

A new Šangû at Neo-Babylonian Sippar — By now, most temple administrators (*šangû*'s) of the Ebabbar temple at Sippar in the period 620-482 BC are known (see A.C.V.M. Bongenaar, *The Neo-Babylonian Ebabbar Temple at Sippar, Its Administration and its Prosopography*, PIHANS LXXX, Leiden, 1997, pp. 11-33). However, there is a gap in the prosopography between *šangû* Ebabbara-šadûnu (in office between Nbp 20 and Nbk 07, possibly until Nbk 21) and Mušallim-Marduk (in office between Nbk 35 and Ner 02) of at least 14 years, and possibly even 28 years. Both Ebabbara-šadûnu and Mušallim-Marduk belonged to the Šangû Šamaš family, Mušallim-Marduk being the grandson of Ebabbara-šadûnu. Bongenaar already suggested that Ebabbara-šadûnu's son (and Mušallim-Marduk's father) Šamaš-šum-ukîn probably was the missing *šangû* during the middle of Nebuchadnezzar's reign (Bongenaar, *op.cit.*, p. 13).

This is now confirmed by BM 61618. I would like to thank the Trustees of the British Museum for permission to publish this tablet.

BM 61618 (82-9-18, 1590)

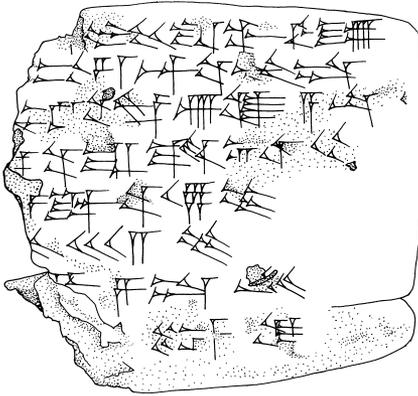
Nbk 18-I-32

(scale 1 : 1)

Obv. 1. [1] ʾanše¹.kur.ra *pe-šu-ú*
 [ir]-bi šá^{1d}utu-mu-gin
 ʾi^{u1}sanga ud.kib.nun^{ki} a-na
 ʾé¹.babbar.ra *it-ta-din*
 ʾi^{u1}bára ud.18.kam
 ʾmu¹.32.kam
 ʾd^{ag1}-níg.du-ùru

Lo.Edge [lugal] ʾtin¹.tir^{ki}

Rev. blank



Translation : [One] white horse, gift of Šamaš-šum-ukīn *šangû* of Sippar. He gave it to the Ebabbar. Nbk 18-I-32.

(1.1) There are at least two other attestations of a white horse presented as *irbu* to the temple : the *simmagir* Iddin-Marduk gave a white horse to the Ebabbar in Nbn 02 (BM 588837, see : Bongenaar, *op.cit.*, p. 299) and a woman called Amtia / Basia had her brother deliver a white horse to the temple (CT 55, 748 ; a more detailed version of this document is BM 61891, from which we learn that the horse was actually white).

(1.2) *irbu* is a general designation for payments that entered the temple, ranging from tithes (*ešrû*) to rent (*sûtu*) and donations. The term *irbu* also has the more specific meaning of « gift » (cfr. CAD I/J s.v. *irbu*, p. 173 ff). These gifts could consist of silver presented to the temple at the entrance of the gate (*irbu ša bābi*) or of different kinds of valuables offered by individuals (such as a bronze vessel, CT 55, 262, one donkey, CT 55, 747, one sheep, Nbk 80, etc.). BM 61618 records such an individual offering by the *šangû*. Only BM 63860 (= Bertin 1118, Nbk [x]-XII-33) provides another example of a *šangû* presenting a gift (one sheep for the *sattukku*-offerings) to the temple. The name of this *šangû* is broken off, but it is likely that the same Šamaš-šum-ukīn is concerned (or, if not, Mušallim-Marduk) as this text was drafted the year after BM 61618. This recalls the two *ešrû* payments made by Mušēzib-Marduk at the beginning of his office as *šangû* of Sippar (Nbn 97 and CT 55, 610 ; see M. Jursa, *Der Tempelzehnt in Babylonien vom siebenten bis zum dritten*

Jahrhundert v. Chr., *AOAT* 254, 1998, p. 68 and A.C.V.M. Bongenaar, *op.cit.*, p. 24). For a discussion on *irbu* and its relationship with *ešrû* (tithe), see M. Jursa, *op.cit.*, p. 87-90.

(1.3) The title cannot be interpreted as Šamaš-šum-ukīn's family name as there is only a small piece of the tablet_{4s} left side broken off which does not allow to restore [a] before lú.

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