

**09) Šamaš visit to Babylon** – Although there is quite a lot of data concerning the political and economic connections between Sippar and Babylon,<sup>1</sup> we know almost nothing about the cultic relations between these important centres.<sup>2</sup> From this point of view the text is important because it comprise the first certain attestation of Šamaš visiting Babylon.<sup>3</sup> However, we do not know whether Šamaš went to Babylon to take part in a cultic performance<sup>4</sup> or if his visit was caused by political situations (the usurpation of Bardiya and Darius coming to the power).<sup>5</sup> However, at least his return to Sippar before

**1** Concerning the carrier of the representatives of Ša-našišu family in Sippar and in Babylon, see A.C.V.M. Bongenaar, *The Neo-Babylonian Ebabbar Temple at Sippar: Its Administration and Its Prosopography* (PIHANS 80, Leiden 1997), pp. 13f. and S. Zawadzki, “New Data Concerning High Officers from the Neo-Babylonian Period,” NABU 2001, No 60. Concerning the engagement of some qualified craftsmen from Babylon sent regularly to Sippar, see Bongenaar, pp. 367-369. The Babylonians were also active in the accomplishment of the building project north of Sippar in the last few years of Nabonidus’ reign (see Zawadzki, “Building activity north of Sippar,” to be published).

**2** We know, however, that regular animal offerings were presented in the Ebabbar to Marduk and Šarpanitu, who took in such texts third and fourth positions, only after Šamaš and his consort Aya or fourth and fifth, after Šamaš, Aya and the deified zikkurat.

**3** Concerning the possible visit of Šamaš in Babylon in the very beginning of the month Nisannu in the third year of Nabonidus, see J. MacGinnis, “The Chariot of Šamaš goes to Babylon,” in: S. Graziani (ed.), *Studi Sul Vicino Oriente Antico dedicati alla memoria di Luigi Cagni*, (Istituto Universitario Orientale, Dipartimento di Studi Asiatici, ser. Minor 71, Napoli 2000), pp. 621-627, especially his comments on p. 621: “Although the text [BM 60841] only mentions the chariot, we can hazard a guess that Bunene, the divine charioteer, was at the helm, and it would be somewhat surprising if Šamaš himself were not also aboard”.

**4** However, no important festival is known to be held in that month in Babylon, see H.J.H. Linssen, *The Cult of Uruk and Babylon. The Temple Ritual Texts as Evidence for Hellenistic Cult Practices*, Leiden, Boston 2004 (CM 25), p. 65.

**5** During instability in Babylonia in the time of war between Assyria and Babylonia the gods of many cities were sent to Babylon (from Šapazzu, Kiš, Sippar), see A.K. Grayson, *Assyrian and Babylonian Chronicles* (Texts from the Cuneiform Sources, vol. V), Locust Valley, New York 1975), p. 88, l. 6; p. 89, l. 21. Also Nabonidus ordered the gods to be sent to Babylon as he faced the Persian attack on Babylonia (Grayson, *ibid*, p. 109, lines 9-12).

the 20<sup>th</sup> day of the month is not accidental, because according to BM 50503, edited and perfectly commented by S. Maul, the 20<sup>th</sup> day of every month (also an intercalary month) was devoted to Šamaš (“ein dem Šamaš geweihter Tag”).<sup>6</sup> The data concerning the boat used for transporting the cultic garments (*ellepēti ša kusīti*)<sup>7</sup> suggest that a regular journey between Sippar and other Babylonian cities was a normal occurrence.

BM 64557 (82-9-18, 4537)<sup>8</sup>

5.6 x 4.2 cm



1. 21 ma-na ki-tin-ni-e
2. <sup>m</sup>Ki<sup>l</sup>-na-<sup>l</sup>ja<sup>l</sup> <sup>lu</sup>ma-la-hi šá ru-ku-bu
3. šá ul-tu TIN.TIR.KI it-ti
4. <sup>r</sup>UTU<sup>l</sup> il-li-ku SUM<sup>na</sup>
- R.5. ITI.ZÍZ UD.20.KÁM MU.SAG
6. <sup>m</sup>Da-a-ru-mu-šú LUGAL TIN.TIR.KI LUGAL KUR.KUR  
21 minas of cotton(?)<sup>9</sup> was given to Kinaya, the boatman of the barge, who came with god Šamaš from Babylon.  
Month of Šabaṭu, the 20<sup>th</sup> day, the accession year of Darius, king of Babylon, king of Lands.

Stefan ZAWADZKI (21-01-2005)

<sup>6</sup> S. Maul, “Gottesdienst im Sonnenheiligtum zu Sippar,” in: B. Böck, E. Cancik-Kirschbaum, T. Richter (eds), *Munuscula Mesopotamica Festschrift für Johannes Renger* (AOAT 267, Münster 1999) 285-316, esp. pp. 290, 303f.

<sup>7</sup> E. Matsushima, “Quelques textes relatifs à l’*elippu ša kusīti* (bateau du vêtement),” in: Bulletin of the Middle Eastern Culture Center in Japan 6 (1992) 1-21 and idem, “Quelques problèmes supplémentaires de l’*elippu ša kusīti*,” *Orient* 30-3 (1995) 171-181.

<sup>8</sup> The text is published with the kind permission of the Trustees of the British Museum.

<sup>9</sup> The possibility of identifying *kitinnu* with cotton is discussed in my *Garments of the Gods* (to be published).