods, should be pointed out. Ashurnasirpal claims that he has made the image of Ninurta, carved of stone and decorated with gold, for the temple of the god Ninurta in Calah. The same source adds that the king also made images of
Ea-šarru and Adad. The inscription stresses the fact that the making of a statue of Ninurta was something completely novel, never undertaken by any previous Assyrian king and that the project was the result of the king's initiative, carried out in accordance with his intuitive and cunning plan. In the inscriptions of Shalmaneser III there is only one reference to the making of a god's statue, that of "Armada" — a deity elsewhere unknown (AKA, pp. 345-346, and KAH II, 49). [pp. 160-161]

4. The theological transformation after the destruction of Babylon (689)

The making of the "image of Anšar" at the beginning of Sennacherib's reign is another manifestation of that far-reaching theological-political transformation which ultimately culminated in the building of the Bit akitu, the house of the new year's festival, for Anšar outside the city of Assur. The latter enterprise took place only after the cataclysmic events of 689. Another text, K.1356 — a draft [or, rather, an archival copy] of an inscription (Luckenbill, Senn., pp. 140-142 [collated]) — describes in detail a bas-relief which Sennacherib had ordered to be engraved on the copper gates of the Bit akitu. Represented on this relief were: a) the war of Anšar-Assur — and not Marduk — against Tiamat, b) the team of gods who helped him, and among them, the figure of the king himself.

The Genre, Purpose and Date of K.4730

The literary style of K.4730 is clearly recognized by its link with the "Naram-Sin epic" which is the best example of the narû-genre literature of commemorative monuments. It is concerned with an ancient and famous king, who suffered many blows of fate and concludes with words of admonition and command to the reader, who is himself a king and who may on some day in the future read the monument. The Naram-Sin epic contains a number of passages which resemble K.4730 in style and content. Although Sennacherib, the chief protagonist of the document in question, was by no means an ill-fated king like Naram-Sin who brought disaster upon his country, Sargon, his father, could have been considered as one who had sinned and died because of his sin. [p. 162]

K.4730 should be regarded mainly as a political-polemical document intended to emphasize that the pro-Babylonian Sargon died through his sin and that Sennacherib made great efforts to clarify the meaning of that sin, wishing to atone for it. The restoration [of the image of Marduk] in Rev. 14 is in line with this line of reasoning [ibid.]. It is further suggested, that the text was composed either at the end of Sennacherib's reign, or — at the very latest — at the beginning of Esarhaddon's, namely during the period of polemics between supporters of Babylonia and their Assyrian adversaries. [ibid.]
Assuming the didactic/polemical character of K.4730, we may perhaps infer that the person addressed here is the son and heir of Sennacherib. The expression: "But thou in my place" (Rev.16'), while emphasizing the fact that the hearer should continue where Sennacherib stopped, also makes sense if we assume that the text was directed at some future king who "would find the document and read it". The particular stress on Sennacherib's sons in some of his inscriptions might, perhaps, support this contention. In the light of this suggestion, the phrases "hold in your grasp the people who made you wise" (1. 26') and "or reconcile them with your gods, who are Anšar etc." (1. 27') seem to make sense: Sennacherib is here presented as a man who commands his heir, in his own interests, to make peace with Anšar, king of the gods (or to make peace between "he who made him wise" and Anšar). We do not know for which of the Sennacherib's heirs the text was intended, whether for the eldest son, Aššur-nadin-šumi, who reigned in Babylon from 700 to 694, or for Esarhaddon. The entire question of the succession at the close of Sennacherib's reign (directly connected with his murder) is part and parcel of the struggle between supporters and opponents of the Babylonian line, which is still obscure. It stands to reason, however, that Esarhaddon, who took up the pro-Babylonian line of Sargon upon ascending the throne, was likely to provoke strong opposition. The emphasis on Sargon's "sin" by the authors of our document is perhaps intended as a warning against those far-reaching changes that began to make their appearance at the outset of Esarhaddon's reign. [ibid.]
PART III

"THE POLITICAL TESTAMENT OF SENNACHERIB"

[Benno Landsberger, 1967]

In spite of the torso-like form of our document, we may claim that its main line of thought can be traced, due to the great simplicity, almost child-like naïveté, of the two contrasting cases of negligence, which are its exclusive content, though they are dressed in a rich garment of learned and pious phrases.

In spite of the bad state of preservation, in spite of the many gimmicks of the scribal art with which the author dresses these simple formulas, the skeleton of the composition can be clearly, almost "anatomically" dissected from the rhetoric; it is, as already said, of childish simplicity:

My father (Sargon) was punished for a neglect of Aššur,
I (Sennacherib) have been punished for a neglect of Marduk.

Before we discuss these basic lines and the "dressing" (libretto) in detail, we have to answer whether the "I" is real or fictive. Only with utter naïveté and a blind belief in the sources could anybody assume that Sennacherib wrote this self-confession toward the end of his life, so to speak, as a last will to his first-chosen but later abandoned son, Esarhaddon.

Our skepticism is based on many indications, of both historical and stylistic character, indicated below.

111 In Bischof, p. 17 n. 12, Landsberger speaks out, rather vehemently, against Textglaubigkeit. The advice given there: "Doubt, until you convince yourself of the veracity of a source by better insight or by objective (other) evidence", is meant to apply to historical inscriptions; but, of course, it is even more valid in regard to the attitude towards the stylistic category labeled propaganda literature, to which the document under discussion belongs.
1. *The punishment.* Both the parallelism with the fate of his father and the inner logic require that also Sennacherib should have been punished for his neglect. It is very much to be regretted that no such allusion can be detected. It may or may not have been contained in the lost half of our text.

As is well known, Esarhaddon covers the death of his father with a diplomatic veil (Borger, *Esarh.*, p.42, 39ff.; cf. Landsberger, *Bischof*, p.16 n. 10). Only Babylonian sources (e.g., Nabonidus No.8) charge a son with murder, without disclosing his name. [See now, however, Parpola, *The Murderer of Sennacherib*, CRRAI 26 (1980) pp. 171ff.] Secondary sources, especially Berossos and the Bible, offer name(s) obviously corrupted by transmission.

2. *The respective sins.* a) The sin of Sargon: In spite of the fact that the whole document appears to be the fulfillment of a dream of Landsberger and Bauer, who already in 1927 stressed the *Assyrerium* and *Babyloniertum* at the Assyrian court (*Bischof* p.15); and in spite of the fact that our general statement “neglect of Aššur” (above) cannot be false, we must scrutinize exactly both the wording of pertinent lines (obv. 10-18) and the other indications in order to find out what was the ‘Sin of Sargon,’ as it was labeled in Eretz Israel.

   (10) hītu ša ... (12) hītu ana ili ihtú, but (16) hītū (see *Excursus* 1).

   (18) [aššu læ našāru] ša adē šar ilāni u là [...]. The second là obviously introduced the concrete sin: the restoration là [epēš šalmišu] imposes itself by analogy to the sins of Sennacherib.

   (17) ana muhhi ša ilāni [māt Aššur ...... ]

   (18) ana muhhi ilāni ša māt Akkadi; the restoration “neglected” imposes itself.

A conflicting motif is suggested by the frame: the same sin which was committed by Enmerkar and Naram-Sin should be avoided by Sennacherib:

ša là ili (pūta) u pagra šūṣū ([cf. Sm.1876, line 1: summa là ina bīrī]: la ili opp. itti ili ... pagra šēṣū; line 13, ki tēm ili, passim, see below, *Excursus* 1.

This would imply that Sargon undertook the particular expedition (or generally, his expeditions) without due consultation of the bārūs.

b) The sin of Sennacherib: Here we are not subjected to the whims of philological restorations; lines 21-23 of the reverse state explicitly that Sennacherib’s delict was nothing but the fact that he did not build the statue of Marduk, and even — a detail unheard of during the whole extent of Sumero-Babylonian civilization and within the whole realm of cuneiform writing — the scribes jump out onto the scene from their literary activity behind the screen and are used as scapegoats for this neglect. To put it mildly, we are startled in the extreme.

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12 A main and authentic source for Esarhaddon’s accession is the long letter *ABL* 1216, which has always been treated as a historical source of the first order, but no attempt at translation consistent with the achievements of Assyriology is available. [See now Parpola, CRRAI 26 (1980), p.179 and *LAS II* (1983), p.50.]
Is it conceivable that the same ruler who in his inscriptions boasts of the greatest possible profanation of the holy places of Babylon, even of smashing the divine statues, in whose res gestae the name Marduk is never mentioned\(^{13}\), and who deposed Marduk as builder and ruler of the world, not only in the texts but also in effigy (biṭ akītu in Assur), would confess to such a minor crime?

An almost inconceivable assault against the sanity of his reader or listener, presupposing the utmost gullibility and the shortest memory!! In defense of our propagandist we could offer the observation that it was the general tendency of the court historiographers to whitewash Sennacherib, and that this tendency was shared by both the Assyrian party and the Babylonian one (to which the author of our propaganda-nara belongs). Ruling out the possibility that at any period of his reign Sennacherib would confess openly to a sin of this kind and blame the bad influence of some of his scribes, we explain it as made up (we avoid the term “faked”) by a scribe of Esarhaddon for political reasons (for “propaganda” [see Excursus 2], whatever this means), and modelled after the “Testament of Naram-Sin” (see below, 4).

3. The affinities to the inscriptions of Esarhaddon. a) As in Borger, Esarh., pp.39-70 and 79-91 (the groups Nin. and AsBb.), the co-existence of Anšar and Marduk is the Leitmotif of our little pseudo-narû. But it is more closely related to the Nin. group insofar as no attempt is made to link Marduk with Anšar by a theological and actual son-father relationship (Bischof, n.38). In our text, as we have restored it, as well as in Borger, Esarh., p.42, 35, Marduk has to be content with bēlu rabû or rémnû. The exact statistics of our piece show the following:

1) Anšar
   - bēli rabī
   - bēlīja
   - šar il[āni]
   - [b]ānīja
   - šar ilāni (meaning Aššur)
   - [Marduk bēli rabī]
   - [Marduk bēli rabī]

2) However, in Borger’s Nin.-group, restricted to Exemplar A, we encounter
   - dAš-šur (not Anšar) ab ilāni
   - dMarduk šar ilāni

\(^{13}\) With the exception of the Bavian-inscription, recording these acts, where it is possibly a slip by mistake (cf. Tadmor, Eretz Israel 5, p. 161).
Exemplar A is dated 673. In the AsBb-group, dating toward the end of Esarhaddon’s reign, Anšar is still šar ilāni, p.85, 47, against bēli rabē Marduk and Marduk bēlu rabū, p.47, 49; but: Anšar ab ilāni, p.79, 1; Marduk aplu rēštū Iššīl ilāni, ibid. 8; Anšar šar ilāni ... zarāšunu, p.83, 33 and 35.

3) The juxtaposition of “gods of Assyria” and “gods of Akkad” (ll. 17’-18’) is alien to any of Esarhaddon’s inscriptions; in Borger, Esarh., p.40, 17, Marduk is enumerated as one of the five supreme gods of Assyria, in line 9 (quite an exception) even under the name Bel.

The co-existence is expressed by mala Anšar u Marduk iqbu, ibid. 84, 40.

b) Though Sennacherib occasionally14 stresses his explorations of the gods’ will by extispicy (especially in his bit akītu inscriptions), he never dwells on this motif and never “dresses” it with his own prayers aimed at obtaining the oracle.

It was left to Esarhaddon’s historiographers to spin this theme out, and here the most striking similarity between our pseudo-naru and Esarhaddon’s AsBb-group of inscriptions comes to mind; we may call it the ahennā-motif. The passage concerned is K.4730 rev.19’ and Borger, Esarh., p.82, 22. Their similarity was already observed, but not understood, by Borger; the correct interpretation was simultaneously offered by CAD under ahennā (“each separately”) and by Landsberger, Bischof, p.22, though they are at variance as to the translation of qāātu (CAD “lists”, Landsberger “groups”)15. It is also the style of Esarhaddon to pray to the gods for annu kinu (see Excursus 3).

For readers not familiar with Assyriology, we note that the verdict of the haruspex consists only of a yes or no, in other words that the query (tamītu) is in our text in rev. 18’: tamītu šādi.

To come back to the ahennā-motif of splitting the bārūs into groups (rev. 15’ff.)16,

14) kī îm ili Luckenbill, Senn., 121, 50, 126a; tēm Šamaš Adad alemd, 137, 29; ina qibīt pi ša Šamaš u Adad, 140, 9.
15) We refrain from deciding which translation is correct or whether neither of them is correct. But if we free the AsBbA passage from the stilted style of conventional phrases, we may detect the following skeleton:
a) Esarhaddon first asks whether the gods should copulate at all, this after prayer;
b) then — this being the main question, for which he employs the “ingenious’ technique of splitting the

haruspices into groups —
c) whether the mythological begetting (i.e., the ceremonial making of the statue) should be in Assur, Babel or Nineveh;
d) the names of the artisans.

16) Commenting upon this passage Oppenheim, following Tadmor, Eretz Israel 5, writes in Ancient Mesopotamia (1964), p.227: “At times, the distrust of omens is formulated as distrust in the professional honesty of the diviners. And when one reads through their reports to the Assyrian kings, one can be amused at their efforts to interpret bad omens in a favourable sense by means of complicated reasoning. We have witness of awareness of this practice when Sennacherib separates the diviners into groups in order to obtain a reliable report on an important question without collusion among the experts”.

we must admit that the author of our pseudo-*narû* again makes himself ridiculous by trying to persuade the reader or listener that the “ingenious trick” is a proof of Sennacherib’s acumen. It is true that Sennacherib not infrequently boasts of his ingenuity and accuses his predecessors of stupidity (*ina là bîšît uzni*, cf. our rev. 24’f. and *CAD B* 270), whereas Esarhaddon stresses more his wisdom (*nêmequ*) and the power of his prayers. It is also true that checking the verb *hâkîmu* in *CAD* or *AHw.* shows that only Sennacherib applies this verb (our rev. 26’); but in both cases he praises — quite rightly — his technical skill (as Esarhaddon calls the job of the craftsmen *sîpir nikîlîtî*, Borger, *Esarh.*, p. 83, 29). This and other stylistic considerations were one of the main reasons for Tadmor in his Hebrew article to date the pseudo-*narû* to the closing years of Sennacherib, while Landsberger, who takes it as *post-mortem* fake, has to admit that the author, in spite of all his onslaughts on the credulity of his readers, had *sîpir nikîlîtî* enough to imitate the style of Sennacherib.

A further slip or poetic license is involved in the fact that the *parâs arkatî* (our obv. 10’ff., see Bischof, p.21 n.28) always refers to the future, so that the *sîpir nikîlîtî* may imply not only the splitting of the *barâs* into groups, but also the search for the past by divine command (*têmu*).

4. The pseudo-*narû* style. The fact that our text is a pseudo-*narû* and patterned after the story formerly called “King of Cutha”, and now the “Cuthaean legend of Naram-Sin”, was already recognized by Tadmor in *Eretz Israel* 5 18. However, it must be emphasised here that while their external form and the *Grundmotif* of the two compositions are largely identical, their internal relationship is rather loose and vague. In order not to prejudice the nature of the parallelism, we will defer the discussion of the key phrase *pagru u pîtû šûsû* to *Excursus 4* and present the following *epitome* of the “Testament of Naram-Sin” without recourse to it:

*Enmerkar asked the gods, but did not respect their will.* (This statement is “doubtful” because of uncertainty about the first person form *al(?)-[pu-ut]* in line 15, Copy E; it possibly could be *il*-*, third person, like *iqbûnî* in line 17. If we do not risk this emendation, the whole story makes no sense)19. He was punished by *Samaš* after his death, and his children and grandchildren still suffered from this ban.

18* In his introduction to the new edition of this piece of purely literary genre (AnSt 5 [1955] 93-115, with addenda AnSt 6 [1956] 163f.), Gurney gives a full account of this category and of the Naram-Sin legend. He could not yet use the Old Babylonian prototype edited by Finkelstein (which does not help very much in overcoming the difficulties still inherent in the later version), nor could he yet use line 12f. of our text which, so to speak, echoes the basic motif of the Cuthaean legend: *[pagru ulpûti itti ili lušēti].*
19* [A caveat for the reader: Not only is the proposed emendation epigraphically impossible, but it is, pace Landsberger, not even needed. The story makes much better sense and provides a much closer parallel to K.4730(+) if Naram-Sin is accepted as the originator of the query already in lines 11ff. We would accordingly recommend modifying Landsberger’s text here as follows:
But Enmerkar did not leave any record [of his sin], so that Naram-Sin fell into the same mistake. Naram-Sin consults the gods first in lines 72-78\(^{20}\), but, strikingly, there is no reference to Šamaš and Adad. On the other hand, we learn from the line 81 that a “dream-priestess” has also been consulted, obviously a reference to the “spirit” (zaqiqi) in line 78 and perhaps to the consulting of the great gods, all of North Babylonian cities. Line 78 is quite obviously corrupt and should not be translated the way Gurney did. But the light shed by ll. 80f. compensates for all the obscurities of the text: Naram-Sin goes out ša lā īlī. Only after repeated failures, Ea plays his role as a friend of the mankind and helps him to explain (ustābil, l. 107) the “livers” of the special New-Year offering lambs; whether he reached his result by prayer (tēmeqi, l. 105) or wisdom (nēmeqi) is irrelevant.

Of course, after Naram-Sin has obtained his “key”, lines 109-114 appear to be superfluous repetition. But, anyhow, he has in lines 120-123 his first success and draws the moral of line 125:

*ba-lu bi-ri ... ul ub-ba[l qa-ti]* “without extispicy I will not undertake anything”. In line 125 he offers a lamb to the gods as a Dankopfer: “[I got] the key of the gods as their reward” (127).

It was neither a biru nor a zaqiqu with which they rewarded him, but a heavenly voice (Hebr. *bath qōl, tukku* in Gilgames) given by Istar: he is warned that the barbarians (zēr halgate) have to wait for the punishment of Enlil and that it is hubris for any human being to interfere with his work. Upon that follows line 126 to be translated: “I did not stretch my arm against them for battling”.

To our great disappointment the epilogue is not in harmony with the main text, as we understand it. Instead of the expected Gott mit uns of Kaiser Wilhelm (World War I), we read a pacifistic manifesto; although it recommends a strong defensive, it goes almost as far as to advise to “turn the other cheek”\(^{21}\)

Conclusion: One cannot posit the equation “Enmerkar : Naram-Sin = Sargon : Sennacherib”. Nor does Sennacherib ask a future king to imitate his example and leave a further narā to his successors.

Rather vague also is the parallelism between Enmerkar (not buried) and Sargon (not buried). There is of course no parallelism between the ghostly enemies of Naram-Sin and those human ones of Sargon/Sennacherib; nor does K.4730 have anything of the legendary and ghostly character of the old narā, nor have either of the kings the gloomy aspect of an Unheilsherrscher (šarru lā mušallim matišu), nor is any pacifism preached to

\(^{20}\) Better: “In lines 72-78, Naram-Sin again consults the gods, but .... ”; cf. the preceding footnote. (SP)

\(^{21}\) For additional remarks on the legend see Excursus 5.
Esarhaddon, who was possessed by the romantic idea of conquering Egypt and of bringing home fantastic booty, unless we read between the lines the tendency: “Stay home and defend yourself”. Nor does either Enmerkar or Naram-Sin investigate the former sins or neglect.

Though this motif is very common at the court of Hattuša, it is “brand new” in K.4730 and probably a free invention of our author.

Excursus 1. Philological notes on K.4730(+)

In the interpretation of the text we have used gratefully the two new dictionaries. At this moment (January, 1967) there are at our disposal: AHw. to mû; CAD A/1, B, D, E, G, H, I/J, S, Z. Thus we have taken advantage of the possibility of checking all references to the following words or phrases whose meaning is not quite certain and so open to discussion:

- ašrātā šite’ū (5f.), epīṣtu (7), sirdē ahāzu “to hold the reins” (5, rev.29, discussed below), šutābulu “to evaluate, calculate (ominous features)” (7f.), ana libbiJa imqüt (9’), hīta hatū (10’ and passim), ana ikkibi turrušakānu(12’), manzāz [ekallī] (14’), adē (19’), dekū “aufwecken” (20’), ēḍu (22’), uddā (r.3) as opposed to šūdā (rev. 18’, 33’), šumtsuku (rev. 4’), ahennā (rev.19’), hiāṭu (rev.20’), šuhkumu (rev.26’).

Key-words not yet contained in either of the dictionaries: šutēmuqu (3’), see Bischof, p.22; parās arkati (11’), see Bischof, pp. 21 and 15; pagrī itti ili lušēsi (13’), discussed below; upanzir (rev. 4’) in the special meaning “to keep silent about bad portents”, etc., cf. Deller, OrNS 35 (1966), p. 317; tēm ili (rev. 20’), discussed below; nikilti/niklat libbi (rev. 24’), cf. Borger, Esarh., p. 83, 30; tapṣuhtu (rev. 34’), cf. OIP II, p. 151, mausoleum of Senn., made by Esarhaddon.

We will limit our discussion to a few selected vocables.

a) hītu: Perhaps it is a little pedantic to give up the translation “sin” for hītu, which, via Hebrew hēt, is so to speak in our blood. But hītu has to be delimited from arnu and “sin” should be reserved for the latter. I have not checked the articles hītu/haṭa[t] of the two dictionaries, but hītu is nothing but a fault or error, sometimes committed unconsciously or without any moral connotation; German Verfehlung is an appropriate word, but “fault” is too general and “transgression” (Hebr. ’abērā) not fitting, though still better than the “Bible-infected” “sin”. As to Hittite, which is, so to speak, neutral ground, Güterbock furnishes the following information: it is quite common for the haruspices (barās) and other types of diviners to investigate the wāṣtul (of kings committed in the past. wāṣtul with unknown etymology may be translated by “sin” or “offense”. Though only a “yes” or “no” can be obtained by these investigations, the fact that they were concerned with the past, represents a point of coincidence between our text and the Hittite practice.

22) [Cf., however, footnotes 19f. above.]
b) **sirdē ahāzu**: The translation of this phrase in *CAD* A 177 sub 3, “I have held your reins”, is too literal and therefore is, in a way, misleading. Von Soden, ZA 42, 25, translates “Zugseil der Sänfte”, i.e., “drawing rope of the sedan chair”, but the latter is, in all probability, an anachronism. Von Soden’s rendering was accepted (as usual, without criticism) by Salonen, Möbel, (1963), 79f., where examples (mostly from OB) for the alleged Sänfte, the *kussē sirdē*, are listed. But the “archeological material” is poor. The Assyrian kings yoked captive kings to their chariots. This is not expressed by *ahāz sirdē*, but by pulling the GIS *ša šadādī*, Salonen, *Landfahrzeuge*, pp. 62-64.

It would be a vivid picture to see the great emperors of Assyria run in front of the rickshaws in which the gods were seated! But such a picture did not exist. We may think that the thrones of the gods (and the “big shots” in OB) were moved on rails (as excavated) within the palace, and that at the great festivals the emperor was yoked to them. But this too is fantasy! Though we are able to refute the Sänfte, we are unable to determine the literal meaning of this phrase. It is not a complete synonym, equivalent of the *sāt ap/bšāni*, discussed by the two dictionaries.

c) **tēmu, tēm ilī**: We cannot investigate this word, which caused difficulties for Assyriologists from the earliest days. In the everyday language of OB letters (as against OA *ṭertu*), it means (or involves) in some passages “order”, in some passages “report”. Ungnad in his *BB* escaped this ambiguity by translating “Bescheid”, a slightly colloquial term, closer to report than to order. This translation is still applied by Kraus in his edition of OB letters. Yet in other passages, e. g., in the famous letter of the king of Uruk to the king of Babylon (Falkenstein, Bagh. Mitt. 2, p. 56,14), it means something like “analysis of the problems connected with ...”. We avoid translating *tēm ilī* by “order” (*qibitu*, *awatu*) or by “judgment” (*dēnu*), which both alternate with *tēmu*. Perhaps “advice” would be better than “decision”.

d) The idiom *pūtī (u) pagrī ušēši*, which is a key word also in the “Cuthaean Legend” (actually more properly to be labeled as “The Testament of Naram-Sin”), will be discussed below, *Excursus* 4. It is quite obvious that our composition, as much a pseudo- *narū* as that of Naram-Sin, is patterned after the latter.

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*Excursus 2. Propaganda literature*

This term was applied by von Soden to denote the genre of his “Unterweltsvision” (ZA 43 1ff. [now SAA III 32]). I leave aside the question of whether it applies to the “Unterweltvision” or whether the latter is rather a didactic composition addressed to a young prince (Esharhaddon?). But the term “propaganda” is neither anachronistic nor out of place if 1) the composition serves the cult of personality of the king, and/or if 2) it propagates certain political ideas and tendencies. Further, I will not object to the label “propaganda”, even if ideas or tendencies, which are contradictory to each other, are subsumed under the name.
Of course, if we use the word propaganda, our first question must be: “Where is the public?”. Here, we should not nourish any false illusions. Maybe the public consisted only of the king and the other scribes, but since the latter were involved, it necessarily encompasses also posterity.

There is also a small difference between a propaganda script and a “political pamphlet” (AS 16, 344a, line 15)\(^\text{23}\).

Without going into the question of whether or not labels like “propaganda” or “political pamphlet” are anachronisms, I will try to classify the “political” enunciations of the scribes according to their style:

a) historical inscriptions: most conspicuous here is the conflict between Marduk and Anšar.

b) royal lamentations: Tukulti-Ninurta I, Ashurnasirpal I.

c) the narātū literature, see above.

d) omina; cf., for the literary genre, *Ein Sittenkanon in Omenform* by Kraus, ZA 43.

e) no other parallel: *Unterweltsvision* (cf. above).

f) cult commentaries, both parties (see Bischof, p. 15).

**Excursus 3. annu kīnu**

Besides the passage AsBbA, concerning the “rebirth” of the Babylonian gods, there are three passages where Esarhaddon explicitly deals with granting the divine consent, the annu kīnu, by haruspicy:

1) Borger, *Esarh.*, p. 3 III 42 through IV 6;

2) *ibid.*, p. 19, Episode 16-17;


The passage AsBbA, already discussed, extends with a prayer as an introduction from p. 82, 14 to p. 83, 27. Note that:

1) concerns the rebuilding of the Aššur temple at Assur;

2) concerns the rebuilding of the Aššur temple at Assur;

3) concerns the struggle for succession.

\(^{23}\) The reasons for the late dating of the *Fürstenspiegel* are mostly of a philological nature, and their validity can (with few exceptions) now be checked by the two dictionaries. Personally, I am very sceptical with regard to the late dating; Diakonoff does not quote the MB letter in which the three privileged cities are distinguished and where āhâ is replaced by habîra. I treated, or mistreated, this letter, known only in late copies from the library of Ashurbanipal, in AfO 10; and, if I am not wrong, Böhl used it in his *Fürstenspiegel*. 
In this last passage, strangely enough, Šamaš and Adad are forgotten. We perceive something of the Enmerkar-Naram-Sin motif of our pseudo-narū, if we take notice of the fact that his adverse brothers act ša lā ilāni and ana tēm ramāniśunu (p.62, 33f.), whereas Esarhaddon acts kl tēm ili; but in this passage it is not said expressly that the tēm ili was searched for by extispicy.

The obtaining of the annu kīnu is always preceded by a prayer to all the great gods and/or the expression of deep awe. Contrary to the statement above that the annu kīnu consists only of one word, i.e., “yes” or “no”, the wording of the divine answer is given in examples 3 and 4; this must be considered as licentia poetica. (Such oracles can be obtained only by mahhū, šabrū, or raggimu, whom Ashurbanipal uses.) It is also poetic licence or a slip that Marduk is added to Šamaš and Adad in example 2 (here Borger’s translation is to be corrected: read DI.KUD.GALrMESt, etc. “the great judges (CAD dikuggallu), the gods, who are my lords”).

Excursus 4. pagri u ĕtušū

The phrase is attested five times:

pagri u ĕtušū ul ušēi, Cuthaean Legend 29f24.
pagri u ĕtušū lušēi, ibid. 93 and the OB Forerunner, which, however, has pagri u ramāni lušēi.

pūtka tušēsū, ibid. 174.
[ ... ] u pagri itti ili lušēi K.4730 line 26.

There are indications in OB legal texts that pagri u ramāni, and, if I remember well, also pagri u ĕtušū are not just “fuller expressions” but complete synonyms of ramāni; accordingly, ramāni ušēi should be synonymous with ĕši; ĕtušū is an ellipsis for pagri u ĕtušū.

The way out of the apparent impasse is to translate all passages by “keep out of trouble”. By no means can “to keep out” ever be equal to šūšū: this can be proved by lines 163f., where pūtka sullim is an exact paraphrase of “keep yourself out of trouble”, in contrast to ĕšū “to go out (against the enemy)”. Furthermore, the implication of the ušēi-passages is not “to keep oneself out” but “to save the country” from accumulation (of catastrophes).

Another proof for the fact that the “mathematical” equation pagri šūšū = ĕšū cannot be applied to the phrase, comes from lines 85-87 (though a certain inconsistency with lullik, line 82, must be admitted). If the king had exposed himself to any danger in the three unhappy campaigns against the Umman-manda, he would not use ušēi; thus, he “kept himself out”; and he cannot ask in line 93 how to keep himself out. Likewise, he

24) We disregard the MU, which is found only in E, from Sultantepe.
cannot ask under these circumstances how to risk his neck by going forth in person “as assumed by all editors”.

But in all probability this error is older than the first editor who can be taken seriously, Jensen. By interpolating itti ili, the author of K.4730 admits tacitly that he could no longer understand any more the three passages of the Cuthaean Legend. We do not therefore revoke our former statement that itti ili contrasts with ša la ili, la libbi ili, balu ili (see above), and parallels ana emüqi ili takālu as opposed to ana emüqi ramānišu takālu. We therefore do not stress the difference between ilum and ilū. The former is unthinkable in the Cuthaean Legend, and is also alien to any historical style, but it is common in the daily language and in prayer; enough evidence is in both dictionaries. The difficulty of the singular ilum in “pre-monotheistic” religions should not be underrated.

Consequently, we do not use the passage of K.4730 for interpreting the three passages of the Cuthaean Legend. This difficulty is aggravated by the fact that no parallels are available for luṣṭakkanuma (old and new versions) which precedes our obscure phrase.25

Whatever the meaning of the two verbs, the sense required is: “How (can I rid my country of all these catastrophes and failures) and put myself out for my country efficiently?” We will hardly be much mistaken if we assume that the phrase was at home in daily language and that therefore šašu is not used in here its basic (or grammatical) sense, but in its transferred or legal sense. A proof for this proposal may be found in the fact that pagri u ramāni (and similar expressions) are used in contracts for self-renting (Lautner, Personenmiete, 13). šašu in legal sense means to “rent” a field, a house; German mieten, pachten (not vermieten!); the rent is called kisru. In cases of slaves or persons renting out themselves mostly agaru and ida are used; but ana kisir ... ušēgi (Lautner, 42) is not unheard of; “sich selbst mieten” (not to be confused with vermieten). We will not spin out this idea further, but we consider it as the only approach possible.

Excursus 5. Notes on the “Cuthaean Legend”

1) The proper names. The legend was already “scribal propaganda” [at the time of its composition], or better, an apocalyptic vision of the Völkersturm which put an end to the Old Babylonian period. (But of course the harebrained author of K.4730 had no idea that a similar Völkersturm was brewing behind the scenes of the Assyrian empire.)

25) It is nothing but a guess if one translates “how can I manage to” (phrase), thus considering the two sentences an hendiadys: šukānu as objektlos (“absolute usage”) and as Gtn.
It may be worthwhile to use as clues the names occurring in the text (cf. Forrer; Gurney, AnSt 5, p. 97), a kind of OB Völkertafel:

a) Šubat-Enlil, roughly Chagar Bazar [actually Tell Leilan], still in existence;

b) Burushanda(r) and Puranša (recte Puranda), identifiable from Kültepe and/or Mari;

c) Umman-manda, line 54 needs re-definition: are they identical with the (Indo-) Aryans? These, for sure, I discover in the zēr halgati of line 130 (see above);

d) *māt* Tiāmat, line 56, already exists;

e) lines 55-60: with the exception of c) this is the classical sequence, and as such timeless;

f) the PN’s in lines 39-46: An-ba-ni-ni; his wife Melili is mentioned in late(?) god-lists. It seems that the kings of Lullubu in the time of Naram-Sin had Akkadian names (cf. -dunnu: Gadd, Cambridge Ancient History 1², chapter XIX, p. 30).

g) a peculiarity of these two names, and of those in 41, 43, and 44, is the duplication of the last syllable. This type of name is well known; their language is called by Landsberger “Prototigridian” and by Gelb the “Banana-language”.

h) Kukupis, line 42, a mountain? (Reiner, ḥiṣṣur- litanies).

Result: These PN’s are taken from a Vorlage dealing with the deeds of Naram-Sin. This of course can also be true for some of the city and country names of lines 50ff. More valuable are the indications above, a, c, and d.

2) Notes on the translation (AnSt 5 98ff.):

line 162: “gird yourself with weapons, but go into hiding”(!) (so p. 113).

line 163, corrected in AnSt 6; for second half, see above, Excursus 4.

line 164: lītiḍi corrupt, not translatable; “carry away as booty”?

line 166: rēdāṭika “of your soldiers”.

line 167: li-šag-gi-iš “let him slay”,

line 168: neither “meek” nor “humble”; ašrāṭa is not wašrāṭa but ḫšrāṭa. ašāru, sanāq, paqādu = “to check”, in the sense of kontrollieren, “be considerate and self-controlled”.

lines 169-172 are an intrusion from BWL’s “admonitions”, as indicated by the shift from -su to -sunu; possibly extrapolated (as perhaps also 134a-140b) from vaticinia post eventum, now investigated by Biggs.

line 170: read gul-lul-ti.

line 171: ta-āṣ-ba-ti is the plural of taṣibtu, from wašābu (hebr. ḥṣf), cf. talītu, from wld.

line 172: e-te-(et)-ti-iq, not “before” but “against”.
PART IV
SYNTHESIS

[Simo Parpola, 1985]

K.4730 (+) Sm.1876 is a political and propagandistic document drawn up to justify Esarhaddon's costly and controversial Babylonian policy, which propagated a cosmetic equality between Assyria and Babylonia, and in its essence involved "dividing" the empire between the king's two sons, restoring the destroyed cult centers of Babylonia, and fashioning a new, Assyrian-made, statue for Marduk, to replace the original one deported by Sennacherib. Since this policy seemingly involved a total reversal of the hard-line policy pursued under Sennacherib, which had been propagated and theologically justified in official inscriptions, it had to be backed by an even more effective and ingenious counterpropaganda.

In Esarhaddon's inscriptions, the new policy is ascribed to the will of gods manifested through ominous signs as well as to the abating of Marduk's wrath, which is now presented as the real cause of Babylon's destruction. One particular omen, observed while Esarhaddon still was crown prince, appears to have literally dictated the Babylonian reconstruction project, see S. Parpola, CRRAI 26 (1980) pp. 179f. The author of K.4730(+) goes a step further and gives to understand that the policy of Esarhaddon was only seemingly new and had in reality been already initiated under Sennacherib.

This allegation was of course pure fiction, and could be supported by no tangible evidence whatsoever. Hence the author of K.4730(+) had to resort to a "trick": he raises the spirit of Sennacherib to make the sensational disclosure personally.

There is every reason to believe that the allegation of the text was supposed to and could be taken seriously. In a contemporary letter (LAS 132), Esarhaddon's personal exorcist Adad-sumu-ushur cites the words of another royal ghost (the king's deceased queen) in support of the king's controversial choice of Ashurbanipal as his heir-apparent. This proves beyond doubt that the possibility of summoning spirits of the dead to act as "political witnesses" was not at all unthinkable at the Assyrian imperial court.

The Structure of the Text

The text is structured partly like an epitaph (cf. YOS I 43; AnSt 8, p. 46 ff.; Nerab A and B, etc.), partly like a royal decree (cf. Postgate, NARG, nos. 9-12). Apart from a heading or introduction, now lost, it falls into five principal parts:
1) self-identification of the deceased;
2) historical part (narrated in the 1st person singular);
3) oath;
4) address to posterity (in the 2nd person singular), and
5) benedictions (and curses?).

Part 2 occupies most of the obverse, Part 4 most of the reverse; Part 3 occupies the lower edge in between the obverse and the reverse.

Both stylistically and structurally, the text also has strong affinities with the "nara literature", particularly the so-called Cuthaean Legend of Naram-Sin (Gurney, AnSt 5).

Why this manner of presentation was adopted should be obvious. An epitaph expresses the last will of the deceased, to be respected by posterity. The guise of a royal decree gives it additional weight. And finally, the Cuthaean Legend, which certainly was very popular at the time concerned, provided the author with a most useful paradigm for his purposes.

In the legend, King Naram-Sin is portrayed as the paradigmatic Unheilsherrscher from whose mistakes and fate future generations were supposed to learn. Thus, by presenting Sennacherib in the role of this Unheilsherrscher, the author was endeavoring to make it very clear that the "last will" of the king, expressed in the text, had to be taken seriously; in other words, Esarhaddon "actually" had no real alternative to his Babylonian policy.

No contemporary could have missed the point, particularly since both Sennacherib and Naram-Sin happened to share a famous father with the same name: Sargon. We know that equal marks were drawn between the two Sargons in the Sargonid period and that Sargon II had consciously emulated the role of his legendary namesake and predecessor.27

Extispicy as a Political Instrument

The Cuthaean Legend served the author's purposes otherwise, as well. It was the

THE SIN OF SARGON AND SENNACHERIB'S LAST WILL

...classic propagator of extispicy, which it presented as an infallible means of studying the divine will, and as a necessary prerequisite for any important undertaking. Extispicy plays a very prominent role in K.4730(+), too. On the surface it would seem that the purpose of this was simply to make the Naram-Sin : Sennacherib analogy more obvious and to stress the pious conduct of the deceased king. On closer examination, however, it becomes evident that the real purpose of the author was much more concrete: to give Esarhaddon a useful pretext to ignore inconvenient domestic criticism, and a means for legitimizing practically any political action he decided to take.

The very first lines of the reverse (which mark the beginning of the Address to Posterity) effectively tell Esarhaddon not to rely on any advice not based on extispicy. What is more, the extispicies had to be performed in a specific way virtually unheard of from other sources: the haruspices were to be divided in several groups, some of which were to present the query to the oracle gods and register the ominous features in the exta, while the actual task of interpreting the omens was left to groups excluded from the extispicy ceremonies themselves.

This procedure is presented as if designed to eliminate any possibility of fraud, but in reality it enhanced the king's chances to control and influence the results of the extispicy. It is well known that the inspection of the exta involved the registration of a great number of ominous features, which were in practice bound to be — at least to a certain extent — mutually contradictory. Hence the decision whether the gods' answer was to be interpreted as positive or negative almost always involved a subjective element, and could be made dependent either on a simple tally of favorable (šalmu) and unfavorable (laptu) omens, or a more refined study of the actual apodoses. By shifting the final decision from the site of extispicy to the palace milieu, controversial cases could be assessed more carefully, and if need be, interpreted in support of the desired policies.

Significantly enough, the practice in question is otherwise only once explicitly referred to in Esarhaddon's inscriptions, viz. in a passage describing the extispicy performed before the decision to fashion a new statue for Marduk (Borger, Esarh., pp. 82f, AsBbA Rev. 20-26) — the very topic of K.4730(+)!! This can hardly be accidental, but rather indicates a close historical connection between the two texts. The titulary of Esarhaddon in AsBbA shows that the inscription was composed some time after the conquest of Egypt, probably in 671 or 670 (cf. LAS II, pp. 184 and 169), which thus would also be the approximate date of K.4730(+).

It would accordingly seem that K.4730(+) was in the first place composed to give formal justification to the abnormal practice of extispicy described in it, which was needed to make sure that the extremely important query concerning the statue of Marduk would yield the desired answer. The fact that such a justification was considered necessary should not strictly be taken to imply that the idea of making a new statue met with strong opposition, but such a conclusion seems rather obvious.

The opposition may have come from both Assyrian and Babylonian circles. It is not difficult to imagine with what sort of feelings national-minded Assyrians watched the
spending of huge sums of money on a “Babylonian Recovery Project”, or the feelings of national-minded Babylonians toward a statue of Marduk “made in Assyria”. K.4730(+) seems to have been addressed to both of these groups of potential opponents. The feelings of the Assyrians were mitigated by stressing the supremacy of Aššur as King of the Gods and the ruler of the world (Rev. 27', cf. also Obv.19' and 40'ff.), those of the Babylonians by presenting Aššur and Marduk as equals, and the fashioning of a new statue for the latter as “God’s will” and a “most natural thing to be done” — considering that a new statue had already been made for Aššur himself.

The Sin of Sargon

In the Cuthaean Legend, Naram-Sin shared the fate of an earlier king (Enmerkar), who, apparently as a result of the same offence as Naram-Sin, had fallen prey to enemy hosts, but had not left a written warning to posterity to prevent it from repeating his fatal mistake. It was only through extispicy that Naram-Sin found out the causality behind the fate of his predecessor and his own misfortunes. This theme recurs in our text, whose starting point is the infamous death of Sargon in enemy hands, clearly associated with a sin he had committed. The nature of this sin was established through the query quoted in Obv. 17'-19', which states, among other things, that Sargon had not kept a “treaty of the King of the Gods”. Since the epithet “King of the Gods” is elsewhere in the text explicitly attached to Aššur, this would seem to imply a sin against Aššur, Assyria’s national god and the very upholder of Sargon’s empire — a conclusion actually drawn, without any hesitation whatever, by Landsberger in his analysis of the passage (above, p. 34).

But how can such an interpretation be harmonized with the first part of the query which, no matter how it is restored, clearly suggests that Sargon had honored the gods of Assyria at the expense of those of Babylonia? Moreover, what kind of a divine treaty (adē) would the king have broken?

We consider it excluded that the term adē here refers to a treaty between Aššur and Sargon comparable to Jahweh’s covenants with Abraham or David. An Assyrian example of such a document actually exists28, and its contents (promises of divine support to the king) make it an extremely unlikely candidate for the treaty meant here. Besides, our text refers to a treaty of, not with Aššur. This phrasing clearly points to a treaty sworn by Aššur (and other gods), i.e. adē in its basic meaning, a political agreement between two rulers (or nations)29. In other words, we take the wording of the text to imply that Sargon had purposely broken a treaty which he had sworn to respect.

28) K.2401 (Craig, ABRT I 22-25).
The treaties that the Assyrian empire concluded with other nations were mostly unilateral; their terms were dictated by the Assyrian emperor, and it was only the other (subjected) party that was required to swear loyalty to the treaty. Occasionally, however, the Assyrian king too, out of sheer political necessity, was forced to conclude a treaty which he too had to confirm by oath. This was the case of the treaty concluded between Šamši-Adad V and Marduk-zakir-šumi in the course of a civil war which the former was trying to win, and we submit that a similar treaty is also in question here. We can think of only one treaty in the entire reign of Sargon which could qualify for such a treaty, and it qualifies for it perfectly: The treaty of Sargon with Merodach-Baladan II, concluded after a civil war in Assyria and the battle of Der, when Sargon still was politically and militarily weak. This treaty established Merodach-Baladan on the throne of Babylon for 12 years, until he was deposed in 710 as a result of an Assyrian invasion.

We know the Merodach-Baladan treaty from Sargon’s inscriptions (Lie, Sargon, p.42, 263ff.), where it is referred to as “the sworn treaty of (or: the treaty sworn by) the great gods” (adē mamū ilāni rabūti). Sargon claims (ibid., 265) that it was Merodach-Baladan who disregarded the treaty by withholding his annual tribute to Assyria. But why would Merodach-Baladan, after having loyally kept the treaty for 12 years, suddenly have broken it at the moment Sargon was at the peak of his power, having crushed Urartu and consolidated his power both at home and in the Levant? It is a fact that he was in no position to resist Sargon’s invading armies but had to flee to the southern marshes already at an early phase of the conflict.

The truth clearly emerging even from Sargon’s own account of the events, is that it was Sargon himself who broke the treaty at the incitement of the clergy of Marduk, who had had enough of a Chaldaean monarch on the throne of Babylon. “Marduk, the great lord, abhorred the evil deeds of the Chaldaean that he hated, and decreed that his royal scepter and throne be taken away. He truly called me, Sargon, the humble king, from among all the princes and summoned me ... At the command of Marduk, I prepared my teams and gathered my camp ...” (ibid., 268ff.). The central role of the priesthood of Marduk and Nabû in welcoming Sargon to Babylonia is well documented in the king’s inscriptions (Lie, Sargon p. 55, 371ff., cf. ABL 763+) and does not need further elaboration.

By breaking a treaty he had sworn by Aššur (and certainly by Marduk too), Sargon had, theoretically at least, committed a sin against the very gods who functioned as the guardians of the treaty. It did not matter if he had acted in the best interests of Assyria; all the same, he had to be punished for his haughtiness. Worse still, by his actions he had broken the divine harmony and initiated a period of enmity between the gods of Assyria and Babylonia — enmity that was to develop into a long war of attrition between the two countries under his son and successor Sennacherib.

30) See Rm 2, 427 (SAA II no.1, discussed ibid., pp. XXVf.).
31) Cf. SAA II p. XXXVI.
PART V

CONCLUSION

A document of this sort raises important questions regarding the identity of its real supposed or literary author. The remarkable points of contact between our text and the Cuthaean Legend of Naram-Sin have already been stressed repeatedly above. But does the analogy of the Cuthaean legend extend to every detail of our text? If Sennacherib is presented as an *Unheilsherrscher* in the text, then this is possible only on the condition that he is already dead, as indeed implied by Rev.23', if correctly restored. In the Cuthaean legend, by contrast, we have a document allegedly written by Naram-Sin while still alive. Hence the only way out we can see is that our text purports to be based on a communication by the ghost of Sennacherib received in a dream, and that it was worked into its present literary form only secondarily, perhaps following the instructions of the ghost.

Moreover, it is most likely in our opinion that the receiver of this dream was the king, i.e. Esarhaddon, himself, because it is only to the king in person that such advice could have been given in the 2nd person singular. One should perhaps not exclude totally the possibility that the receiver of the dream was some other highly placed person at the court, such as the chief haruspex (cf. *LAS* 117). However, in that case we would expect the text to be phrased as a report to the king, which is not the case. The likelihood of the first solution speaks for itself.

If it is the king himself from whom the dream originates, then the text must be placed in the framework of Esarhaddon's Babylonian policy at large and specifically in the phase when the statue of Marduk was being refashioned and the concept of equality between the gods Aššur and Marduk (and hence Assyria and Babylonia) was introduced. What could have been a more effective means of sanctioning this policy than a statement from the spirit of Sennacherib, the archenemy and destroyer of Babylon? It is none less than Sennacherib himself who now orders his son to make peace with the gods of Babylonia and thus to complete something he had started to do himself but did not finish. Even a most nationalistic-minded Assyrian at court could not have criticized a policy which emanated from the person of Sennacherib himself.

A dream of such a kind would fit well in the psychological state of Esarhaddon at the time when he was deeply immersed in the practical implementation of his revolutionary new policies and all the risks involved in it. Naturally, our text is not the *ipsissima verba* of the king's vision but a highly sophisticated literary oeuvre never used before. Orthographical analysis indicates that it originates with a member of the
haruspex guild\textsuperscript{32}. Despite the fact that the language is Standard Babylonian, the author may actually have been an Assyrian. At this stage we cannot yet identify him exactly\textsuperscript{33}.

In this light, we can better understand the implication of the statement in Rev. 21, where we read: "After I had made the statue of Aššur, the Assyrian "scribes" (i.e. astrologers) prevented me from making the statue of Marduk". It would seem that the haruspex who shaped the document is criticizing the team of astrologers headed by the chief scribe Kalbu, who in Sennacherib’s time withheld adverse astrological omens from the king and thus misled him in his decisions (ABL 1216 Rev.)\textsuperscript{34}. As far as we know, this is the only case in Assyrian literature where a king admits to have been limited in power by his advisers.

Altogether, the text is a multi-layered, skillfully contrived, almost Machiavellian composition. In the garb of a dead king’s last will, it mirrors as if in a dream three dramatic personae, two of them pursuing different policies and dying a tragic death: Sargon the pro-Babylonian, killed ignominiously on battlefield, his spirit wandering aimlessly (lā šālālī) like that of his ancient namesake (Grayson, \textit{ABC}, p. 154, 20-23; cf. Isa. 14, 19-20); Sennacherib the anti-Babylonian, "maker of the image of Anšar", who was not rewarded for his Assyrian policies but killed by his own son, like Tukulti-Ninurta, the ancient foe of Babylon four centuries earlier; and finally Esarhaddon, the receiver of the message, a haunted but brave king who undertook new and far-reaching, risky policies. Our document is therefore a supreme expression of the precarious position in which Esarhaddon found himself on the verge of those crucial decisions that were to shape the fortunes of the Assyrian Empire.

\textsuperscript{32} A most significant orthographical feature indicating that the scribe was a haruspex is the consistent spelling of the determinative pronoun \textit{sa} with the sign $\text{sa}$, which is a standard feature of the haruspical queries, even those written in Assyrian script; normally this word was written by Neo-Assyrian scribes with the sign $\text{sa}$. Occasional spellings with $\text{sa}$ occur in the letters of certain scribes (see \textit{LAS} II, p. 446 and \textit{SAA} I, p. 226, glossary under $\text{sa}$), but they are decisively rarer than normal spellings with $\text{sa}$ and generally occur side by side with the latter. Thus the ratio of spellings with $\text{sa}$ versus $\text{sa}$ is 60 : 99, 14 : 83 and 14 : 26 (respectively) in the letters of the exorcists Adad-šumu-usur, Marduk-šakin-šumi and Nabû-nadin-šumi, 8 : 56, 13 : 41 and 5 : 42 (respectively) in the letters of the astrologers Istar-sumu-eres, Balas! and Nabu-ahhe-eriba, and 4 : 43 in the letters of the physician Urad-Nana. Most scribes never used $\text{sa}$ for writing the pronoun, reserving it exclusively for the spelling of longer words. The only scribe in \textit{LAS} to spell the pronoun consistently with $\text{sa}$ is the writer of \textit{LAS} 370 (\textit{CT} 53 139), son of the chief haruspex Marduk-šumu-usur, on whom see the following note.

\textsuperscript{33} A comparison of the sign forms in K. 4730(+) with those of \textit{CT} 53 139 (see preceding footnote) indicates that all comparable signs are identical and the general appearance of the ductus is similar in both texts. \textit{CT} 53 139 dates from the same time as K. 4730(+), and the prominent status of the writer as the son of the chief haruspex would qualify him well for the author (or scribe) of K. 4730(+). However, some uncertainty remains, since the author of \textit{CT} 53 139 consistently spells the conjunction \textit{u} with $\text{u}$, not $\text{u}$ as in the present text.

\textsuperscript{34} As already considered by Landsberger (cf. above, p. 37); Esarhaddon knew of this incident through the letter just referred to.