

30 Ajjaru 219 SE = 19 June 93 BCE. – According to the wholly calculated tables of Parker and Dubberstein for the restatement of Babylonian dates in terms of the Julian calendar, the month of Ajjaru in the 219th year of the Seleucid Era would have corresponded with the twenty-nine days between 21 May and 18 June 93 BCE.¹ However, three Late Babylonian accounting tablets from the archive of Raḫimesu from Arsacid Babylon, CT 49 161 and Iraq 43 139 [AB 245 and 246], each bear the date formula ^uGU4 U4.30.KÁM MU.2 ME 19.KÁM ^uar-šá-ka-a LUGAL LUGAL.MEŠ, i.e., 30 Ajjaru 219 SE (labeled Arsacid!). It is therefore of historical interest to note that Simānu 219 SE began on 20 June 93 BCE, one day later than calculated, and that, for calendrical purposes, direct observation of the first appearance of the new crescent still determined the beginning of the new month.

That the three texts cited above are in fact dated to the year 219 of the Seleucid Era rather than the Arsacid Era as they appear to be at first blush receives confirmation from within AB 245 itself: line 10, referring to the date of an earlier deposit of gold, reads MU.1 ME 54.KÁM šá ší-i MU.2 ME 18.KÁM. This peculiar method of dating whereby the Arsacid Era year and its Seleucid Era equivalent are given within the body of the text, but only the Seleucid Era year, labeled Arsacid, is given in the date formula is found on two or three other tablets in the Raḫimesu archive: CT 49 153, 158(?) and 159. Among the balance of the dated tablets in this archive, there are those which give the dates within the text as well as the date formula in terms of both the Arsacid Era and the Seleucid Era equivalent (CT 49 150, 156, 160, 162-164; Iraq 43 143 [AB 248]; ZA 3 147 [8]), and those which give all dates in terms of the Seleucid Era (labeled Arsacid!) alone (BRM 1 99;² CT 49 152, 154, 155, 157, 161; Iraq 43 133 [AB 244] and 139 [AB 246]).³

1. R.A. Parker and W.H. Dubberstein, *Babylonian Chronology 626 B.C.-A.D. 75* (Providence, 1956), 43. I wish to thank Professor J.A. Brinkman of the Oriental Institute for the very helpful comments and suggestions he offered in our correspondence regarding the matters treated in this brief note. I alone remain completely responsible for all statements made herein.

2. Although BRM 1 99 lacks a concluding date formula, it may be confidently dated to 27

Addaru 218 SE, the last date of offerings collected in the stated period : (3) ...TA[†]U₄.x.KÁM[†] šá[†]ZÍZ MU.2 ME! 18.KÁM (3) EN U₄.27.KÁM šá[†]ŠE šá MU *an-nit*. The practice of writing a tablet on the last day of the stated collection period is directly evidenced in such similar texts as CT 49 153, 155, 156 and Iraq 43 133 [AB 244] and 143 [AB 248].

3. For a brief summary of the vagaries of the dating practices evident within the Arsacid cuneiform corpus in general, see J. Oelsner, « Randbemerkungen zur arsacidischen Geschichte anhand von babylonischen Keilschrifttexten, » *AoF* 3 (1975), 29, n. 12.

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