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THE CIVILIZING OF EA-ENKIDU : AN UNUSUAL TABLET OF THE BABYLONIAN GILGAMESH EPIC

BY
Andrew R. GEORGE

Presented here is a large fragment of a cuneiform tablet that I was able to study at first hand in Princeton in March 2005, when I prepared the cuneiform copies that accompany this article.¹ It is published here with the permission of the owner, who wishes to remain anonymous.²

The fragment represents the upper left-hand portion of what was once a tablet of six columns, three on each side, and measures 170 × 125 mm. Its maximum thickness is 29 mm, reducing to 21 mm at the left edge. On one side most of the inscribed surface is extant (Figs. 1, 3); on the other very little inscription survives (Figs. 2, 4). At first sight the better-preserved side, which is noticeably convex, is the reverse and the other side, which seems flatter, is the obverse. However, this identification is not borne out by closer inspection. On the better-preserved side portions of two columns can be read. Some lines of the left-hand column continue across the vertical ruling in to the middle column, where the scribe has had to avoid the overrunning characters by indenting. Clearly the middle column was written after the left-hand column. The latter is therefore col. i, the former col. ii, and this must be the tablet's obverse. The other side is by default the reverse. The patch of inscribed surface is clearly part of the middle column, which will then be col. v. Every tenth line of text is marked with the decimal sign. The use of such marks speaks for the serious intentions of the writer to produce a permanent copy fit for consultation, though the text is not free from error.

The text contained on the fragment is part of an Akkadian poetic narrative immediately recognizable as coinciding with versions of the Babylonian Epic of Gilgameš. Such an identification is compatible with the tablet's layout in six columns. The six-column format was normal for library tablets of Gilgameš in the first millennium, when there are almost no exceptions, but was also utilized in the Old Babylonian period, at least by the Pennsylvania and Yale tablets (OB II, III). The episodes preserved on the fragment published here are, on col. i, the passage where the hero relates dreams to his mother, who explains them; on col. ii, the civilization of a male character by a woman, who takes him to a shepherds' camp; and, on col. v, a description of the city as a place where the young women are supremely pretty. Most lines are

1. I have had the good fortune to read this tablet in seminars at the Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, and at the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London. Both exercises led to gains in understanding, for which I should like to express my gratitude to Professor Jerrold S. Cooper, Dr Daniel Schwemer and others who contributed to the seminars.

2. The tablet has since been offered for sale by a Californian bookseller, Michael Sharpe Rare and Antiquarian Books, as item 53 in his catalogue no. 1, issued on 4 September 2007. It is there described as "Gilgamesh. Manuscript in cuneiform. Mesopotamia, c. 1400 B.C." The sale was reported by another bookseller in a "blog" posted on 5 September 2007 at <http://blog.myfinebooks.com/2007/09/heritage-bookss.html>, with a photograph of the tablet's obverse.

very close to one or other of the known versions of the text, especially the Pennsylvania tablet (OB II, ed. George 2003 : 159–94) and Tablets I–II of the Standard Babylonian epic (SB I, II, ed. George 2003 : 535–71). Script and language are post-classical Old Babylonian but certainly second millennium. The only reason for not immediately identifying the text as a witness to an intermediate version of the Babylonian Epic of Gilgameš is the proper nouns. Where we expect Gilgameš, we read ^d30 (ll. 5, 6, 16, 17, 18, 39, 83) ; where Enkidu is wanted, we find ^d40 (ll. 80, 88, v 3', 7') ; and the city where the former resides is not Uruk, but Ur (ll. 5, 12, 33, v 3', 7'), except on one occasion when ^d40 is invited to Uruk, not Ur (l. 65). The prostitute's name, Šamkatum in the Pennsylvania tablet and Šamḫat in the Standard Babylonian version, is conditioned by her calling and not altered (90 : *ša-am*-[...]).

The two spellings ^d30 and ^d40 elsewhere represent respectively Sîn, the moon god, on account of the thirty-day month, and Ea, the god of the subterranean waters, for reasons which are obscure.³ Might this fragment bear a text about Sîn and Ea that was a parody or adaptation of the Epic of Gilgameš? While light-hearted spoofs are extant in Assyrian and Babylonian literature, there are in the scribal repertoire that has come down to us no parodies of serious narrative poems that exactly parallel the wording of the original. And this is the striking point. The wording of the fragment is so close to extant versions of the Epic of Gilgameš that it seems incontrovertible that what we have here is a piece from an edition of the epic in which the names have been changed deliberately. The solitary inconsistency, Uruk for Ur in l. 65, is important in this regard, for it reveals that a text with the expected proper nouns underlies the text on the tablet. The questions then are : can we explain ^d30 and ^d40 as *recherché* spellings of Gilgameš and Enkidu, or are we intended to understand that this poem asserts the syncretisms Sîn = Gilgameš and Ea = Enkidu?

Sîn = Gilgameš, Enki = Enkidu, Ur = Uruk?

Of course, Ea is Enki by another name, so that ^d40 = Ea might be interpreted as an abbreviation for the name Enkidu. Until recently the only name that appeared in abbreviated form in the Babylonian Gilgameš was Gilgameš's, in the second millennium often written ^dGIŠ and once ^dGIŠ.BIL. That has changed. Enkidu is also abbreviated, to ^d*en*, in the larger of the Old Babylonian tablets now in Norway (OB Schøyen₂, ed. George 2003 : 224–40). In the same tablet Ḫuwawa is ^d*hu* and ^d*hu-wa*. So there seems to have been a tradition of abbreviation of names of the poem's dramatis personae. Abbreviations utilize the first sign after the divine determinative (^dGIŠ, ^d*en*, ^d*hu*), and sometimes also the next (^dGIŠ.BIL, ^d*hu-wa*). Nowhere is an abbreviation taken from the end of a name, so reading ^d30 in the present text as ^d*eš* is not a probable solution to the problem. And if ^d30 is not an abbreviation, then perhaps ^d40 is not either.

The substitution of numbers for certain cuneiform signs is a well-known habit of cuneiform scribes. Some such encryptions became established as conventional spellings. Others were handed down only in lists that today we call number syllabaries (Pearce 1996, 2005, von Weiher 1993 : 130–1 no. 218) or confined to the periphery, as with the limited examples of number-writing at Susa (Labat 1965). Neither in the number syllabaries nor at Susa is there any suggestion that 30 and 40 could represent the signs *giš* and *en*, or any other signs that might identify these numbers as spellings of the names Gilgameš and Enkidu (the equivalence of *en* is

3. A recent suggestion is that Enki is 40 because the sun was in the Path of Ea at the winter solstice, when length of daylight in the ideal scheme of length of day and night, expressed as a sexagesimal fraction of the longest day, was 0,40 (Parpola 1993 : 203). I am unconvinced by this, not just because, as Parpola admits, the observation only works for Anu (1) and Enlil (50) when their respective paths are exchanged, but also because the varying lengths of day and night were expressed in texts as weights of water and as units of time, but never as sexagesimal fractions of the longest day (Al-Rawi and George 1991–2, Hunger 1999, 2001).

given in one number syllabary as the sexagesimal fraction 13,31 ; Pearce 1996 : 458 D ii 10). Indeed, the fact that Uruk is adjusted to Ur, and not to something more opaque, suggests that cryptic writing is not the issue here.

The substitution of Ur for Uruk is the least intractable of the three substitutions. It has long been known that in some historical traditions Gilgameš was considered to have been a king of Ur, not of Uruk. This is seen clearly in the Letter of Gilgameš, a fictional composition known from first-millennium copies. In it Gilgameš describes himself as *šar Urim mār Kullab* “king of Ur, native of Kullab”, where Kullab is part of Uruk (*STT* 40 // 42, 2). “This association [of Gilgameš] with Ur as well as Uruk must be a distant legacy of the efforts of Ur-Nammu and Šulgi of Ur to identify themselves in their considerable literary output as brothers of the great hero” (George 2003 : 119). Ur and Uruk were already viewed as complements the one of the other in Early Dynastic times, when Lugalkiginnedudu described his dominion over both cities as the combination of *nam.en* (rulership in Uruk-Kullab) with *nam.lugal* (rulership in Ur). The political identity of Uruk later merged with Ur as a policy of the Ur III dynasty, so that a Šulgi hymn even offers them as variants, extolling Gilgameš as a conqueror “who brought kingship from Kiš to Uruk, *var.* Ur” (Šulgi O 61, George 2003 : 111). Presumably the policy arose to assert the primacy of the new capital as a centre of political power. Thereafter the merger of the two cities entered the historiographic tradition. Thus “king of Ur, native of Kullab” is a combination of epithets that tallies with what later tradition implicitly believed about Ur-Nammu, for a Late Babylonian chronicle maintains that Utu-ḫengal of Uruk was Šulgi’s maternal grandfather, and thus Ur-Nammu was Utu-ḫengal’s son-in-law (*SpTU* I 2, 10). The same connections were evidently attributed by some to Gilgameš.

Just as we understand *úrim*(ŠEŠ.UNUG)^{ki} as Ur, replacing *uruk*(UNUG)^{ki}, so too we are encouraged to understand ^d30 and ^d40 in the normal way, as Sîn and Ea, replacing Gilgameš and Enkidu. Let us then suppose that what the scribe had in mind in writing ^d30 and ^d40 that Gilgameš was somehow Sîn and Enkidu somehow Ea. There must have been a deliberate purpose in these substitutions, as there was in a recension of *Enūma eliš* that circulated in seventh-century Assyria, with the name of Marduk replaced, for theological reasons, by Aššur (Lambert 1997). Sîn and Gilgameš are more closely related than is at first apparent when one recalls that, in the Letter of Gilgameš, Gilgameš is “king of Ur”. This is also self-evidently a title of Sîn, the patron deity of this city. But there should be a more cogent explanation for the substitution than that.

It has often been asserted that the first-millennium poem of Gilgameš, set out in twelve tablets, can be read as an astral myth, though few Assyriologists, if any, have been persuaded by the arguments presented so far. This new evidence suggests that at least one ancient scholar reinterpreted the poem on a cosmic scale, as a mythological narrative with divine protagonists. Far from being a solar figure, as some have wanted, Gilgameš took on, in this man’s view, the characteristics of the moon god, while Enkidu, perhaps only by virtue of his name, became Ea. Why was Ea thought suitable as the moon’s companion? In known mythology Ea has little connection with the moon, so that in search of an explanation one has to turn elsewhere.

In the speculative scholarship of Babylonian commentators, ideas are sometimes expressed that might be thought to assert a stronger association of Sîn and Ea than that found in mythology. There was a notion that the waxing moon, when shaped like a kidney from the sixth to tenth days of the month, was Ea (Livingstone 1985 : 47) ; but they equated the immediately preceding and succeeding phases with Anu and Enlil, so that the idea here seems to be not that Sîn had a special relationship with Ea but that the moon in its different phases encompassed all cosmic forces. Scholarly speculation provides for another possible link between the two deities, and with Enkidu. A section of the Nippur Compendium that deals with the days of the month

equates night with Ea and Damkina, with a variant E-ude-Amanki “House, Marvel of Amanki” (George 1992 : 152–3). If Ea could be night itself, we may cite the tradition that Enkidu was responsible for regulating the watches of the night, presumably because he had been the shepherds’ nightwatchman (George 2003 : 143–4).

The moon and the night are obvious partners, but there are strong reservations. First, it is not clear how the moon and the night are suited to taking the parts of Gilgameš and Enkidu in the story told by the epic, and what understanding would be gained by such equations. Gilgameš lost Enkidu, but the moon does not lose the night. On the contrary, it is the night, ever-present and unchanging, that loses its companion, when the moon disappears from the night sky at the end of each lunar month. Second, these commentaries belong to the middle and late first millennium. It is not safe to assume that they contain information that can be used to elucidate material that, as we shall see, is in the order of one thousand years older.

Simple allegory and symbolism are other avenues for exploration. It can be commented that the poem of Gilgameš runs in a circle, just as the moon completes a cycle every lunar month. But Ea plays no part in the lunar cycle that can be correlated allegorically with the life and death of Enkidu. The moon is a potent symbol of kingship, displaying, as it does, the *agû* “crown”, and Gilgameš was the greatest king of Babylonian legend. Ea is the source of all wisdom, but in this role is hardly matched with the wild Enkidu, even if he is accredited with native intuition as an interpreter of dreams. What we currently know of Šîn and Ea does not open the text to an additional exegesis of the plot of the epic. For the moment the scribe’s purpose in replacing Gilgameš and Enkidu with these two deities is obscure.

Language and spelling

The language of the text is not classical Old Babylonian, for mimation is nowhere present in word-final position, not even on the name of the sky god, ^d*a-ni* (9, 20, 28). There are a few points of elevated style but no more than one normally encounters in Gilgameš : one instance of the terminative ending : *šadiška* (4) ; a construct state in *-u* : *milku sinništi* (72), unless an error for *milku* ⟨*ša*⟩ *sinništi* ; an apocopated suffix in *tatarrâš* (25) for *tatarrâššu* ; and use of the short form of the preposition *eli* in *eššu* (22, 37) v. *elīšu* (34). The assimilation /š/ > /šš/ in *eššu* < *elšu* and *atbaššu* (15) < *atbalšu* is unremarkable in Middle Babylonian but not normal in Old Babylonian ; an early instance occurs in a tablet of bilingual proverbs from Nippur where *akalšu* “his bread” is written *a-ka-šu* (Lambert 1960 : 273 l. 2 = Alster 1997 : 14 SP 1.42 ; GAG § 34c Ergänzungen). More remarkable is the shift /t/ > /št/ in *ištabaš* (75) for *iltabaš* ; the shift of liquid to fricative before a dental is hitherto attested only for /t/ > /št/.

The spelling displays many Old Babylonian habits : /qu/ is always written *qú* (9, 23), and /qa/ is always *qá* (13, 17, 20, 26, 29, 58, 70) ; note also *ṭù* (22) and *uṣ/z₄* (67, 73) ; vocalic onset in certain words is written *plene* : *ú-ul* (11, 13, 91), *ú-um-mi-id* (14), *i-ip-pa-al* (26). The *plene* spelling of a short final vowel as in *um-mi-šu-ú* (7) is not unusual in Old Babylonian writing. Other usage is not classical Old Babylonian, however. The sequence /VssV/ is spelled the same, whatever the derivation. Examples of /VssV/ < /VtšV/ are : *-as-sa* (71), *-as-su* (77) ; cf. occurrences of /VssV/ < /VstV/ : *is-sa-* (17, 26, 86). This conflicts with Old Babylonian practice. The bisyllable /ayi/ is written *a-a-i* (8). Less diagnostic are /pi/ written *pi* (30), /su/ written *su* (81), and ligatures of *i-na* and *a-na*. However, a very distinctive feature is the use of the sign *ku* for the onset of *gupru* (78) ; this is not normal in Babylonia at any time, but occurs at Boğazköy (see the textual note). Some common nouns are written with logograms, but also two verbs : *du* = *alāku* (27) and *igi* = *amāru* (39b). To summarize, the spelling employed in this tablet is heavily influenced by Old Babylonian practice but the overall impression is of a tablet written after the

classical period, i.e. post-eighteenth century. Very few comparable literary tablets survive from the middle centuries of the second millennium, at least in the published record, and so the evidence of language and spelling cannot speak with exactitude; but on these grounds we might consider either a very late Old Babylonian date or an early Middle Babylonian date.

Date and provenance

Other evidence confirms the impression derived from the text's language and spelling. The tablet was reported to be part of a group of unpublished tablets that included omen and liturgical compositions, some mentioning Pešgaldaramaš (*peš₁₁-gal-dàra-meš*) and Ayadaragamma (*a-a-dàra-galam-ma*), kings of the First Sealand Dynasty, and to share with them aspects of physical appearance and ductus. I was able to confirm this report from photographs of the tablets in question. In particular, the present piece closely resembles a tablet of lung omens dated to Pešgaldaramaš. Close resemblance is not an infallible criterion for attributing provenance, but it is enough to permit a provisional hypothesis that the tablet published here derives from the same source as the Sealand tablets. A date in the period of the kings mentioned would place the tablet in the early sixteenth century (middle chronology), shortly after the fall of Babylon and the end of the Old Babylonian dynasty. In current reckoning this is the beginning of the Middle Babylonian period. Consequently I give it the siglum MB Priv₁ (Priv = private collection), after the style established in my critical edition (George 2003).

The realm of the First Sealand Dynasty is now known as the provenance of a large archive of administrative tablets, to be published by Stephanie Dalley (Dalley 2007) and also dating to Ayadaragamma. Because the Sealand was not hitherto known as a source of literary tablets, such a provenance would explain why the ductus of the tablet published here is not a close match for any published Old or Middle Babylonian script. An origin in the southern periphery, far from Nippur and Babylon, might also account for other features of the tablet and its text. Two careless corruptions – *uštapaḥḥaru* (21) for *uštamaḥḥaru*, and *ula"iṭū* (22) for *una"iḏū* – and a false nominal case – genitive *nuššišu* (11) for accusative *nuššašu* – are perhaps indications of provincial origin. The presence of *mā* as a particle introducing speech in l. 18 contributes to the impression of a text corrupted by local influence.

More intriguing are features hitherto associated with places further afield. The unvoiced onset of *kupru* has already been mentioned as otherwise occurring in Anatolia. The ends of lines are not regularly aligned with the right margin; this is also a habit of the north-western periphery. The presence of these features raises the possibility that some well-known habits of mid-second-millennium Syrian and Anatolian scribes derived, ultimately, from the Sealand, where it now seems there was an active tradition of scholarship in the early sixteenth century, just the period when both Babylon and Nippur were abandoned. The existence of a tradition of scholarship in the Sealand also suggests that not all the southern intellectuals had fled north in the reign of Samsuiluna at the end of the eighteenth century; it can be envisaged that some sought refuge instead at the court of his enemies, the kings of the Sealand, and there passed down their scribal lore to succeeding generations. Further publication of Late Old Babylonian and Sealand-period literary texts will clarify matters.

The textual relationship between the present fragment and other versions of the poem will be examined in the commentary below, where consequent improvements in our understanding of those versions will also be set out. Before these comparisons, it is opportune to present the text itself. As in George 2003, cross-references at the right-hand margin identify parallel lines in other versions of the poem. The symbol // identifies shared lines, sometimes even verbatim correspondence, while lines in less close relationships are introduced by the abbreviation "cf."

Transliteration

Photographs : Figs. 1–2, cuneiform copies : Figs. 3–4

obv. col. i

- 1 [.]
- 2 [x x x x li]-mu-ra ᵀpa-ni¹-k[a] // SB I 224
- 3 [libbu(šà)? mu-du]-ᵀú¹ i-še-i ib-ra cf. SB I 214, II 32 etc.
- 4 [ᵀ40 la-a]m ta-al-li-ka ša-di-iš-ka // SB I 243
- 5 [x x x]x ᵀ30 i-na libbi(šà) úrim^{ki} i-da-ga-la šu-na-ti // SB I 244
- 6 [it-t]i-la-am-ma ᵀ30 i-ta-mar šu-ut-ta cf. OB II 24 // SB I 273a
- 7 [it]-bé i-ta-ma-(a) a-na um-mi-šu-ú // OB II 25, cf. SB I 245
- 8 [ib?]-bi-šu-ma ka-ak-ka-bu ša-ma-a-a-i // OB II 6 // SB I 247
- 9 ki-iš-ru ša ᵀa-ni im-qú-ta a-na še-ri-ia // OB II 7 // SB I 248
- 10 aš-ši-šu-ma ka-bi-it e-li-ia // OB II 8 // SB I 249
- 11 as-ki-ip-šu-ma nu-uš-ši-šu ú-ul el-e // OB II 9 // SB I 250
- 12 ᵀúrim^{ki} mātu(kur) pa-ḫi-ir e-li-ia // OB II 10 // SB I 251
- 13 ᵀpa-aḫ¹-ru eṭ-lu!(KU)-tu ú-ul i-li-ú šu-uq-qá-šu
- 14 ú-um-mi-id bu-di i-mi-du ia-ti // OB II 12–13
- 15 aš-ša-aš-šu-ma at-ba-šu a-na ma-aḫ-ri-ki // OB II 14 // SB I 257
- 16 um-mi ᵀ30 mu-da-at i-pa-aš-ša-ar // OB II 15, cf. SB I 259–60
- 17 is-sa-aq-qá-ra a-na ᵀ30 // OB II 16, cf. SB I 259–60
- 18 ᵀma¹ mi-in-de ᵀ30 ša ki ka-ta-ma // OB II 17
- 19 i-na še-ri i'-a-li-id-ma ú-ra-ab-ba še-ru // OB II 18–19
- 20 ki-ma ki-iš-ri ša ᵀa-ni du-un!-nu-na e-mu-qá-šu // SB I 270
- 21 aš-šum uš-ta-pa-aḫ-ḫa-ru it-ti-ka // OB II 43 // SB I 290
- 22 ú-la-i-tù-šu-ma i-pa-aḫ-ḫu-ru eš-šu
- 23 ù eṭ-lu-tu ú-na-aš-ša-qú ša-tu // OB II 21
- 24 ta-am-ma-ar-šu-ma libba(šà)-ka i-ša-ak // OB II 20
- 25 te-ed-di-ra-aš-šu-ma ta-ta-ar-ra-aš a-na maḫ-ri-ia // OB II 22–3
- 26 [ᵀ30] ᵀi¹-ip-pa-al-ši is-sa-aq-qá-ra a-na um-mi-šu
- 27 [x x x x]x li-ša-am-ma li-ib-ši lillika(du)^{ka}
- 28 [li-im-qú-ta]m? ᵀki¹-ma ki-iš-ri ša ᵀa-ni
- 29 [lu du-un-nu-na] e-mu-qá-šu
- 30 [x x x x x x]-ki-ik-ma li-na-pi-iš libbi(šà)^{ki¹}
- 31 [it-ti-la-am-ma ᵀ30] i-ta-mar šu-ut-ta // l. 6 // OB II 24, cf. SB I 273a
- 32 [it-bé i-ta-ma-a a-na] um-mi-šu // l. 7 // OB II 25, cf. SB I 274–5
- 33 [x (x) x i-na su-qí ša ú]rim^{ki} ri-bi-ti // OB II 27–8 // SB I 277
- 34 [ḫa-aš-ši-nu na-di-m]a e-li-šu pa-aḫ-ru // OB II 29–30 // SB I 278
- 35 [el-qé-šu-ma aš-ta-ka-an-šu] a-na a-ḫi-ia // OB II 35–6
- 36 [ḫa-aš-ši-nu ša-ni bi]-nu-ta // OB II 31
- 37 [a-ra-am-šu-ma ki-ma aš-š]a-ti a-ḫa-bu-ub eš-šu // OB II 33–4 // SB I 284
- 38 [um-mi ᵀ30 mu-da-at i]-pa-aš-ša-ar // l. 16 // OB II 37, cf. SB I 286
- 39 [is-sa-aq-qá-ra a-na ᵀ30] // l. 17 // OB II 38, cf. SB I 287
- [ḫ]a-aš-ši-nu ᵀ30 ⟨šà⟩ tāmuru(igi)-šu amēlu(lú) // SB I 288
- 40 [il-la-ka-ku-um-ma mu-še-zi-i]b ib-ri // SB I 291
- 41 [ta-am-ma-ar-šu-ma libba(šà)-ka] ᵀi¹-ša-ak // l. 24 // OB II 20
- 42 [te-ed-di-ra-aš-šu-ma ta-ta-ar-ra-aš]-ᵀšú a-na maḫ-ri¹-ia // l. 25 // OB II 22–3
- 43 [.]x

remainder of col. i lost

Translation

- 1 [The harlot said to him, to Ea (Enkidu) :]
- 2 “[Let the people(?) (. . .)] see your face,
- 3 [your heart(?), now wise,] is seeking a friend.
- 4 [O Ea (Enkidu), before] you came from your uplands,
- 5 [. . .] Sîn (Gilgameš) was having dreams in Ur.
- 6 Sîn (Gilgameš) [lay] down and had a dream,
- 7 [he] arose to talk to his mother :
- 8 ‘The stars of the sky grew distinct(?),
- 9 a lump of sky-rock fell down before me.
- 10 I picked it up but it was too heavy for me,
- 11 I gave it a shove but could not move it.
- 12 The land of Ur was gathered about me,
- 13 the young men all together could not raise it.
- 14 I braced my shoulder, they supported me,
- 15 I picked it up and took it away into your presence.’
- 16 Being wise the mother of Sîn (Gilgameš) explained,
- 17 saying to Sîn (Gilgameš),
- 18 so : ‘For sure, O Sîn (Gilgameš), there is one like yourself,
- 19 he was born in the wild and the wild reared (him).
- 20 His strength is as mighty as a lump of sky-rock,
- 21 because I shall gather in force (sic! *for* make him equal) with you.
- 22 They shackled (sic! *for* admired) it, gathering around it,
- 23 and the young men kissing it :
- 24 You will see him and your heart will laugh,
- 25 you will hug him and bring him into my presence.’
- 26 [Sîn (Gilgameš)] answered her, saying to his mother :
- 27 ‘Let [a friend] come forth, so be it, let him come!
- 28 [Let him befall] me(?) like a lump of sky-rock,
- 29 [let] his strength [be mighty!]
- 30 [. . .] . . . and let him ease my heart!’
- 31 [Sîn (Gilgameš) lay down and] had a dream.
- 32 [He arose to talk to] his mother :
- 33 ‘[. . . in the street of] Ur-the-Capital,
- 34 [an axe was lying] and (people) were gathered around it.
- 35 [I took it up and put it] at my side.
- 36 [The axe was strange] in shape,
- 37 [I loved it like a] wife, caressing and embracing it.’
- 38 [Being wise, the mother of Sîn (Gilgameš)] explained,
- 39 [saying to Sîn (Gilgameš) :]
- 40 ‘The axe, O Sîn (Gilgameš), that you saw is a man,
- 41 [there will come to you one who will save] (his) friend.
- 42 [You will see him and your heart] will laugh,
- 43 [you will hug him and bring] him into my presence.’”

obv. col. ii

two lines lost

- 55 x[.
 56 b[a?-
 57 iš-tu x[.
 58 dam-qá-ta ¹ d[40 kīma ili tabašši] // [SB II], cf. OB II 53 // SB I 207
 59 am-mi-ni ki-m[a nammaššê tarappud šēra] // SB II 29, cf. OB II 54–5 // I 208
 60 li-it-ba-aš l[u-ub-ša] cf. OB II 110–11
 61 né-en-zi-iḫ né-[be-ḫa] // SB II 28
 62 li-qé ³ kakka(tukul) ki-ma m[u-ti . . .] cf. OB II 112–13
 63 mi-iš-šu lu ra-ma-t[a] // SB II 30!
 64 am-mi-ni at-ta ki-ma n[am-] // SB II 29
 65 lu ta-mu-ur-ma unug^k[.]
 66 šu-ub-ta ša ni-ši {ras.} m[u-ša-ab ^d a-ni?] cf. OB II 58 // SB I 210
 67 a-šar eṭ-lu-tu uz₄-zu-ḫ[u nēbeḫī?] // SB I 227
 68 ú-mi-ša ma-a-a-al m[u-ši . . .] cf. SB I 228, 232
 69 at-ta a-na zi-bi ta-a[š-] cf. OB II 62–3
 70 ab-ka-ta i-na qá-aq-[qá-ri] // OB II 64–5
 71 iš-me-ma a-ma-as-sa im-t[a-ga-ar qabâša] // OB II 66
 72 mi-il-ku si-in-ni-iš-t[i imtaqut ana libbīšu] // OB II 67–8
 73 iḫ-mu-uš₄ lu-ub-ša iš-te-n[am ultabbissu] // OB II 69–70, cf. SB II 34
 74 ù ša-na-⟨a⟩ ši-i {ras.} i[š-ta-ba-aš] // OB II 71–2, cf. SB II 35
 75 iš-ta-ba-aš lu-ub-š[a] cf. OB II 110–11
 76 ša-am-na ip-pa-ši-i[š] cf. OB 108–9
 77 ša-ab-ta-at qá-as-su ki-ma ⟨i⟩-l[i ireddešu] // OB II 73–4 // SB II 36
 78 a-na ku-up-ri ša re-e-i a-š[ar tarbāši] // OB II 75–6 // SB II 37
 79 i-mu-ru-šu-ma re-e-ú ù x[.] cf. OB II 77 // SB II 38
 80 a-na ^d40 ki-ma i-li uš-[ki-in-nu] cf. OB II 78–9?
 81 ka-am-su re-e-ú ma-ḫ[a-ar-šu]
 82 ka-pa-ar-ru ud-da-am-m[a-šu ana šērīšu?] // OB II 80 // 183 // SB II 40
 83 eṭ-lu-um-mi a-na ^d30 m[a-ši-il padatta] // OB II 81–2 // 184–5, cf. SB II 41
 84 la-na né-e' e-še-em-t[a pungul] // OB II 83–4 // 186–7 // SB II 42 bb
 85 mi-in-de i'-a-al-la-⟨ad⟩ ¹ i-na¹ [šadī] // OB II 114
 86 is-sa-ak-pu rē'û(sipa)^{mes} [mušī'āti]
 87 ši-it-tu iṣ-ša-¹ ba¹-a[s-su-nu-ti . . .]
 88 ^d40 na-šir-[šu-nu amēlu ēru] // OB II 118–19 // SB II 62
 89 it-ta-n[a-]
 90 it-ti ša-am-[ḫa-at ippuš ulša?] // OB II 135–6?
 91 ú-ul i-[.]
 92 ut-ta-a[p-pi-iš?] // OB II 115–16 // SB II 60?
 93 mi-im-¹ ma¹ [.]
 94 [x x] x[.]

gap of more than two columns and a half, ca 130 ll.

Gap of 15 ll. When the text resumes the prostitute is again talking to Ea (Enkidu), at least from l. 58:

- 57 From [.]
 58 “You are handsome, [O Ea (Enkidu), you are just like a god,
 59 why like [the animals do you roam the wild?]
 60 Clothe yourself [with a garment . . . ,]
 61 be girt with a waistband [. !]
 62 Take up a weapon, [become(?)] like a warrior!
 63 Why do you inhabit [. ?]
 64 Why do you, like the [animals, roam the wild?]
 65 You should see Uruk, [. ,]
 66 the people’s home, seat [of Anu(?),]
 67 where the young men are girt [with waistbands(?),]
 68 daily the beds of night-[time . . .]
 69 To the festive food you will [. ,]
 70 you are (now) displaced from the territory [. . .]”
 71 He heard her words, consented [to what she said,
 72 a woman’s counsel [struck home in his heart.]
 73 She took off (her) garment, [clothed him in] one part,
 74 and the other part she put [on herself.]
 75 He put on the garment [. ,]
 76 he anointed himself with oil [.]
 77 Grasping his hand, [she began leading him,] like a [god,]
 78 to the shepherds’ camp, the site [of the sheep-pen.]
 79 The shepherds saw him and [. ,]
 80 they threw [themselves prostrate] before Ea (Enkidu) as (before) a god.
 81 The shepherds were bowed down in [his] presence,
 82 the herdsboys humbling themselves [before him.]
 83 “The fellow is [equal in build] to Šîn (Gilgameš),
 84 (though) squatter of stature, [he is sturdier of] bone.
 85 For sure he is born in [the uplands.]”
 86 The shepherds lay themselves down [at night,
 87 sleep overtook [them,]
 88 Ea (Enkidu) was [their] watchman, [a man wide awake.]
 89 He kept [. ,]
 90 with Šamḫat [pleasuring himself.]
 91 He did not [. ,]
 92 he kept chasing(?) [.]
 93 Anything [. . .

long lacuna

rev. col. v

- 1' [. . .] x x [. . .
 2' [. . .] x x x *ku*l?-l[a- . . .
 3' [. . .] ʔ^d40 *úr*im^{ki} [. . . // SB I 226?
 4' [. . .]-ga-ab? a-š*i*-im-x[. . .
 5' [a-ša-ar?] ar-da-ʔ^t *tu*ʔ šu-um-la-[a . . . // SB I 230
 6' [ku-uz₄-ba] ʔ^tzu¹-ʔ^tu-ú-na ma-l[a-a ri-ša-a-ti] // SB I 231
 7' [x x x] x-ša? ^d40 *ú*[rim^{ki} . . . cf. SB I 233?
 8' [ʔ^d30 *lu*]-k[a-a]l-ʔ^tlim¹-ka eṭ-la [. . . // SB I 234
 9' [. . .] x x ʔ^teṭ¹-lu-ta b[a-ni . . . cf. SB I 236
 10' [. . .] x x x x [. . .

Significant variants in shared lines

- 4 *šadīška* for SB I 243 *ultu šadīmma* “from the uplands”
 5 *idaggala šunāti* for SB I 244 *inaṭṭala šunātēka* “was dreaming about you”
 8 [ib?]-bi-šu-ma for SB I 247 *ibšānimma* “appeared to me”
 9 *kišru* for SB I 248 *kīma kišrī* “like lumps of rock”
 10 *kabit* for OB II 8 *iktabit* “it grew heavy”, SB I 249 *dān* “it was too much”
 11 *askipšūma* for OB II 9 *unīssūma* “I pushed at it”, SB I 250 *ultablakkissūma* “I kept trying to roll it”
 11 *el'e* for OB II 9 *eltē'i*, SB I 250 *elē'i'a*
 12 *paḥir elīya* for OB II 10 *paḥir elīšu* “was gathered about it”, SB I 251 *izzaz elī[šu]* “was standing around [it]”
 14 *būdī* for OB II 12 *pūtī* “my forehead”.
 15 *atbaššu ana maḥrīki* for OB II 14 *atbalaššu ana šērīki* “I brought it away to you”, SB I 257 [a]ttadīšu ana šaplī[ki] “[I] set it down at [your] feet”
 16 // 38 *mūdāt ipaššar* for OB II 15 *mūde'at kalāma* “knowing everything”
 18 *mā minde* for OB II 17 *minde*
 18 *kī kātāma* for OB II 17 *kīma kâtī*
 19 *urabba šēru* for OB II 19 *urabbīšu šadū* “the uplands reared him”
 21 *aššum uštapaḥḥaru* for OB II 43 *aššum uštamaḥḥaru* “because I shall make (him) equal”, SB I 290 *u anāku ultamaḥḥaršu* “and I shall make him equal”
 23 *u* where OB II 21 omits
 23 *šātu* for OB II 21 *šēpīšu* “his feet”
 24 // 41 *libbaka iṣāk* for OB II 20 *taḥaddu atta* “you will rejoice”
 25 // 42 *ana maḥrīya* for OB II 23 *ana šērīya* “to me”
 31 *šutta* for OB II 24 *šanītam* “another”
 36 [bi]nūta for OB II 31 *būnūšu* “its form”
 37 *aḥabbub eššu* for OB II 34 *aḥabbub elšu*, SB I 284 *elīšu aḥbub*
 39b *ḥaššinnu* ^d30 *igi-šu* for SB I 288 *mārī ḥaššinnu ša tāmuru* “My son, the axe that you saw”
 58 *damqāta*, with MB Boğ₁ // SB, for OB II 53 *anaṭṭalka* “I am looking at you”
 59 *kīma* for OB // MB Boğ₁ // SB *itti* “with”
 61 *nenziḥ* for SB II 28 *nanziḥ*
 63 *miššu lū ramāta* for SB II 30 *mitluku ramānīšu* “taking his own counsel”
 64 *atta kīma* for SB II 29 *itti* “with”
 69 *ana zībī* for OB II 62 ? (damaged, but different)
 72 *milku* for OB II 67 *milku* *ša*
 73 *iḥmuš lubša* for OB II 69 *iṣḥuṭ libšam* “she stripped off her clothing”
 74 *u šanā!* for OB II 71 *libšam šani'am* “the other garment”
 74 *i[štabaš]* for OB II 72 *italbaš*
 75 *ištabaš lubša* for OB II 110 *ilbaš libšam*
 76 *ippašiš* for OB II 108 *iptašaš*
 83 *eṭlummi ana* for OB [80] // 183 *anāmi* “to”
 83 // OB II [80] // 183 *mašil padattam*, SB II 40 *kī mašil lāna* “how similar in build”
 84 *nē'* for OB II [81] // 184 // MB Boğ₁ *šapil* “shorter”
 85 *i'allad!* for OB II [83] // 86 *ša iwwaldu* “he that was born”, SB II 42 MS bb *alid*
 88 *nāšir[šunu]* for OB II 118 *maššāršunu* “their watch”, SB II 62 *nāqissanu* “their herdsman”
 rev. 5' *šumlā* for SB I 230 *šūsumā* “comely”

- 3' "[...] O Ea (Enkidu), Ur [...]
 4' [...] [...] [...]
 5' [where] the young women are filled [with beauty(?),]
 6' graced [with charm,] full [of delight.]
 7' [...] [...] Ea (Enkidu), Ur [...],
 8' [I will] show you [Šîn (Gilgameš),] a man [...]
 9' [...] [...] he is fair in manhood [...]"

NOTES

4. For the ablative function of "terminative" *-iš* see *GAG* § 67b.

5. The broken text in front of ^d30, which ends in an upright wedge, is absent from the parallel, SB I 244 *Gilgameš ina libbi Uruk inaṭṭala šunātēka*. One might read [*šū-ú*] ^{md}30, but the determinative *DIŠ* = ^m is not used elsewhere on this tablet.

8–9. On these lines and their parallels see the commentary below.

13. The sign *ú* of *ú-ul* was inserted in the line as an afterthought, and *tu* squeezed as a consequence.

18. On the particle *mā* at the beginning of Akkadian clauses see Kienast 1961 and *CAD* M/1 1–4 s.v. *mā*. Simple spellings are confined to the third and early second millennia; thereafter the word is written *ma-a*. As (i) a particle of rhetoric *mā* expresses objection (Oakk, OA, OB, NB) or confirmation (Oakk, OB, Boğazköy, MA, NA), but it also serves as (ii) a particle introducing or continuing direct speech or quotation (MB, Boğazköy, Ras Shamra, MA, NA, SB), particularly in the north. Objection is not appropriate in the present context, for Ninsun does not dispute the dream's content, and confirmation seems redundant alongside *minde*, which has exactly that force (George 2003: 182 on OB II 17). Thus I take *ma* as (ii). It is without parallel elsewhere in the Gilgameš corpus and indicates the influence of vernacular usage on the text.

22. The verb *ula* "iṭūšūma strikes a very false note; no doubt it is corrupt for *una*" *idūšūma* "they admired him".

24 // 41. The charming idiom of the heart laughing, said of one falling in love, also occurs in an unpublished Old Babylonian love poem (MS 2866: 2): *li-bi i-ši-ik* (ed. George forthcoming). In both texts the verb derives from the root *√š'h* (I am indebted to Jerrold S. Cooper for this insight), i.e. *šāḥu* "to laugh" with substitution of plosive /k/ for fricative /h/, as in *tamāḥu* > *tamāku*, *šamuḥtu* > *šamuktu* etc. (Knudsen 1969). It is noteworthy that west Semitic languages employ the plosives /k/ and /q/ as the third radical of cognates of *šāḥu* (see *AHW* s.v.). Further examples of *libbu šāḥu* in Akkadian occur conventionally spelled in MB letters (*PBS* I/2 36: 9–10): *lib-bi ma-'di-iš' iṣ-ši-ḥa-an-[ni]* "my heart rejoiced very much"; (*BE* XVII/1 89: 8–9): *lib-bi a-na a-ma-ri-ka iṣ-ši-ḥa-an-ni* "my heart rejoiced at (the idea of) seeing you"; and in Ashurnāširpal II's great display inscription (*I R* 24 iii 26, ed. Grayson 1991: 214): *a-na ši-tap-ru-šū ḥu-te-ni-šu i-ša-ḥa libba(ša)-šu* "whose heart delighted in letting fly his darts(?)".

33. The word *ribītu* "main street" as an epithet of cities was briefly discussed in George 2003: 183 sub 28. That note overlooked the evidence from Mari that demonstrates *ribītu* in such a usage signifies a centre of political power (Durand 1991, Charpin 1991). The literal translations "Uruk-the-Town-Square" (George 1999) and "Uruk-Main-Street" (George 2003) are hereby retracted. On the etymology of *ribītu* see now Edzard 2000: 295.

40. The parallel line is longer (SB I 291): *illakakumma dannu tappū mūšēzib ibri*, but there is not space on the present tablet to hold it all. An alternative restoration is to omit the verb: [*da-an-nu tap-pu-ú mu-še-zi-i*] *b ib-ri* "[a mighty companion, the saviour] of (his) friend".

63. The interrogative *miššu* is booked in the dictionaries as a lemma confined to Old Akkadian and Old Assyrian, except for entries in the Old Babylonian grammatical text at *Ib* i 3' and 5', where it is spelled *mi-in-šum* as well as *mi-iš-šum*. An overlooked instance is *mi-in-šu* in the OB dialogue *CT* 46 44 ii 7', 11', iii 6'. The word became *minsu* in Middle Babylonian, so *miššu* here is an example of the survival of old-fashioned language in a literary context. As such it might not have been freely intelligible, which would explain why it came later to be corrupted (if the line corresponds to SB II 30; see the commentary below). Note also *mi-is-su* in the Yale tablet of Gilgameš (OB III 145).

69. In the contexts in which it appears the word *zību* signifies an offering of food made to a god. This is no doubt why the entry *zī-i-[b]u = nap-[ta-nu]* "meal" in the synonym list *CT* 18 21 Rm 354 obv. 2' //

LTBA 2 14: 1' is glossed "meal (for the god)" in CAD Z 106a. There is further lexical evidence from another synonym list, newly recovered:

<i>zi-i-bu</i>	MIN (<i>maṣṣatu</i>) "offering flour"
<i>zi-i-bu</i>	<i>mut-qū-ú</i> "sweet cake"
<i>zi-i-bu</i>	<i>i-sin-nu</i> "festival"
<i>zi-i-bu</i>	<i>ni-qu-u</i> "sacrifice"

Malku III 218–21, from *Uruk* III 120 (ed. von Weiher 1988: 254)

// IM 132650 iv (courtesy Khalid Salim Isma'il)

In my view the explanations of *zību* "food-offering" as *naptanu* "meal" and *isinnu* "festival" can be elucidated by comparative evidence. In Hebrew the cognate of *zību* is *zebah*. This term refers to a sacrifice of meat in which the surplus was consumed in a communal feast by family, friends and neighbours, where the shared meal was a ceremonial rite that reaffirmed membership of the group. In Babylonia the popular consumption of sacrificial meat was a practice that found a literary expression in the Sumerian poem of Bilgames and the Bull of Heaven, which ends with the hero dividing the slaughtered bull's carcass among the people of Uruk, the meat going to the poor (Cavigneaux and Al-Rawi 1993: 126 ll. 135–9). That passage is probably an aetiology of a particular festival in Uruk in which the townsfolk feasted on the meat of sacrificed bulls, distributed by the temple. There were surely other feastdays when ordinary people themselves slaughtered animals as sacrifices and made a communal banquet of the surplus meat, as in ancient Israel. There is the story of the Poor Man of Nippur, in which Gimil-Ninurta bought a goat with the intention of sharing it with his neighbours, kith and kin, but decided not to because he could not afford the beer to make a proper feast of it. The specific mention of neighbours, kith and kin suggests that Gimil-Ninurta's abandoned plans were motivated by the customs of popular religion, not just by sociability.

77. The restoration follows the Pennsylvania tablet (OB II 74); alternatively read *kīma il[i pānīšu illak?]*, with MB Boğ, a 7.

78. The word *gupru* is also spelled with initial /k/ in a lexical text from Boğazköy (*KUB* XXX 6 ii 6): [é.gi.sig.ga] e-ki-za-aq-qa = *ku-up-ru*.

84. The meaning of *né-e'* in this context (and as a variant of OB *šapil*) is taken from *Malku* VIII 117: *né-'-u* = *šā-pa-lu*, an equation drawn to my attention by D. Schwemer. If this is the verb *nē'u* "to turn away", and there seems little alternative, the meaning "short" must have arisen from the use of the adjective *nē'u* "repelled, turned back" for "stunted".

v 3'. This line is probably the formal counterpart of SB I 226: *alik Enkidu ana Uruk supūri* "Go, Enkidu, to Uruk-the-Sheepfold". See below, on v 7'.

v 6'. This line is an exact match for its counterpart in the first-millennium text.

v 7'. The prostitute's reiteration use of Enkidu's name, repeated from v 3', invites formal comparison with SB I 233: *Enkidu [ša lā] idū balāṭa* "O Enkidu, [you who do not yet] know life!", which renews her address to him begun in SB I 226.

v 8'. This line is the counterpart of SB I 234: *lukallimka Gilgameš ḥaddi'a amēla* "I will show you Gilgameš, the man so merry", with transposition of the first two words and *eṭla* [...] taking the place of the contentious second half.

v 9'. In the first-millennium text the clause preserved here opens a line describing Gilgameš's physical appearance (SB I 236): *eṭlūta bani balta tšī* "he is fair in manhood, has dignified bearing". Some other permutation of phrases seems to have been used in the present version.

Commentary : the new text and the parallel material

The text begins with the prostitute talking to the wild man, Ea-Enkidu. She is persuading him to come with her back to the city of Ur, where people will see him and he may find companionship, and where Sîn-Gilgameš has been having dreams about him (1–5). She goes on to relate the two dreams that Sîn-Gilgameš had told his mother, the first about a hefty meteorite, the second about a strange axe, and the mother's explanations that the dreams portended the coming of a companion and saviour (6–42). Following a lacuna at the bottom of col. i, the text continues with more of the prostitute's advice. She asks Ea-Enkidu why, when he is so beautiful, he roams the steppe like a wild animal, and tells him to put on clothing and come to Uruk, where he will discover the joys of human society (58–70). He does as she advises, sharing her garment and rubbing sweet-smelling oil on himself (71–6). Then she takes him to the shepherds' camp, where the herdsmen and shepherd boys abase themselves before him, recognizing him as a match for Sîn-Gilgameš and of strange origin (77–85). That night Ea-Enkidu becomes their watchman

(86–9). The prostitute and Ea-Enkidu are then described in dalliance (90 ff.). A long lacuna of about 130 lines intervenes and then comes a short fragment of text describing the fine sights to be seen in the city (v 1'–9').

The part of the Babylonian poem of Gilgameš covered by the new text is an old favourite. Thirty years ago Jerrold Cooper studied the dreams of Gilgameš in this part of the poem from the point of view of style and content, contrasting the Pennsylvania tablet with the first-millennium text (Cooper 1977). More recently Giorgio Buccellati has given us a structural study of the dream episode (Buccellati 2000). The dreams and their aftermath are now known in three different versions: (i) the Old Babylonian Pennsylvania tablet (OB II), (ii) the present tablet (MB Priv₁); and (iii) the Standard Babylonian text (SB I–II). Another source for this part of the poem is a late Old Babylonian version known from (iv) a fragment of a tablet copied at Hattusa (MB Boğ₁ Fragment a), which (as restored) yields a text very similar to OB II. These four sources survive in varying degrees of completion. A comparison of the four sources is most easily made by presenting their contents in tabular form.

(a) Pennsylvania tablet (OB II)

1. Gilgameš tells his first dream to his mother Ninsun (OB II 1–14)
2. N. explains it (OB II 15–23)
3. G. has another dream and tells it to N. (OB II 24–36)
4. N. explains it (OB II 37–43, 39–42 lost)
5. Meanwhile Enkidu makes love with Šamkatum for seven days and nights (OB II 43–50)
6. Š. tells E. about Uruk and proposes to take him there (OB II 51–65)
7. E. agrees, so she covers his nakedness, leads him to the shepherds' camp (OB II 66–76)
8. The shepherds admire E., give him food and drink (OB II 77–93)
9. Š. tells E. what to do with the food and drink (OB II 94–8)
10. E. eats, drinks, is groomed, clothed and becomes the shepherds' watchman (OB II 99–119)
11. A stranger comes on the scene (OB II 120 ff.)
12. E. and Š. observe the stranger while making love (OB II 135–9)

(b) The fragment from Boğazköy (MB Boğ₁ a)

1. The prostitute admires Enkidu's beauty (1–4)
2. She clothes E. and leads him to the shepherds' camp (5–8)
3. The shepherds admire E., give him food and drink (9–13)
4. The prostitute tells E. what to do with the food and drink (14–16)

(c) The present tablet (MB Priv₁)

1. The prostitute alerts Ea-Enkidu to his need of human company ([1]–3)
2. She relates the dreams in which Sîn-Gilgameš has foreseen his coming (4–42)
3. [gap] see (d) 7–8
4. She asks why E.-E. lives with the animals, tells him to cover himself and go to Uruk (59–70)
5. E.-E. agrees and they share her clothing; he rubs on oil (71–6)
6. She leads E.-E. to the shepherds' camp (77–8)
7. The shepherds admire him (79–85)
8. E.-E. becomes the shepherds' watchman (86–9?)
9. E.-E. and the prostitute make love? (90 ff.)
10. [long gap]
11. Description of Ur-Uruk (v 1'–9')

(d) Standard Babylonian poem (SB I–II)

1. Enkidu makes love with the prostitute Šamḫat for six days and seven nights (I 188–94)
2. E. is spurned by the animals and returns to Š. (I 195–204)
3. Š. asks why E. lives with the animals, proposes to take him to Uruk (I 205–12)
4. E. agrees and declares that he will challenge Gilgameš (I 213–23)
5. Š. describes Uruk and Gilgameš, advises submission to G. (I 224–42)
6. Š. relates the dreams in which G. has foreseen E.’s coming (I 243–99)
7. Š. and E. make love again (I 300–II 1)
8. [gap]
9. Š. again asks why E. lives with the animals (II 29)
10. E. ponders her question, agrees to take her advice (II 30–3)
11. E. and Š. share her clothing (II 34–5)
12. Š. leads E. to the shepherds’ camp (II 36–7)
13. The shepherds admire E., give him food and drink (II 38–48)
14. Š. tells E. what to do with the food and drink (II 49–51)
15. [gap]
16. E. becomes the shepherds’ watchman (II 60–2)
17. A stranger comes on the scene (II 63 ff.)

Leaving aside the issue of the peculiar proper nouns, there are many variants in the vocabulary and phrasing of the new text, when compared with the parallel versions; they have been collected above, after the transliteration. The synopses just given make it clear that the tablet published here is witness to a version of the poem of Gilgameš that displays considerable differences from the eighteenth-century Pennsylvania tablet, on the one hand, and the Standard Babylonian poem *ša naqba imuru*, a product of the late second millennium, on the other. These differences are examined in the following paragraphs.

In col. i, where the text runs parallel to col. i of the Old Babylonian Pennsylvania tablet, some lines of the Old Babylonian text are absent (OB II 11, 26, 32), while others appear transposed, not always to the benefit of the poem (MB Priv₁ 23–4 // OB II 21, 20, MB Priv₁ 35–6 // OB II 35–6, 31). There are two completely new individual lines in this column: MB Priv₁ 13: *paḥrū eḫlūtu ul ilī’ū šuqqāšu*, which takes the place of OB II 11: *eḫlūtum unaššaḳū šēpīšu*, thus avoiding the repetition at MB Priv₁ 23 // OB II 21; and MB Priv₁ 22: *una’idūšu(!) ipaḥhurū eššu*, which is a new variation on the theme of people marvelling at the strange sight of the meteorite that symbolizes Enkidu.

The new evidence presented by MB Priv₁ 8–9 necessarily prompts a re-examination of the parallel lines of the Pennsylvania tablet. In my edition I read the damaged opening of OB II 6 as *ip-ī zi?-ru-nim¹-ma*. Collating the tablet in 2005 in the light of the present line, I saw that the damage gives the impression of oblique wedges where they may be none and that the decipherments *zi* and *ru* are for this reason both far from secure. It now seems likely that the Pennsylvania tablet and the present tablet both have the same verb, OB II 6: *ib-ī bi-šu-nim¹-ma kakkabū šamā’ī* // MB Priv₁ 8: *[ib]-bi-šu-ma kakkabū šamāyī*. This verb is difficult to parse, which is probably why the first-millennium text replaces it with *ibšūnimma*, literally “they came into being” (SB I 247). Since both second-millennium tablets write the syllable /pi/ with *pi* not *pí*, I can see no alternative root to \sqrt{b} ’š. The verb *bêšu* “to grow apart, separate” is not hitherto attested in the IV-stem, but as an intransitive verb it would form an ingressive in this stem, i.e. *nebšû* “to become separate”. Such a meaning would suit the context: as night fell and the light

failed, more and more stars slowly became distinct against the darkening background of the twilight sky.

Collation of the Pennsylvania tablet at OB II 7 did not alter my understanding of the traces : x (x)-*rum ša Anim imqutam ana šērīya*. However, the presence of *kišru* on MB Priv₁ 9, in addition to the first-millennium text (SB I 248), strengthens the case for reading *k[i-i]š!-rum* in OB II 7, against the tablet.

A new four-line passage, MB Priv₁ 27–30, is structurally the counterpart of SB I 295–7, though it follows the explanation of the first dream, not the second. In both passages the protagonist expresses to his mother his longing for the friend foretold him in the dreams, but in different language. This reaction is not present in the Pennsylvania tablet. The new fragment includes the previously unattested detail that the hero hopes the new arrival will *linappiš libbī* “ease my heart”. This represents a tacit awareness by Gilgameš that his overbearing behaviour in Uruk was borne of what, in another context, his mother Ninsun called *libba lā šālilu* “a restless spirit” (SB III 46).

Col. ii of the new tablet holds text that parallels first the fragmentary opening of SB II and then the latter part of col. ii of the Pennsylvania tablet. Comparison between the versions is hampered by the loss of the ends of lines on this column of MB Priv₁, and by our incomplete knowledge of the three other texts, the Pennsylvania tablet (OB II), the tablet from Hattusa (MB Boğ₁) and the first-millennium poem (SB II). Enough is preserved, nevertheless, to show that the correspondence of lines is less close than it was in col. i. In the present version of the poem, the episode in which the prostitute enjoins Enkidu to adopt human ways is far from a good match with previously known text. It includes two lines new to knowledge, in which the prostitute tells Ea-Enkidu first to cover himself (60 : *litbaš l[ubša ...]*) and second to bear arms (62 : *liqe kakka kīma m[uti ...]*) ; both have counterparts in the narrative of the Pennsylvania tablet, where her instructions are realized in very similar phrasing (OB II 110–13 : *ilbaš libšam kīma muti ibašši / ilqe kakkašu lābī ugerre*). In between MB Priv₁ 60 and 62 is a line that adds another detail, that Ea-Enkidu should wear a belt around his waist (61 : *nenziḥ nē[beḥa ...]*) ; this shows that the elusive opening word of SB II 28 is *nanziḥ*.

Following these three lines are two that probably correspond to SB II 29–30, but transposed. In the first-millennium text the prostitute concludes her speech by asking a second time why the wild man keeps the company of wild animals, and his reaction is to ponder her words (SB II 30 *mitluku ramānīšu [...]*). In the new tablet, as in the Pennsylvania tablet, he is not allowed a reaction, and the prostitute’s speech continues. But before she asks why he behaves like an animal there is a line of parallel meaning that, as it stands, has no counterpart elsewhere (63 *miššu lū ramât[a ...]*). There is more than a passing phonetic similarity between the two phrases *miššu lū ramâta* and *mitluku ramānīšu*. The latter is a clumsy expression, and I suspect it arose from a garbling of the former through corruption of a long sequence of signs : **mi**, **iš**→**it**, **šu**→**lu** **lu**→**ku** **ra** **ma** **ta**→**ni-šú**. Having turned a line of the prostitute’s speech into narrative, the culprit then had no option but to transpose it with the following line. In this way the couplet MB Priv₁ 63–4 became SB II 29–30.

The continuation of the prostitute’s speech contains her invitation to go to the city, following broadly the example of the Pennsylvania tablet. But there is another new line (65 *lū tāmur Uruk [. . .]*), and one couplet (ll. 67–8) is more closely related to the Standard Babylonian text than to the Old Babylonian. Lines 69–74 run parallel with the Pennsylvania tablet. The first two of these prompt a re-examination of a damaged and perplexing passage of the Pennsylvania tablet that in my edition I read, without much confidence, as follows :

ù at-t[a-m]a ki-[ma] † a-wi-li-im-ma?†⁶³ ta-aš-[ta-ka]-a[n?] † ra¹-ma-an-ka

ʿal-ka-ti-ma i-na ʿqá-*aq-qá-ri* ⁶⁵ ma-a-AK re-i-im

OB II 62–5, ed. George 2003 : 174

The present text confirms that the OB passage forms a couplet, though spread over four lines of tablet, and that it was correct to restore *atta* in the first line of the couplet. However, the traces of what follows *atta* in the OB line cannot be reconciled with MB Priv₁ 69 *ana zībī*, and here the Pennsylvania tablet retains its mystery, even after renewed collation. In the following line the new text shows that *al-ka-ti-ma* was rightly understood as an archaic 2.m.sg. stative. The first sign of this word on the Pennsylvania tablet is as copied, i.e. either *ab* or *al*, but the word must now be read *ab-ka-ti-ma* to match MB Priv₁ 70 *abkāta*. The general import of the couplet is much as understood before. Enkidu's habitat is no longer the wild. The city calls him, and there he must fit in with human society. The new text adds the detail that in the city he will share in the sacrificial meals (*zību*), which were probably distributed by the temple on feastdays (see the textual note). Previously Enkidu was a vegetarian, like the gazelles with whom he grazed. In this invitation to eat meat the poet gives us another example of the way in which civilization will turn Enkidu into an oppressor of his former companions. At the same time he will become socialized by partaking of communal rites of feasting, for these were important events in confirming identity and kinship.

Like the Pennsylvania tablet, the new text follows the couplet discussed in the preceding paragraph with a narrative describing how Ea-Enkidu saw the sense of what the prostitute said and shared her garment (MB Priv₁ 71–4 // OB II 66–72). Lines 75–6 are a couplet reporting again that Ea-Enkidu clothed himself and that he splashed on scented oil. They represent an intrusion in comparison with the Pennsylvania tablet, where two comparable lines occur the other way around and at a point later in the narrative, after Enkidu has reached the shepherds' camp. The departure for the shepherds' camp is handled in the same way in both versions (MB Priv₁ 77–8 // OB II 73–6). Lines 79–82 are the counterparts of OB II 77 ff., but here a lacuna interrupts the text of the Pennsylvania tablet, so that comparison becomes impossible. To judge from l. 79, the new text diverges somewhat from the OB version. Three lines, not previously known, paint a vivid picture of the shepherds grovelling, man and boy, before their new guest (ll. 80–2).

In other versions the entry to the shepherds' camp is greeted by a quatrain in which the shepherds, and later the townsfolk of Uruk, marvel at Enkidu's size (OB II 80–6 // 183–9 // MB Boğ₁ a 10–12, rather differently in SB II 40–3). Here this strophe is cut short, with no reference to his suckling by the animals (MB Priv₁ 83–5). In all three parallel versions the poem continues with the celebrated passage in which the shepherds give Enkidu bread and beer, and the prostitute shows him what to do with them (OB II 87–98 // MB Boğ₁ a 12–15 // SB II 44–51). A lacuna interrupts SB II and MB Boğ₁ at this point, but the Old Babylonian poem then has him getting drunk, being shaved, anointed with oil, dressed in proper clothes, and equipped with a weapon, so turning him into a human being (OB II 99–113). The narrative of the new text jumps straight to nightfall, when the newcomer takes over as the shepherds' watchman (MB Priv₁ 86 // OB II 114). The text then continues with the passage in which Enkidu, dallying with the prostitute, spies the stranger who will tell him how Gilgameš behaves at weddings. This episode is poorly preserved in both the Pennsylvania tablet and SB II. It appears that the new text diverges again, with some points of contact with the Pennsylvania tablet (MB Priv₁ 88, 90 and 92) but several apparently new lines (ll. 87, 89, 91, 93). Unfortunately these are too damaged to restore.

The fragment of text on the reverse of the new tablet tells of the splendours of city life in Ur, where the girls are so pretty, etc. The passage has a parallel in the first-millennium text at the point where the prostitute first attempts to persuade Enkidu to leave the wild and go to Uruk, long before he enters the shepherds' camp (SB I 226 ff.). It allows one correction to the reconstructed

text : in SB I 230 read not [*har-ma*]-*a-ti* “harlots” but [*ar-da*]-*a-ti* “young women”, with MB Priv₁ v 5’ : *ardātu*. If I have correctly restored [*luk*]*allimka* “I will show you” in l. 8’ // SB I 234, this is also a passage of direct speech. The fragment is certainly many lines later than the episode at the camp, so must take its place later in the narrative. The obvious location for it is when Enkidu arrives at the city, accompanied by the prostitute. It would be natural for the poet then to have her repeat the description of the city already painted. The first-millennium text is poorly preserved and is marred by a long lacuna of nearly forty lines in SB II that falls between Enkidu spying the stranger and his confrontation of Gilgameš in Uruk. It is thus eminently possible, as well as fitting, that this lacuna contains a passage parallel to col. v of the present tablet.

From the point of view of the narrative, the most salient features of the new text are (a) the inclusion of the dream episode in a speech of the prostitute, and (b) the omission of the bread-and-beer episode. The former is not a feature of the Old Babylonian poem, where the dreams are reported as direct speech by the narrator. The technique of second-hand reporting is a sophistication also introduced into the poem by the inclusion of *Ūta-napišti*’s story of the deluge (SB XI 8–206). This kind of narrative complexity can be broadly said to distinguish later Gilgameš from earlier. The incorporation into Gilgameš of the Flood story seems definitely to have been a late development, for a version of the poem that had no room for it survived into the first millennium in an early Neo-Assyrian copy (Assyrian MS z, George 2003 : 364–9). Formerly one was tempted to attribute both these major changes in the narrative to a single editor, for want of a better name, to *Šîn-lēqi-unninni*. The evidence of the present text, however, shows that the reporting of Gilgameš’s dreams by the prostitute could not have been an innovation of the Standard Babylonian text, but was a strategy already employed at a much earlier date.

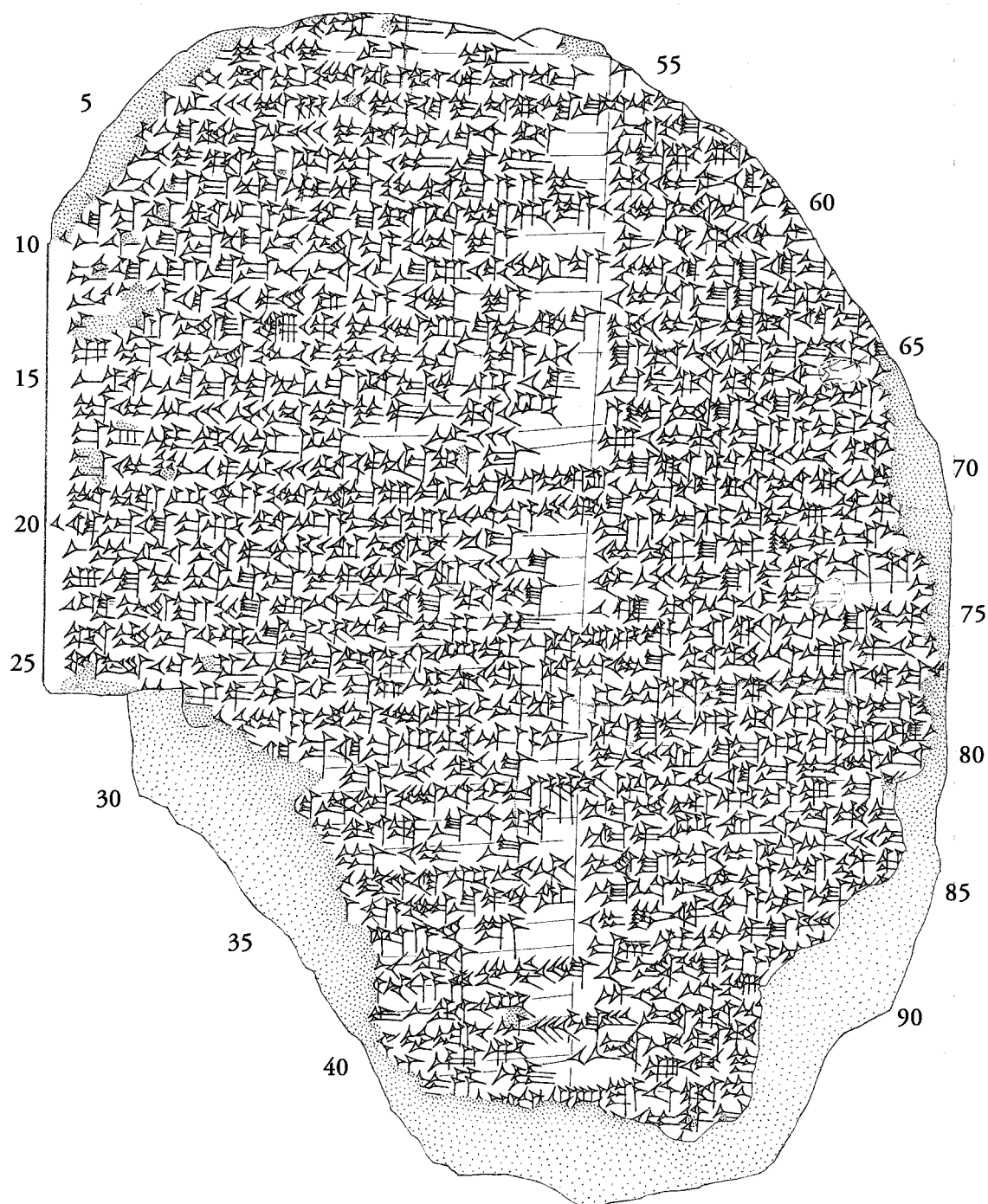
The bread-and-ale episode is part of the story of the civilizing of Enkidu. In the new text he still learns how to wear clothing and use scented oil as perfume, but the comic passage in which he learns to eat bread and drink beer at the shepherds’ table is not present. Instead, Enkidu immediately becomes the camp watchman. The omission of part of this episode is another indication, if one were needed, that the evolution of the poem in the second millennium was not linear. While the version of the poem represented by the new tablet left out this key element of Enkidu’s transformation, other contemporaneous versions clearly did not, for the episode survives into the Standard Babylonian text. Versions of the poem differed in minor respects, such as vocabulary and phrasing, and in structural matters, such as the ordering of lines, but this comparison clearly reaffirms that there were also larger differences, and also demonstrates that not all versions held every episode.



Fig. 1. MB Priv₁ obverse



Fig. 2. MB Priv₁ reverse

Fig. 3. MB Priv₁ obverse

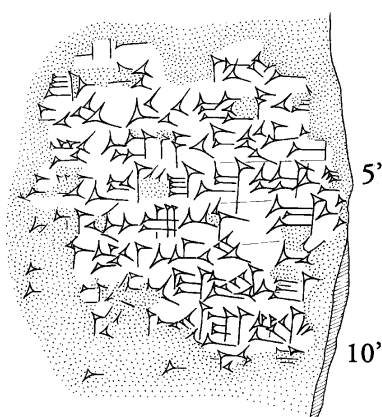


Fig. 4. MB Priv₁ reverse, detail showing inscribed surface

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ABSTRACT

This article presents a unique tablet of Gilgameš, not previously published, on which is preserved part of the episode of the taming of Enkidu. However, the proper nouns Gilgameš and Enkidu are replaced with gods' names: ^d30 (Sîn) and ^d40 (Ea). No compelling explanation for this can be found. The tablet is probably of early Middle Babylonian date, from the Sealand. The article concludes with a comparison of its text with that of other versions of the poem. The chief difference is that this new account lacks the passage in which the wild man is offered bread and ale.

RÉSUMÉ

Cet article est consacré à une tablette de Gilgameš unique, jusqu'à présent inédite, sur laquelle est conservée une partie de l'épisode de la domestication d'Enkidu. Cependant, les noms propres de Gilgameš et Enkidu sont remplacés par des noms de dieux: ^d30 (Sîn) et ^d40 (Ea). Aucune explication de ce phénomène ne s'impose. La tablette date probablement du début de l'époque médio-babylonienne, étant originaire du Pays de la Mer. L'article s'achève avec une comparaison de ce texte avec celui des autres versions du poème. La principale différence réside dans l'absence de l'épisode dans lequel du pain et de la bière sont offerts à l'homme sauvage.

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