

consequently, because the beginning of the composition is quite stable, we should assume that the opening lines were used as a refrain in this manuscript.

Rev. col iii = col vii

- 1'. [...] x la<sub>2</sub>-e  
 2'. [...] x [...] -še<sub>3</sub>' nu-mu-un-da-la<sub>2</sub>  
 3'. [...] l]u<sub>2</sub> daġal-la kur-ra la-ba-an<sup>1</sup>-šu<sub>2</sub>-šu<sub>2</sub>  
 4'. [ti]l<sub>3</sub> niġ<sub>2</sub>-du<sub>10</sub> ša<sub>3</sub>-hul<sub>2</sub>-la šu hē<sub>2</sub>-ni-ib-kar-kar-re  
 5'. [hu]b-sar ša<sub>3</sub>-hul<sub>2</sub>-la u<sub>4</sub> hē<sub>2</sub>-ni-ib-zal-zal-e  
 6'. [...] t]il<sub>3</sub> e<sub>2</sub>-a-ni šu ba-ab-te<sup>19</sup>-ġa<sub>2</sub>-a  
 7'. [...] n]u-kal zi ku<sub>7</sub>-ku<sub>7</sub>-da  
 8'. [...] x niġ<sub>2</sub>-tuku lu<sub>2</sub> la-ba-an-tuku  
 9'. [...] niġ<sub>2</sub>-tuku ba-an-tuku  
 10'. [...] k]u<sub>5</sub>-ru-de<sub>3</sub> saġ ib<sub>2</sub>-ġa<sub>2</sub>-ġa<sub>2</sub>  
 11'. [...] x ra ku<sub>4</sub>-k[u<sub>4</sub>-de<sub>3</sub>]  
 12'. [...] x [...]  
 13'. [...] x  
 14'. [...] x-e  
 15'. [...] -ġa<sub>2</sub>  
 16'. [...] -x-de<sub>3</sub>  
 17'. [...] ba-ku<sub>4</sub>  
 18'. [...] x  
 19'. [...] -de<sub>3</sub>

We may conclude that N 3579 (+) Ni 2763, UM 29-16-616 and 3N-T 326 + 3N-T 360 contained quite long versions that were somehow similar; moreover UM 29-16-616 possibly belonged to the one of the recensions inscribed on the other two manuscripts. On the contrary, Ni 3023+ appears to be inscribed with a version quite different from those attested on the other three manuscripts.

#### Notes

1. This research has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under the Marie Skłodowska-Curie grant agreement No 795154.
2. The tablet contains several joins reconstructed by Civil 1972, 89-90. "Nothing is of Value" is only preserved on Ni 3023 only; there are two joins for that portion of the tablet, Ni 4473, which contains a few fragmentary lines from column viii on the reverse, and Ni 4484, which is uninscribed on the reverse.
3. Alster 2005, 286.

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**94) On "Nothing is of Value" IV: Version B<sup>1</sup>** — Alster in *Wisdom of Ancient Sumer* (Bethesda, 2005) reconstructed "Nothing is of Value" Version B based on five sources: CBS 13777, Ni 3023+, BM 54699, N 3579 (+) Ni 2763 (col. ii) and YBC 7283. As discussed in "On "Nothing is of Value" I: N 3579 (+) Ni 2763," the tablet N 3579+ should be discarded from this group because it contains an independent version that shows some parallel lines with version B (see edition below). According to Alster Ni 3023+ 1'-6' should be ascribed to Version B but, as argued in "On "Nothing is of Value" III: Ni 3023+ (SLTNi 131)", it is unlikely that this manuscript contained two different versions one after the other. We are therefore left with only three possible sources. CBS 13777 (A) is a fragment from a *Sammeltafel* that contains a version of "Nothing is of Value" on the reverse (lines 6'-21'). This is a shortened version because the lines are inscribed between double rulings. The tablet seems to contain extracts from different compositions because twelve of the approximately twenty lines preserved on the obverse are parallel to "Proverbs from Ugarit"<sup>2</sup> and are inscribed between double rulings. BM 54699 = CT 42 36 (B)<sup>3</sup> is a four-sided prism that on Face

B, after a double ruling, preserves fourteen broken lines of “Nothing is of Value” that are very close to the version inscribed on CBS 13777. According to the reconstruction presented here BM 54699 did not contain a shortened version as CBS 13777 although it is not possible to determine the extension of the text because the tablet is broken. This indicates that BM 54699 and CBS 13777 did not belong to the same recension although the preserved lines contain a similar text. Once more, the attribution of sources to coherent versions appears to be artificial. YBC 7283 (C) is a lentil tablet containing one line of the composition. Another Old Babylonian lentil tablet inscribed with one line from this version of “Nothing is of Value” is Ontario 2 506 (D).<sup>4)</sup>

- 
- 
- |     |                           |   |
|-----|---------------------------|---|
| 1.  | A 6'.<br>B 6'.            | [.....k]u <sub>7</sub> -ku <sub>7</sub> -da<br>[niĝ <sub>2</sub> -nam nu-ka]l z[i k]u <sub>7</sub> -[ku <sub>7</sub> ]-[da] (there is no space for two ku <sub>7</sub> )<br>Nothing is of value, but life should be sweet.  |
| 2.  | A 7'.                     | [me-na-am <sub>3</sub> niĝ <sub>2</sub> -tuku lu <sub>2</sub> la-ba-a]n-tuku lu <sub>2</sub> niĝ <sub>2</sub> <sup>2</sup> -tuku ba-an-tuku<br>[When a man] has [no property], (that) man owns something.   |
| 3.  | A 8'.<br>B 7'.            | [.....] saĝ al-ĝa <sub>2</sub> -ĝa <sub>2</sub><br>[x x x] ku <sub>5</sub> -ru-de <sub>3</sub> saĝ [ib <sub>2</sub> -ĝa <sub>2</sub> -ĝa <sub>2</sub> ]<br>The head is raised in order to cut ...   |
| 4.  | A 9'.<br>B 8'.            | [...] -ga-še <sub>3</sub> <sup>2</sup> sur-ra ku <sub>4</sub> -ku <sub>4</sub> -de <sub>3</sub> nam-erim <sub>2</sub> -še <sub>3</sub> saĝ al-ĝa <sub>2</sub> -ĝa <sub>2</sub><br>[x x x x <sup>1</sup> sur-ra ku <sub>4</sub> -ku <sub>4</sub> -de <sub>3</sub> saĝ ba-an-...]<br>In order to turn to ... separated (?), the head is raised for the oath.  |
| 5.  | A 10'.<br>B 9'.           | [.....] eĝir-bi im ba-an-de <sub>6</sub><br>[.....] x eĝir-bi im ba-na-[de <sub>6</sub> ]<br>cf. Ni 2763 i 10' umuš-bi [x <sup>2</sup> ] eĝir-bi / i[m] ba-e-tum <sub>3</sub><br>[That plan] – its outcome was carried away by the wind.  |
| 6.  | A 11'.<br>B 10'.<br>D     | [...] ĝal <sub>2</sub> -la <an <sup>2</sup> >-aš ba-an-ku <sub>4</sub> -re<br>[niĝ <sub>2</sub> <sup>2</sup> [x (x)]-bi-da i-bi <sub>2</sub> -gin <sub>7</sub> an-še <sub>3</sub> ba-e- <sup>1</sup> e <sub>11</sub> <sup>2</sup> ]<br>niĝ <sub>2</sub> -šu ĝal <sub>2</sub> -la i-bi <sub>2</sub> -gin <sub>7</sub> an-še <sub>3</sub> <sup>1</sup> ba-e <sub>3</sub> -de <sub>3</sub><br>All the existing goods will go up to the sky like smoke. |
| 7.  | A 12'.<br>B 11'.<br>C 1-2 | [.....] ku <sub>3</sub> im-ba-aš ba-an-ak- <sup>1</sup> e <sup>2</sup><br>ku <sub>3</sub> [bala]-bi ku <sub>3</sub> im-TU <sup>2</sup> ba-an-[...]<br>ku <sub>3</sub> la-la-bi keše <sub>2</sub> -da / ku <sub>3</sub> im-ba-aš ba-an-ku <sub>4</sub><br>The abundance of money (that has been put together), will turn into lost money.  |
| 8.  | A 13'.<br>B 12'.          | [..... e <sub>2</sub> -r]e-a-aš ba-an-ku <sub>4</sub> -r[e]<br>[e <sub>2</sub> -bi <sup>1</sup> du <sub>6</sub> <sup>1</sup> -da ba-an-ku <sub>4</sub> e <sub>2</sub> -re-a ba-an-...]<br>cf. Ni 2763 i 11' e <sub>2</sub> -bi du <sub>6</sub> -du <sub>6</sub> -da ba-šid-e / a-ri-a-še <sub>3</sub> mu-un-ku <sub>4</sub><br>That house became a ruined mound. It turned into a wasteland.  |
| 9a. | A 14'.                    | [...] x KA <sup>2</sup> izi-la <sub>2</sub> x<br>... purification rites.  |
| 9b. | A 15'.                    | [...] i]b <sup>2</sup> -ni-du <sub>3</sub> -x   |
| 10. | A16'.<br>B 13'.           | [.....]-[si <sub>3</sub> <sup>1</sup> -ge<br>[ka <sup>2</sup> -x-[x]-ga-ni nu-um-si <sub>3</sub> -g[e]<br>He will not place his ...   |
| 11. | A17'.<br>B 14'.           | [.....]-a<br>na[m <sup>2</sup> -x-(x)]-ga diĝir-ra-ni i <sub>7</sub> -da nam-t[a-...]<br>... should not (?) ... his god in the river  |
| 12. | A 18'.<br>B 15'.          | [.....]-la<br>ba-a[n-(x)]-zi-ir u <sub>4</sub> mi-ni-ib-zal-z[al-le]<br>It has been broken, the day will pass.  |

- 13a. A 19'. [.....]-ga  
 13b. B 16'. g[i<sup>2</sup> x-g]a-gin<sup>7</sup> ʽnu-mu<sup>1</sup>-un-zu-a  
 Like ... reed(?) he does not know.
- 14a. A 20'. [.....] x x  
 14b. B 17'. GI [x] [P]I<sup>2</sup>-ni-ta<sup>2</sup> n[u-mu-u]n-na-kal-[kal-le]  
 ... is not precious.
- 15a. A 21'. [.....] x  
 15b. B 18'. [.....] ʽRI<sup>2</sup> [.....] ʽx x x<sup>1</sup> [...]
16. B 19'. [.....] ʽx<sup>1</sup> [.....]  
*tablet break*

### Notes

1. This research has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under the Marie Skłodowska-Curie grant agreement No 795154.
2. Alster 2005, 323-326.
3. I thank Klaus Wagonsonner who kindly provided me with a photograph of the prism.
4. Alster 2005, 287.

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**95) A seal prayer to Ninšubur and the date of Nisaba 33, 734\*** — Among the ca. 1150, mostly 3<sup>rd</sup> millennium tablets in the recently published Nisaba 33 volumes,<sup>1)</sup> there are several dozen Old Babylonian documents and a handful of Neo-Babylonian ones.<sup>2)</sup>

One of the Old Babylonian tablets, the whereabouts of which remain unknown, deserves attention for its date and seal inscription. Nisaba 33, 734 was described by the editors as ‘Sheep Date: mu ʽRi-im-eš<sub>18</sub>-< >’ and tentatively dated to the year Šu-ilīšu 2<sup>?</sup>,<sup>3)</sup> implying that the year name should be understood as an abbreviation of ‘King Šu-ilīšu built the great wall of Isin (called) “Šu-ilīšu-rim-Ištar”’.<sup>4)</sup>

This identification and dating can be challenged for the following reasons:

1) Very few texts from the reign of Šu-ilīšu are known so far, and these come from particular Isin, Ur and Nippur archives.<sup>5)</sup> These archives are barely represented in the minor or private collections that Nisaba 33, 734 may belong to.

2) The language of the document is Akkadian, as the formulation ‘1 (animal) ša PN *ublam*’ (ll. 1–2, 3–4) reveals. Akkadian finds very limited use in the documents known so far from the reign of Šu-ilīšu.

3) Year names, and also the long and ceremonial names of the city walls of kings of Isin can be abbreviated.<sup>6)</sup> Nevertheless, an abbreviation of a ceremonial wall name by omitting the king’s name from its beginning but keeping its divine determinative is rather unexpected.

4) What the seal impression preserves is not an ordinary personal seal inscription,<sup>7)</sup> but a so-called ‘religious inscription’ or seal prayer. Such inscriptions, especially those with epithets and sometimes even a verbal form (with a wish towards the god on behalf of the seal owner) are barely attested in Early Old Babylonian times and it is rather in the Late Old Babylonian period that they become widespread.

For this particular seal prayer, the following reading can be suggested:

- |                                 |                               |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. ʽ[ <i>nin</i> ]-šubur        | [Nin]šubur,                   |
| 2. ʽsúkkal <sup>1</sup> gal [x] | chief minister [...],         |
| 3. ní-tuku-[zu]                 | may the one who reveres [you] |
| 4. ki-ti [tuku]                 | [have] a protective spirit!   |

### Philological notes

1–2. The restorations are based on a seal prayer that describes Ninšubur as *súkkal gal šár-gal* ‘chief minister of the universe’ and is preserved on BE 6/2, 30 (Nippur, Samsu-ilūna 11).<sup>8)</sup> While ‘chief minister of An’ and ‘righteous minister of An’ are frequently attested designations of Ninšubur, the genitive an=ak is written as an-na as a rule. Sauren’s hand copy, which makes one expect one lost sign each at the end of ll. 2–4 rather than two, discourages a restoration of [an-na].