New Light on Dilbat:
Kassite Building Activities on the Uraš Temple "E-Ibbi-Anum" in Tell al-Deylam

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Abstract

Recent excavations by the Department of Archaeology of the University of Babylon (Iraq) have brought to light the ruins of a temple at Tell al-Deylam, about 30 km south of Babylon. Thanks to a number of inscribed bricks it can securely be identified as "E-Ibbi-Anum", the temple of Dilbat's city god Uraš, which confirms earlier attempts to identify the site with that city. The Sumerian text of the inscriptions allows a secure dating of the building to the Kassite period, more precisely, the reign of a king named Kurigalzu (probably I).

1. Tell al-Deylam and its identification with ancient Dilbat

Tell al-Deylam (تل الديلام)[2] is a local name[3] of an archaeological site within Babil Governorate. It is located in the central plain between two branches of the modern Euphrates, the Shatt al-Hillah in the east and the al-Hindiya in the west, about 20 km to the south of the governorate's capital Hillah and thus rather close to the ancient cities Babylon (20 km) and Borsippa (15 km) (32°17′44″N 44°27′58″E; see map 1).

[1] We would like to thank Mary Frazer and Jean-Jacques Herr for their valuable comments on earlier versions of this paper. – Use of abbreviations follows Reallexikon der Assyriologie und Vorderasiatischen Archäologie.

[2] The name occurs in (esp. early) secondary literature with various spellings and pronunciations, including "Deylem", "Daillum" and "Dulaim" (Armstrong 1992, 220). Occasionally, it has been confused with Dulaihim (e.g., Groneberg 1980, 51), a fourth/third-millennium tell to the southeast of Nippur (Armstrong 1992, 220).

[3] The site received its modern name, Tell al-Deylam, because of a Muslim shrine on the western edge of the site that – according to belief of the local people – belonged to Muḥammad ibn Yaḥya al-Deylami, a grandson of Ali ibn Abi Ṭalib (the cousin of prophet Muḥammad). It was recorded as an archaeological site in the *Al-Waqiah al-Iraqiya* newspaper (no. 2283) in 1937.

(((MAP 1: THE GOOGLE MAP WILL BE REPLACED BY A QGIS MAP.)))

The identification of Tell al-Deylam with ancient Dilbat (a city that was economically important in Old Babylonian times[4] and whose sanctuary existed at least until the Neo-Babylonian period[5]) goes back to a group of tablets mentioning Dilbat that were reportedly found there by Hormuzd Rassam and local diggers in the late nineteenth century.[6]

During a short excavation project by the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago in 1989–1990, James Armstrong and his team were able to confirm that there had indeed been intensive digging activities at the site, particularly at the northern end of the eastern mound (Armstrong 1992, 220). Moreover, by means of soundings in Areas A and B (see map 2) they could prove that the site had been inhabited during the (late) Old Babylonian as well as the late Kassite period (Armstrong 1992*,* 221–222),[7] thus making Unger's (1931, 23; 1938, 219) proposal that the location of Dilbat might have changed in the course of time unnecessary (Armstrong 1992, 224). In addition, a close study of Oppert's (1857–1863, vol. 1, 239) description of Mukhattat (that had also been taken into account as a possible candidate for the location of Dilbat once, since it had been claimed to be the findspot of some Old Babylonian Dilbat tablets by local diggers) revealed that this mound was "the ruin of a single, large structure" (Armstrong 1992, 225) rather than a city, and probably of a much later date (Seleucid or Parthian period).

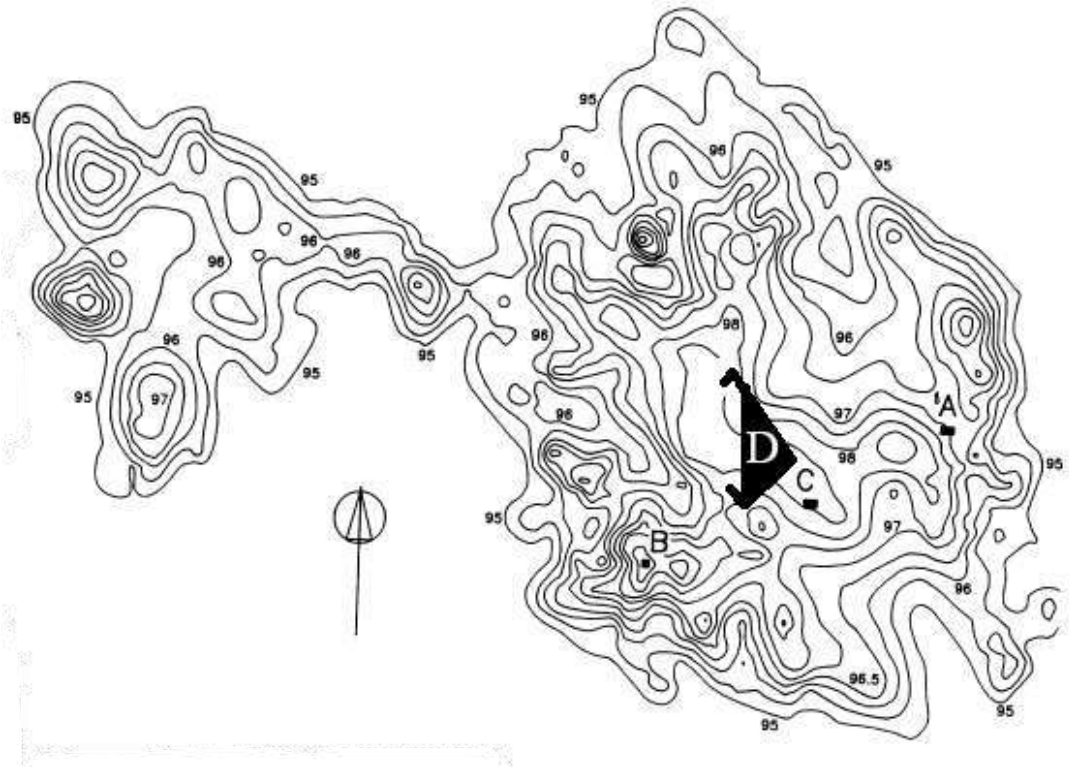
Taking all this evidence together, Armstrong (1992, 225) came to the conclusion that it seemed "unlikely that any site other than Deylam was ever Dilbat". Nevertheless, the only inscriptional material that was found there during the American campaign (that is, the only texts from Tell al-Deylam found in the course of official excavations) – that is, two fragmentarily preserved writing exercises and a brick with an inscription of the Ur III king Amar-Suena relating to his work on the Ekur (i.e., the temple of Enlil in Nippur), found in pits from Isin-Larsa times (*ibid.* 223) – did not contribute anything to the identification of the site.

[4] de Boer (2014: 108).

[5] At least, the restoration of its temple is mentioned in inscriptions of Aššur-etel-ilāni and Nebuchadnezzar II (see n. 8).

[6] A detailed description of the site's early "excavation" history and its identification with Dilbat (including other suggestions for its location) is given by Armstrong (1992, esp. 219–220 and 224–225). On the "Dilbat tablets" see Rassam (1897, 265. 347), Unger (1931, 21–23; 1938, 219), Reade (1986, xxiv, xxxiv), Koshurnikov/Yoffee (1986, 117 n. 4), Goddeeris (2002, 225–249) and de Boer (2014, 108–109) with references to publications and previous studies.

[7] However, Armstrong notes that according to their pottery finds, there was "a substantial gap in the occupation of Area B between approximately the late seventeenth and the thirteenth centuries" (1992, 222).



Map 2: Map showing the topography of Tell al-Deylam, the soundings of Armstrong's team (A–C) and the newly excavated area (D). The illustration is based on Armstrong (1992, 220). (((PERMISSION WILL BE ASKED FOR.)))

A new excavation project carried out by the University of Babylon has now brought to light unequivocal evidence that – at least in Kassite times – the temple of Dilbat's city god Uraš that is known from a year name of the Old Babylonian ruler Sabium (year 9), as well as from a number of temple lists, liturgical texts and first millennium royal inscriptions[8] as "E-Ibbi-Anum" (George 1992, 102), really stood at Tell al-Deylam.

[8] Those consist of an inscription of Aššur-etel-ilāni (RIMB 2, B.6.35.3) and a number of inscriptions by Nebuchadnezzar II. In the latter texts (all of which were found elsewhere), E-Ibbi-Anum is listed as only one of many temples that were renovated by Nebuchadnezzar II; only the inscription of Aššur-etel-ilāni exclusively deals with this temple and its renovation for the god Uraš. Unfortunately, it is not clear whether Langdon's (1923, 37) claim that it stemmed from Dilbat was based on some knowledge about its findspot or only on the contents of the text (Frame 1995, 265).

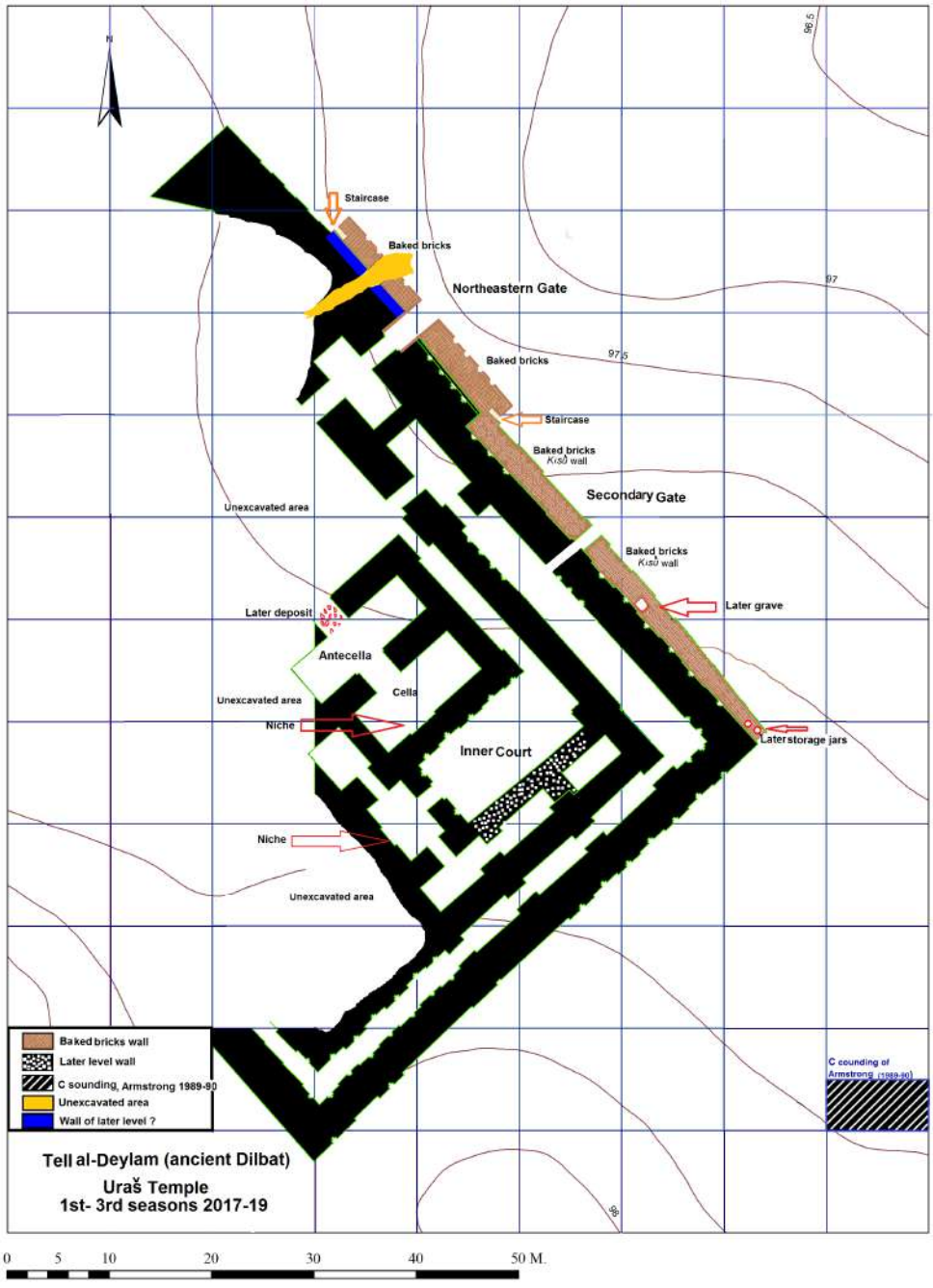
Fig. 1: Aerial view of the newly excavated area. The picture was taken by a drone on February 15, 2020.

2. Recent excavations in Tell al-Deylam

In 2016, the Iraqi State Board of Antiquities and Heritage (SBAH) gave permission to Iraqi scholars from the University of Babylon (Hillah) to resume excavations in Tell al-Deylam. The first season (2017) was directed by Maryam Omran, the following ones (2018–2020) by Haider Almamori.[9]

They started to excavate the large flat mound to the northwest of Armstrong's sounding C (see map 2), since its elevated position, its shape and the relatively small amount of sherds on the surface nurtured hope that it might cover the ruins of an ancient temple. Indeed they soon discovered the remains of a large rectangular building that could be identified as a temple already during the first season, based on its ground plan (see map 3), the decoration of its outer and inner walls and some characteristic pottery sherds (Omran *et al.* 2019).

[9] The results of the first season have been published by Omran *et al.* (2019); detailed reports of the following seasons will follow in Sumer. The present paper concentrates mostly on the inscriptions that were found during the third season and their relevance for the history of Dilbat.



Map 3: Ground plan of the excavated parts of the temple that date to the Kassite period.[10]

[10] There was at least one later building phase: Some parts of the temple (including the northeastern part of the corridor indicated in this map) were modified later by adding new structures and blocking some entrances, and a grave was dug into the *kisû*-wall. For reasons of convenience, these later structures are only indicated in this map (in a different shading) where they are important to understand the architecture and/or function of a room. For a more detailed plan including later changes see the upcoming publication of the results of the second and third seasons by Almamori in Sumer 66 (2021).

Ten inscribed bricks that were found built into the main northeastern gate and the outer wall to the north of the gate during the third season (2019) now confirm this interpretation and allow both an identification of the building with the temple of Dilbat's main god Uraš, "E-Ibbi-Anum", and a dating of the relevant structures to the Kassite period (see below, sections 3 and 4).

So far, excavations have focused on the eastern part of the temple, but the location of three corners is clear and thus the dimensions of the building (ca. 60×80m) can be securely established. Within the eastern part, two rooms with niches opposite their (main) entrances have been discovered: one to the northwest and another one to the southwest of an inner courtyard (see map 3). The niche in the room to the northwest of the courtyard measures 3 m in length and was partly plastered with bitumen (see Fig. 2).[11] Some beads and pendants as well as two pieces of gold (which are probably contemporary with a later level of the temple) were found close to it (see Omran *et al.* 2019, 18–21. 25. 28–29. 34 [Arab. section]).

Fig. 2: Niche in the *cella* northwest of the courtyard, partly plastered with bitumen (picture taken from the northeast).

This room obviously constituted the temple's (main) *cella*, since access to it was only possible through another room, providing an *antecella*.[12] At a much higher level, only 20 cm beneath the surface, remains of barley and/or wheat as well as pendants of small heads of birds, three cylinder seals (probably from the Jemdet Nasr period) and beads of various shapes and sizes, quite obviously an intentional deposit, were found in the entrance to the latter room beneath a floor that was (probably later, but perhaps still in the Kassite period) paved with two courses of mud bricks.
The function of the second room with a niche is less clear: The entrance opposite the niche was blocked in later times, but during the first phase of the building the room was not only connected with two small adjacent rooms to the northwest and southeast,

[11] This may have happened at a later point in time.
[12] The latter room was probably somehow connected with a courtyard in front of the main northeastern gate, but this part of the building has not been excavated yet.

but also directly accessible from the inner courtyard (see map 3).
The latter was decorated along its northwestern and southwestern wall with a characteristic pattern of buttresses and following recesses of almost equal length (2.80m/2.70m) that were each interrupted by T-shaped niches in their middles (see Fig. 3).[13]

Fig. 3: Inner court in the eastern part of the temple. The picture shows the blocked entrance to the room to the southwest of the courtyard, the characteristic T-shaped niches that are also found elsewhere in the building, and part of the pavement of the (probably later) floor.

The same pattern is also found in some passages of the very long corridor[14] circling around the eastern and southern parts of the building along its massive outer wall (4m in width), as well as on the northeastern and southeastern façades of the temple, including the *kisû*-wall[15] in front of it and the tower[16] to the southeast of the main northeastern gate.[17][18]

[13] It is very likely that the southeastern side of the courtyard was decorated in the same way, but this cannot be proven since the original wall was replaced at a later point in time.
[14] In a later period, the northeastern part of this corridor was obviously divided into three parts.
[15] Strangely, a looted grave, containing some jars that seem to date to the late-Kassite period, was found dug into this wall (see map 3).
[16] The original height of the walls enclosing the entrance was probably about 2m, as can be estimated from the large numbers of fallen bricks that were found on the floor in front of as well as in the filling of the gate.
[17] The main entrance is 2.30 m wide and built of baked bricks; the passage then narrows down to 1.50m–1.80m within a mud-brick wall. Both the baked-brick and the mud-brick wall were (possibly later) plastered by bitumen. Towards the south-east in the same wall, there is also a smaller gate (1.30m in width) that directly led into the long corridor circling the building; this gate, however, was blocked by a wall made of mud bricks and baked bricks in later times. The two gates divide the northeastern front of the temple into three almost equal thirds.
[18] Most of the walls consist of mud-brick. However, the entrance part of the main northeastern gate and also the façade of the platform of its northwestern tower, as well as the *kisû* in front of the southern wall, were built by baked bricks. Baked bricks were also used for paving the floors in front of the northeastern wall and within the above-mentioned corridor.

Fig. 4: Main northeastern gate of the temple. The picture shows the view from the northeast and the locations of the inscribed bricks nos. 1–6 in and outside the gate.

In combination with the relatively uniform size (28.5–32.5 × 28.5–32.5 × 7 cm) of the bricks that were used to build most of these structures[19] as well as the floor beneath and in front of the main northeastern gate, this allows the conclusion that the ground plan of the building as shown in map 3 goes back to the reign of a single king.

3. The inscriptions from the temple gate

This king can now securely be identified as a Kassite ruler named Kurigalzu by a number of (baked) inscribed bricks[20] that were built into the walls of the main northeastern gate and the outer wall to the north of it (see Figs. 4 and 5).[21] Although the inscriptions discovered so far were facing the outside of the walls (being written on the small sides of the bricks)[22], they were certainly not visible in antiquity since the walls of the gate (as well as the floor in front of it) were covered with bitumen that

[19] Note, however, that very rarely also some other sizes (34 × 34 × 7 cm, 38 × 38 × 5 cm and 42 × 42 × 5 cm) are attested.
[20] In addition, a stone door socket was found one meter away from the eastern corner of the northeastern tower, but unfortunately, it was removed from its original context and has been left uninscribed.
[21] For some reason, more care seems to have been put into the erection of the northwestern tower than into that of the southeastern one: baked bricks were used instead of mud-bricks and the T-shaped niches were built more carefully. Strangely, the stairs on the southeastern tower were covered by a large quantity of bitumen (possibly in later times), making them practically unusable.
[22] These and/or other bricks might also have been inscribed on their large sides, but since the walls were preserved in their entirety by the excavators, this cannot be proven.

only revealed the inscriptions recently after some time being exposed to the sun. However, it is unclear at which point in time the bitumen was added, and in any case, the direction of the inscription might have been of importance to the builders, possibly indicating an intended direction of movements (that would accordingly be entrance on the left hand side and exit on the right hand side): The beginnings of the inscriptions on the two bricks found in the southeastern wall of the gate (nos. 1 and 2) were facing towards the temple, the two on the other side (nos. 3 and 4) facing outwards, the ones on bricks nos. 5–9 up the wall towards the northwest[23] and those on no. 10 again inwards towards the staircase within the northwestern wall of the northwestern tower.[24]

Fig. 5: The northwestern tower. View from the north on the northern corner of the tower and the staircase; the locations of bricks nos. 7–10 are indicated.

Some inscriptions are very well preserved (esp. no. 1), others hardly legible (nos. 3, 4 and 6). Nevertheless, it seems clear that all bricks found so far contain basically the same Sumerian text. Although differences in paleography and ruling (see copies in attachment C) suggest the involvement of more than one scribe, there is only one major variant in spelling, that being the name of the temple (l. 8; see sections 4c and d).
With the notable exception of brick 1 (where lines are drawn after each row of signs; see copy 1) the text is separated by horizontal rulings into the following 11 lines:

1)	^{d}uraš	For Uraš,
2)	en saĝ-kal	foremost lord,
3)	KA-mud-ĝál an ki	counselor(?) of heaven and earth,

[23] Part of that wall was left unexcavated for conservatory reasons (see map 3 and Fig. 5); it is possible that there might have been even more inscribed bricks in that area.
[24] Notably, so far no inscriptions have been found on the northeastern and southeastern walls of the southeastern tower.

4)	lugal-a-ni-ir	his lord,
5)	*ku-ri-gal-zu*	Kurigalzu,
6)	gù-dé an-na	the one called by the god An,
7)	^{d}en-lil$_2$-da ĝeš-tuku	who listens to Enlil,
8)	E$_2$-*i-bi$_2$*-AN-*um* (var. -an-na)	built the "E-Ibbi-Anum" (var. "E-ibi-Ana"),
9)	e$_2$ ki-aĝ$_2$-ĝa$_2$-ni	his beloved temple,
10)	dil-bat^{ki}	in Dilbat.
11)	mu-na-ni-du$_3$	

Commentary:

1-3) The divine epithets saĝ-kal "foremost" and KA-mud-ĝál "counselor(?)" are also attested (in the same order, but without the preceding and following words of ll. 2–3) in an inscription by the Old Babylonian king Sîn-iddinam addressed to the weather god Iškur who is designated as "son of An" in the same line (RIME 4, E4.2.9.15: 3).[25] Whereas saĝ-kal "foremost" occurs occasionally in other royal inscriptions (addressed to various deities),[26] KA-mud-ĝál is generally very rare and otherwise so far only known from praise poems (*Urnamma A*: 33: lugal KA-mud-ĝál ⌜ki-en⌝-gi-⌜ra⌝ [me-te unken-na] "king, counselor(?) of Sumer, ornament of the assembly"; *Šulgi X*: 51: unken-na KA-mud-ĝál-zu-me-èn "you are the counselor(?) in the assembly"; and *Nuska A*: 4: KA-mud-ĝál […] é lugal […] "counselor(?)… house of the king"). In the Old Babylonian Lú-Series (MSL 12, 197: 18), lú-KA-mud-ĝál is equated with Akkadian *mu-ta-al-ku* (-> CAD M/2 *s.v. muntalku* "1. deliberate, judicious; 2. (in substantival use) counselor").

5) The name of the ruler is consistently written without a preceding personal or divine determinative. This is the most common spelling of the name Kurigalzu (cf. Brinkman 1976, 242–243).

6–7) The same royal epithets are attested in two inscriptions of the Old Babylonian ruler Ḫammu-rāpi addressed to Utu of Larsa (RIME4, E4.3.6.14: 5–6) and Inana of Zabalam (RIME 4, E4.3.6.16: 6–7). However, there is one difference: the present inscription omits the ending -a after gù-dé (that is still used in Ḫammu-rāpi's inscriptions) in all exemplars where this passage is clearly legible, which might indicate that it was not regarded to be grammatically necessary any more. This provides yet another example for the modified copying of previous rulers' titles by Kassite kings (cf. Bartelmus 2016, 214–215). – Some other interesting aspects of these two lines will be discussed in section 4 below.

8) The name of the temple is written E$_2$-*i-bi$_2$*-AN-*um* on bricks 7, 8, 10 and probably 9, but E$_2$-*i-bi$_2$*-an-na on bricks 1, 2 and 5. Unfortunately, the relevant passages on bricks 3 and 4 are not legible, but it seems that the distribution follows a clear pattern: bricks 1–5$^{?}$/6$^{?}$ might have contained a Sumerian version of the temple name, bricks

[25] According to Schwemer (2001, 166–168), there were originally two concurring concepts of Iškur's genealogy, but the idea that he was the son of An (rather than Enlil) became dominating already in the Ur III period.

[26] In the inscription by Aššur-etel-ilāni mentioned above (n. 8), this title is also used with regard to Uraš (RIMB 2, B.6.35.3: 1).

6[?]/7[?]–10 an Akkadian version. For discussion, see section 4c–e.

10–11) Whereas the expected locative marker after the place name is missing, the verbal prefix chain contains a locative element -ni-. Whether it was used intentionally cannot be decided. – The verb dù "to build" seems to indicate that Kurigalzu did not restore already existing structures, but erected a new building (or part of such) on his own (see discussion in section 4e). – The last two lines of brick 5 seem to have been written when the mud was already almost dry.

4. Historical interpretation

Although the text of the inscription (like basically all Kassite royal building inscriptions) is short and very formulaic, it contains important historical information. As has already been mentioned above (section 2), the inscriptions provide final proof that Tell al-Deylam is the location of ancient Dilbat, since they are dedicated to Dilbat's main deity, Uraš, and identify the building in which they were found as his temple "E-Ibbi-Anum". Moreover, the gap between the seventeenth and thirteenth century in the documentation found by Armstrong can now – at least partly – be bridged: Whether one or the other Kurigalzu was responsible for its building (on which see below), the ground plan of the temple as it was excavated clearly dates to the fourteenth or even late fifteenth century. Thus, there must have been an (at least small) community of people living in Dilbat at this time who were able to build and sustain the temple.
Whereas this basic information can be deducted more or less directly from the text, the situation becomes more complicated when one tries to figure out more details about the history of the building.

a) Kurigalzu I or II?

First of all, it is not immediately obvious which Kurigalzu was responsible for the building of the temple: The text of the inscription does not contain any of the features that are characteristic for Kurigalzu I (like the epithet "governor for Enlil" or the ḫu-prefix; see Bartelmus 2010, 154–157), and also the lack of the title "king of Babylon" (that is likewise very typical for this ruler; *ibid.* 156–157) cannot be taken as an argument here since the text does not contain any royal titles at all. Still, the fact that we are dealing here with a very large, religiously motivated building project – perhaps even the erection of a new temple (building) (see below) –, and that the text is written in Sumerian seems to fit Kurigalzu I's extensive temple-building program (Clayden 1996; Bartelmus 2010) very well. Moreover, since there is so far no evidence that Kurigalzu II did any substantial building work at all during his reign, and one would further expect him to give his filiation in building inscriptions – that were intended to be read by future kings and thus to preserve his memory – in order to make sure that he could be distinguished from his predecessor, it seems extremely likely that despite the divergent royal titles the inscriptions and thus also the temple itself should be

attributed to the former ruler.[27]

b) Unusual royal epithets

Now, if this is the case, why did Kurigalzu I abstain from the use of both his royal titles and his favorite epithet here, and what does this tell us about the addressed god, his temple, the other deities mentioned in the text and the king's relationship with them?

In order to answer these questions one can look for comparable examples amongst his inscriptions and those of other Kassite rulers. Indeed, there is one city where such a practice was obviously quite normal:[28] None of the Kassite royal building inscriptions referring to the Ekur, Enlil's sanctuary in Nippur, or Kurigalzu's own building project for Enlil there, the Ekurigibara,[29] ever contains any royal titles.[30] Instead, the kings who did building work there would always emphasize their piety towards this god, his temple and his city, by using appropriate epithets only.[31] It seems that they hesitated to challenge Enlil's exclusive authority over his temple by mentioning their own claim to rule in this context.

It is now very interesting that we might encounter a similar case here in Dilbat: possibly, Kurigalzu was afraid of offending religious feelings (of gods or men) in this city, too. However, the situation is slightly different: Whereas the temple "E-Ibbi-Anum" is explicitly attributed to Uraš in these and other sources and he is regarded to be the city's main god (Krebernik 2014, 404–405), he does not appear in the royal epithets used in the present inscription. Instead, there is mention of the two highest gods of the third/early second millennium Babylonian pantheon, An(um) and Enlil. These gods are mentioned in their usual order (with An(um) coming first),[32] which is generally not surprising since Kurigalzu quotes previously existing epithets almost literally (see the commentary on the inscription). However, the eschewal of the epithet "governor for Enlil" means that he also refrains here from emphasizing both his personal preference for Enlil[33] and his claim to be a ruler who was legitimately reigning on behalf of that god. A possible explanation for this unusual phenomenon is

[27] One should further note that despite of the fact that the epithet "governor for Enlil" is not used here, there is still reference to Enlil as one of the king's main gods. — For additional arguments see sections 4d–e below.

[28] Note, however, that there is (very limited) evidence for this phenomenon from Isin, too: Both Adad-šuma-uṣur and Meli-Šiḫu do not use any royal titles in their inscriptions to Nin-Isina (MSKH 1, C. Add [16]; S.Add [34] [now AbhMünchen NF 143, 134 no. 28]).

[29] Votive inscriptions might have been treated differently in this regard; see the examples quoted in Bartelmus (2017, 264 n. 135).

[30] The same goes for all of his temple building inscriptions from Dūr-Kurigalzu. This indicates that „governor for Enlil", despite its distinct claim of authority, should be understood as an epithet rather than a title (*contra* Bartelmus 2010. 2016. 2017: *passim*).

[31] Note, however, that this is not true for inscriptions that refer to temples of other gods within that city, e.g., the Ebaraduĝara for Inana (5N-T700; MSKH 1, P.2.2), a temple for Nanna (FLP 2010; MSKH 1, J. Add [21]), and possibly a temple of another god who so far could not be identified (CBS 8635; MSKH 1, Q.2.23. This text, by the way, is one of the rare cases where a Kurigalzu is called "king of Babylon" in a building inscription; for the only other example known so far, see Bartelmus 2010, 156 n. 78.) Thus, the practice is clearly related to the sanctuary of the main god of Nippur rather than the city itself.

[32] Sallaberger 2005, 299.

[33] This preference is obvious from the many inscriptions from sanctuaries elsewhere where he calls himself "governor for Enlil" (see the list in Bartelmus 2010, 155–156).

that there might have been a strong local tradition in Dilbat that did not allow any other deity to challenge An(um)'s superiority.
Of course, this interpretation is heavily dependent on the assumption that the inscriptions really date to Kurigalzu I. One could also turn the argument around and state that the use of deviant titles might indicate that we are dealing here with Kurigalzu II instead, who might simply have had different preferences for his royal titulary. However, this is not very likely (see above, section 4a) and the lack of any royal titles would still need an explanation. Moreover, despite the fact that Uraš was revered as the main god of Dilbat, there is indeed evidence that An(um) was also of prime importance there (see below). This raises further questions, namely about the relationship between An(um) and Uraš in general, as well as the former's significance for Dilbat as a cultic center.

c) "E-Ibbi-Anum", Uraš and An(um)

Uraš, the lord of Dilbat, is generally assumed to have been a male figure, since he is described as a manifestation of Ninurta in lexical and literary texts (Krebernik 2014 404–405).[34] The former information is confirmed by the inscription edited here, as Uraš is explicitly addressed as Kurigalzu's "lord" (lugal) in line 4. An equation with the warrior god Ninurta, however, is not really apparent from the divine epithets used in this text: whereas (en) saĝ-kal "foremost (lord)" is formulated very vaguely and can be used for a number of other deities, too,[35] it appears in combination with the very rare epithet KA-mud-ĝál "counselor(?)" only once, namely in an inscription of Sîn-iddinam to Iškur who is explicitly designated as a son of An(um) in the relevant text (see commentary in section 3 above). More importantly, the following complement an ki "(of) heaven and earth" that specifies the counselor(?)'s function in the present inscription (but not in the one by Sîn-iddinam) seems to indicate a special relationship of the epithet bearer to a celestial deity and/or his own involvement in not only earthly, but also heavenly affairs.[36] Finally, the name of the temple "E-Ibbi-Anum" ("House: Anum has Called it into Being") clearly shows that – despite the fact that Uraš, the lord of Dilbat, was distinct from the homonymous *parhedra* of An(um) (Krebernik 2014, 402–403) – there was a very close relationship between the two deities in Dilbat, since the name states explicitly that An(um) had been involved in the creation of Uraš's temple.
Like the giving of an Akkadian ceremonial temple name (George 1993, 45), the latter is a very unusal phenomenon: One could, of course, translate some of the many temple names containing the element an-na as "of An(um)" rather than "of heaven" (as George 1993, *passim* does),[37] but this is the only case where the interpretation as

[34] Some god-lists further specify his function as being related to arable farming, by adding explanations like "(Ninurta) of the hoe", "of the tenant farmer" or "of the calendar" (*ibid*. 404–405).
[35] The same epithet is used in Old Babylonian inscriptions for Utu, Iškur and Nergal (see RIME 4, E4.2.9.9: 3; saĝ-kal an ki "foremost one of heaven and earth" [Utu]; E4.2.9.15: 3: saĝ-kal KA-mud-ĝál dumu an-na "foremost one, counselor(?), son of An" [Iškur]; E4.2.14.5: 4: saĝ-kal kur gú érim šu ḫul di "foremost one, who destroys all the evil foreign lands" [Nergal]).
[36] In Old Babylonian inscriptions (see RIME 4, *passim*) an ki is exclusively used in epithets of celestial deities (Utu/Šamaš, Nanna/Sîn, Inana/Ištar) and their offspring (Iškur, Ninegal [in the relevant text: daughter of Su'en], [male] Ninšubur) as well as in such of Enlil who is credited with rulership over both heaven and earth.
[37] In some inscriptions of Esarhaddon, the temple name é-an-na is attributively described as *bīt anūti* „House of An-ship" (see, *e.g.*, RINAP 4, Esarhaddon 133: 30).

the sky-god's name is unequivocal, due to the variants ending in -^{d}*a-nu*, -^{d}*a-num* or -AN-*um* (as in the present text, l. 8). Moreover, it is one of just two temple names known so far where a god is explicitly credited with having played an active role in the creation of a temple:[38] the other one is é-^{d}*é-a-ba-a-ni* ("House, Ea is (its) Builder"), a name that is only known from a fragmentary passage in a temple list from Khorsabad (George 1993, 81. 42: TL no. 3, 45′). Interestingly, both of these temple names are in Akkadian.
All of this fits the mention (and pre-eminent position) of An(um) in Kurigalzu's epithets very well and supports the hypothesis that his choice might have been based on a strong local tradition.

d) "E-ibi-Ana", Uraš and Ninurta

One should not forget, however, that there is also a variant[39] of the temple name (é-i-bí-an-na) that is attested both amongst the present inscriptions (see commentary in section 3 above) and in some other sources (George 1993, 102). Whereas this variant does not make any sense if it is read in Akkadian, it could easily be understood in Sumerian as "House: Eye of (or: in Front of) Heaven/An", taking the i-bí as an Emesal-form of igi "eye".[40]
There is indeed indirect evidence that might strengthen this hypothesis, if one takes into account the identification of Uraš, the lord of Dilbat, with Ninurta[41] that is attested in many sources (Krebernik 2014, 403–404): According to George's (1993, 63–161) gazetteer of ceremonial temple names, two (or even more) of the temple names that are associated with Ninurta begin with é-igi- or – in Emesal-texts(!) – é-i-bí- respectively, namely the é-igi-šu-galam (a shrine in Nippur; probably identical with the é-i-bí-šu-galam that is mentioned in the standard litany of

[38] However, there is a number of temple names in George (1993) in which another god than the temple owner is mentioned (seemingly as *nomen rectum* of a genitive construction):
- 398: é-^{ĝeš}gigir-^{d}en-líl-lá "Chariot-House of Enlil" (seat of Enmešarra in é-šár-ra at Assur),
- 997: é-su-lim-^{d}en-lil-le "House of the Awesome Radiance of Enlil" (temple of Uqur at Ĝirsu) (Note that George 1993, 142 translates the seemingly parallel name é-su-lim-an-na [no. 996, a temple of Ištar as Belet-Eanna at Kiš] differently as "House of the Awesome Radiance of Heaven" rather than "… of An".)
- 1030: [é$^{?}$]-ša$_{6}$-^{d}en-líl-ḫi "Lovely House(?) of Enlil" (the inner sanctum (*kummu*) of Nuska)
- 1055: é-šu-^{d}en-líl-le "House (Created) by the Hand of Enlil" (probably a temple of Nuska and/or his consort Sadarnunna in Nippur)
Note that almost all of these entries refer to Enlil, but there is also one that refers to An(um).

[39] The fact that inscriptions containing one or the other form were found within the same wall, only some meters away from each other (see above sections 2 and 3), proves George's assumption that both names refer to the same building.

[40] An(um) (or the heaven) would play a role here, too, but it would be less prominent. – Alternatively, i-bí could also mean "smoke" (Akk. *qutru*; CAD *s.v.*) here, but "House: Smoke of Heaven/An" does not seem to make much sense, whereas i-bí "eye" is well attested as Emesal-form of igi in other temple names (see below).

[41] The idea to equate Uraš with Ninurta virtually suggests itself since both names are written with the same sign (IB) that can be read both uraš and urta in Sumerian (MesZL p. 205 no. 807). (The parallel becomes even more obvious in Emesal where the name Ninurta is written as ^{d}umun-uraš-a [var. ^{d}umun-ĝuruš-a] or umun-^{d}uraš-a [Krebernik 2014, 401].) Whether these readings are etymologically related is debatable; the most likely hypothesis links them to the Semitic root *ḥ-r-ṯ* (related to ploughing) that is underlying the Akkadian verb *erēšu(m)* (see Krebernik 2014, 401–402 with further literature). In CAD E p. 285, the latter verb is translated very elaborately as "to seed by drilling seed into a furrow by means of a seeder-plow, to cultivate or plant (a field)".

temples of Ninurta; see George 1993, 102), the é-i-bí-šuba (which "appears as a variant of é-i-bí-šu-galam in the standard litany of his TNs in liturgical texts"; *ibid.* 103) and the é-igi-kalam-ma ("a temple of Ninurta as Lugal-Maradda at Marad"; *ibid.* 104). It would thus be possible to explain é-i-bí-an-na as another name of the same format, perhaps focusing on a certain aspect of Ninurta that fits his form of appearance (*i.e.*, Uraš) in the relevant context, namely, in a sanctuary that might in ancient times have been related to the god of heaven, An(um), and a deity named Uraš who originally belonged to his circle. In this scenario, the two names for the temple would not actually be identical (although they pretend to be), but they might express different aspects of a very complicated religious phenomenon.

The fact that an Emesal form would be used here outside its original context (on which see Schretter 1990, 135) does not principally hinder this idea: in the Kassite period, Emesal forms were treated as a fancy way of translating Akkadian words into Sumerian (Bartelmus 2016, 231–233). Particularly Kurigalzu I seems to have had a weakness not only for using Emesal for the names of his newly founded temples (as can be seen from the names of the temples é-gašan-an-ta-ĝál (for Ninlil) and é-u(mun)-gal (for Enlil) in Dūr-Kurigalzu; *ibid.* 232),[42] but possibly also for ambiguous names (cf. George 1993, 152 on the latter name). Consequently, the use of Emesal in the variant name might even be indicative of its dating.

However, whereas all other attestations for é-i-bí-an-na given in George (1993, 102) are of later date (and would thus not challenge the hypothesis that an "Sumerisation" of the – originally Akkadian – name E-Ibbi-Anum took place in the Kassite period), there is one source that seemingly contradicts this interpretation, namely a slightly deviating manuscript of the balaĝ uru-ḫul-a-ke$_4$.[43] If this manuscript really dates Old Babylonian (as stated by the scholars mentioned in n. 43), the name é-i-bí-an-na (which is only partly preserved) would already have been attested as name of a temple in Dilbat before the Kassite period. In this case, Kurigalzu might simply have taken the name from a lament written in Emesal and used it for his own inscriptions without considering the original context of the wording of the name. But there is also the possibility that the suggested dating for this tablet is wrong: Cohen (1988) only distinguishes between "Old Babylonian" and "first millennium" (as well as some Middle Assyrian) manuscripts, but completely neglects the Middle Babylonian period. Since some of the Old Babylonian and first millennium versions parallel each other, there must have been intermediate stages, too, and it is not reasonable to assume that they all have become lost.[44] Indeed, the paleography of the tablet in question (according to the copies published in PBS 10/2 and VS 2; see above n. 43) seems to be compatible with a Middle Babylonian dating,[45] and if the explanation given above (comparison with the Ninurta-temple-

[42] Note, however, that the temple for Ninurta in Dūr-Kurigalzu (that occurs as é-saĝ-dím-me-er-e-ne in the hymn KAR 97) is called é-saĝ-diĝir-(re-)e-ne "Foremost House of the Gods" (George 1993, 139) in Kurigalzu's own inscriptions (MSKH 1, Q.2.48 and Q.2.49).

[43] CBS 497 (PBS 10/2: 12) + VAT 1334 (VS 2: 12) + VAT 1357 (VS 2: 16); Cohen (1988, 253. 264–270); cf. Löhnert (2009, 90. 138). The Old Babylonian dating was also accepted by Viano (2016, 105) and Delnero (2016, 90).

[44] Some Middle Babylonian examples are mentioned by Sassmannshausen (2008, 269–270 and 272–273) und Viano (2008/2009, 129).

[45] Note especially the forms of the signs BI and AN (e.g., PBS 10, 12 i 1 and 4; VS 2, 12 i 11 and ii 15′–17′). – Although this is nowhere explicitly stated, the main criterion for an Old Babylonian dating of the tablet in secondary literature seems to be its presumed origin: CBS 497 (PBS 10/2, 12) is part of the so-called "Khabaza Collection" in the University Museum, large parts of which have been recognized as belonging to Old Babylonian archives from Sippar (Kalla 1999, 206–210). The joining fragments

names) is right, the temple name indicates a lot of creativity which would fit a Kassite invention very well.

e) Kurigalzu's "E-ibi-Ana" – a new temple (building)?

Regarding the wording of the inscription, there is still one very important question remaining, namely, why Kurigalzu claimed to have "built" a temple rather than to have restored a previously existing one. As stated above, the evidence discovered so far suggests that Kurigalzu I (and perhaps even the Kassite kings in general) put a lot of thought into the wording of their inscriptions and did not make any illegitimate claims: The verb dù "to build" is otherwise only used by Kurigalzu I for the temples in Dūr-Kurigalzu (all of which were certainly new creations) and for the é-kur-igi-bar-ra in Nippur that – because of its name – is probably related to, but not identical with the Ekur (Bartelmus 2010, 158). For all the other temples on which he did building work, the exact type of building activity ("new building" or restoration) is explicitly stated (*ibid.* 157–161).[46]
Indeed, while it is still not clear what lay below the building erected by Kurigalzu, the archaeological evidence suggests that the whole layout of the building was a new creation, designed by architects of the same king who left the inscriptions (see above, section 2). However, the situation that we encounter here is slightly different from that at Nippur and Dūr-Kurigalzu, since unlike the names of the temples he built there, "E-Ibbi-Anum" was already well-known as the temple of Uraš in Dilbat before Kurigalzu's time (see the year-name of Sabium mentioned above).
Unger's (1931, 23; 1938, 219) theory that Dilbat (and thus, the Old Babylonian temple) could have been located at another site during the Old Babylonian period can confidently be ruled out, since Armstrong's (1992, 225) argument about Mukhattat being a later structure and not even a city (see section 1) is very convincing and his soundings have proven that Tell al-Deylam was inhabited in the Old Babylonian period. Moreover, his find of an Ur III royal building inscription relating to the Ekur within pits from Isin-Larsa-times (Armstrong 1992, 223) indicates that there were indeed temple building activities at this time in this place, too, since it is hard to explain the brick's function other than as a model text for the creation of new inscriptions.[47] Finally, the fact that objects from the Jemdet Nasr (or Early Dynastic) period were deposited below floor in the entrance of the *antecella* in later times (see section 2) signals a very long history of the settlement (and probably the sanctuary as well). Thus, the new temple might have been an annex to an already existing building

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from Berlin (VAT 1334+1341+1 piece+1357) belong to a (related; *ibid.* 207) group of tablets that were acquired from dealers in Baghdad in 1887 and 1888 by the Vorderasiatisches Museum in Berlin (Delitzsch in Zimmern 1912, [preface]). However, it should be noted that none of the fragments was properly excavated and there seem to be pieces from other places as well in the relevant collections (Hilprecht 1908, 205–206). Thus, a different origin – and therefore also a Middle Babylonian dating – cannot be excluded.

[46] There is only one exception, namely a brick from Ur (IM 932 (U 2753); Gadd, UET I 152; Brinkman 1976, 222, Q.2.56) in which Kurigalzu claims to have „built" the Ekišnuĝal. This inscription was found in a complex that was erected by Kurigalzu on a previously unoccupied site (Brinkman 1969, 316; cf. Bartelmus 2010, 158, n. 81).

[47] Another possibility might be that the dating of the pits is incorrect or the brick ended up there accidentally.

or a new building within the temple precinct.[48] If the "Sumerianising" variant é-i-bí-an-na was indeed a Kassite creation (see above, section 4d), it might even have been used intentionally in order to distinguish the new building from an already existing one: it is noteworthy that the inscriptions that were found within the gate itself all give its name as "E-ibi-Ana" and only those along the northwestern part of the wall (starting with brick $6^{?}/7^{?}$) use "E-ibi-Anum", notably with a different spelling than the one used for the Old Babylonian year names (see above, commentary in section 3).
The interpretation of the building in a larger archaeological context, however, is of course open to debate and very much depends on the results of further excavations in Tell al-Deylam.

[48] At the moment, this cannot be established, since the surroundings of the temple have not been excavated yet.

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Appendix

A) Information on the inscribed bricks and their findspots

No. 1: 31.5 × 31.5 × 7 cm
Course 6[49]
within the gate; 50 cm away from the corner of the southern tower

No. 2: 31 × 31 × 7 cm
Course 14
within the gate; 50 cm away from the mud brick gate

No. 3: within the gate; almost 1 m away from the mud brick gate (almost totally covered with soil and bitumen)

No. 4: 27[+x?] × 27 [+x?] × 7 cm (probably a part is missing)
Course 8
within the gate; 1.1 m away from the corner of the southern tower

No. 5: 31 × 31 × 7 cm
Course 10
on the outer wall; 60 cm to the north of the corner of the northern tower

No. 6: size uncertain
Course 8
on the outer wall; 15 cm to the north of the first recess of the northern tower

No. 7: 31 × 31 × 7 cm
Course 10
on the outer wall; 15 cm to the south of the second (probably third) recess of the northern tower

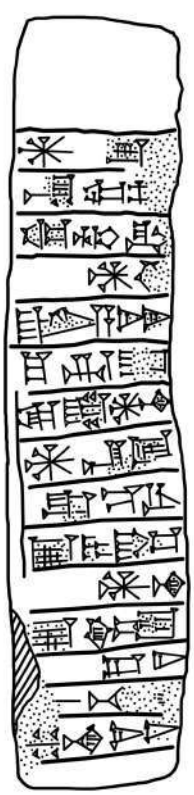
No. 8: 32 × 32 × 7 cm
Course 7
on the outer wall 15 cm to the south of the third (probably fourth) recess

No. 9: 30 × 30 × 7 cm
Course 8
on the outer wall 60 cm to the north of the third (probably fourth) recess

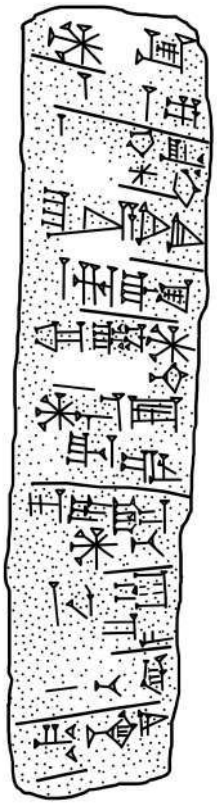
No. 10: 30 × 30 × 7 cm
Course 6
on the outer wall; 15 cm to the east of the northern staircase

[49] Counted from the level of the paved floor.

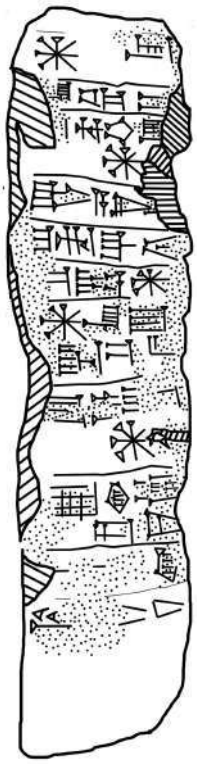
B) Copies of the inscriptions (based on photographs)



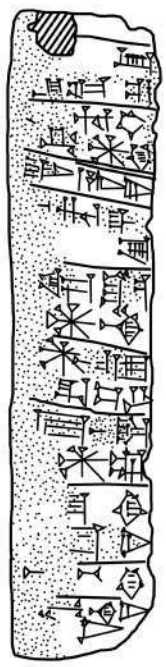
1



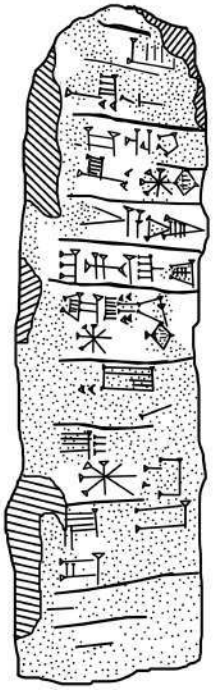
2



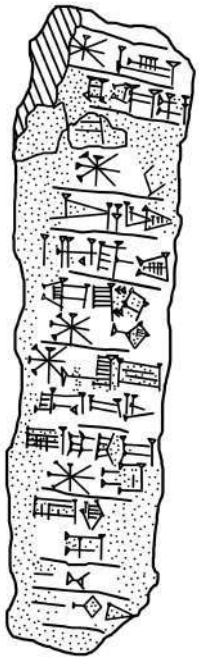
5



8



9



10

(Bricks no. 3, 4, 6 and 7 have not been copied due to their very bad state of preservation.)