

08) Anu-aḥ-tuqqin reconsidered – In a recent contribution, T. Boiy (*NABU* 2005/55) revisited the reading of a Late Babylonian personal name in BiMes 24 44, preferring ^{md}60-ŠEŠ-ME (Anu-aḥ-ušabši), rather than ^{md}60-ŠEŠ-LÁ (Anu-aḥ-tuqqin) as read by D.B. Weisberg, the text’s principal editor.¹ The name in question occurs twice in that text (l. r.10’): first as the personal name of a witness, and second, in that witness’s patronymic as his grandfather’s name. The tablet is from Uruk, dated to year 115 of the Arsacid Era, i.e., 178 S.E. (133 BCE). In support of his argument, Boiy cited personal names in two very early Seleucid Uruk archival texts, BRM 2 1 (8 S.E.) and BRM 2 5 (31 S.E.), preferring to read ^{md}60-ŠEŠ-ME in the latter but ^{md}60-ŠEŠ-LÁ in the former. However, the two names in question in BRM 2 1 and BRM 2 5, as I will demonstrate, almost certainly refer to the same individual and therefore should be read the same way, preferably Anu-aḥ-tuqqin.

In BRM 2 1: 16 the name in question is the personal name of a witness whose father’s name is given as Nidintu-Anu. The seal of this witness, depicting from left to right a winged scorpion monster wearing a feathered crown facing a seated mastiff, is found on the tablet’s upper edge (T1) and is captioned with his personal name.² The over-size horizontal wedge of the final sign in the seal caption is positioned such that either ME or LÁ might have been intended, but Boiy rightly prefers the latter. The identical seal³ appears on the lower edge (B2) of TCL 13 234 (6 Antigonus), captioned *un-qa* ^{md}60-ŠEŠ-LÁ/ME A ^{md}EN-ú-sat;⁴ here the sign in question is drawn in an extremely cramped script with its

¹ Cf. G.Ch. Sarkisian, “Manumissions in Seleucid-Arsacid Uruk”, *Drevnii Vostok* 5 (1988): 54, who read ^{md}Anu-aḥa-ME.

² R. Wallenfels, *Hellenistic Seal Impressions in the Yale Babylonian Collection I. Cuneiform Tablets*. AUWE 19 (Mainz am Rhein, 1994), Pl. 14, No. 239.

³ This seal impression was catalogued separately as AUWE 19, No. 247A; that entry should be deleted, its data added to No. 239, with appropriate corrections made in the Index of Personal Names (p. 161) and Concordances (p. 191).

⁴ For a photograph of the seal impression and the accompanying cuneiform caption, see L. Delaporte, *Catalogue des cylindres orientaux, cachets et pierres gravées du Musée du Louvre II* (Paris, 1923), Pl. 121, Fig. 4b [B2]. In a curious departure from the norm, Anu-aḥ-tuqqin is one of three witnesses to this transaction whose names are not found in the otherwise perfectly preserved witness list but whose seals do appear among those of the other witnesses on the tablet’s edges, each captioned with just the sealer’s

very short horizontal wedge certainly well below the head of the initial vertical wedge⁵—admittedly not unlike the archetypal ME sign. However, since, as I have previously shown, seals in Hellenistic Uruk only very rarely changed hands,⁶ it must be assumed that the two witnesses in question in TCL 13 234 and BRM 2 1 are one and the same person. Given the additional fact that in one of these texts the name Anu-aḥ-ušabši appears written in the expected form ^{md}60-ŠEŠ-GÁL-ši (TCL 13 234:32), there seems to be little room for doubt that the intended reading of this witness’s full name is Anu-aḥ-tuqqin/Nidintu-Anu//Bēl-usāt. The example of the name in question cited by Boiy in BRM 2 5 occurs as the father’s name in the patronymic of one Anu-bēlšunu//Bēl-usāt. In light of the use here of this extremely rare family name—it is unattested in this period at Uruk beyond the individuals already mentioned—Anu-bēlšunu can hardly be other than the son of the aforementioned Anu-aḥ-tuqqin.

In another early Seleucid Uruk archival text, MLC 2163 (29 S.E.), there is a witness whose name was read Anu-aḥ tuqqin/Nidintu-Anu by L.T. Doty;⁷ this witness’s seal depicts a striding winged scorpion monster facing right (AUWE 19, No. 214). Despite the absence of the witness’s ancestor name, this is very likely the same individual noted above in TCL 13 234 and BRM 2 1, this new seal being an appropriate replacement for the one used earlier. It was not uncommon among the Hellenistic Uruk seal owners to replace an older seal with a new one with similar imagery.⁸

The issue at hand boils down to the variability of the forms of the sign(s) in question. Boiy prefers to read LÁ only when the horizontal wedge is clearly positioned near the top of the preceding vertical, and ME whenever the horizontal is somewhat below the head of the vertical. But we are dealing here with Late Babylonian tablet cursive that is neither written consistently from one scribe to the next, nor by the same scribe from one tablet to the next. Variability in sign-forms that result in the convergence of the shapes of originally dissimilar signs is well-known elsewhere in this corpus, e.g., *ma* and *ba*, *bit* and

personal and ancestor names. For the reading of the ancestor name, see D.B. Weisberg, *Guild Structure and Political Allegiance in Early Achæmenid Mesopotamia*. YNER 1 (New Haven, 1967), p. 96, followed by L.T. Doty, “Cuneiform Archives from Hellenistic Uruk” (Diss. Yale, 1977), p. 379, n. 243; cf. ^{md}EN-ú-kin (R.J. van der Spek, “Land Ownership in Babylonian Cuneiform Documents”, in M.J. Geller, *et al.* eds., *Legal Documents of the Hellenistic World* [London, 1995], p. 210).

⁵ R.J. van der Spek, *Grondbezit in het Seleucidische Rijk* (Amsterdam, 1986), p. 194-195; and idem, “Land Ownership”, pp. 210, 213, read the final sign as ME, but declined to normalize the name.

⁶ AUWE 19, pp. 143-146.

⁷ L.T. Doty, personal communication.

⁸ See note 6, above.

lil, with context alone being the determining factor in a particular reading. Given that the two examples adduced by Boiy most clearly to distinguish the signs from one another are, in fact, used to write the name of one and the same individual, it must be assumed that we are dealing with one and the same sign, LÁ, in each and every case, and that the purported writing of Anu-aḫ-ušabši as *^{md}60-ŠEŠ-ME remains unattested in this corpus.⁹

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⁹ Also note the following individuals: the seller Mannu-kī-Ištar/Anu-aḫ-tuqqin (MLC 2194) 12 S.E.; the slave Anu-aḫ-tuqqin/Anu-bēl-zēri (MLC 2192 = MLC 2198), 12 S.E.; and the witness Nidintu-Anu/Anu-aḫ-tuqqin ^{l4}pūšāyya (MLC 2162), 66 S.E. (all courtesy L.T. Doty, personal communication)