A LETTER FROM ŚAMAŚ-ŠUMU-UKÍN TO ESARHADDON

By Simo Parpola

BM 135586 = 1971–7–5, i, until recently in private possession, is a hitherto unknown Neo-Assyrian letter belonging to the royal correspondence of Nineveh, and indisputably an important specimen of its genre. In 39 completely preserved lines, it contains a message to the Assyrian king Esarhaddon (680–669 B.C.) from his son Śamaš-šumu-ukin, who at that time was the crown prince of Babylon. So far only three very short and fragmentary letters sent by Śamaš-šumu-ukin in this office had been known, and they are now completely overshadowed by the new text, which is here published by permission of the Trustees of the British Museum. It is of dark grey-brown colour and measures 41 by 82 mm. For all further details concerning the tablet and the script I refer to the photographs and copy published on Plate XIX.

Transliteration

Obv. 1 a-na LUGAL be- li- i[a] 2 IR-ka 1.dGil.SIR-MU- G1.NA 3 lu-u šal-mu a-na LUGAL be-li-ia 4 ḏAG ū ḏAMAR.UD a-na LUGAL be-li-ia 5 lik-ru-bu 1.dPA-PAB meš-APIN-eš 6 DUMU KÁ.DINGIR.RA 7 [1]EN-SUM-na DUMU BÁR.SIPA 8 e-gér-tú is-sa-ap-ru-u né 9 ma a-de-e LUGAL ina muḫ-ḫi-ka

Abbreviations: as in W. von Soden, Akkadisches Handwörterbuch (Wiesbaden, 1959 ff.), besides: VTE = D. J. Wiseman, The Vassal-Treaties of Esarhaddon (London, 1958); LAS = S. Parpola, Letters from Assyrian Scholars I (= AOAT 5/1, Kevelaer/Neukirchen-Vluyn, 1970), quoted according to the numbers. For the asterisks used in the transliteration see AOAT 5/1, p. xx.


2 ABL 534: a-na LUGAL be-li-ia 3 IR-ka 1.dGil.NU-MU-G1.NA 4 lu-u šal-mu a-na LUGAL be-li-ia 5 ḏAMAR.UD a-na LUGAL be-li-ia 6 e-gér-tú is-sa-ap-ru-u né 7 ma a-de-e LUGAL ina muḫ-ḫi-ka

3 ABL 535: a-na LUGAL be-li-ia 3 IR-ka 1.dGil.SIR-MU-G1.NA 4 lu-u šal-mu a-na LUGAL be-li-ia 5 ḏAMAR.UD a-na LUGAL be-li-ia 6 e-gér-tú is-sa-ap-ru-u né 7 ma a-de-e LUGAL ina muḫ-ḫi-ka
Translation

To the king, my lord, (from) your servant Šamaš-šumu-ukin: Good health to the king, my lord! May the gods Nabû and Marduk bless the king, my lord.

Šaridu (and) Nabû-ahhî-ēreš, citizens of Babylon, (and) Bēl-iddina, a citizen of Barsip, have sent me the (following) letter:

“The king has made an agreement with us concerning you: ‘Tell your lord whatever you hear!’ Now, Bēl-ēter (and) Šamaš-zēra-iqîša have broken the order which the king gave them (and) are acting on their own. Apâyu, whom the king sent (with the order) ‘Go (and) set up daises in Babylon!’, has made common cause with them. They gaze at the stars (and) slaughter lambs, (but) do not (or: he does not) tell (anything) about the king, our lord, (and) the crown prince of Babylon. Apâyu alone is a haruspex, Bēl-ēter (and) Šamaš-zēra-iqîša are astrologers; they look day and night at the sky. Furthermore, he has gathered together the people who captured Aššûr-nâdin-šumi (and) handed him over to
BM 135586 = 1971-7-5, 1
Photograph and copy.
Elam, (and) has made an agreement with them conjuring them by Jupiter (and) Sirius. We have now heard (of this and) told (it) to the crown prince of Babylon."

Urad-Nabû has sent Bêl-êter (and) Šamaš-zêra-iqîša the (following) letter:

"The steward who came has come without (the authority of) the king; scold him on my behalf! Our brother Sulâyu is kept in the Armoury of Nineveh by order of the king."

Philological notes

Obv. 11. For mi-i-ni = minu (nom. sg.) see K. Deller and S. Parpola, "Progressive Vokalassimilation im Neuassyrischen", Or ns 36 (1967), 337 f. Another example of such an assimilation in the present letter is ud-mu < unity in l. 25.

14. The form īš-ka-nu-šâ-nu-u-ni (instead of paradigmatic īškunûsunûni) results from a Neo-Assyrian phonetic law according to which an unstressed short u may change to a in an open syllable preceding a stressed (long or short) u. Similarly īš-ba-tu-"ni" in l. 27. Compare ā-sa-li-mu-šâ-nu-[ni] and is-se-e-ša-nu-ma ABL 129: 9, ū-ba-lu-û-nê 724: 12, a-ba-tu-ni 992 r. 1, 10par-šâ-mu-te LAS 121: 16, liš-pâ-rû-nê 186 r. 10, āsak-la-lu-te 281: 23, ū-kal-tim-u-ka-nu-ni VTE 93, ta-sab-bat-a-ša-nu-ni 139, LUGAL-ka-nu-ni and EN-ka-nu-u-ni 191, ū-sak-pa-du-u-ka-nu-ni 322, and often in other texts. Note also the N-A by-forms a-nâtu, a-kussu, ūkuttu, of unâtu, ukuttu, etc. This law already worked in Middle-Assyrian, see W. Mayer, AOATS 2, § 8.

15. Instead of the expected plural form e-pu-šu = /epušu/, the text has unequivocally e-pu-uš. The lack of the plural suffix could be explained orthographically, taking -uš for an "inverse spelling" of /šu/, but there are certain points which make such an interpretation doubtful here. Firstly note that elsewhere in the text /šu/ is quite normally written either šu or šo, and that there are no other inverse spellings either in the text. Secondly, there are many other "unusual" forms in the letter which have clearly to be explained phonetically (mi-i-ni l. 11, īš-ka-nu-šâ-nu-u-ni 14, kur-ru 17, ud-mu 25, īš-ba-tu-"ni" 27, urûni-nu-û 39). Thirdly, one more "defectively written" plural occurs in l. 25, namely i-da-gul for which see below. These three points together make it justifiable—if not compelling—to reject the orthographical solution here; in other words, the sign uš has here its normal value uš. This accepted, we must conclude that unstressed, phonemically long final

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4 This phenomenon has been interpreted in two different ways (W. von Soden, JCS 2 (1948), 301 f., and GAG § 15 f.; and W. Mayer, loc. cit.), neither of which seems quite satisfactory. The change is clearly marked by stress, since e.g. plural forms like idāgūtu are never affected by it (unless the ending is stressed for some reason). The quality and quantity of the variable vowel cannot be defined with certainty.


6 My inclination toward a phonetical interpretation in this particular case does by no means mean that I deny the existence of "inverse spellings" in principle. There are unambiguous examples, collected by Deller in the article just mentioned, which prove that confusion in the usage of signs indeed existed, probably under the influence of Aramaic script. However, it is not advisable to interpret all spellings deviating from a grammatical model after orthographical principles: such a procedure would annul the possibilities of a deeper understanding of Neo-Assyrian phonetics and, in particular, the reconstruction of the various subdialects within the language. Moreover, it should be borne in mind that there are no orthographical principles which could be universally applied to all Neo-Assyrian texts. There were several scribal schools, and each scribe had more or less his own conventions.
vowels (including verbal suffixes) were shortened in Neo-Assyrian colloquial, since they were occasionally dropped altogether. Apocopated forms are, of course, against linguistic and orthographic norms and therefore extremely seldom find expression in writing. However, spellings that can be taken to denote such forms do occur elsewhere too: e.g., e-\(pu\)-\(us\) (\(= eppus\') as in our letter) \(ABL\) 91: 9, lik-\(ru\)-\(ub\) (for likrub\(i\)) \(ABL\) 1245: 2 and tu-\(up\)-\(pa\)-\(d\(s\)) (for tupp\(a\)\(s\)) 174: 15; for more examples see note to l. 25. Apocope of final phonemically short vowel is evidenced, e.g., by tu-\(se\)-\(li\)-\(i\)-\(sh\) ND 2316: 5 (Iraq 16 (1954), Pl. VII), ta-\(ab\)-\(tu\)-\(u\)\(s\) 81-2-4, 61: 28, lu-\(gal\)-\(li\)-\(bu\)-\(u\)\(s\) LAS 310: 13', a-na a-bé-et an-ni-te \(ABL\) 1308: 5, i\(a\)\(š\)+\(sur\)-\(sa\)g-\(i\)\(š\) ADD 49: 3, i-\(ta\)-\(as\) ND 2332: 3, ri-\(i\)-\(š\)-\(a\)-\(k\) IV \(R^2\) 6 ii 11, etc. Explaining away these examples according to the principle of “inverse spellings” is difficult, since the use of signs is otherwise perfectly normal and no confusion of phonetic values is observable in the relevant texts.

16. In i\(š\)-\(pur\)-\(su\)-\(u\)-\(ni\), the scribe has omitted the subjunctive marker \(u\) before the pronominal suffix -\(su\). This is hardly a mistake, but rather a Neo-Assyrian scribal convention, for similar omissions (and even the same spelling) occur in other texts too. Cf. i\(š\)-\(pur\)-\(su\)-\(u\)-\(ni\) \(ABL\) 408: 22, i\(š\)-\(pur\)-\(ni\) 90: 8, i\(š\)-\(pur\)-\(n\)-\(e\)-\(n\) \(ni\) 1026: 6 (against this i\(š\)-\(pur\)-\(u\)-\(n\)-\(e\)-\(n\) \(ni\) 569: 7), d\(š\)-\(pur\)-\(ka\)-\(ni\) \(KAV\) 115: 14, d\(š\)-\(kur\)-\(ka\)-\(a\)-\(ni\) \(ABL\) 424: 17, ta-na-\(sar\)-\(š\)-\(a\)-\(u\)-\(ni\) \(VTE\) 168, etc. There is no doubt that the missing \(u\) was actually pronounced, but from the point of view of morphographemics (see I. J. Gelb, Mélanges Marcel Cohen, p. 73 ff.), its expression in writing was not obligatory, since the subjunctive mood was easily recognizable from the enclitic -\(ni\) which in Neo-Assyrian was appended to all subjunctive forms and had in practice replaced \(u\) as the subjunctive marker. 

17. kur-\(ru\) is imperative 2 m. sg. of the verb karâ\(ru\) “to lay”, formed after the pattern purs\(u\) which in Neo-Assyrian seems to alternate freely with the paradigmatic pattern purs\(u\). Cf. du-\(ub\)-\(bu\) “speak!” \(ABL\) 1046: 10 and often, mu-\(ut\)-\(hu\) “lift!” 581 r. 2", su-\(uk\)-\(nu\) “place!” 129 r. 20, sup-\(ru\) “send!” 388: 9, 1245 r. 16 and su-\(up\)-\(ru\) LAS 151 r. 15’ besides su-\(pur\) \(ABL\) 1257: 8, LAS 173 r. 4, etc. Note also š\(a\)-\(a\)-\(š\) \(la\) \(ABL\) 633 + r. 1 besides š\(a\)-\(a\) 129:4, etc. The form du-\(ub\)-\(bu\) has been tentatively interpreted by W. von Soden as a ventive with progressively assimilated ending (GAG § 101), but this explanation cannot be accepted, since in most cases the contexts show that no ventive can be in question.10 We must look for another solution.11

7 The shortening of phonemically long unstressed final vowels is paralleled by modern Arabic dialects. Cf., e.g., H. Palva, Lower Galilean Arabic (StOr 32, Helsinki, 1965), p. 10.
8 The circumstances under which this could happen remain to be studied. Note that “in Syriac final vowels, whether long or short, are dropped (*qabar > *qab\(a\) [the final \(u\) is written but not pronounced])” (S. Moscati, An Introduction to the Comparative Grammar of the Semitic Languages, p. 68).
9 These are of the type i-\(da\)-\(g\(a\)l, i.e. the last syllable is written with a CVC-sign. Such spellings are considered inexplicit with regard to the vowels (cf. K. Deller, Or no 31 (1960), 7 ff.; and Gelb, Or no 39 (1968), 336) and hence of little significance to the present problem, but I think the matter is just the other way round. If a word as a result of the dropping of the final vowel ended up in a closed syllable, what would have been more natural than to write this syllable with a convenient CVC-sign? The spellings e-pu-\(us\), tu-\(up\)-\(pa\)-\(d\(s\)), etc., are only seemingly “explicit”: that we do not have CVC-spellings here results solely from the fact that no suitable signs existed in the Neo-Assyrian syllabary.
10 Cf., e.g., ABL 1046: 9-12 du-ib-\(bi\) du\(g\)\(a\)+\(ga\)\(me\) is-se-\(še\)-\(nu\) du-\(ub\)-\(hu\) ka-a-a-\(ma\)-\(nu\) di-ib-\(bi\) du\(g\)\(a\)+\(ga\)\(me\) is-se-e-\(še\)-\(nu\) a-a-d-b u-u-b.
11 The problem is obviously connected with stress. The pattern purs\(u\) could be considered an alloform of purs\(u\), provoked by the heavy stress falling on the
19. The unusual spelling e-mur-ru, standing for spoken /emmuru/, can be explained as follows in the light of the evidence discussed in note on l. 15. The scribe has first written the apocopated form e-mur = /emmur'/ (just as in l. 25, i-da-gul), but then changed his mind and added the final vowel to make a grammatically correct form. The fact that he has thereby added the whole last syllable is nothing extraordinary, since the scribes mostly observed only the syllable boundaries and took no heed of the morpheme ones. It has been customary, in cases like this, to transliterate e-muru, assigning the sign mu a CVCC-value and interpreting ru as a phonetic indicator. However, there are certain explicit spellings which show that this way of transliteration is somewhat artificial. Cf. e-pu-uš-sū, ABL 87 r. 6 (by the same scribe who in ABL 91 : 9 wrote e-pu-uš = eppusu); liš-ul-lu, 148 : 5; i-za-nu-un-nu, 128 r. 16, etc. Transliterating these e-pu-ušš and i-za-nu-un-nu would certainly go too far. Cf. also e-kul, ABL 196 : 14 besides e-kul-lu, 419 r. 1, 563 r. 13 (both spellings standing for the plural /ekkul(a)/); iš-kun-nu, ADD 415 : 1; ıbu-lat, ADD 528 : 5, ıbu-lat-tu, 641 : 28 and ıbu-lat-tu, ND 2460 : 31 (all for /Bull(L(u))/); ıbar-ruq, ADD 60 : 10, ıbar-ruq-qu, 174 : 23, and ıbar-ruq 421 : 16 (for /Barruq(u)/).

20. The sign i at the end of the line has a peculiar form suggesting that the scribe perhaps originally had in mind writing be-li-ni instead of be-i-ni. This, however, does not make the latter a scribal mistake. The same spelling is namely also attested in ABL 419 : 6, where it alternates with en-i-ni (Obv. 1, 8, etc.). Cf. also ABL 798 r. 7, Lugal be-i (instead of the standard Lugal be-li); ı*šikkal be-iá, ABL 1081 : 2.4. r. 8, and ıpat-ti-ábe, ABL 621 : 11 besides ıpat-ti-áen, 883 r. 4. These examples show clearly that be was in Neo-Assyrian texts used as a logogram for bélu “lord” (though this equation does not seem to have been attested lexically) and probably considered only an allograph of EN. The latter conclusion is supported not only by the alternation of be-i-ni and en-i-ni referred to above, but also by such spellings as en-li, ABL 556 r. 7 and en-li, ABL 165 r. 8 instead of the standard be-li and be-li, as well as by the writing be-ni standing for an expected en-ni or be-li-ni, e.g. in LAS 139 : 7. r. 6 (cf. LAS 52–58 and 163–166). It seems unnecessary to emend be-i-ni to be-(li)-i-ni, though this spelling is also once attested (Lugal be-li-i-ni ı[a]! i-qab-bi, ABL 544 : 11).

21. A logical continuation of “they observe ... and slaughter” would be “but they do not tell” (especially since both astrologers and haruspices are involved), but the text has la i-qab-bi “he does not tell” (the reading has been confirmed by Sollberger). In view of l.15 it is not impossible that i-qab-bi is an apocopated plural;

first syllable, which alternatively would have caused a lengthening of the vowel. Note that the phenomenon is not restricted to the imperative only: we have, e.g., the following stative pairs:

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<tr>
<td>za-ar-pl</td>
<td>ADD 335 : 14</td>
<td>za-rp</td>
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<tr>
<td>šd-al-mi</td>
<td>LAS 223 r. 14</td>
<td>*salim</td>
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<tr>
<td>mašš</td>
<td>ABL 211 : 16</td>
<td>mašš-ir</td>
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<tr>
<td>qur-bu</td>
<td>LAS 148 r. 8</td>
<td>qur-ru-ab</td>
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<tr>
<td>ba-la-at-û-ni</td>
<td>LAS 13 r. 24</td>
<td>ba-la-at-û-ni</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>da-a-nu</td>
<td>LAS 109 : 17</td>
<td>da-an</td>
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<tr>
<td>ma-a-da</td>
<td>ABL 157 r. 8</td>
<td>ma-a-ad</td>
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the list of references could easily be prolonged).

11 It is for this reason that the Sumerian scribes repeated the last root consonant in writing vocalic suffixes (dingir-ra, not *dingir-a) and that the Old Babylonian scribes wrote i-din-nam (instead of *i-din-am) while adding the ventive suffix -am to the indicative form -din. "Morphemic" spellings, (like tak-lim-tu, pl. tak-lim-a-tu) of course also occurs but they form a clear minority. Thus we have in our letter only iq-bat-ui-ni l. 27.
cf. i-ti-si ur-ta-mi-ú-ṣú-nu, ABL 144: 19–20, where one also would expect i-ti-si-u, and ur-ta-mi-i (pl.), 1063: 6. However, the fact that all predicates in ll. 28–30 are in the singular demands caution at this point. Perhaps Aplāyu, who as a royal envoy would have been obliged to inform the king above all others, is the intended subject here also, as in ll. 28–30.

Rev. 24. Out of the many different spellings of the serial name Enûma Anu Enlil,13 the present one seems to occur only here. The other spellings known to me are:

I UD .signIn LIL.A
I UD  signIn LIL
I UD an.signIn LIL
UD an.signIn LIL
UD an.signIn LIL, LÁ
UD an.signIn LIL
UD an.signIn LIL
I UD a-na signIn LIL
I UD a-na signIn LIL, LÁ
ACh Sin I 5.

As far as I know, this also is the only instance where the word enûma is written UD-mu (cf. note on l. 11); the normal logographic spelling was either mere UD or (with a phonetic complement) UD-ma, see CAD and AHw s.v.

As to ṣú-nu at the end of the line, the context requires that it is taken to denote the absolute personal pronoun and not the homophonous pronominal suffix, though syntactically the latter would also be possible,14 and orthographically even more probable: Neo-Assyrian scribes usually wrote ṣu-nu for the absolute pronoun and ṣú-nu for the suffix. This “rule” can be visualized by means of the following statistics15:

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<tr>
<td>ṣu</td>
<td>ṣú</td>
<td>proportion</td>
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<tr>
<td>+ sunu</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>155</td>
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<tr>
<td>sunu</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>6</td>
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These statistics imply that in 26 cases out of 27, the spelling ṣú-nu stands for the suffix, and only once for the absolute pronoun. The distinction is even more marked in the writing of the corresponding singular forms:

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<tr>
<td>ṣu</td>
<td>ṣú</td>
<td>proportion</td>
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<tr>
<td>+  ṣu</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>425</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ṣú(tu)</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>2</td>
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</tbody>
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However, the fact that exceptions of the “rule” occur makes it justifiable to disregard the implications of the orthographical practice in the present ambiguous case (note also ut-ta-še-ṣu-nu in l. 30). For other exceptional spellings see ABL

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13 For ṣuplar-Enûma-Anu-Enlil = “astrologer” see most recently S. Parpola, AOAT 5/2, p. 19.
14 By assuming a casus pendens, one could translate “the astrologers of Bêl-êter and Šamaš-zēra-iqïâ look...”. For such a construction, cf. ABL 403: 14–15, um-ma M ḫa-ﬁ-tu ina KÁ & 16DI.KUD 10 KA-Id al-la ṣú DAM-ú KALAG-an “the words of the adulteress carry more weight at the door of the judge’s house than those of her husband.”
15 Taken from a sample of 667 Neo-Assyrian letters comprising 29,843 words in all.
413 r. 3, 1103 : 6 and r. 3, 1110 r. 4, 1217 : 5, and 1352 r. 4' (here šu-nu likewise denoting the absolute pronoun); cf. šu-u, ABL 118 r. 17 and 257 : 10; and šu-ti-ur-ni, 111 r. 3.

25. The spelling kal-la stands for spoken /kala/ and has to be interpreted like e-mur-ru in l. 19 (the co-existence of the apocopated form kal besides kala is proved by the spellings ka-al and kal-lu-mi, see AHw 427b). For ud-mu see note on l. 11.

On the interpretation of the spelling i-da-gul (3 m. pl.) see note on l. 15. The same spelling is also found in ABL 1362 r. 3. Cf. i-na-sur, ABL 408 r. 29, 424 : 12, 433 : 7, 482 : 9, 1063 : 17; i-ga-mur, 503 r. 9; i-ma-gur, 1965 : 10; ū-ga-mur, 330 : 7.13.15; ū-sal-lum, ADD 618 : 18; is-su-hur, ABL 251 r. 6; lim-hur, KAR 215 r. ii 18, etc. All these spellings stand likewise for 3 m. pl.

26. sa is here written with only three horizontal wedges, the middle one of which is faint but nevertheless clearly visible in the photograph. The sign has the same form also in ll. 11, 15 and 16, but is written with four horizontals in l. 14.

35. Instead of ša la, which is expected, the text has clearly ša ad, but this must be a scribal mistake. A reference to the king’s father would be out of place here, and the grammatical interpretation of ša Ad would also present great difficulties. The signs la and ad were so close to each other in Neo-Assyrian writing that it is sometimes impossible to decide which one is in question. Cf. pal-ha-ak ša Ad Lugal 4 en-ia la a-sab-bat-še “I am afraid, I cannot seize her without(!) the king, my lord”, ABL 992 r. 5 f., where Ad likewise is an error for la (cf. “pa-al-ha-ku ša la Lugal, etc., LAS 248 r. 10). Note also VTE 1.351, where the main text (ND 4327) has ad-ša-ka, but a duplicate (ND 4335), la-ka.

39. The city-name Nineveh, when syllabically written, normally occurs in the form uruši-nu-(-u-)a (= *Ninua) in Neo-Assyrian texts; the contracted form uruši-nu-ū is extremely rare and found only in AR 36 : 8, 322 : 12, 615 : 16 and ADD 1165 r. 2. See AOAT 6, pp. 262 ff.

Commentary

1. Date. For lack of clear-cut chronological evidence the letter can be dated only approximately. The terminus post quem is Ayaru 16, eponym year of Nabû-šēnu-ushur (= c. 19th May, 672 B.C.), the date on which the treaty referred to in l. 9 was promulgated; the terminus ante quem is, of course, the date of Esarhaddon’s death, Araḫsamma 10 = 2nd/3rd November, 669. To get a little further I would suggest, on the ground of the reference to the daises in l. 7, that the year in question was 670 B.C.: it is known from the letters of Mār-Ištar that sanctuaries were being constructed and inscribed in Babylon and Borsippa during that year. This would fit well the fact that Šamaš-sumu-ukin’s presence in Babylonia is actually attested for year 670 only. It may be pointed out that this year is also the one to which

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18 For more examples see K. Deller, Or 83 31 (1960), 7 ff., Sub numum, kūn, luḫ, gam, išar, gūl, zur and lum.

17 The sign has been collated by Sollberger, however, with a negative result ("the queried sign is certainly ša but the emendation tō ša is legitimate...").

16 See AOAT 5/2, notes on LAS 1.

19 See A. Schott and J. Schaumberger, ZA 47 (1941-1942), 130.

20 See LAS 283–286 and, for the dating of these letters, the relevant comments in AOAT 5/2.

21 See ADD 615 = AR 116 (a deed between the governor of Lāhiru and a eunuch of the crown prince of Babylon, dated 670), and LAS 280–281 (both dating from 670).
most of the documents attesting Assurbanipal’s co-regency with Esarhaddon must be assigned.\textsuperscript{22} Unfortunately it is not possible to make precise conjectures as to the date at present; the prosopographical evidence discussed below is too vague in this respect.

2. **Persons involved.** Nine individuals figure in the letter:

\begin{itemize}
  \item[(1)] Šaridu \textit{from Babylon} informers
  \item[(2)] Nabû-ahḫī-ēres \textit{from Barsip}\textsuperscript{23}
  \item[(3)] Bēl-iddina \textit{astrologers}\textsuperscript{24} denounced
  \item[(4)] Šamaš-zēra-igiša haruspex
  \item[(5)] Bēl-ēter
  \item[(6)] Apûlu
  \item[(7)] Aššur-nādin-šumi
  \item[(8)] Urad-Nabû
  \item[(9)] Sulâyû.
\end{itemize}

Nothing certain is otherwise known about the first six men. The fact that their domiciles/professions had to be specified to the king suggests that they were not well known at the Assyrian court either. It deserves attention that no astrological reports from Bēl-ēter and Šamaš-zēra-igiša are to be found among those preserved in the royal archives of Nineveh\textsuperscript{28}; this tallies with the statement that they did not communicate their observations to the king.

In detail, the information I am able to present on these individuals is as follows\textsuperscript{26}:

\begin{itemize}
  \item **Šaridu**: Name not attested in Sargonid sources.\textsuperscript{27}
  \item **Nabû-ahḫī-ēres**: Perhaps mentioned in ABL 1091 r. 10, a letter referring to [\textit{a}-de-e ša si-i-ki} “treaty of insurrection” (cf. our letter, l. 28) in connection with Babylon.\textsuperscript{28} The name is there written Nabû-aḫa-ēres (\textit{I.dAG*-ŠEŠ-APIN-ES}), but this need not preclude the identification.\textsuperscript{29} The name Nabû-aḫa-ēres also occurs in two other letters dating from Esarhaddon’s reign, 83–1–18, 138\textsuperscript{30} and K.\textsuperscript{14}140,\textsuperscript{31}
\end{itemize}

\textsuperscript{22} See the commentary on LAS 246 in AOAT 5/2, where the pertinent evidence is collected and discussed.
\textsuperscript{23} C. 15 km south of Babylon.
\textsuperscript{24} Probably from Babylon, to judge from the domiciles of the informers and the mission of Apûlu.
\textsuperscript{26} My sources are K. Tallqvist, Assyrian Personal Names (1914) and Neubabylonisches Namenbuch (1905); M. San Nicolò, Babyloniens Rechtsurkunden des ausgehenden 8. und 7. Jahrhunderts v. Chr. (1951); the Ninevite royal correspondence in its entirety (see L. Waterman, RCAE IV index), supplemented by the new texts presented by Dietrich (see the indexes in WO 5 (1969), 51 ff., and AOAT 7), and my own transliterations of unpublished Assyrian letters; and the letters and records from Calah, published or communicated in Iraq 12 ff.
\textsuperscript{27} For Neo-Babylonian texts see K. Tallqvist, NV, p. 200b (written \textit{Iš-rīd} and \textit{Iš-ri-du}). The etymology of the name is uncertain. Most probably it is an abbreviation of the PN \textit{Ašaridu} (see CAD A 2, 417; cf. \textit{šarisu} > \textit{šarissu}, ibid. 419), but a derivate from the verb *šād (which to my knowledge is not yet attested in Akkadian) cannot be totally excluded (cf. Hebr. \textit{sārid} “survivor”).
\textsuperscript{28} Assigned hesitatingly to the reign of Sennacherib by M. Dietrich, AOAT 7, p. 16.
\textsuperscript{29} The name was probably pronounced Nabû-ahêres in both cases, whether written with the plural sign or not. Cf. \textit{I.PA-PAP-KAM-ES} \textit{GAR.KUR UTU-SA-AM-AL-LA, ADD} 59 r. 5 = \textit{I.PA-PAP-MES-APIN-ES} \textit{GAR UTU-SA-MA-AL-LA, ADD} 127: 7.
\textsuperscript{30} See M. Dietrich, WO 4 (1968), 242, and AOAT 7, p. 66 (from Bēl-ulêzib).
\textsuperscript{31} See M. Dietrich, WO 4 (1968), 242\textsuperscript{111} and 250.
but both are so badly broken that they cannot be properly evaluated. The other occurrences of the name\(^{33}\) are irrelevant for us.

**Bel-iddina**: The name is very common, but there is no certain reference to a citizen of Birsip so called in contemporary texts.\(^{33}\)

Samšu-zēra-igiša: As far as I know, the name is otherwise attested only once in Sargonic sources, in a legal document from Nineveh (\(^{1}.\)\text{\textit{utu}}-\text{numu}n-ba-\text{ṣa} \(\text{\textit{ul}}[\ldots]\), ADD \(481:4\)), and it is entirely unlikely that the same person is in question.\(^{34}\)

**Bel-ētet**: Several different persons bearing this name figure in contemporary letters and records, but none of them can be confidently identified with the astrologer with whom we are concerned. ABL \(961\) mentions a Bēl-ētet, citizen of Babylon (\(1.d\text{\textit{en}}-\text{kar-er} \text{\textit{dumu}} \text{\textit{din}} \text{\textit{tir}}\)), Rev. 6–7), but the letter dates from about 650 B.C.\(^{35}\) and is consequently irrelevant for us. The same is true as regards most of the remaining alternatives, admitting that in some cases identity with our Bēl-ētet cannot be wholly excluded.\(^{36}\) I can see only one reference which possibly could be significant for the interpretation of the present letter: the entry of the Babylonian Chronicle for year 668, relating the execution of a certain Bēl-ētet, judge of Babylon (\(\text{\textit{1tu}} \text{\textit{ab}} \text{\textit{ud}} \text{\textit{20}}. \text{\textit{kām}} \text{\textit{1en}}-\text{kar-er} \text{\textit{di}}. \text{\textit{kud}} \text{\textit{din}} \text{\textit{tir}}\) \text{\textit{sa-bit-ma} ga}" "on the 20th of Ṭebētu Bēl-ētet, the judge of Babylon, was seized and killed", Col. iv 38).\(^{37}\) This passage might tell the fate of our Bēl-ētet, but unfortunately the identity of the two men is not at all certain.\(^{38}\)

Apšu: No man with this name is elsewhere expressly designated as a haruspex, and since we know very little else about our Apšu, no certain identifications can be made. The fact that he was employed by the king points to Apšu, a sender of astrological reports to Esarhaddon.\(^{39}\)

The remaining three persons are known better.

Assur-nadin-sumu,\(^{40}\) an elder brother of Esarhaddon, was king of Babylon from 700 to 694 B.C. For details, see below, p. 32 f.

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\(^{33}\) ABL 212 dates from the reign of Sargon II; ADD 30, 59, 127, 231, 269, 277, 279, 635, III R 1, v 43 and PSBA 30 (1908), 111–112 refer to the eponym of 681 B.C.

\(^{34}\) Cf. APN, p. 58, and M. Dietrich, AOAT 7, p. 43.

\(^{35}\) For Neo-Babylonian texts, see K. Tallqvist, NN, p. 196b.

\(^{36}\) Mention is made in this letter of Tammaritu II, the Assyrian troop commander Marduk-šarru-šuš, and Kudurru of Ur, but it is so fragmentary that any date between 648 and 650 seems possible.

\(^{37}\) For a list of different Bēl-ēters see M. Dietrich, AOAT 7, p. 32.

\(^{38}\) Provided that the hypothesis of Bēl-ēter’s being a Babylonian astrologer is incorrect (cf. note on l. 24 with n. 14), which is very unlikely, two well-known persons from Esarhaddon’s reign could be considered: Bēl-ēter, the commandant of Uruk (see ABL 276, 299, 1154 + 1363, 1155, 1230, K.4670 +, 80–7–19, 113 and 80–7–19, 382) and Bēl-ēter, the governor of the city of \(\text{\textit{ur}}\text{\textit{su}}\text{\textit{kar}}\) (see ABL 1345 +, K.1533 and 81–2–4, 70: the reading and identity of \(\text{\textit{ur}}\text{\textit{su}}\text{\textit{kar}}\) is as yet unclear; I consider Dietrich’s \(\text{\textit{Har}}\text{\textit{ran}}\) excluded on the ground of the textual contexts, especially ABL 1453).

\(^{39}\) CT 34, Pl. 50.

\(^{40}\) That an astrologer may have appeared as a judge is not unthinkable, since professional judges were at all times extremely rare. See the evidence collected in CAD D, 28 ff.

\(^{41}\) See RMA 46, 79A, 86A, 120, 123, 190A, 197, 211, 253A, 265, 277M and O. For other persons mentioned in letters and perhaps identical with our Apšu see ABL 324: 2, 413 r. 5, 912 r. 8, 948: 2, 1357: 4 and LAS 224 r. 16.

\(^{42}\) The transcription of the GN \(\text{\textit{Assur}}\) with a long \(\text{\textsl{u}}\) (instead of the conventional \(\text{\textit{Asūr}}\) is based on the Hebrew and Aramaic plene writing \(\text{\textit{šur}}\) (\text{\textit{Gen}}\text{\textit{esis}} 2: 14, 10: 11.22, 25: 18, \text{\textit{Isaia}} 7: 18, 8: 7, 10: 5, 14: 25, etc., and \text{\textit{KAI}} 215: 7.11.12.13.15.16.17, 220: 3(?), 233: 16(?).17(?).18) which predominates over the spellings \(\text{\textit{šr}}\) (\text{\textit{Kings}} 5: 6, \text{\textit{KAI}} 24: 8, 215: 18, 222 A 25) and \(\text{\textit{tsr}}\) (\text{\textit{passive}} in names). Note also the Greek writing \(\text{\textit{Asuropēs}}\) (Damasacus, \text{\textit{De primis principiis}}, ch. 125). The cuneiform spellings \(\text{\textit{aₘₙₙ}}\text{\textit{uₚₙ}}, \text{\textit{aₘₙₙ-ₚₙ}}, \text{\textit{aₘₙₙ-uₚₙ}}, \text{\textit{aₘₙₙ-rₚₙ}}, \text{\textit{Anₘₙₙ-rₚₙ}}, \text{\textit{Anₘₙₙ-rₚₙ}}\).
Urad-Nabû is undoubtedly identical with an influential Assyrian priest known from his many letters to Esarhaddon. No other person with the same name figures in the royal correspondence, and the fact that no specification has been added to his name in our letter proves that he must have been a man well known at court. Note also the reference to the steward (abaraku) in l. 34.

For Sulâyu see below, p. 33.

3. Contents. Stripped of its introductory salutations and blessings, the letter is but a paraphrase of two letters sent to (or seen by) Šamaš-šumu-ukin. The first of them contains charges against three fellow-citizens of the senders. It is opened by a reference to an agreement obliging the writers “to tell their lord (the crown prince) whatever they hear”—a prelude to the following exposures, meant to underline the loyalty of the writers (cf. l. 31 f. “we have now heard and told . . .”). The explicit remarks that the agreement concerned the crown prince of Babylon shows that the so-called “Vassal-Treaties of Esarhaddon” are in question. A constantly recurring provision in this covenant was that the crown prince had to be kept informed about any criminal actions planned or undertaken against him, and the manner in which this was done by the present informers was actually literally prescribed in the treaty text: šum-ma la ta-lak-a-né-ni a-na laš + šar-Dû-A DUMU.MAN GAL šá Â vš-ti la ta-qab-ba-a-ni ma-a Ad-ka a-de-e ina u[GU-Ka]! is-se-ni is-sa-kan ú-la-ma-na-a-ni “(You swear) that you will go and report (it) to Assurani-pal, the appointed crown prince of the Succession palace, (saying) ‘Your father made an agreement with us concerning you, (and) made us swear (it) ’.”

The efficiency of this treaty provision cannot be questioned. As already pointed out by A. L. Oppenheim, loyalty, fear of the curses concluding the treaty, and
personal interests produced informers in such numbers as to make them an omnipresent royal eye and ear seeing and hearing everything. In addition to the present letter, a great number of similar denunciations have been preserved, many of which, like our letter, make a special reference to the relevant treaty stipulation.

A typical example of such letters may be quoted here in full: "We entered the treaty of your royal father, [and] we (also) entered the treaty of the king, our lord ([a-na] a-de-e ša LUGAL be-li-ni ni-tir-ub). Fu[rthermore], the king has written to us: ‘Write me whatever you see and hear!’ (mim+ma-la ta-am-ma-ra ư ta-šem-ma-a’ šup-ra-a-ni). As the people of Uruk found out about these men who in Uruk had committed a crime against the king, they informed us, (and) we wrote to the king according to their speech. We have now brought the criminals and the witnesses to the king; if it is acceptable to the king, let the king question them. There are certain matters concerning the king that I have heard—the king’s messenger should come and question me. Žera-ukin the son of Lábāši says: ‘When the king hears of the [matters] I have heard, the whole world will be in fault.’ He has just come with the son of Ina-tēšī-ēter. The king should summon and question him, before he gets caught and is made to disappear.”

It is interesting to note that another denunciation is introduced by exactly the same words: [ina ša] a-de-e iš-ša-ti-ir um-ma ma-la tam-ma-ra ư ta-šem-ma-a’ šup-ra-a-ni “it is written [in] the treaty: Write me whatever you see and hear!” ABL 831 r.1’–5’.

The system of "king’s eyes and ears" created a veritable secret intelligence service which effectively contributed to suppressing insurrections and conspiracies against the ruling house. It is very likely that all Assyrian treaties concluded in order to secure the royal succession contained the “eye and ear” stipulation, though only the text of the “Vassal-Treaties of Esarhaddon” has been preserved completely.

Proceeding now to the charges made against the three men, we find that they are firstly blamed for a somewhat unusual fault: though expert diviners, they did not communicate to their lords any prognostications concerning the king and the crown prince. This may not sound serious to us, but it certainly was that in Sargonid Assyria. The elaborate techniques of astrology and extispicy were seriously utilized by the royal palace in order to foresee the future course of events, and all diviners—not only those resident at court—were obliged to inform the king on their findings. In neglecting this duty, the scholars made themselves guilty of breaking a direct order of the king (tē-e-mu ša LUGAL iš-ka-nu-ša-nu-u-ni ur-tam-mi-ū, ll. 14–15). Compare RMA 268 = ABL 1006 r. 12 ff.: LUGAL tē-e-mu il-tak-na-an-ni um-ma EN.NUN-a

60 ABL 472, Babylonian, unsigned.
61 Cf. also LAS 133 r. 18 ff.: “Is it not written in the treaty as follows: ‘whoever hears something but does not speak out in the presence of the king’” (man-nu ša me-me-ni i-tam-mu-u-ni ina pa-an LUGAL la i-qa-bu-u-mi). A literal quotation from the Vassal-Treaties is found in ABL 1110+ Obv. 20–23 (cf. VTE 635–636 and 633–634). For more general references to the treaty in denunciations see ABL 555: 6’–8’, 1341: 6’ and 1404 r. 19 ff.; for denunciations without reference to the treaty see ABL 633, 1945, 1908, etc.
62 It is certain that at least the conspiracy of year 670 (cf. p. 34) was detected by the king’s “eyes and ears”: see ABL 1091 + K.1034 + ... + K.11021 and ABL 1217(+K.13737, by Nabû-rēḫtu-ush. See also the anonymous denunciation published by E. Weidner, A/O 17 (1954–1956), 5 ff.
63 The entire reverse of the Zakātu treaty (ABL 1239) is devoted to the information stipulations. See also ABL 129, from the time of Sargon II, and ABL 472: 1–2 (quoted above).
64 See ABL 1216 r. 1–10, translated most recently in AOA 5/2, sub LAS 41. For a list of scholars sending regularly reports to the king, see ibid., Appendix 1A and B.
ú-suR u mim+ma šá ti-bi-ú qi-ba-a en-na mim+ma šá ina pa-ni-iá ba-nu-ú ubeša lam ina ugu Lugal be-lí-íá ta-a-bu a-na Lugal al-tap-ra “The king has given me the order: ‘Watch and tell me whatever occurs!’ So I am now reporting to the king whatever seems to me to be propitious and well-portending (and) beneficial to the king, my lord (to know)”.

Our letter nicely demonstrates how the scientific basis and usefulness of astrology and extispicy were unquestioned in the minds of the first millennium Mesopotamians. It also shows that the withholding of important information in these matters was considered detrimental to the state. The king’s attitude towards the denounced scholars may become understandable if we recall the delicate position of scientists working in the field of nuclear physics in our times.

The second crime, exposed in ll. 26–30, is of a much more concrete nature. One of the scholars, probably Aplayu, is said to have collected a band of ill-famed rascals and made a formal agreement with them for a purpose which is not stated but which it is easy to guess from the context (see below). This was expressly against the provisions of the Vassal-Treaties which forbade the forming of any kind of alliances and naturally especially those directed against the royal house. Cf. lines 212 f. of the treaty text: šum-ma al-tu-nu UKKIN ta-šá-kan-a-ni a-he-iš tu-lam-ma-a-ni a-na 1-en ina lib-bi-kú-nu LUGAL-u-tu ta-dan-a-ni “(you swear) that you will not hold an assembly and conspire with each other to give the kingship to one of you”; and ll. 153 ff. a-de-e ina IGI DINGIR meš-ka ta-šá-kan-a-ni . . . a-he-iš tu-lam-ma-a-ni “you will not make an agreement before gods . . . nor conspire with each other”. The reference to Âshûr-nadin-šumi is so suggestive that the informers certainly had one more treaty stipulation in mind: šum-ma al-tu-nu 1aš+šur-DÙ-A . . . la DUG.GA-tu la SIG-ŠU te-ep-pa-šá-nišu-un-ni ta-sa-ba-ta-šu-uni ta-du-ka-šu-un-ni a-na 10KUR-ši ta-da-našu-uni “(you swear) that you will not do (anything that is) not good and not proper to Assurbanipal (read: Šamaš-šumu-ukin), that you will not seize him, nor put him to death, nor hand him over to his enemy”. The informers clearly hint that history can be repeated, and that the unhappy end of Âshûr-nadin-šumi was also being prepared for the newly appointed Babylonian crown prince.

Incidentally, our passage, though short, gives the most detailed account of the end of Âshûr-nadin-šumi available so far. Hitherto we had only the laconic statement of the Babylonian Chronicle: 1AN.ŠAR-na-din-MU DIB-ma ana KUR NIM a-bi-ik “Âshûr-nadin-šumi was captured and carried off to Elam”. Since this statement is preceded in the Chronicle by an account of an Elamite invasion to Babylonia, it was thought that Âshûr-nadin-šumi was captured by the Elamites and not by the

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55 Translation of A. L. Oppenheim, *Centaurus* 14 (1969), 115. For more relevant examples, see ibid.
56 Note that already Ptolemy (2nd century A.D.) had to devote large sections of the proem to his *Tetrabiblos* for answering the criticism raised against astrology in his times.
57 It is noteworthy that the treaty partners were conjured by names of two *astral gods*. The Vassal-Treaties were likewise concluded “before stars” (*LAS* 1r. 18 f.) specified as Jupiter, Saturn, Venus, Mercury, Mars and Sirius in ll. 13–15 of the treaty text (i.e. the five classical planets and the most important of the fixed stars, the caniculum). Astral gods were invoked in other solemn oaths too (e.g., *LAS* 13), not to speak of blessings, benedictions, conjurations, etc. The nature and significance of the astral element in the religious thinking of Sargonid times has to my knowledge never been properly investigated and is therefore hardly correctly understood today.
58 *VTE* 123–127.
59 Col. ii 14 (GT 34, Pl. 48).
Babylonians themselves, as we now know. Taking into account how little is altogether known about Aššur-nādin-šumi, this additional detail must be welcomed.

The other letter parphrased by Šamaš-šumu-ukin had not been addressed to him but to the denounced astrologers Bēl-ēṣer and Šamaš-zēra-iqiṣa. We may assume that it had been confiscated by the crown prince after he had learnt of the charges directed against the two men.

While the reasons for quoting the letter are thus plain, I do not perceive the full meaning of the passages quoted from it. Did the letter render Urad-Nabû too suspicious in the eyes of Šamaš-šumu-ukin? This seems to me possible, but not compulsory. The order to mock the steward (l. 36) may have been understood as an incentive to seditious action, but it may equally well been meant only as a reproach. Similarly, the fact that the Assyrian Urad-Nabû calls the Babylonian Sulāyu his “brother” might have sounded suspicious, but must not necessarily have been so. We know nothing of the personal relations of Urad-Nabû, Sulāyu and the two astrologers.

The reference to Sulāyu is very interesting. The only contemporary text mentioning him is ABL 447, an account of school activities (reading and copying of literary texts) in a Ninevite palace. All students mentioned in this text have Babylonian names. Another noticeable feature in the text is that at least some of the students seem to have been schooled by compulsion. Thus we read, in Obv. 8–13 of the text, “Ninurta-gimilli, the son of the sandabakku (of Nippur), has completed the series (and) has been put in irons. He is (now) in charge of Bānūnī in the Succession Palace, there is no work for him (at present).” The next section (Obv. 14–19) reads: “Kudurru (and) Kunāyku have completed (the series) ‘Evil Demons’. They are at the command of Sāṣi.” Kudurru is here nearly certainly the son of Šamaš-ibni (the Chaldean sheikh of Bit-Dakûr) who was deported to Assyria in 675 b.C. To this list of “compelled” students our letter adds Sulāyu who is said to be “kept” in the Armoury of Nineveh “by order of the king”. Why were these Babylonian youths, of whom at least Ninurta-gimilli and Kudurru were of noble blood, kept and taught in the Assyrian capital? I believe I am not much mistaken in suggesting that they were above all taught the “Assyrian way of life” and were later on to enter into the king’s service as loyal officials in their native country. Indeed, our Sulāyu could well be identical with Sulā (= the Babylonian form of the name) whom Šamaš-šumu-ukin later in his reign appointed the commandant of the Babylonian city of Dilbat. Foreign princes kept as hostages and

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61 For the post route leading from Nineveh to Babylon see LAS 294 r. 3 ff. It is to be assumed that this route was under the direct control of Šamaš-šumu-ukin.
62 Cf. the respective frequencies of the relevant names in APN and NX.
63 See Babylonian Chronicle, Col. iv 14–15 (CT 34, Pl. 49). In this connection I would like to draw attention to ABL 756, a letter to Esarhaddon from “Kudurru, the son of Šamaš-ibni, the dead man whom the king brought back to life”. The letter must date from the time of Kudurru’s stay in Nineveh, since it is written in Assyrian.
64 Taking into consideration what a privilege scribal schooling meant in those times, it is hard to see another reason why these exiled men would have been given this honour. For the son of the sandabakku cf. also K.1353 r. 3, DUMU 14G.E.N.NA ša a-kan-na ka-ša-ša “the son of the š, who is kept arrested here (in Nineveh)” (AOAT 7, p. 158 f.), very probably referring to the same person.
65 Cf. ABL 326:8 ši-la-a 14GAR.KU ša DIL.BAN ša 14G.IŠ.IR-MU-GL.NA iq-qi-du “Sū, the commandant of Dilbat whom Šamaš-šumu-ukin appointed”. 
educated in Nineveh and later on placed on the throne (as pro-Assyrian vassals) in their home countries are well known, above all from the royal inscriptions.66

A good parallel illuminating this Assyrian method of indoctrination is found in the Bible where we read \((\text{Daniel } 1:3-7)\):

"Then the king ordered Ashpenaz, his chief eunuch, to take certain of the Israelite exiles, of the blood royal and of the nobility, who were to be young men of good looks and bodily without fault, at home in all branches of knowledge, well-informed, intelligent, and fit for service in the royal court; and he was to instruct them in the literature and language of the Chaldaeans. The king assigned them a daily allowance of food and wine from the royal table. Their training was to last for three years, and at the end of that time they would enter the royal service.

Among them there were certain young men from Judah called Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah; but the master of the eunuchs gave them new names: Daniel he called Belteshazzar, Hananiah Shadrach, Mishael Meshach and Azariah Abed-nego."67

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Year 670 was marked by a serious crisis in the internal affairs of Assyria; the Babylonian Chronicle has the following single entry for this year: \(\text{MU } 11\text{.KĀM LUGAL (ina) KUR aš+šur }10\text{GAL meš-šu ma-du-tū ina }zi\text{tUKUL id-duk}\) "In the 11th year, the king of Assyria (var. in Assyria) executed many of his magnates",68 which can only refer to a conspiracy or rebellion quelled in its beginning.69 Whether or not the present letter is somehow connected with this conspiracy can be made out only if new sources providing the lacking details become available.

66 Cf. R. Borger, \(\text{Ash.}, p. 53:15\) f.: \(\text{mā-bu-u-a tar-bit }\text{GAL AD-īd a-na LUGAL-u-tī UGU-lū Nu }\text{id-kun-ma it-tī DINGIR meš-šu a-na KUR-lū }u-tū-sī "I placed Tabū’a, a fostering of my father’s palace, to the kingship over them and returned her with her gods to her (home) country." References to foreign princes taken as hostages to Nineveh and later returned to their countries are numerous, see e.g. M. Streck, \(\text{Ash.}, p. 18\) f. Note also \(\text{ABL } 918\), a letter from Esarhaddon to the Elamite king Uriaku which shows that the kings had exchanged children as hostages in order to secure peace between their countries (the letter begins: "A tablet of Esarhaddon, king of Assyria, to Uriaku, king of Elam: I am well, your sons and daughters are well, my country and my magnates are well. May Uriaku, king of Elam, my brother, be well, may my sons and daughters be well, may your magnates and your country be well!").

67 According to the \text{New English Bible (Oxford and Cambridge, 1970)}.

68 See BM 25091 r. 4 (S. Smith, \(\text{BHT}, \text{Pl. I-III}); \text{CT } 34, \text{Pl. } 45 \text{iv } 8-9 \text{and Pl. } 50 \text{iv } 29.

69 This conspiracy is, excepting the Chronicle, attested only in letters. For a list and discussion of the pertinent texts see \(\text{AOAT } 5/2\), commentary on \(\text{LAS } 247\)