

## ON WOLVES AND KINGS. TWO TABLETS WITH AKKADIAN WISDOM TEXTS FROM THE SECOND MILLENNIUM B.C.

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*The lair of the wolf is his refuge,  
and where he has made him his home,  
Not even the head wolf may enter,  
not even the council may come.*

Rudyard Kipling,  
The Law of the Jungle

In this paper two Akkadian wisdom texts are edited and discussed. BM 13928 is an unpublished Old Babylonian list of proverbial sayings and admonitions concerning a wolf and a king. CBS 14235 is a Middle Babylonian tablet which describes the royal life and contrasts it to the behavior of wild animals. The two texts add to the growing corpus of Akkadian wisdom literature of the second millennium B.C. and offer a new angle to our understanding of royal ideology of the period.

### *Introduction*

In this paper we present two tablets with Akkadian wisdom texts from the second millennium B.C.<sup>2</sup> BM 13928 (96-2-4,28), dated to the Old Babylonian period, is edited below for the first time, and CBS 14235, a Middle Babylonian copy of an Old Babylonian tablet, was last edited by Lambert (1960: 276, pl. 70). Both texts contain a sequence of monolingual proverbial sayings and admonitions. No other Akkadian examples of tablets with proverbial sayings from the Old Babylonian period are known to us to date.<sup>3</sup> The colophon of BM 13928, if correctly read as “tenth tablet”, proves, however, that collections of Akkadian proverbs were more common in this period than previously assumed. Thematically, the two texts stress the paramount role of the king in society. This ideological notion was probably the reason for gathering and putting down these proverbial sayings in written form.

### BM 13928

### *Research History*

The text BM 13928 has been known to scholars visiting the British Museum for several decades. According to the catalogue of Figulla (1961: 154), the text is an Old Babylonian “medical text” (probably because its first intelligible line started with *šumma*). W. von Soden, followed by CAD, quotes three lines of the text in his *AHW* (see the commentary to ll. 7, 15, 19 below). N.W. examined the tablet on several occasions, and some of the photos he took in the museum were put online and published on the website of the British Museum ([www.britishmuseum.org](http://www.britishmuseum.org)). We know that W.G. Lambert worked on the tablet, but no copy of it exists in his folios.<sup>4</sup> See Figs. 1–2.

<sup>1</sup> We are grateful to J.C. Fincke for taking new photos of BM 13928 and S. Tinney for new photos of CBS 14235 after the tablet had been cleaned. These new photos were very helpful in deciphering some difficult signs. We also thank Svetlana Matskevich for preparing the photos for publication, Suzanne Herbordt for correcting our English, as well as an anonymous reviewer for his careful reading and his critical remarks.

<sup>2</sup> On proverbs in general, see recently Alster (2014).

<sup>3</sup> See the catalogue of the SEAL project [www.seal.uni-leipzig.de](http://www.seal.uni-leipzig.de) under chapter 7.1.4, where we catalogued mostly bilingual proverbs or proverb collections.

<sup>4</sup> Courtesy Andrew George (private communication, March 2014).



Fig. 1 BM 13928, photo: NW (courtesy the British Museum)

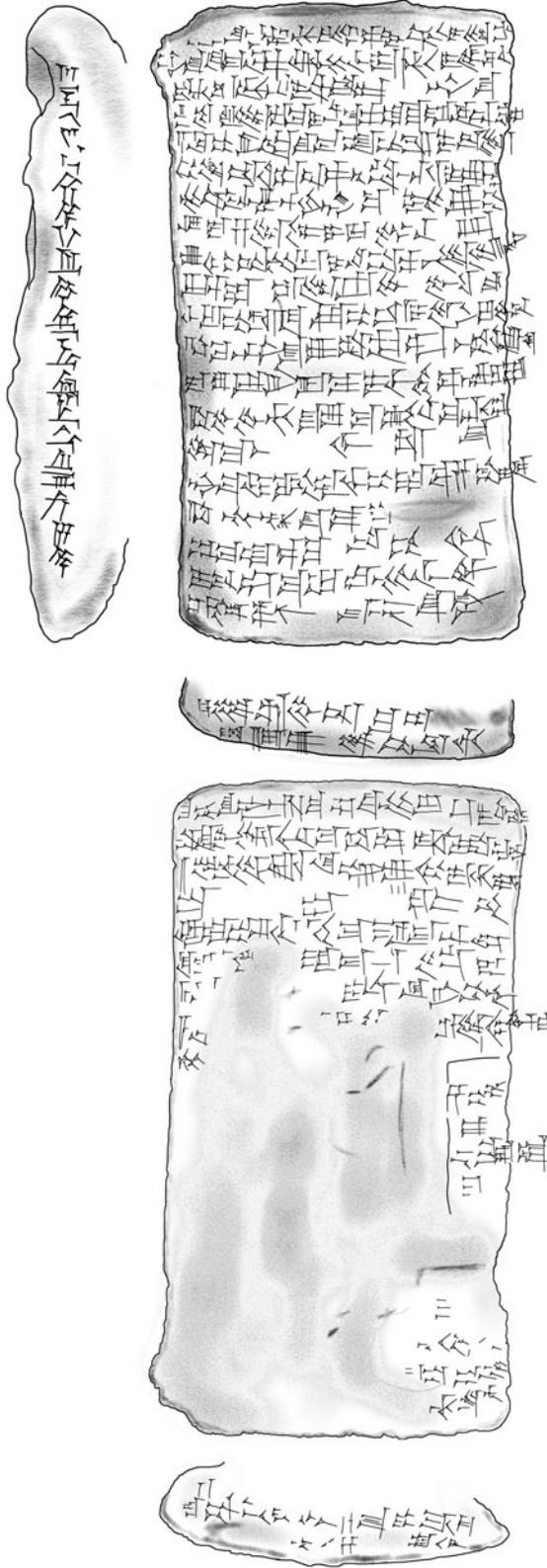


Fig. 2 BM 13928, copy: NW

### *Physical Description of the Tablet*

The size of the tablet is 70 × 123 × 31 mm. The lower half of the reverse is badly damaged. Text is also found on the lower, left and upper edges. The obverse and the lower edge show several erasures (ll. 6, 17, 21).

### *Contents*

The main protagonists in this tablet are the wolf (on the obverse) and the king (on the reverse). The text does not present a running narrative. Although no separation lines exist,<sup>5</sup> we believe that the text contains a collection of popular or proverbial sayings thematically connected.<sup>6</sup> Another support for this is the colophon.<sup>7</sup>

Proverbs concerning wolves are found in the Sumerian Proverb Collection 5,<sup>8</sup> but none of them offers a close parallel. In our text the wolf is the opponent of the civilized world: restless and constantly roaming around (§§ 2, 6); cunning and dangerous as a snake (§ 3); its hunger is enormous (§§ 2, 3, 5); it threatens the shepherds (§ 5); and although it takes great pain to provide for its house and heir (§§ 1, 2), it has no normal, civilized family (§ 4). The obverse of the tablet ends with the statement that the wolf cannot be overcome by “you” (plural), i.e., the audience (§ 6). The reverse, as far as preserved, presents the protagonist of Mesopotamian civilization, the king. Living in the wilderness, outside his ruling sphere, means suffering (§ 8), but if one follows him, one will “make booty” and prosper (§§ 8, 9). The animal metaphor of the obverse is further developed in § 11: the king is the herder who pastures the cattle, his subjects, defending them against the uncivilized world, just as the shepherds in § 5f. A similar royal ideology is also mirrored in CBS 14235, published below.

### *Paleography and Orthography*

BM 13928 shows a typical Old Babylonian hand with some scribal peculiarities or idiosyncrasies: ŠUM is written in all instances (ll. 2, 3, 7, 16, 47) with only one horizontal wedge instead of two parallel ones, and NIM is written in ll. 3, 18 with one horizontal wedge instead of two slanted ones (but with two parallel horizontal wedges in l. 24). The plene spellings in *i-im-<sup>r</sup>ma-ar<sup>r</sup>* l. 2 and *i-ip-pu-uš* l. 8 are typically Old Babylonian. *pí* (l. 11), *qí* (ll. 29, 47) and *qú* (ll. 4) point to the north of the Old Babylonian writing area, whereas *ṭi* (l. 25) is used more in the south.<sup>9</sup> Noteworthy are the following three spellings: *zī-bi-iš* l. 5 with *zī* instead of *zi*; *mu-ut-tá-ag-gi-šum* l. 7 with *tá* instead of *ta* (elsewhere used in the text, see ll. 9, 18), an uncommon syllabic value in Old Babylonian (more typical to Old Akkadian and Old Assyrian). A syllabic value which should be pointed out is *rim* in *mu-ur-rim* l. 23, which so far is attested only from Middle Babylonian onwards (see von Soden 1991: 55 no. 280). The text employs a limited number of logograms: U<sub>4</sub> l. 6; (DUMU) UR.BAR.RA ll. 6, 10, 12; ŠÀ l. 10, 12; É ll. 8, 13; SIPA l. 18; LUGAL l. 25, all quite typical for an Old Babylonian literary text.

### *Language*

The vocalic sequence *i-a* (>*ā*) is still uncontracted, which is another sign for an Old Babylonian date: *mu-ši-ia-ti* l. 2, *li-li-a-tim* l. 9. Mimimation is not used throughout. Examples with mimimation are (not counting CVC-signs): *ma-an-nu-um* l. 14, *mu-ši-im* l. 19, *re-qú-um* l. 23, *du-um-qá-am* l. 26. The following words show no mimimation: *mu-ši-ia-ti* l. 2, *le-e-ma* l. 3, *qú-ra-di* l. 3, <sup>r</sup>*ap<sup>r</sup>-lu* l. 13, *ma-ak-ku-ra* l. 13, *šar-ra* l. 28. The text provides three new and unambiguous examples for the terminative *-iš* in comparative use: *zī-bi-iš* l. 5, *ši-ib-bi-iš ki-ip-pí-iš* l. 11. Thus an Old Babylonian date of this function of *-iš*, already advocated by Streck/Wasserman (2008: 350) ad *Papullegara-hymns* ll. 24'–25', is now clear.

<sup>5</sup> Parallels for this are CBS 14235, edited below, Bo. 3157 (Lambert 1960: 277 ff.) and Sumerian Proverb Collection 22.

<sup>6</sup> In spite of the use of the 2nd person sg. in l. 9, there is no indication in the text that it is a dialogue. Note that 2nd person addresses are common in Sumerian proverbs (e.g., Sumerian Proverb Collection 1.3, 1.4, 1.11., 1.14, 1.22 etc.), cf. Alster (1997).

<sup>7</sup> See the commentary to l. 47, below.

<sup>8</sup> See Alster (1997) 132 ff.

<sup>9</sup> According to our experience the so-called northern vs. southern orthographical conventions are in fact irrelevant for many of the Old Babylonian literary texts, which often show a mixture of the two writing conventions.

*“Museum Archaeology”*

The 96-4-2 group of tablets in the British Museum (see Figulla 1961: 151–85), altogether 403 tablets, consists almost entirely of texts from the Ur III and Old Babylonian periods (only BM 13129 is said to be Neo-Babylonian). As far as dated, almost all Old Babylonian tablets belong to the “classical” time of the Old Babylonian period (dates of Hammurapi and Samsuiluna of Babylon and their contemporaries Rīm-Sîn of Larsa and Rīmanum of Uruk); only three tablets in this group of tablets bear an early Old Babylonian date (Manabaltiel), and none a late Old Babylonian date. The paleography, orthography and language of BM 13928 as presented above also points to this general time frame, namely the “classical” or central Old Babylonian period.

Interestingly, of the twelve literary and scientific tablets in Figulla (1961; the volume lists altogether 3000 tablets), nine belong to the 96-4-2 collection: three lexicographical tablets (BM 13128, 13902, 14063), one of three divination texts (BM 13915), three of four hymns and prayers (BM 13930, 13963, 14016), one mathematical tablet (BM 13901), and BM 13928, published here. If this distribution of literary texts catalogued by Figulla is not purely accidental, then we might cautiously suggest that BM 13928 originally belonged to a “library” organized by a scribe.<sup>10</sup> This subject cannot be pursued further here. As we state in the commentaries to ll. 17 and 23, below, the scribe probably had copied the text from another tablet.

*Transliteration*

## Obverse

- 1 [x] x x x (x)<sup>1</sup>-ti KU UZ<sup>2</sup> pa-<sup>r</sup>as<sup>1</sup>-na-qám i-li-<sup>r</sup>ik<sup>1</sup>
- 2 šum-šu ki-ma di-pa-ar mu-ši-ia-ti i-im-<sup>r</sup>ma-ar<sup>1</sup>
- 3 it-ti <sup>r</sup>da<sup>1</sup>-pi-nim i-pi-id-du šum-šu
- 4 ú-te-ru le-e-ma i-na šu-pa-at qú-ra-di uš-<sup>r</sup>ša-ab<sup>1</sup>
- 5 a-di bi-ir-ka-šu-ma zı-bi-iš i-da-li-p[a]
- 6 <sup>r</sup>ul<sup>1</sup>-li-iš U<sub>4</sub>-um uš-pa-aš {erasure}-ša {erasure}-<sup>h</sup>u DUMU UR.BAR<sup>1</sup>.<sup>r</sup>RA<sup>1</sup>
- 7 mu-ut-tá-ag-gi-šum-ma i-še-eb-bé
- 8 ú <sup>r</sup>la<sup>1</sup> ša-li-lum i-ip-pu-uš É
- 9 ú-ul ta-mu-ur i-na tá<sup>1</sup>-pa-aš li-li-a-tim
- 10 UR.BAR.RA e-li-ip bu-bu-ut <sup>r</sup>ŠÀ<sup>1</sup>
- 11 ši-ib-bi-iš ki-ip-pi-iš i-te-né-ep-pu-uš
- 12 a-na ma-an-ni-šu ú-ša-ka-al aš-ša-tam UR.BAR<sup>1</sup>.RA
- 13 <sup>r</sup>ap<sup>1</sup>-lu ib-ni É-ma i-ši-il<sup>h</sup> ma-ak-ku-ra
- 14 a-na bu-bu-ti-šu-ú-ma qá-tam ma-an-nu-um
- 15 li-ma-aš-ši-iš-šu
- 16 šum-ma ši-ra-am la še<sub>20</sub>-bi ra-ba-ša-am i-de
- 17 a-na bu-bu-ti-šu-ma <sup>r</sup>x<sup>1</sup> [xxx] <sup>r</sup>x x<sup>1</sup>
- 18 um-ma-at SIPA ta-bi-nim
- 19 i-da-al-ma ka-la mu-ši-im
- 20 e-li-ku-nu šu-up-šu-uq

## Lower edge

- 21 <sup>r</sup>e<sup>2</sup><sup>1</sup>-li-ka<sup>1</sup> {erasure} pu-uš-qú-um [x x (x)]
- 22 [ʔ-ʔ] ša<sup>2</sup><sup>1</sup>-a<sup>2</sup>-lu-ú li-bi-<sup>r</sup>it<sup>1</sup>-ti<sup>2</sup>

## Reverse

- 23 šu-up-šu-uq re-qú-um ki mu-ur-rim i-na ša-<sup>r</sup>di<sup>2</sup><sup>1</sup>-[im?]
- 24 <sup>r</sup>ša<sup>1</sup>-ki-<sup>r</sup>in<sup>1</sup> uz-nim-ma ša-al-la-tam i-ša-la-al
- 25 a-li-ik wa-ar-ki LUGAL ú-ul i-ḫa-at-ṭi
- 26 du-um-qá-am

<sup>10</sup> However, BM 13928 has a much larger writing than most of the other tablets mentioned here (private communication by J. Taylor).

27 *ù at-ta* <sup>r</sup>*ri-di-am*<sup>1</sup>-*ma ra-ma-an-ka*  
 28 *ki-<sup>r</sup>ma*<sup>1</sup> *a*<sup>2</sup>?-*bi*<sup>2</sup>?-*im*<sup>2</sup>? *ra-ma* {erasure} *šar-ra*  
 29 *a-n*[*a x x x x x*] *i-na* <sup>r</sup>*qē*<sup>1</sup>-*er-bilbé-tim*  
 30 *a-d*[*i*] [*x x x x*] *x x e-li mi-im-ma*  
 31 <sup>r</sup>*mu*<sup>1</sup> [...]

32	<sup>r</sup> <i>x x</i> <sup>1</sup> [...]	
33	(sign traces)	<i>ša-bi-tum-</i>
34	(sign traces)	<i>ma</i>
35	(sign traces)	[ <i>b</i> ] <i>i-<sup>r</sup>it</i> <sup>2</sup> ?- <i>ra-at-</i>
36	(sign traces)	<i>ma</i>
37–40	(sign traces)	
41	[...]	<i>x x</i>
42	[...]	<sup>r</sup> <i>x x GA</i> <sup>2</sup> ?- <i>ta-li</i>
43	(sign traces)	- <i>ti-li-<sup>r</sup>ka</i> <sup>2</sup> ?

## Left Edge

44 [(*x x*)]-*ma* <sup>dr</sup>GÌR *iq*<sup>1</sup>-*bi-šum-ma bu-lam na-qí-du-ut sú-ku-lim i-pu*-[*uš*]

## Upper edge

45 *a* [...]  
 46 <sup>r</sup>*at*<sup>1</sup>-*ta* <sup>r</sup>*x x x-a-šu*<sup>1</sup> *i-<sup>r</sup>ba*<sup>2</sup>-*ki*<sup>2</sup>?  
 47 [MU?.B]I<sup>2</sup> [40] + 4<sup>2</sup> <sup>r</sup>DUB 10<sup>kam</sup><sup>1</sup>

## Translation

## Obverse

## § 1

1 ... he went away powerlessly.  
 2 He looks at his offspring like a torch in the nights:  
 3 Are they catching his offspring with the mighty one?

## § 2

4 (When) they brought back eating, he sits in the warrior's house,  
 5 until his knees get restless (again) like a vulture.  
 6 Then, having calmed the cub, the wolf  
 7 satisfies himself, roaming around.  
 8 And not sleeping, he builds a house.

## § 3

9 Did you not see, in the (time of) becoming fat(?) during the night,  
 10 (how) the wolf is swollen up because of hunger in (his) belly?  
 11 He constantly acts like a *šibbu*-snake, like a snare.

## § 4

12 For whom, after all, does the wolf feed a wife?  
 13 Has (his) son (ever) built a house and become great with respect to possessions?

## § 5

14–15 At his hunger, who could possibly match him as to his hand?  
 16 If he is not sated with flesh, he knows to lurk.  
 17 Against his hunger ...  
 18 (could) an army of shepherd(s) (do anything in) the shelter?

## § 6

19 He roams about all night long,  
 20 he is too hard for you (to catch).

## Lower edge

## § 7

21 Hardship for you (sg.) is [...]

22 ... *brickwork*.

## Reverse

## § 8

23 It is very hard to be far away (from the king) like a foal in the *mo[untain]*.

24 Only he who pays attention (to the king) will make booty.

25–26 Who follows the king will not miss any good.

## § 9

27 And you yourself, follow (the king)!

28 Love the king like *a father!*

## § 10

29 To ... in the middle/on the meadow,

30 until ... on something.

31–36 (sign traces)

(box on the right side) It is the gazelle who is outstanding(?).

37–43 (sign traces)

## § 11

## Left edge

44 ... Sumuqan designated to him the cattle (and) he exercised the pastorship of the herd.

## Upper edge

45 ...

46 You, ... him so that he *cries*.

47 [It]s [*lines*]: [4]4, tenth *tablet*.

## Commentary

1: *pasnaqum* instead of *pisnuqum* is also attested in Gilg. OB III 156.

3: *dapinum* probably refers to the king. We tentatively derive *i-pi-id-du*<sup>7</sup> from *pādum* “to take captive” (not from *padūlpedū*, an *-i*-verb), although the verb is almost always mediae *ā*; however, a mediae *ī* variant is attested once in a Neo-Assyrian royal inscription (*AHW* 808 *pādu* G 2a, *CAD* P 9 *pādu* A 1e). The subject of the verb is probably the hunters led by the king. Note the alliteration *d-p-p-dd*.

6: Note the word order VERB-OBJECT-SUBJECT, which also occurs in l. 12.

7: *AHW* 689 quotes the line as “*mu-ut-ta-ag-gi-šum-wird satt*”, and *CAD* M/2, 303 as *mu-ut-ta-ag-gi-šum-ma*.

9–10: Generally wolves are crepuscular, active in dawn and dusk. In this couplet, the wolf is depicted as looking for food at nightfall.

10: *e-li-ip* has to be connected with *a-li-ip* in Finkel (1999: 218) BM 79938 (copy fig. 2 p. 243) l. 3: *bu-bu-tam a-li-ip a-ka-lam* <sup>r</sup>*e*<sup>1</sup>-[e<sub>3</sub>] “He is swollen up(?) because of hunger, sho[rt] for bread”. See on this verb also Wasserman (2003: 34 with n. 31). We derive the form from *elēpum/alāpum* “to sprout forth, to flourish”, perhaps in the sense of “to be swollen up”.

12: *ana mannišu* belongs to the examples of *mannum* with pron. suffix, see *CAD* M/1, 216 *mannu* b. This construction emphasizes the question pronoun.

15: *limaššiššu* < *limaššilšu* (court. I. Khait). *AHW*. 624b and *CAD* M/1, 360b derived the word from *mašāšu*.

17: The line ends with an erasure in which the scribe started to write *um-ma-at* SIPA *ta-bi-nim* of the next line, thus suggesting that he copied from another tablet.

18: The word *ummatu* is hyperbolically used.

19: *AHW* 725 quotes the beginning of the line (l. “19”) as “*i-na-al*” from *nālu* “to lie down”.



Fig. 3 CBS 14235 (courtesy S. Tinney, Penn Museum)

23–25: A similar statement is found in ll. 8–14 of CBS 14235, below. The parallel with *tišānum* strongly suggests that *murrum* is a variant of the word *mūrum* and not the plant (although this plant is said to grow in the mountain, see the medical text *BAM* 1 iii 12: <sup>u</sup>ŠIM.ŠEŠ<sup>meš</sup> šá KUR).

28: We understand *ra-ma* not as a pl. but as sg. with ventive and *atta* as subject.

Box to the right of ll. 32 ff.: Note the rulings on the tablet which indicate that these lines probably continue the broken l. 31.

44: The mentioning of Sumuqan, the god of herds, refers metaphorically to the king's function as a shepherd of the people.

46: This line may continue the text or, if l. 47 contains a colophon, as we believe, might be the title of the composition, namely the first line of the first lost tablet.

47: As we understand it, this line contains a colophon. Colophons in Old Babylonian literary texts are rare, see Hunger (1968: 25–29). To this add “second tablet” Gilg. OB II 241 and “seventh tablet” Girra and Elamatum 52 (Walker 1983: 145 ff.).

#### CBS 14235

##### *Research History*

CBS 14235, found in Nippur, was lastly published by Lambert (1960: 276 ff., with copy on pl. 70). The text has the CDLI no. P269202 (with photos). See Fig. 3.

##### *Physical Description of the Tablet*

As BM 13928 published above, CBS 14235, a fragment of a three-column tablet, is also without separation lines. Its back is uninscribed, as can be seen on the photo in CDLI.

##### *Contents*

BM 13928 and CBS 14235 show strong thematic parallels. The king (CBS 14235: 13 adds the queen) is contrasted to wild animals (*murrum ina šadīm* “a foal in the mountain” BM 132928: 23, *tišānim ... ša šadī ttenettiqu* “a mountain goat, which wanders in the mountains” CBS 14235 ii 10–12 and *umāmu ... rābiš šēri* “a beast lying in the steppe” CBS 14235 ii 15; see also *šabītu* “a gazelle” BM 132928: 33). The wild animals, in both texts, metaphorically refer to those who are not under the domain of the king. Both texts give advice for a prospering life: *šākin uznimma šallatam išallal ālik warki šarrim ul iḥaṭṭi dumqam* “Who pays attention (to the king) will make booty. Who follows the king will not miss any good” BM 132928: 24–26 and *awīlum adi lā innaḥu ul irāšši mimma* “A man, as long as he does not exhaust himself, will not get anything” CBS 14235: 8 ff. Lines ii 2–7 seem to speak of a washing ritual performed in front of the king. The moistening of the plants

mentioned in ll. 6–7 probably describes the preparation of holy water, known from first-millennium rituals.<sup>11</sup> The royal washing ritual is the quintessential manifestation of Mesopotamian culture, as opposed to uncivilized life in the wilderness.

#### *Paleography and Orthography*

As Lambert (1960: 276) noted, the mixture of archaic and younger or cursive signs in the text is typical for some Old Babylonian/Middle Babylonian texts from Nippur. We can add the following further examples: AN ii 10, 11 (younger) and i 6, ii 14 (archaic); AM i 2, 6, 7 (gloss) (younger) and 3 (archaic); MI i 5, 7 (gloss) (archaic) and ii 9, 10 (archaic); UB i 9 (younger) and ii 4 (archaic). This mixture of sign forms might indicate that the scribe copied the tablet from an older text, an idea confirmed by the gloss in ii 7 where only younger sign forms are found.<sup>12</sup> An archaic syllabic value is *qe*<sub>4</sub> ii 3, whereas *ter* in ii 5 is typical for Middle Assyrian. For the unusual *si*<sub>12</sub> ii 6, see the commentary to the line, below.

#### *Language*

There are several arguments for an OB date. The text consistently uses mimation, except for *ú-ma-mu* ii 15. The vowel sequence *i-a* remains uncontracted (see *ir*<sup>2</sup>-*l*]-*e-di-a-am* i 2). The word *tišānu* in ii 10 is only attested in Old Babylonian texts to date. On the other hand, the form *i-na-an-di-iš-šu* with dissimilation of the geminate and the dative pron. *-šu* in ii 11 are typical for post-Old Babylonian texts. Thus the language confirms the idea, already gained from the paleography and orthography of the text, that a Middle Babylonian scribe copied the tablet from an Old Babylonian original.

#### *Transliteration*

col. i

- 1 (traces)
- 2 *ir*<sup>2</sup>-*l*]-*e-di-a-am*
- 3 ...]-*ra-am*
- 4 *ša*]-*lum-ma-ti-šu*
- 5 ...] x *-am*<sup>2</sup>-*mi-im*
- 6 ...*m*]-*a-am-ma-an*
- 7 ...] x-*gi*
- 8 ...] x-*rum*
- 9 ...]-*ša-ár*
- 10–15 (traces)

col. ii

- 1 x [...]
- 2 *un-ne*<sup>r</sup>-*na*<sup>r</sup>x<sup>1</sup> [...]
- 3 *i-le-eq-qe*<sub>4</sub> *a*<sup>r</sup>-*wi*<sup>2</sup>-*l*]-*u*? [...]
- 4 *a-šar ši-bu*<sup>12</sup>-*tim ub-ba*<sup>r</sup>-*al*<sup>2</sup>-*[(x)]*
- 5 *iṭ-ter i-ša-bat i-na pa-ni šar-ri-im*
- 6 *Ú*<sup>meš!</sup> *a-na me-si*<sub>12</sub>-*im ú-la-ba-ak*
- 7 *ša-am-mi-ma*
- 8 *ù a-wi-lum a-di la i-na-ḥu*
- 9 *ú-ul i-ra-aš-ši mi-im-ma*
- 10 *ma-an-nu-um mi-nam a-na ti-ša-nim*
- 11 *i-na-an-di-iš-šu*

<sup>11</sup> See Maul (1994: 41–46) for the ingredients and the preparation of holy water.

<sup>12</sup> This mixture of different sign forms is also typical for Old Babylonian literary tablets from Ur. Another

explanation for it might be that the scribes displayed their learning (private communication J. Taylor).

12 *ša ša-di-i i-te-né-ti-qú im<sup>17</sup>-ma-ni-iš*  
 13 *ša la i-šu-ú šar-ra-am ú šar-ra-tam*  
 14 *be-el-šu ma-an-nu-um*  
 15 *šu<sup>2</sup>-ú-ma lu ú-ma-mu lu ra-bi-iš ʿšé-ri<sup>1</sup>*  
 16 (traces)

## col. iii

1 *še-e-r[i<sup>2</sup>...*  
 2 *i-wi r[a...*  
 3 *i-ša-a hu a [...*  
 4 *ú-še-el[-le?*  
 5 *a-na ma-a-k[a-li*  
 6 *ši-ni-šu i-m[a-...*  
 7 *ú at-ta r[a<sup>2</sup>-ma?-an?-ka?*  
 8 *i-na U<sub>4</sub> [...]*  
 9 *ú-maš<sup>2</sup>-š[a*

*Translation*

## col. i

1 ...  
 2 [... he has fo]llowed.  
 3 ...  
 4 [.. his sple]ndour.  
 5 ...  
 6 ... somebody.  
 7–15 ...

## col ii

1 ...  
 2 A supplication ...  
 3 A *man* takes ...  
 4 To the place he needs he bring[s (it)].  
 5 He takes (it) away, holding (it). In front of the king,  
 6–7 he moistens the plants for the washing.  
 8 And a man, as long as he does not exhaust himself,  
 9 will not get anything.  
 10–11 Who will give anything to a mountain-goat,  
 12 which wanders during the heat in the mountains?  
 13 He who has no king and no queen,  
 14 – who is his lord?  
 15 Such (a man) is either a beast or (an animal) lying in the 'steppe'.  
 16 ...

## col iii

1 *Stepp[e ...]*  
 2 *He became ... [...]*  
 3 ...  
 4 He sharpens/raises [...]  
 5 For foo[d ...]  
 6 He [...] *his teeth* twice.  
 7 And you ...  
 8 At the day...  
 9–15 ...

*Commentary*

ii 4: *ter* confirmed by photo. *ši-bu*<sup>12</sup>-*tim* already read by Legrain (1922: 46).

ii 6: Reading follows CAD L, 8, 2a. The original tablet in front of the scribe probably had a badly written MEŠ which he copied carefully as he saw it. Therefore, the scribe found it necessary to gloss this simple word. Note that the gloss only uses younger sign forms (see above), further strengthening the notion that this is really a gloss. The odd choice in SIG<sub>7</sub> = *si*<sub>12</sub> is perhaps connected to the logographic meaning of the sign, *warqum* “green”, which echoes *šammū* “plants”.

ii 10: For *tišānu*, see Durand (1988b) and Mayer (1995: 163). *tišānu* is a sort of mountain goat, or antelope, connected to Heb. תישן.

ii 12: *i-te-né-ti-qú* with Legrain (1922: 46) instead of Lambert’s *i-te-ni-ti-ip*<sup>?</sup>. Reading *im*<sup>12</sup>-*ma-ni-iš* with Legrain, *ibid.* and AHW 378b, s.v. *immāniš*, “am Tage”, and with Mayer (1995: 163).

ii 15: <sup>1</sup>*šé-ri*<sup>1</sup> following a suggestion by the late A. Shaffer in his copy of Lambert (1960).

iii 3: The photo shows a clear *hu*.

iii 7: Our tentative reading is based on *atta ... ramanka* BM 13928: 27.

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عن الذناب والملوك. لوحتان تحتويان على نصوص حكمة أكدية من الألف الثاني قبل الميلاد  
بقلم : مايك بي ستريك و ناثان واسرمان

في هذه المقالة نجد نصين من الحكمة الأكديّة تمت مراجعتهمَا ومناقشتهمَا. اللوحة BM 13928 هي قائمة لم تنشر سابقًا لأمثال بابلية وتوبيخ بابلي تتعلق بذنوب وملك. أما اللوحة CBS 14235 فهي لوحة من العهد البابلي الوسيط تصف حياة الملوك وترادفها مع سلوك الحيوانات الكاسرة. كلا النصين يضيفان إلى المكنز المتزايد لأدب الحكمة الأكديّة من الألف الثاني قبل الميلاد وتوفر لنا طريقة جديدة لفهم الإيدولوجية الملكيّة في تلك الفترة.