

**26) A “Babylonian” scribe in Hellenistic Uruk** – In the text corpus from the Hellenistic period the personal names in Uruk show a clear preference for Anu as theophoric element. A quick look in the name index of the text editions BRM 2, OECT 9 and BiMes 24 reveals that some 80-90% of the Urukian personal names are built with Anu. It has been shown that this evolution towards a preference for Anu did already start in the Achaemenid period (Oelsner 1978: 103; Stolper 1990: 561-562) and Kessler (2004: 248-251) recently argued that the change happened suddenly after cultic rearrangements in Babylonia early in the reign of Xerxes (485-465 BC) following Babylonian revolts.<sup>1</sup>

Compared to the personal names found in Uruk during the Neo-Babylonian period,<sup>2</sup> the popularity of Ištar had clearly gone downhill and the North Babylonian gods Bēl/Marduk and Nabû simply vanished from the Uruk onomasticon.<sup>3</sup> Marduk is in Uruk

<sup>1</sup> Although the number of cuneiform tablets from this period is very limited, the differences in the onomasticon between the ration list PTS 2180 from the end of the reign of Darius and the witness lists of SpTU 5 299 and 300, legal documents from Xerxes’ 6th and 9th year, make a convincing case. For the Babylonian revolts during the early years of Xerxes, see Waerzeggers 2003/4.

<sup>2</sup> For an overview of the onomasticon in Uruk during the Neo-Babylonian period, see e.g. the name lists in Kümmel 1979.

<sup>3</sup> The presence of Bēl/Marduk names in the Uruk onomasticon was partly due to the large participation of North Babylonian families in the Eanna cult in Uruk. On the other hand, reconstruction of family trees of traditional Uruk families show that during the Neo-Babylonian and Early Achaemenid period also in these families Bēl/Marduk and Nabû names were used (see Kessler 2004).

during the Hellenistic period only attested as theophoric part of the family/ancestor name Kidin-Marduk in a few cases.<sup>4</sup> Also Bēl appears only very rarely as personal name:<sup>5</sup>

Bēl-ab-ušur/Nādin: VDI 1955/4 163 (n° 1): 25 + Lo.E. 1

Bēl-bullissu: BaM Beih. 2 113: 8

Bēl-ku-a-ú-a: BM 105200: 23 (see Corò 2005: 148)

Bēl-šum-iddin/Bēl-iddin: MLC 2200 (seal AUWE 19 452)

Bēl-TIN-[ ]: BaM Beih. 2 135: 3'

Šipqat-Bēl/Riḫat-Bēl: BM 109954 = 109985: 25 (Corò 2005: 220)

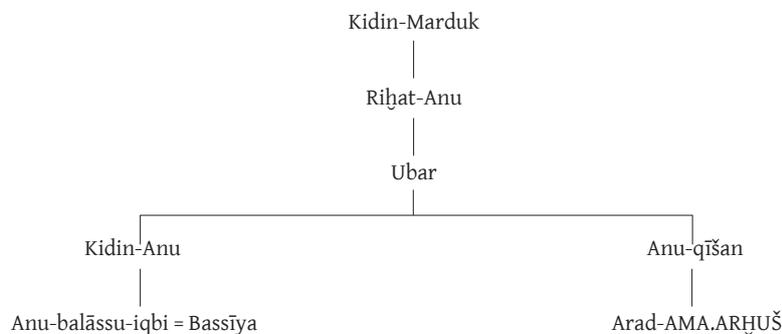
One of these persons, Bēl-bullissu, is explicitly called “*ú<sup>ki</sup>-ú*” (“the Babylonian”) in BaM Beih. 2 113 exposing his city of origin. Also the other attested persons with a Bēl name cannot be linked to a family tree of a traditional Uruk family and, since they all lack a typical Urukean ancestor/family name, it is reasonable to assume that they originated from another Mesopotamian town, most probably from northern Babylonia.

Also the few persons with Nabû names probably came originally from another (north) Babylonian town:

Iddin-Nabû: BRM 2 18: 13, OECT 9 10: 27 and VS 15 23:11

Nabû-ušallim: BiMes 24 40: Obv. 8'

<sup>4</sup> See BRM 2 3: 29, 4: 21, 14: 4, 45: 22, 47: 1; CM 12 176-177: 25; NCTU 2: 32; OECT 9 5: 28; 48: 25, 54: 32, 55: 31; VS 15 5: 3, 13: 1, 15c: 5, 42: 28. Apart from a few texts (BRM 2 3, 4 and 14, OECT 9 5 and VS 15 5 and 13) all attestations can be reduced to one single family:



It is remarkable that already during the early Achaemenid period the members of the Kidin-Marduk family, despite the appearance of Marduk in the family name, did not have personal names with a North Babylonian god as theophoric element.

<sup>5</sup> As ancestor/family name Bēl appears in Anu-bēlšunu/Anu-aḫ-tuqqin//Bēl-usat (BRM 2 5: 14) and Nidintu-Anu/Anu-aḫ-ittannu//Bēl-ereš (BiMes 24 27 = 29: 11 and 21). BiMes 24 29: 21 has Aḫ'ūtu as family name for Nidintu-Anu/Anu-aḫ-ittannu instead of Bēl-ereš (so in BiMes 24 27: 11 and 21 and BiMes 24 29:11).

Nabû-ušēzib: RA 83 84 (n°3): 3<sup>6</sup>

<sup>f</sup>Amat-Nabû/Nabû-zabaddu: OECT 9 2: 1

Most scribes attested in cuneiform documents from Hellenistic Uruk have Ekur-zakir or Sîn-leqe-unninni as ancestor name. Only a few scribes do not belong to the traditional Urukean families and one of them bears a Bēl name and has a Nabû name as patronym:

Bēl-ereš/Nabû-nāšir: NCBT 1942 (seal AUWE 19 36), NCBT 1950 (seal AUWE 19 76), BM 109954 = 109985: 28 (see Corò 2005: 220).

The appearance of Bēl and Marduk in the name and patronym and the absence of a traditional Urukean family/ancestor name is already enough to conclude that this scribe was no Urukean and in the case of Bēl-ereš/Nabû-nāšir it is possible to find out his city of origin: NCBT 1942 calls him “citizen of Babylon” (*mār Bābili*). Finally, there is one published cuneiform tablet that probably mentions the same Babylonian scribe: SpTU 5 311. The name of the scribe of this text (SpTU 5 311: Rev. 5) was interpreted by the editor of SpTU 5 as Bēl-nāšir/Nabû-nāšir (<sup>md</sup>en-uru<sub>3</sub>/<sup>md</sup>ag-pap), but on the basis of the autograph copy a reading <sup>md</sup>en-kām/<sup>md</sup>ag-pap (Bēl-ereš/Nabû-nāšir) is also a possibility. The date of the tablet (10 SE) allows us to identify this scribe with the one mentioned in NCBT 1942 (dated 41 SE), BM 109954=109985 (dated 37 SE) and NCBT 1950 (dated 27 SE). The rarity of north Babylonian names and scribes in Hellenistic Uruk makes a second Bēl-ereš/Nabû-nāšir as scribe in Uruk during the Early Hellenistic period very unlikely.

## Bibliography

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<sup>6</sup> Nabû-ušēzib (RA 83 84 [n°3]: 3) might be an exception because his son has a typical Urukean Anu name. On the other hand, it is also possible that Nabû-ušēzib was a North Babylonian immigrant who “acculturated” into his new environment and gave his son a typically local name.

The absence of a typical Urukean ancestor/family name is in this case no indication for a foreign origin because RA 83 84 (n°3) is one of the few administrative tablets from Hellenistic Uruk and this text, a list of allocations of silver, does not give any ancestor names.

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