

Stela depicting Nabonidus (British Museum)

The Reign of Nabonidus King of Babylon 556-539 B.C.

PAUL-ALAIN BEAULIEU

Yale Near Eastern researches.

New Haven and London Yale University Press

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À mes parents

Louis-Jacques et Jacqueline

CONTENTS

Tables ix Abbreviations хi Acknowledgments xiii Introduction 1 The Inscriptions of Nabonidus Statement of the Problem **Evidence for Dating Inscriptions** Catalogue and Chronology of the Inscriptions 20 The Exaltation of Sîn 2 The Early Reign of Nabonidus (556-553 B.C.) 67 The Origins of Nabonidus The Accession of Nabonidus The History of the Early Reign of Nabonidus 104 Conclusions 137 3 The Teima Period and the End of the Reign (553-539 B.C.) 149 Chronology of the Teima Period The Sojourn in Arabia 169 Belshazzar's Administration of Government 185 The Last Years of the Reign The End of the Reign (539 B.C.) 219 Afterword 233 Appendix 1 237 Appendix 2 239 **Bibliography** 243 Index of Sources 267 General Index 268

TABLES

1.	Building Works at Sippar 15
2.	Chronology of the Inscriptions 42
3.	Epithets of Sîn and Marduk 44
4.	Texts from Bīt šar Bābili 96
5.	Prosopography of Sippar 116
6.	Prosopography of Uruk I 125
7.	Texts Mentioning Belshazzar 156
8.	Prosopography of Uruk II 161
9.	Royal Correspondence from Uruk 164
0.	Royal Offerings at Sippar 189
1.	Oaths Sworn in the Name of the Royal Family 191
2.	Late Building Works 210
3.	Features of Late Inscriptions 213

ABBREVIATIONS

The abbreviations conform to the Assyrian Dictionary of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, with the exceptions listed below. Classical sources, unless otherwise indicated, are quoted from the Loeb Classical Library edition.

- CTMMA Moldenke, A. B., Cuneiform Texts in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Parts I and II. New York: Metropolitan Museum, 1893.
- IAA Speelers, L., Recueil des inscriptions de l'Asie antérieure des Musées Royaux du Cinquantenaire à Bruxelles. Bruxelles-Gand: Vanderpoorten, 1925.
- Lab Evetts, B. T. A., Inscriptions of the Reigns of Evil-Merodach,
 Neriglissar and Laborosoarchod (Babylonische Texte VI B).
 Leipzig: Pfeiffer, 1892. (Laborosoarchod).
- Ner Evetts, B. T. A., Inscriptions of the Reigns of Evil-Merodach,

 Neriglissar and Laborosoarchod (Babylonische Texte VI B).

 Leipzig: Pfeiffer, 1892. (Neriglissar)
- Peek Pinches, Th. G., Inscribed Babylonian Tablets in the Possession of Sir Henry Peek, Parts 1–IV. London: Harrison and Sons, 1888.
- PTS Siglum of cuneiform tablets in the Collection of the Princeton Theological Seminary.
- SCT Gordon, C. H., Smith College Tablets: 101 Cuneiform Texts

 Selected from the College Collection (Smith College Studies in

 History XXXVIII). Northampton, Mass.: Smith College, 1952.

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Paul-Alain Beaulieu New Haven May 1989

INTRODUCTION

The personality of king Nabonidus, the last sovereign of the Neo-Babylonian dynasty and the last ruler of a native Mesopotamian state, has long captured the attention of Assyriologists and historians. During the first half of the twentieth century, as more and more literary and monumental sources bearing on his reign were coming to light, he was portrayed in various, peculiar ways. To some, Nabonidus appeared to have been an aged eccentric, preoccupied with archaeological excavations and the collecting of old inscriptions. To others, he was a single-minded religious fanatic obsessed with establishing the supremacy of the moon god in his realm, or a cynical and manipulative usurper whose inept policies brought his kingdom to an undistinguished end. A more balanced picture has emerged from recent assessments, in which Nabonidus appears as an able ruler who tried to save a hastily built and unstable empire from internal political turmoil and from an uneasy, if not desperate position on the international scene. It now appears that the variety and apparent contradictions of the earlier points of view reflect the complexities of the king's personality and the irruptive circumstances that shaped the final destiny of the Neo-Babylonian empire.

Yet, for all the sustained interest in Nabonidus, his reign has received comparatively little scholarly attention since the epoch-making study of R. P. Dougherty, Nabonidus and Belshazzar: A Study of the Closing Events of the Neo-Babylonian Empire (Doughtery 1929). One of Dougherty's numerous merits was his successful handling of the archival material, a relatively abundant but often neglected source. During the period beginning shortly before and extending several decades beyond Nabonidus' reign, administrative scribal activity reached a level unparalleled in first millennium Mesopotamia. The extraordinary size of the corpus—more than three thousand texts—may account in some measure for its having been neglected by scholars, many of whom have concentrated on monumental and literary sources. The present study stems from the conviction that only by a systematic examination and correlation of archival, monumental, and canonical (viz. literary) sources can significant advances in our knowledge of ancient Mesopotamia be made. Archival material has become more readily available, especially with the

publication of a large body of documents from Sippar in CT 55, 56, and 57. A convenient list of published economic and administrative texts dated to the reign of Nabonidus has been compiled by M. A. Dandamaev in the English language edition of his *Slavery in Babylonia* (Dandamaev 1984: 10–12). In addition, unpublished material from Uruk in the Yale Babylonian Collection has been used in the present study. These texts will be referred to by both their museum and their publication number: YOS XIX. A forthcoming volume in the Yale Oriental Series, Babylonian Texts, will include my copies of all the remaining Nabonidus texts in the Yale Babylonian Collection, thus bringing to a conclusion the work begun by R. P. Dougherty.

1

The Inscriptions of Nabonidus

1.1 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

One of the most important sources for the study of the Ancient Near East is that category of cuneiform texts called royal inscriptions. They can be divided into sub-categories such as votive inscriptions, seal inscriptions, and building inscriptions.1 This last sub-category is the best represented in all periods and especially during the Neo-Babylonian empire (626-539 B.C.). The return to political stability at the end of the seventh century, after decades of almost continuous turmoil, and a manifest rise in the general level of economic prosperity, allowed the Babylonian kings to undertake vast building programs in all the major cities of the kingdom. If the building works carried out under the long reign of Nebuchadnezzar II (605-562 B.C.) are more widely known, mainly because the architectural eminence of Babylon as celebrated by classical writers is mostly to be credited to him, Nabonidus seems to have been no less active than his illustrious predecessor, taking into account that his reign was much shorter. More than twenty-seven of his inscriptions, mostly building inscriptions recorded on clay cylinders and bricks, have come down to us. Most of them commemorate restorations of shrines and temples at various sites of the kingdom. His building activities can be traced to thirteen different sites and involve the renovation or building of twenty-eight architectural complexes (Berger 1973: 108-10).

One major problem which confronts the historian using these inscriptions as historical sources is their chronology. Very few of them contain internal indications as to their date, and, in most cases, no external source provides clues as to their chronological order. Since royal inscriptions often yield a considerable

^{1.} On the typology of royal inscriptions, see Hallo 1962 and Edzard and Renger 1980. A new category called "triumphal inscriptions" was proposed by Kupper (see Kupper 1971), but his arguments have been rejected by van Driel (see van Driel 1973).

Statement of the Problem

body of information, establishing a chronology is of crucial importance to the historian. Events mentioned in individual inscriptions can then be dated and the data they contain can be added to the information provided by other sources. Variations in the royal titulary can then be traced and their historical significance assessed. Unlike their Assyrian counterparts, Neo-Babylonian royal inscriptions contain very few allusions to historical events, and their compositional patterns show little variation throughout the short history of the dynasty. The solution to one much debated question concerning the reign of Nabonidus has mostly been linked to assessment of the chronology of his inscriptions. The question is whether there was a marked increase throughout Nabonidus' reign in his devotion to the moon god Sîn and a concomitant decrease in the official position of Marduk, the supreme god of the Babylonian pantheon.

In fact, discussion of the chronology of Nabonidus' inscriptions originally began with debate on when the lunar cult was propagated in his reign. The first important argument was brought in 1947 by Landsberger in an article devoted to a fragment of the inscription of Adad-guppi, the mother of Nabonidus (Landsberger 1947). As a complement to his study he inquired briefly into the order of Nabonidus' main inscriptions from the point of view of what he considered to be the main two characteristics of the king's personality, namely a continuous endeavour to promote the moon god to the head of the pantheon, and the idea of imperial continuity with Assyria, centered on the figure of Aššurbanipal. His lead was followed by Tadmor twenty years later in an article where he attempted to establish a relative chronology of the inscriptions of Nabonidus (Tadmor 1965). Taking as a starting point Landsberger's remarks on the elevation of Sîn to the head of the Babylonian pantheon, he proposed to take as the main criterion for classifying the inscriptions chronologically the changes they show in the frequency and intensity of Sîn's epithets in contrast to the changes in the position of Marduk. According to his theory, the inscriptions showing the strongest inclination towards the exaltation of Sîn should be ascribed to the last years of the reign, after the king's return from his long sojourn in Arabia. Tadmor's main contention is that the rebuilding of the Ehulhul, the temple of Sîn in Harran, took place in the last period of the reign and not at its beginning, as had been supposed. Those last years presumably saw an attempt by the aging ruler to establish Sîn's supremacy.

As the present study will demonstrate, Tadmor's intuitions are by and large correct. From a methodological angle, however, his approach is marred by one problem: the criterion he adopted for establishing a chronology of the inscriptions is what he intended to prove through an analysis of their content, that is, a clear and marked increase in Nabonidus' devotion to Sîn throughout his reign.

He thereby incurred the risk of offering a circular argument. This methodological problem was noted by Garelli, who pointed out that comparing the relative importance of Marduk and Sîn in the inscriptions of Nabonidus, in an attempt to establish their chronology, is tantamount to assuming the existence of the process which such research should establish (Garelli 1968: 283):

Il est difficile de savoir s'il y a eu progression dans sa dévotion envers Sîn. Car, si on adopte ce critère pour classer chronologiquement les textes, on suppose admis ce qui reste précisément à démontrer.

Tadmor devoted the first part of his inquiry to documents that give some internal indications as to their date. Yet the problem remained fundamentally the same, in that the group of datable texts, which furnished the core of his argumentation, was statistically not significant enough to ensure that the increase in Sîn's importance as shown in them could be seen as a general tendency. Of the twenty-six inscriptions available at the time of his study, not more than six could be dated convincingly, namely, according to Tadmor's numbering, nos. 8, 18, 3, 1, 4 and 25, which correspond in my numbering to nos. 1, 2, 9, 15, 16 and 13 (see section 1.3). Most of the others were assigned to a specific period in the reign only on the basis of the frequency and intensity of Sîn's epithets.

In his more recent attempt to assess the chronology of Nabonidus' inscriptions, Berger seemed to take this methodological problem into consideration (Berger 1973: 110–12). He avoided favoring any main criterion of classification, seeking rather firm evidence for dating individual texts, using a wide range of criteria such as style, correlations with other sources, or comparisons of content between related inscriptions. Yet he did not make use of all possible sources, and, if his inquiry resulted in a significant number of new results as compared to previous studies, it still remains far from complete and offers some conclusions which need to be reconsidered.

The purpose of this chapter is to expand on Tadmor's and Berger's work and to establish the chronology of the inscriptions of Nabonidus. This chronology will help determine the evolution of the king's religious policy throughout his reign, assuming that it is faithfully reflected in his inscriptions. These texts were certainly directly commissioned by the court, and one can expect that they should mirror any political or religious movement endorsed by the king and his entourage.

1.2 EVIDENCE FOR DATING INSCRIPTIONS

Evidence for dating inscriptions falls into several categories. First, there is the evidence provided by literary texts, consisting of scattered allusions found in

these compositions to building works undertaken by Neo-Babylonian kings. When these allusions contain reliable chronological information, one can determine the date of building works and of their related inscriptions. Another type of evidence is furnished by archival texts: in many cases, correlations can be established between building inscriptions and dated texts originating in temple archives which record building operations. Archaeological evidence is also important: in many instances the find-spot of an inscription has helped determine its chronology. These last two types of evidence have not been fully exploited yet. Finally, there is internal evidence as to date.

1.2.1 Literary Texts

Four literary texts provide accounts of the reign of Nabonidus. The best known are the "Nabonidus Chronicle," which belongs to the Neo-Babylonian Chronicle Series (Grayson 1975a: 104-11, chronicle 7), and the "Verse Account of Nabonidus," an overtly biased composition which describes the reign of Nabonidus in negative terms and glorifies the deeds of Cyrus, the conqueror of the Neo-Babylonian empire (Smith 1924: 82-91). Two additional compositions have come to light more recently: a chronicle-like text on the reign of Nabonidus dubbed by Lambert the "Royal Chronicle" (Lambert 1968), and the so-called "Dynastic Prophecy," which devotes but a few lines to his reign (Grayson 1975b: 24–37). Berger and von Soden suggested that another literary composition, originally called by Lambert "Nebuchadnezzar King of Justice" (Lambert 1965), might have been a piece of propaganda commissioned by Nabonidus himself (Berger 1974: 222 n. 51, and von Soden 1983: 63). According to Lambert, who published the text, there are two arguments in favor of Nebuchadnezzar II: the word $nag\hat{u}$ "region," which occurs in this text, is attested only in the inscriptions of that king, and a large section of the text, which describes provisions made for the daily offerings of the gods, recalls a similar passage of the Wadi Brissa inscription of Nebuchadnezzar II, with many coincidences of wording. Against Lambert's argument one should note that the word nagû does occur in the inscription of Adad-guppi (Col. III: 20). But the similarities with the Wadi Brissa inscription remain quite conclusively in favor of Nebuchadnezzar II. In addition this king is the only Neo-Babylonian ruler, except for Nabopolassar in one instance, who bears in his inscriptions the epithet šar mēšari "king of justice" (see Seux 1967, s.v. šar mēšarim). Since the composition involved here describes the king as a provider of justice and equity, Nebuchadnezzar II seems a more likely candidate. Therefore, as arguments in

favor of Nebuchadnezzar II outweigh those in favor of other kings, it would be unwise to use it as a source for the reign of Nabonidus.

Of these sources, only the Royal Chronicle provides chronological information on the building works of Nabonidus and allows us to date their inscriptions. As pointed out by Lambert, this text resembles a chronicle in style, but its redactor seems to have relied heavily on building inscriptions in the sections where restorations of temples are described. The events reported in this document are arranged chronologically and its preserved portions cover parts of the second and the third regnal years of Nabonidus. The section concerning the second year is of particular interest, since the consecration of En-nigaldi-Nanna, the king's daughter, as high priestess of Nanna at Ur, the rebuilding of the Egipar at Ur, and the restoration of the Ebabbar, the temple of Šamaš at Sippar, are all reported to have taken place in that year. The inscriptions which commemorate these events were therefore written in the second year of Nabonidus (inscriptions 2, 3, 4 and 5 in my catalogue). The relevant sections of the Royal Chronicle can be summarized as follows:

- Col. II (end): omens are taken to determine if Nabonidus' daughter is the one chosen by the gods to become high priestess of Nanna at Ur. This section closely resembles the account of the extispicy contained in inscription 2, Col. I, 11-25.
- Col. III, 1-5: unclear passage mentioning that the astrological series *Enūma Anu Enlil* was brought from Babylon for the king's perusal. According to inscription 2, the consecration of Nabonidus' daughter followed an eclipse of the moon which was interpreted as an omen (Col. I, 7-10; quoted, section 1.3.2). The two facts are evidently related.
- Col. III, 6-13: this passage mentions the discovery of a stela of an *entu* priestess of the time of Nebuchadnezzar I. According to inscription 2 (Col. I, 29-33), the stela was discovered during excavation of the old foundations of the Egipar.
- Col. III, 14-16: En-nigaldi-Nanna is consecrated to Nanna as high priestess.
- Col. III, 16-28: in the month Ulūlu of the same year (second year), the old foundations of the Ebabbar of Sippar are discovered and restoration of the temple begins.
- Col. III, 29-36: during excavation of the foundations of the Ebabbar, an old statue of Sargon of Akkad is found. Nabonidus orders its restoration, places it

Evidence for Dating Inscriptions

in the Ebabbar, and establishes a regular oblation for it. Offerings to that statue are mentioned in administrative texts of the Ebabbar. The references span from the eleventh year of Nabonidus to the second year of Cambyses (Kennedy 1969: 79; see section 2.3.3.2).

Col. III, 37-49: completion of the rebuilding of the Ebabbar and dedication of the temple, at the beginning of the third year. The dedication of the Ebabbar certainly took place at the beginning of the third year, since the following section of the text starts with the campaign to Ammananu, in the second month of the third year (see section 3.1.4).

1.2.2 Archival Texts

The majority of Neo-Babylonian texts come from the archives of two temples: the Ebabbar of Sippar and the Eanna of Uruk. Considering the importance of these two administrations in the public life of Sippar and Uruk, one can expect to find in their archives records concerning the building works undertaken in these two cities, particularly when restoration of the temple-complex was involved. A search made in these archives has yielded a significant number of dated texts related to building works, including records of deliveries of bricks and bitumen and of assignment of workers to building sites. One may suspect that they do not record routine operations, as they appear in the archives only in particular years. On this basis, correlations can be proposed between building inscriptions and these dated records, especially when the latter explicitly refer to one building in particular, or when they attest to an unusual level of building activity over a short period of time.

1.2.2.1 Texts from Sippar, Archive of the Ebabbar

Five works of restoration at Sippar are commemorated by inscriptions of Nabonidus: the Ebabbar (inscription 5), the tiara for the statue of Šamaš (inscription 6), the temple of Bunene (inscription 8), the ziggurat of Sippar, the Ekunankugga (inscription 11), and the temple of Anunītum at Sippar-Anunītum (inscriptions 15 and 16). The evidence from archival texts suggests that important building activities took place at Sippar in the second, the tenth, and the sixteenth year of Nabonidus. It is assumed here that all the archival texts discussed in the following sections come from the archive of the Ebabbar of Sippar, as they belong to the "Abu Habba" collection in the British Museum, granting that this is only a strong probability, not a certainty (Leichty 1986: xxxiv).

1.2.2.1.1 Letter Orders

Two of the building inscriptions from Sippar report that scholars from Babylon were summoned to Sippar to furnish advice on the proper ways to excavate the foundations of the Ebabbar. These passages read as follows:

Inscription 5 (restoration of the Ebabbar)

Col. I, 30. qa-ti ^dutu en-ia aş-bat-ma 31. i-na é.Babbar u₄-1-kám šána-at ú-še-ši-ib-šú im-nu u šu-me-lu pa-ni u ár-ku ša pa-pa-hu u lìb-bi du₆.Meš 32. hi-iţ-ţa-tú aţ-ţu-uţ-ma ú-pa-aḥ-hi-ir-ma ši-bu-ut uru dumu.Meš tin.tir^{ki lú}dub.sar mi-na-a-ti 33. en-qu-ú-tu a-ŝi-ib é mu-um-mu na-şir pi-riš-ti dingir.Meš·Gal.Meš mu-kin garza lugal-ú-tu 34. a-na mi-it-lu-uk-ti áš-pur-šu-nu-ti-ma ki-a-am az-kur-šu-nu-ti um-ma te-me-en la-bi-ri ši-te-e'-ma 35. pa-pa-hu ^dutu da-a-a-nu na-pa-li-sa-ma é da.rí.A a-na ^dutu u ^da-a en.Meš-a ep-pu-uš 36. i-na te-me-qu ^dutu en-ia ina su-pe-e-šu šá dingir gal.gal ukkin dumu.Meš um.Me.A te-me-en la-bi-ri 37. ip-pal-su-ma pa-pa-hi u du-6.Meš i-hi-ţu

I took the hand of Šamaš my lord and, on the first day of the year in which I caused him to dwell in the Ebabbar, I made excavations all around the cella and the central area of the platform, and I gathered city elders, citizens of Babylon, many wise scribes who dwell in the temple academy, who keep the secrets of the great gods, who preserve the ordinances of kingship. I sent them to deliberate, thus ordering them: "Look for the old foundations, inspect the cella of Šamaš the judge and I will build an everlasting temple for Šamaš and Aya my lords!" With ardent prayers to Šamaš my lord and supplications to the great gods, the assembly of scholars found the old foundations and made excavations in the cella and the platform.

Inscription 11 (restoration of the Ebabbar and of the ziggurat Ekunankugga)

Col. I, 55. šu.gi tin.tir^{ki} bár.síp^{ki} 56. em-qu-tu mu-de-e ši-ip-ri 57. a-na qé-re-eb é.babbar.ra ú-še!-reb!

I brought wise elders of Babylon and Borsippa, skilled workers, inside the Ebabbar.

In inscription 5, these scholars are called $umm\bar{a}n\bar{u}$, and they are said to belong to an institution called the $b\bar{\imath}t$ mummu, which can be translated as temple

academy (Heidel 1948: 102-04). They are further referred to as $š\bar{\imath}b\bar{u}tu$ "elders," as $emq\bar{u}tu$ "wise, knowledgeable," and as coming from Babylon and Borsippa, the main two centers of learning in first millennium Mesopotamia. There is therefore little doubt that $umm\bar{a}n\bar{u}$ is to be translated here as scholars, and not as craftsmen. These $umm\bar{a}n\bar{u}$ were in all likelihood expert scribes and scholars commissioned by the king to excavate the foundations of temples and to restore their structures according to proper rites (Goossens 1948: 154).

Since the archive of the Ebabbar has yielded thousands of documents dated to the Neo-Babylonian period, one can hope that some of them record the occasional visits of these colleges of scholars to Sippar. This archive has yielded a certain number of texts which can appropriately be categorized as letter orders, as they usually record a command by the sender to the addressee to give something to a third party (see Hallo 1969: 171–76 and Oppenheim 1950: 195). Five of these letter orders consist of short commands to give rations to "the $umm\bar{a}n\bar{u}$ who came from Babylon." In addition to those referred to below, there are only two more texts of this kind from Sippar so far published. They are dated respectively to the third and the eighth year of Cyrus (Cyr 103 and CT 55: 321). Of the three which belong to the reign of Nabonidus, the following one, Nbn 56, is dated to the second year:

obv. 1. 1 pi 3 bán kaš.sag a-na 2. $^{l\acute{u}}$ um-man-nu šá ta 3. tin.tir $^{k\acute{u}}$ illik-ku-nu 4. i-din $^{i\acute{u}}$ bará 5. u₄-29-kám mu-2-kám 6. $^{l\acute{d}}$ nà-i lugal tin.tir $^{k\acute{u}}$

Give one *pānu* and three *sūtū* of first quality beer to the scholars who came from Babylon. Month Nisanu - 29th day - Second year of Nabonidus, king of Babylon.

The two others are dated to the tenth year:

Nbn 407. Order to give rations of food to the scholars who came from Babylon. Month Ayyaru - Day 8 - Tenth year of Nabonidus.

Nbn 409. Order to give bread to the scholars who came from Babylon. Month Ayyaru - Day 14 - Tenth year of Nabonidus.

We know, according to the Royal Chronicle, that the rebuilding of the Ebabbar started in the sixth month (Ulūlu) of the second year of Nabonidus (Col. III: 16-28). Inscription 5 adds that the excavations of the temple's old foundations, the mandatory preliminaries to the rebuilding, started at the beginning of the year in which Nabonidus "took the hand of Šamaš and made

him dwell in the Ebabbar," obviously the second year. The excavations therefore covered a period of six months before the old foundations could be cleared.² Inscription 5 also says that the scholars from Babylon were summoned by the king to Sippar on the first day of that year to supervise the excavations. One can hardly think it purely coincidental that "scholars from Babylon" should be mentioned in an archival text of the Ebabbar of Sippar dated precisely to the first month of the second year. The "scholars from Babylon" receiving rations in letter order *Nbn* 56 are certainly identical with the ones mentioned in inscription 5. We have here a perfect correlation between archival and monumental texts.

On the basis of the correlation between Nbn 56 and inscription 5, one may expect that building works were carried out at Sippar in the years in which similar letter orders turn up in the archive of the Ebabbar. Given their rarity and their peculiar wording, one can indeed presume that they are not routine texts. As already mentioned, two letter orders, Nbn 407 and 409, record the presence of "scholars from Babylon" at Sippar in the tenth year of Nabonidus. One might of course argue that the purpose of this visit was entirely different and bore no relationship to building works. Another archival text from Sippar, Nbn 428, also dated to the tenth year, alludes to the repair of the ziggurat in that city (see section 1.2.2.1.3). There is also evidence, internal and archaeological, that inscription 11 was written at that time to commemorate the rebuilding of the Ekunankugga, the ziggurat of the Ebabbar of Sippar (see section 1.3.11). As mentioned above, "wise elders" (i.e. scholars) from Babylon are also mentioned in that inscription as having visited Sippar at the time. In view of all this converging evidence, it seems reasonable to assume that the scholars mentioned in Nbn 407 and 409 are identical with those mentioned in inscription 11.

Another building inscription from Sippar, inscription 6, which commemorates the restoration of the Ebabbar and more specifically the fashioning of a new tiara for the statue of Šamaš, also contains references to scholars from Babylon:

Col. I, 47. a-na e-peš AGA KÙ.GI ŠÀ pa-li-iḫ ra-ša-ku n[i-ki-it-ti] 48. ú-pa-aḫ-ḫi-ir-ma DUMU.MEŠ TIN.TIR^{ki} ù [BÁR.SíP]^{ki} Col. II, 1. en-qu-ti ra-áš ţè-mi ki-ma la-bi-ri-im-ma li-in-ni-pu-uš iq-bu-ni

2. Six months to excavate a temple's structure seems to have been a reasonable and more or less standard time-frame. In inscription 16 (Col. II, 59), it is said that the excavation of the Eulmaš of Agade required three years. Since the time required was thought to be worth reporting, one may infer that it was considered unusually long.

Evidence for Dating Inscriptions

My heart became fearful concerning the fashioning of a tiara of gold, I strove [hard]. I gathered wise citizens of Babylon and [Borsippa], providers of advice: "Let it be made according to the ancient customs" did they say to me.

According to the Royal Chronicle, the dedication of the Ebabbar took place at the beginning of the third year. One can presume that the new tiara for the statue of Šamaš was completed for these ceremonies of dedication, and that inscriptions 5 and 6 are therefore contemporaneous. Inscription 6 does not however provide any conclusive evidence as to the date of the fashioning of the tiara, but a letter order from Sippar, CT 55: 51, which can be correlated with that inscription, furnishes decisive chronological data:

obv. 1. 5 bán qé-me hal-la-la 2. a-na $^{l\acute{u}}$ um-[ma]-nu 3. šá it-ti 4. a-ge-e il-lik-ku-nu 5. i-din $^{it\dot{i}}$ bará rev. 6. $_{4}$ -7-kám mu-3-kám 7. d Nà-i lugal 8. tin.tir $^{k\dot{i}}$

Give five measures of *hallala* flour³ to the scholars who came with the tiara. Month Nisanu - Day 7 - Third year of Nabonidus, king of Babylon.

Although the *ummānū* mentioned in this text are not specified as having come from Babylon, it seems reasonable to identify them as the scholars who, according to inscription 6, gave advice to the king on the proper way to fashion the tiara for the statue of Šamaš. The tiara was probably made in Babylon and brought to Sippar for the ceremonies of dedication of the Ebabbar at the beginning of the third year. The date of this letter order agrees with this reconstruction: the tiara was certainly brought for the first day of the new year (Nisanu 1), since the *ummānū* received rations of flour six days later (Nisanu 7), and placed in the newly renovated cella of Šamaš, as inscription 6 tells us:

Col. II, 36. AGA KÙ.GI ki-ma la-bi-ri-im-ma šá za-ri-ni in z4 GIŠ.NU $_{II}$.GAL 37. ù z4 UGU.AŠ.Gì.Gì šu-šu-bu in zá.MEŠ ni-siq-tim šuk-lu-lu 38. in ši-pir d KÙ.GI.BAN.DA u d NIN.ZA.DÍM eš-ŝi-iš ab-ni 39. u $_{4}$ -mi-iš ú-na-am-mi-ir-ma 40. ma-ḥa-ar d UTU be-lí-ia ú-ki-in

I made anew the tiara of gold according to the ancient customs; it was placed on a stand of alabaster and turquoise, and perfected with choice stones, according to the craftsmanship of the god Kugibanda and the

3. The form *ḥallala* is probably a variant of *ḥalḥallu*, a Neo-Babylonian word for a type of flour. See *CAD*, H, s.v. *halhallu*.

goddess Ninzadim. I made (it) glow like daylight and set it before Šamaš, my lord.

In consideration of this evidence, inscription 6 should be correlated with letter order *CT* 55: 51 and should be dated to the end of the second year of Nabonidus.

1.2.2.1.2 Letters

In the inscription which commemorates the rebuilding of the Ekurra, the temple of Bunene in Sippar (inscription 8), we read that special rituals of purification were performed during restoration of the temple:

Col. I, 30. é.kur.ra é ^dbu-ne-ne šá qé-reb si-par 31. ana ^dbu-ne-ne eniá eš-šiš e-pú-u-šu te-bi-ib-ti-šú 32. ú-qa-ad-diš-ma us-si-ma ana é.kur DINGIR-ú-ti-šú

The Ekurra, the temple of Bunene in Sippar, for Bunene my lord did I build anew. I purified it in a ritual act and made it suitable as a temple of his godhead.

According to the text known as the "rituals of the $kal\hat{u}$," specific rituals could be performed when a sacred building was restored (Thureau-Dangin 1921: 35–47). One of these rituals, now lost, concerned the sippu, the doorposts of the temple. It is mentioned in those portions of the rituals of the $kal\hat{u}$ which describe the rituals to be performed when the foundations of the new structure were laid. The catch line of one tablet, which has not been preserved, is $en\bar{u}ma$ sippu kunnu "when the doorposts are fixed" (Thureau-Dangin 1921: 44–45, rev. 15). This ritual was discussed by Ellis, who pointed out that the sippu was apparently the entire complex of jamb, threshold, and door socket on one side of a door (Ellis 1968: 33). In this connection the data from the following letter, CT 22: 68, should be of special relevance for dating inscription 8:⁴

obv. 1. IM ^{Id}EN-LUGAL-URÌ 2. a-na ^Imu-še-zib-^dAMAR.UD DINGIR.MEŠ 3. šu-lum-ka liq-bu-[ú] 4. a-mur ^IEN-šú-nu u ^I[......] 5. ^{Iú}MAŠ. MAŠ.MEŠ a-na [ka-a-ši] 6. al-ta-par ḫi-ši-[iḫ-tu] 7. šá dul-lu šá né-p[e-ši šá] 8. ^dbu-n[e-ne li-pu-šu] 9. [......] rev. 10. [......] 11. ul-te-[bi-lak-ka] 12. si-ip-pi ^Iɹ [^dbu-ne-ne] 13. gab-bi lu [eb-bu]

Letter of Belshazzar to Mušēzib-Marduk. May the gods decree your

4. Broken passages are restored according to Ebeling 1949: 41.

Evidence for Dating Inscriptions

13

well-being. See! I sent to [you] Bēlšunu and [......], the conjurers. [May they perform] the neces[sary] work for the rit[uals of] Bu[nene]. [.....] I sent [to you]. May all the doorposts of the temple [of Bunene] be [purified].

The sender of this letter can be identified as Belshazzar, the son of Nabonidus, and the addressee as Mušēzib-Marduk, who was šangu of Sippar from the second to the thirteenth year of Nabonidus (San Nicolo 1941: 34). Nabonidus left Babylon for Arabia in the second month of his third year and returned in the seventh month of his thirteenth year, and Belshazzar is attested as regent performing official duties in his father's stead from the beginning of the fourth year to the beginning of the thirteenth year (see section 3.1). Therefore, this letter should be dated to the period of Belshazzar's regency, as it shows him performing an official duty. Admittedly, the vocabulary used to describe the purification of the doorposts is not wholly identical with that used in inscription 8 (Col. II, 30-32), where it is stated more generally that the temple of Bunene was made ritually clean upon its dedication. However, inscription 8 is the only inscription of Nabonidus which specifies that rituals of purification were required as part of the restoration of a sacred building, and letter CT 22: 68 is the only archival text from Sippar which makes a direct allusion to such rituals. The fact that the rituals were performed in this case by a mašmaššu instead of a kalû should not pose a problem; there is evidence that building rituals could also be performed by that category of priest (Ellis 1968: 34). There is also archaeological evidence for the existence of such rituals; discoveries made in the Old Babylonian palace at Mari suggest that ceremonies were performed when the door sockets or the doors were put in place. There is, however, no first millennium archaeological evidence for such practices (Ellis 1968: 33). Nevertheless, it seems reasonable to assume that the purification of the doorposts mentioned in the letter was one of the rituals performed upon dedication of the temple of Bunene. The fact that this matter was given particular attention by Belshazzar points to its importance: it is evident that a routine operation was not involved, and restoration of a sacred building seems the most likely hypothesis. Therefore, inscription 8 should be dated to the period of Belshazzar's regency, during Nabonidus' sojourn in Teima.

1.2.2.1.3 Records of Building Operations

Several texts from the archive of the Ebabbar of Sippar record the delivery or purchase of building materials. A survey of these records shows that there were building activities in Sippar in the second, the sixth, the tenth, and the sixteenth year of Nabonidus.

RA 63: 79. Delivery of six iron trowels to make bricks. Arahsamnu - Day 24 - Second year of Nabonidus.

According to the Royal Chronicle, the old foundations of the Ebabbar were discovered in the sixth month of the second year and the rebuilding started shortly after. It seems therefore reasonable to correlate this text with the restoration of the Ebabbar (inscription 5), since it records the making of bricks in the eighth month of that year. This correlation was already established by Kennedy (Kennedy 1969: 79).

Nbn 423. Allocation of 30,850 bricks and 100 talents of bitumen. Dûzu - Day 3 - Tenth year of Nabonidus.

Nbn 428. Silver disbursed for five talents of bitumen for the work to be done on the ziggurat (obv. 4. ½ GÍN KÙ.BABBAR a-na 500 GUN ku-pur a-na 5. dul-lu šá dziq-qur-rat One third shekel of silver for five hundred talents of bitumen for the work to be done on the ziggurat). The name of the ziggurat is unfortunately unrecorded, but one can presume that the Ekunankugga is meant. Abu - Day 10 - Tenth year of Nabonidus.

Nbn 478. Delivery of dry and crude bitumen. Addaru - Day 9 - Tenth year of Nabonidus.

As already seen (section 1.2.2.1.1), according to letter orders *Nbn* 407 and 409, scholars from Babylon were at Sippar in the beginning of the tenth year. According to the three texts listed above, an important building work took place in the same year, which involved restoration of a ziggurat. Therefore, a correlation can be established between these records and inscription 11, which commemorates the restoration of the Ekunankugga, the ziggurat of the Ebabbar temple-complex in Sippar (see section 1.3.11). Inscription 11 can therefore be dated to the tenth year on this basis.

BMQ 3 (1928): 70. Report on an unpublished text accessioned by the British Museum: "Bricks furnished for the king's public works. Year 16 of Nabonidus."

Peek no. 11. Silver disbursed for bricks for the king's works. Simānu - Day 11 - Sixteenth year of Nabonidus.

CT 55: 332. Bitumen delivered for work on a canal and a quay. Dûzu - Day x - Sixteenth year of Nabonidus.

Nbn 1003. Delivery of 1005 talents of bitumen. Šabāţu - Day 6 - Sixteenth year of Nabonidus.

Nbn 1004. Delivery of bitumen. Šabāţu - Day 14 - Sixteenth year of Nabonidus.

Nbn 1028. Delivery of bitumen. Nisanu - Day 25 - Seventeenth year of Nabonidus.

According to these texts, important building activities took place at Sippar between the middle of the fifteenth and the beginning of the seventeenth year. They do not refer directly to restoration of a temple. Rather, two of them, *Peek* no. 11 and *CT* 55: 332, apparently record building operations on the irrigation network. The remaining texts do not specify the type of work involved. But there are reasons to believe that the restoration of the Eulmaš, the temple of Anunītum at Sippar-Anunītum, took place between the fifteenth and the seventeenth year of Nabonidus, as the only inscriptions which contain accounts of its rebuilding, nos. 15 and 16, can be dated to that period on the basis of other evidence (see sections 1.2.2.2.2 and 1.3.15). Therefore these records attest to a high level of building activity in those years and furnish a piece of converging evidence, though inconclusive, that the restoration of the Eulmaš took place in that period.

CT 55: 329. Bricks delivered to the Ebabbar (text badly broken). Abu - Day 10 - Sixth year of Nabonidus.

This text might be related to the restoration of the Ekurra, the temple of Bunene at Sippar (inscription 8), as it is the only known building work at Sippar which could possibly be dated to the sixth year. Indeed the restoration of the Ebabbar, the Ekunankugga, and the Eulmaš, can be dated to the second, the tenth, and the sixteenth year respectively. Moreover, inscription 8 can be dated to the period between the third and the tenth year (see section 1.3.8).

1.2.2.1.4 Summary

Table 1 lists all the archival texts discussed above, the years to which they are dated, the inscriptions with which they are correlated, and the building works involved.

1.2.2.2 Texts from Uruk, Archive of the Eanna

Although there are no inscriptions of Nabonidus recording works of restoration at Uruk, texts from the archive of the Eanna contain relevant information for dating two of his building inscriptions.

Table 1: Building Works at Sippar

YEAR	LETTER ORDERS	BUILDING MATERIALS	LETTER	RESTORATION INVOLVED	INSCRIPTION
2	Nbn 56	RA 63, 79		Ebabbar	5
3	CT 55:51			Tiara of Šamaš	6
6		CT 55:329		Temple of Bunene?	8
4 to 13			CT 22:68	Temple of Bunene	8
10	Nbn 407 Nbn 409	Nbn 423 Nbn 428 Nbn 478		Ziggurat Ekunankugga	11
16		Nbn 1003 Nbn 1004 Nbn 1026 BMQ 3, 70 Peek 11 CT 55:332		Canals Temple of Anunītum?	15 and 16

1.2.2.2.1 Texts Concerning Building Materials and Workers

TCL XII: 74. Silver disbursed from the month Tašrītu of the accession year to the month Dûzu of the first year, for various purposes, including the purchase of 2322 talents of dry and crude bitumen. Dûzu - Day 6 - First year of Nabonidus.

NCBT 880 (YOS XIX: 214). Record concerning the making of 22,000 bricks. Simānu - Day 11 - Second year of Nabonidus.

YOS VI: 20. Silver disbursed for making bricks. Dûzu - Day 20 - Second year of Nabonidus.

YOS VI: 34. Contract to furnish 1000 baked bricks. Addaru - Day 22 - Fourth year of Nabonidus.

GCCI I: 393. Silver given to hired workmen doing work on the *akītu*-temple and to hired workmen molding bricks at the gate of the *akītu*-temple. x - Day 21 - Fifth year of Nabonidus.

YOS VI: 97. Silver disbursed for baking bricks. Simānu - Day 23 - Seventh year of Nabonidus.

- GCCI I: 268. Silver given for digging the canal of the Gate of Adad. Šabāṭu Day 22 Seventh year of Nabonidus.
- GCCI I: 317. Silver given for digging the canal of the Gate of Adad. Addaru Day 23 Seventh year of Nabonidus.
- GCCI I: 355. Silver disbursed for making bricks. Dûzu Day 27 Ninth year of Nabonidus.
- YOS VI: 104. Promise to deliver 300 bricks. Tašrītu Day 20 Ninth year of Nabonidus.
- GCCI I: 291. Silver disbursed for baking bricks. Second Ulūlu Day 27 Tenth year of Nabonidus.
- GCCI I: 295. Silver given to hired workmen performing work on the royal canal. Kislīmu Day 1 Tenth year of Nabonidus.
- GCCI I: 323. Silver given to hired workmen who dug the royal canal. Tebētu Day 12 Tenth year of Nabonidus.
- GCCI I: 352. Silver disbursed for making bricks. Šabāţu Day 2 Tenth year of Nabonidus.
- GCCI I: 334. Silver disbursed for making bricks. Šabāţu Day 20 Tenth year of Nabonidus.
- GCCI I: 280. Silver given to hired workmen who made bricks. Addaru Day 11 Tenth year of Nabonidus.
- GCCI I: 369. Silver given to hired workmen who dug the royal canal. Simānu Day 5 Eleventh year of Nabonidus.
- GCCI I: 284. Silver given to hired workmen to dig the royal canal. Simānu Day 28 Eleventh year of Nabonidus.
- GCCI I: 282. Silver given to hired workmen to dig the royal canal. Abu Day 7 Eleventh year of Nabonidus.
- GCCI I: 376. Silver given to hired workmen to dig the royal canal. Abu Day 11 Eleventh year of Nabonidus.

These texts can be divided into four groups according to their dates and the works to which they refer. NCBT 880 and YOS VI: 20 may refer to some restoration work, otherwise not documented, ordered by Nabonidus at the time of his visit to southern Babylonia in his first regnal year (see section 2.3.2.1).

The second group (YOS VI: 34 and GCCI I: 393) contains explicit references to building works on the *akītu*-temple of Uruk at the turn of the fifth year. The third group, which consists of three texts dated to the seventh year, also contains explicit references to one building site, the canal flowing near the Gate of Adad. No inscription commemorating these building works has come down to us.

The fourth group, by far the largest, attests to important building activities from the middle of the ninth to the middle of the eleventh year (last thirteen texts listed above). Several of these records deal with the repair of the main canal of Uruk, the "Royal Canal" (nār šarri). Others refer to the molding and baking of bricks without further specification. Two inscriptions of Nabonidus were found at Uruk: inscription 12, a short stamped brick inscription with a royal titulary (see section 1.3.12), and a fragment of inscription 9, which records the rebuilding of the Ebabbar of Larsa in his tenth regnal year (see section 1.3.9). This fragment was found in the structure of the main canal at Uruk, which, according to the archival texts listed above, was repaired in the tenth and the eleventh year, at the same time the Ebabbar of Larsa was being restored. All known exemplars of inscription 12 were found at Uruk and in the structure of the Ebabbar of Larsa. It is therefore obvious that inscriptions 9 and 12 were twin inscriptions commissioned to commemorate the restoration of the Ebabbar of Larsa and various public works undertaken at Uruk in the tenth year of Nabonidus, which are alluded to in the archival texts listed above. This seems only natural, as Uruk and Larsa were closely associated cities in the Neo-Babylonian period; Larsa seems to have been administratively dependent on Uruk (Arnaud 1980: 499).

1.2.2.2.2 *Letters*

Inscription 16 of Nabonidus consists of copies of four stelas (asumittu) reportedly set up in Sippar, Larsa, Agade, and Sippar-Anunītum to commemorate the restoration of their main temples. A statement to that effect is found at the end of each copy, as, for example, after the section reporting on the restoration of the Ebabbar of Sippar (Col. I, 40. šá ugu záa-su-mit-tum šá ud.kib.nunki That which is on a stela which is at Sippar). The whole inscription ends with the following statement which, as suggested by Leichty, fulfills the function of a colophon (Leichty 1964: 151 and 153):

Col. III, 79. e-piš-tú ^d30 en dingir.meš ù ^diš-tar 80. šá an-e u ki-tim šá ina ugu ^{zá}a-su-mi-né-e-tú 81. šá ga-la-la áš-ţu-ru-ma a-na šá-me-e šá un.meš ár-ki-tum

The deed of Sîn, the lord of gods and goddess(es) of heaven and the

underworld, which I wrote upon stelas of polished stones for the people to hear (it) in the future.

The following letter from the archive of the Eanna, YOS III: 4, should be particularly relevant for dating inscription 16:

obv. 1. a-mat Lugal 2. a-na ¹kur-ban-ni-damar.ud 3. šu-lum ia-a-ši 4. lìb-ba-ka lu-ú 5. ṭa-ab-ka 6. ²áa-su-mi-né-e-ti ši-na 7. šá ga-la-la 8. šá-aṭ-re-e-ti 9. šá ú-še-bi-l[ak]-ku 10. ina É DINGIR.MEŠ rev. 11. a-šar šá ṭa-a-bu 12. šu-kun-ši-né-e-tu

Command of the king to Kurbanni-Marduk: I am well, may you be satisfied! Set up in the temple of the gods, in appropriate places, those inscribed stelas of polished stones which I sent to you.

Kurbanni-Marduk was *šatammu* of the Eanna from the middle of the thirteenth year to the end of the sixteenth or the beginning of the seventeenth year of Nabonidus (see section 3.1.2.2), who is therefore to be identified as the sender of this letter. Inscription 16 and *YOS* III: 4 contain the only two known references to "stelas of polished stones" (*asuminētu ša galālu*) from the Neo-Babylonian period. As suggested by Tadmor (1965: 361), the two texts certainly refer to the same monuments. In *YOS* III: 4, Nabonidus is sending an order to the *šatammu* of the Eanna that the stelas copied in inscription 16 be set up in the temples of Uruk. Therefore inscription 16 is to be dated to the last years of the reign, during Kurbanni-Marduk's incumbency as *šatammu* of the Eanna.

1.2.3 Archaeological Evidence

Along with written sources, archaeological evidence can determine the dating of some inscriptions. By archaeological evidence is meant here the find-spots of royal inscriptions, which so far have not been taken into consideration in inquiries into the chronology of Nabonidus' inscriptions.⁵ Although a detailed study of the function of Neo-Babylonian building inscriptions is yet to come, some general considerations on that subject can be offered. For example, clay cylinders, the standard medium on which building inscriptions were written, appear to have been primarily intended as foundation deposits. The disclosure

5. The find-spots of Nabonidus' inscriptions are listed in Berger 1973, under each inscription's entry. Summaries of that data are also provided in section 1.3 under each inscription's entry.

of the original layouts of temples and the discovery of foundation deposits left by former kings were absolute prerequisites to a proper restoration of a temple. Statements to the effect that the king responsible for the restoration of a temple deposited his own inscription next to the foundation deposit of a previous ruler are commonly found in Neo-Babylonian building inscriptions (Goossens 1948: 153). Nevertheless, this does not appear to have been the sole purpose of such documents. Some were discovered in the walls of temples, where they had obviously been inserted in antiquity (see section 1.3.21). Many others were apparently on display, as they were found in large numbers lying on the floor of temple rooms or in other buildings such as the so-called "Museum" in the royal palace at Babylon (Unger 1931: 224-28). One can reasonably infer from this that inscriptions had secondary purposes such as propaganda or publicizing of the king's deeds (Ellis 1968: 112-13). Equally important is the archaeological distribution of some inscriptions. While most inscriptions have been found exclusively in the buildings they were associated with, others have been found at different locations, where they were put on display or integrated into the structure of buildings they seemingly had no connection with. For example, a fragment of inscription 9, which records the restoration of the Ebabbar of Larsa, was found at Uruk (see section 1.3.9). Two exemplars of inscription 16, recording building works at Sippar, Larsa, and Agade, but commissioned specifically to commemorate the rebuilding of the Eulmas of Sippar-Anunītum, were found in the ruins of the ziggurat of Ur (see section 1.3.16). Such finds are not infrequent enough to be ascribed to chance: they must have significance. It is suggested here that in such cases we have contemporaneous building works thought to be so closely related to one another that copies of the inscriptions commemorating them were deposited in each restored building. When this occurs, it can reasonably be assumed that such building works and the inscriptions commemorating them were contemporaneous. This has already been determined for inscriptions 9 and 12 (see section 1.2.2.2.1). In addition, such evidence will be considered for dating inscriptions 10, 11, 17, and 19.

1.2.4 Internal Evidence

The last type of evidence employed in dating building inscriptions derives from the inscriptions themselves. There is internal dating, that is to say, an inscription may contain strong or unequivocal internal indication as to its date. Such evidence is rare; it occurs only in inscriptions 1, 2, 7, 9, and 13. There is also the evidence obtained through analysis of style and content. Use of such evidence,

however, will be circumspect, in order to avoid circular argumentation. It will be restricted to cases where an inscription shares such striking features with another inscription already dated on the basis of other evidence that the two can be assumed to be contemporaneous—provided that those features are shared exclusively by these two inscriptions. Inscriptions 3, 10, 14, and 17 have been dated partly or entirely on such a basis.

1.3 CATALOGUE AND CHRONOLOGY OF THE INSCRIPTIONS

This section consists of a catalogue of the inscriptions of Nabonidus. As the numbering used in my catalogue is different from previous ones, a concordance with Berger's and Tadmor's lists is provided in the discussion of each inscription. Then follows a description of the content of the inscription. Many of them contain recapitulations of previous building works. When this occurs, the work constituting the main object of the inscription will be identified as such. Then follows the date proposed for the inscription, and a discussion of the evidence on which this dating is based.

The thirty inscriptions included in this list are divided into three groups. Inscriptions of the first group are those which can be dated; they are numbered from 1 to 19, reflecting their chronological order as proposed in this study. The second group includes inscriptions which cannot be dated; they are identified by letters (A to H). The last group includes three fragmentary texts, whose assignment to this corpus is still uncertain (Inscriptions X, Y, and Z). The inscribed stela of the mother of Nabonidus, found at Harran, not a royal inscription narrowly speaking, is not included in this catalogue.

1.3.1 Inscription 1

Concordance: Berger 1973: 384–86 (Stelen-Fragment XI).

Tadmor 1965: no. 8 (VAB IV, 8).

Content: Report on the beginning of the reign of Nabonidus and statement

6. Those lists are Berger 1973: 343–88, and Tadmor 1965: 351. Tadmor followed the numbering of Langdon in *VAB* IV. Under some entries concordances with Walker 1981, which contains new duplicates of already known brick inscriptions, are also provided.

about his intention to restore the Ehulhul, the temple of Sîn at Harran.

Remarks: Only one exemplar of this inscription is known. A copy was published by Messerschmidt, and a photograph of an impression of the inscription, a transliteration, and a translation were subsequently published by Scheil (Messerschmidt 1896 and Scheil 1896). The inscription is recorded on a stela, which was found in the so-called Museum in the royal palace at Babylon (Unger 1931: 225, no. 19).

Evidence for dating: The date of this inscription can be determined solely on the basis of internal evidence. It consists of a report on the accession year and the beginning of the first regnal year of Nabonidus. This report is preceded by a historical prologue. The contents of inscription 1 can be summarized as follows (see also section 2.3.1.1):

Cols. I–II: Sennacherib's desecration of Babylon. As retaliation, Marduk causes Sennacherib's son to murder his father and eventually brings about the fall of Assyria through the Medes. The king of Babylon (Nabopolassar) is stricken with awe at the sight of the devastated cult centers of Assyria.

Cols. III–IV: Restoration of proper rituals and cults in the Eanna of Uruk by Nebuchadnezzar II and in the Eulmaš of Sippar-Anunītum by Neriglissar. It should be noted that Nebuchadnezzar II is not explicitly mentioned in the section dealing with the Eanna of Uruk. However, there is strong evidence that he was meant, since he claimed in one of his inscriptions to have returned the cultic statues of Uruk to the Eanna (VAB IV, Nebuchadnezzar no. 9, Col. II, 55). Moreover, a passage of the recently discovered "Uruk Prophecy" published by Hunger alludes to the same event (Hunger 1976: 20, text no. 3). Hunger and Kaufman have pointed out in their study of this text that the next to last ruler mentioned in the prophecy should in all likelihood be identified as Nebuchadnezzar II. One of the predictions associated with his rule states that "he will remove the ancient protective goddess of Uruk from Babylon and let her dwell in her own sanctuary at Uruk." This passage bears a striking resemblance to inscription 1, which states that "(Nebuchadnezzar II) replaced with her appropriate statue an incorrect image of the Lady of Uruk which had been set up in the reign of Eriba-Marduk, and reinstalled the incorrect image in another cella" (Hunger and Kaufman 1975: 374–75).

Cols. IV (end)—V: Deposing of Lābâši-Marduk, Neriglissar's son, and elevation of Nabonidus to kingship.

Cols. VI–VII: Report on Nabonidus' dreams and visions after his accession to power. He successively beholds Nebuchadnezzar II and the goddess Gula, both of whom approve of his rule. Then he visits the sanctuaries of Nabû and Marduk, seeking their blessing. This section reflects Nabonidus' concerns about the legitimacy of his rule.

Cols. VIII-IX: Adornment of temples in Babylon. Dedication of 2850 prisoners from the country Hume (Cilicia) to Nabû and Nergal. After the New Year's festival, during which he makes sumptuous gifts to Marduk, Nabû, and Nergal, Nabonidus visits the cult centers of Ur, Uruk, Larsa, and Kesh.

Col. X: Marduk entrusts Nabonidus with the restoration of the Ehulhul in Harran. A cylinder seal of jasper, upon which Aššurbanipal had written a eulogy of Sîn, is restored and placed in the Esagil.

Col. XI: This column contains quotations from hepatoscopic texts.

One can assume that this inscription was commissioned not very long after Nabonidus' accession, since a sizeable portion of it describes the circumstances of his rise to power in an apologetic way (Cols. V-VII). The mention of prisoners from Hume also points to an early date in the reign, since campaigns to that region are known to have been conducted in the third year of Neriglissar and in the first year of Nabonidus (Grayson 1975a: 103, for chronicle 6, and 105, for chronicle 7). The campaign alluded to in inscription 1 should have been conducted in the last months of the accession year of Nabonidus, since the New Year's festival described in Col. IX is that of his first regnal year, after which he set out to visit southern Babylonia. Indeed, the visit to southern Babylonia (Col. IX) certainly took place in the first two months of the first year, since it is documented in archival texts from Larsa dated to Nisanu and Ayyaru of that year (see section 2.3.2.1). As the account of this visit closes the narrative on the beginning of the reign, it provides a terminus post quem for the redaction of the inscription: the third month of the first year. Since the consecration of Ennigaldi-Nanna and the restoration of the Ebabbar of Sippar are not mentioned, the terminus ante quem should be the end of the first year, when the decision to rebuild the Ebabbar was made. Therefore, in consideration of all this evidence, inscription 1 must have been written towards the middle of Nabonidus' first regnal year.

1.3.2 Inscription 2

Concordance: Berger 1973: 364 (Zylinder II, 7).

Tadmor 1965: no. 18.

Content: Consecration of En-nigaldi-Nanna, the daughter of Nabonidus, as high priestess of Nanna at Ur, and rebuilding of the Egipar, her residence.

Remarks: Only one copy of this inscription is known. It consists of a clay cylinder reportedly found at Ur. According to Scheil, the cylinder was at one time in the possession of antiquities dealers in Baghdad, who reported to him that it was found at Ur (Scheil 1912: 680–81). It was subsequently accessioned by the Yale Babylonian Collection and published by Clay as YOS I: 45.

Evidence for dating: According to the Royal Chronicle, the consecration of En-nigaldi-Nanna took place in the second year of Nabonidus (see section 1.2.1). Inscription 2 can be dated with even greater precision on the basis of internal evidence. It reports that the consecration of Nabonidus' daughter came as the result of an eclipse of the moon which was interpreted as an omen sent by the god Sîn:

Col. I, 7. aš-šum e-re-eš NIN.DINGIR.RA 8. i-na ^{iti}KIN. dINNIN U₄-13-KAM ITI ši-pí-ir diš-tar.meš 9. din-bi in-na-di-ir-ma i-na na-a'-du-ri-šu ir-bi 10. den.zu nin.dingir.ra i-ri-iš ki-a-am it-ta-šu ù pu-ru-us-su-šú

On account of a wish for an *entu* priestess, in the month Ulūlu, the month (whose Sumerian name means) "work of the goddesses," on the thirteenth day, the moon was eclipsed and set while eclipsed. Sîn requested an *entu* priestess. Thus (were) his sign and his decision.

H. Lewy pointed out that this eclipse is to be identified as that of September 26, 554 B.C. (H. Lewy 1949: 50, n. 105). The dedication of En-nigaldi-Nanna and the rebuilding of the Egipar therefore took place in the second half of the second year (see also section 2.3.3.1). Inscription 2 is to be dated to that period.

1.3.3 Inscription 3

Concordance: Berger 1973: 344 (Türangelstein I).

Tadmor 1965: no. 22.

Content: Restoration of the Egipar at Ur.

Remarks: This inscription is recorded on a gate-socket found during the excavations at Ur. It was published as *UET* I: 187. In fact, this gate-socket was not integrated into the structure of the Egipar. It was found in the remains of the so-called Nabonidus Gate, located northwest of the sacred enclosure, facing the

25

back of the ziggurat (see Woolley 1923: 314–17). This gate was probably restored by Nabonidus when he consecrated his daughter to Nanna.

Evidence for dating: According to the converging evidence from the Royal Chronicle and inscription 2, this inscription should also be dated to the second half of the second year. That this gate-socket is a companion inscription to inscription 2 is further suggested by verbatim correspondences between the two texts. Inscription 3 reads as follows:

1. [dna-bi-um]-i lugal ká.min^{ki} 2. [pa-li-ih] d30 u dnin-gal ana-ku 3. [é.g]₁₆.pàr é nin.dingir.ra 4. [ša] qé-reb šeš.unug^{ki} 5. [a-n]a d30 be-lí-ia e-pu-uš 6. [r]a-am-ku-ut é.giš.nu₁₁.gal 7. ki-di-nu-ut-su-nu ak-sur-ma 8. šu-ba-ra-šu-un aš-ku-un

[Nabo]nidus, king of Babylon, [worshipper] of Sîn and Ningal, am I. The [Eg]ipar, the residence of the *entu* priestess in Ur, did I build anew [fo]r Sîn, my lord. I established the privileged status of the [pr]iesthood of the Egišnugal and I set them free.

The last three lines are a shorter version of inscription 2, Col. II, 25-31, which gives the names of all the categories of priests which were released from their service obligations at the time of the consecration of the king's daughter (see section 2.3.3.1):

Col. II, 25. ra-am-ku-ut é.Kiš.NU.GÁL (there follows the categories of priests) 31. i-li-ik-šu-nu ap-ţu-ur-ma šu-bar-ra-šu-nu [áš]-ku-un

As for the priesthood of the Egišnugal, (there follows the categories of priests) I discontinued their service obligation and I set them free.

There is therefore no doubt that inscriptions 2 and 3 form a group.

1.3.4 Inscription 4

Concordance: Berger 1973: 352 (Backsteine B I, 3).

Tadmor 1965: no. 15 (VAB IV, 15).

Walker 1981: 93, no. 113.

Content: Restoration of the Egipar at Ur.

Remarks: Several exemplars of this stamped brick inscription are known. Five of them are catalogued by Walker (1981: 93). In addition, according to Gadd, several of them were left in situ (*UET* I, p. xix, no. 186). Copies were published as I R 68, no. 7, and *UET* I: 186. Most of them were found during the

excavations at Ur, in the structure of the Egipar, southeast of the ziggurat (see Woolley 1925: 377-79).

Evidence for dating: This inscription should be dated to the second half of the second year of Nabonidus for the same reasons as inscriptions 2 and 3. It constitutes with them the complete set of inscriptions (cylinder, stamped brick, and gate-socket) commissioned by the king to commemorate the consecration of his daughter as high priestess and the rebuilding of the Egipar.

1.3.5 Inscription 5

Concordance: Berger 1973: 367–68 (Zylinder II, 9). Tadmor 1965: no. 6 (VAB IV, 6).

Content: Restoration of the Ebabbar, the temple of Samas at Sippar.

Remarks: Two exemplars of this clay cylinder are known. They were both reportedly found at Sippar and entered the British Museum with the bulk of the Abu-Habba Collection. They were published by Pinches as V R 65, with variants from the duplicate noted in the margin. The duplicate was later transferred to the Istanbul Museum.

Evidence for dating: According to the converging evidence of literary and archival sources (Royal Chronicle, Nbn 56, and RA 63: 79; see sections 1.2.1, 1.2.2.1.1, and 1.2.2.1.3), the rebuilding of the Ebabbar of Sippar took place in the second half of the second year of Nabonidus (see also section 2.3.3.2). Inscription 5 is to be dated to that period.

1.3.6 Inscription 6

Concordance: Berger 1973: 365–66 (Zylinder II, 8). Tadmor 1965: no. 7 (VAB IV, 7).

Content: Restoration of the Ebabbar, the temple of Šamaš at Sippar. Fashioning of a new tiara for the statue of Šamaš (main object of the inscription).

Remarks: Only one exemplar of this clay cylinder is known. It was published by Pinches as V R 63. It was reportedly found at Sippar (Scheil 1890: 399), and was accessioned by the British Museum with the Abu-Habba Collection.

Evidence for dating: Inscription 6 can be dated solely on the basis of archival evidence (CT 55: 51). As discussed above, this document proves that the tiara for the statue of Šamaš was made at the same time the Ebabbar was restored and was brought to Sippar at the beginning of the third year for the

ceremonies of dedication of the temple (see section 1.2.2.1.1). Therefore, inscription 6 should be dated to the end of the second year of Nabonidus.

1.3.7 Inscription 7

Concordance: Berger 1973: 362 (Zylinder II, 5).

Tadmor 1965: no. 17.

Content: Restoration of the Ebabbar, the temple of Šamaš at Sippar.

Restoration of the Ugalamaru, the wall of Kutha.

Restoration of the Melamkurkurdulla, the wall of Kish.

Restoration of the akītu-temple of the god Uraš at Kish.

Restoration of the wall of the city Ubaşşi and of the temple of the

goddess Nanaya in that city.

Consecration of En-nigaldi-Nanna, the daughter of Nabonidus, as high priestess of Nanna at Ur, and rebuilding of the Egipar, her residence.

Restoration of the Eigikalamma, the temple of the god Lugal-Marada at Marad, and fashioning of a new chariot for him (main object of the inscription).

Remarks: Two copies of this clay cylinder are known. One is in the Louvre and was published by Dhorme and Thureau-Dangin (Dhorme 1914), and the other is in the British Museum and was published as CT 36, pl. 21–23. According to Böhl, the two exemplars were found at Marad (Böhl 1939: 151), but this assumption is not substantiated by any evidence.

Evidence for dating: This inscription can be dated on the basis of internal evidence if one presumes that the list of building works which preceded the restoration of the temple of Lugal-Marada that it contains is comprehensive, and not made up of a random selection of those works. The latest datable work mentioned in the list is the restoration of the Ebabbar of Sippar, which gives the beginning of the third year as a terminus post quem for inscription 7. The terminus ante quem would be the tenth year, since the earliest datable building works not mentioned in the list took place in that year (Ebabbar of Larsa and ziggurat of Sippar). Therefore the restoration of the temple of Lugal-Marada and inscription 7 should be dated between the third and the tenth year. Moreover, since the restoration of the Ekurra, the temple of Bunene at Sippar (inscription 8), is not mentioned in the list, one may assume that the restoration of the Eigikalamma at Marad preceded it. If one accepts the suggestion that the Ekurra

was rebuilt in the sixth year, which is very uncertain (see section 1.3.8), then inscription 7 should be dated between the third and the sixth year.

1.3.8 Inscription 8

Concordance: Berger 1973; 361 (Zylinder II, 4).

Tadmor 1965: no. 2 (VAB IV, 2).

Content: Restoration of the Ebabbar, the temple of Samas at Sippar.

Restoration of the Ekurra, the temple of Bunene at Sippar (main

object of the inscription).

Remarks: Two copies of this cylinder are known. One, published by Bezold, belongs to the British Museum, and its find-spot is unrecorded (Bezold 1889: 86–92, and pl. I–II). The other, now in the Istanbul Museum, was found in the Museum in the royal palace at Babylon (Unger 1931: 225, no. 22). It is still unpublished.

Evidence for dating: This inscription can be dated solely on the basis of archival evidence. The restoration of the temple of Bunene certainly took place between the third and the thirteenth year, in consideration of the correlation established between inscription 8 and CT 22: 68, a letter of Belshazzar to the šangu of Sippar, Mušēzib-Marduk (see section 1.2.2.1.2). If one accepts that text CT 55: 329 is also related to the rebuilding of the Ekurra (see section 1.2.2.1.3), which is highly uncertain, a more precise date can be proposed, the sixth year. In any event inscription 8 should be dated to the period of Nabonidus' stay in Teima.

1.3.9 Inscription 9

Concordance: Berger 1973: 369–70 (Zylinder III, 1). Tadmor 1965: no. 3 (VAB IV, 3).

Content: Restoration of the Ebabbar, the temple of Šamaš at Larsa.

Remarks: Only one fully preserved copy of this cylinder is known. It was published by Bezold with one of the duplicates of inscription 8 (Bezold 1889: 92–101, and pl. III–V). In addition, three fragments are known: fragment 1, which belongs to the British Museum, was identified by Bezold (Bezold 1921: 116, no. 8); fragment 2 was published as BIN II: 29, and fragment 3 by Schott (Schott 1928–29: 62–63, no. 30). Only the find-spot of fragment 3 is known: it was found during the German excavations at Uruk, alongside one of the ancient irrigation dikes (Schott 1928–29: 62).

Evidence for dating: This inscription is the only one which contains an unequivocal statement as to the date of the building work it commemorates. The restoration of the Ebabbar of Larsa took place in the tenth regnal year of Nabonidus:

Col. I, 54. i-na-an-na i-na MU-10-KAM i-na u₄-mu BALA-e-a 55. da-am-qa i-na šar-ru-ti-ia da-rí-tim

Now, in the tenth year of my everlasting kingship, on a propitious day of my rule.

The same indication is found in inscription 16, in the section devoted to the restoration of the Ebabbar of Larsa (Col. I, 64: *i-na-an-na i-na* MU-10-KAM *ina* BALA-*e-a ki-nim* Now, in the tenth year, in my true rule). Inscription 9 should therefore be dated to that year.

1.3.10 Inscription 10

Concordance: Berger 1973: 363 (Zylinder II, 6).

Tadmor 1965: no. 26.

Content: Restoration of the Eamaškugga, the temple of Ningal at Dūrum. Remarks: This inscription is known from a fragment of a clay cylinder found during the excavations at Tell al-Laḥm, which is probably to be identified as ancient Dūrum (Dūr Bīt-Yakīn), and possibly also as ancient Kissik (Vertesalji 1980). It was published by Saggs (Saggs 1957). According to Safar, the cylinder was found in the low settlement, in room 8, which was the main entrance to the eastern building, one of the two most imposing architectural units in that area (Safar 1949: 159–60). There is no evidence, apart from the fact that inscription 10 was found there, that the building in question is to be identified as the temple of Ningal.

Evidence for dating: In his edition of this inscription, Saggs noted that its opening section is virtually identical with that of inscription 9. The correspondences between the following parts, which consist of lists of Nabonidus' epithets, are particularly striking. Here follows the relevant passage of inscription 9:

Col. I, 11. re-é-a-am mu-uš-ta-lu 12. mu-uš-te-ši-ir ni-ši ma!-a-tim 13. ša dAMAR.UD den-líl DINGIR.DINGIR a-na za-na-an ma-ḥa-zi 14. ù ud-du-šu eš-re-e-ti 15. šu-um-šu ki-ni-iš iz-ku-ru a-na šar-ru-ti 16. dna-bi-um pa-qid kiš-šat AN-e ù KI-tim 17. i-na nap-ḥa-ar a-ši-ib BARÁ

18. ú-šar-bu-ú be-lu-ut-su 19. dnè.iri_{11.}GAL dan-dan-ni 20. den-líl er-șe-tim mu-ud-dal-ku 21. i-na qá-ab-lu ù ta-ḥa-zi 22. il-li-ki i-da-a-šu den.zu ù dnin-gal 23. a-ge-e du-úr U₄.Meš i-pi!-ir ra-šu!-uš-šú 24. dutu ù da-a tu-da-at mé-ša-ru 25. ú-pa-at-tu-šu

The following section of inscription 10 is virtually identical:

Col. I, 8. re-é-a-am [mu-uš-ta-lu] 9. mu-uš-te-ši-ru ni-š[i ma-a-tim] 10. ša $^{\rm d}$ AMAR.UD IGI.GÁL DINGIR.MEŠ m[u] 11. na-ap-ḫa-ar KUR.KUR [......] 12. šu-um-šu ki-ni-iš [iz-ku-ru ana LUGAL-ti] 13. $^{\rm d}$ na-bi-um pa-qi-[id kiš-šat] 14. ša-mé-e [ù er-ṣe-tim] 15. i-na ku-ul-la-at [a-šib BARÁ] 16. ú-ša-áš-qu-ú [be-lu-ut-su] 17. $^{\rm d}$ NÈ.IRI $_{\rm II}$.GAL da-a[n-da-an-ni] 18. $^{\rm d}$ en-líl er-ṣe-tum [mu-ud-dal-ku] 19. i-na ša-aš-mu da-a[n-da-an-ni] 20. il-li-ku i-da-a-[šú] 21. $^{\rm d}$ EN.ZU ù $^{\rm d}$ nin-gal 22. a-ge-e du!-úr U $_{\rm d}$.MEŠ 23. i-pi-ri ra-šu-uš-šu 24. $^{\rm d}$ UTU ù $^{\rm d}$ a-a 25. ṭu-da-at mé-ša-ri ú-pa-at-tu-šu

Here follows a conflated translation of the two passages:

(Nabonidus, king of Babylon), the thoughtful shepherd, who keeps order among the people of the land, whose name Marduk, the leader of the gods, pronounced truthfully for kingship in order to take care of the cult centers and restore the sanctuaries, whose lordship Nabû, the overseer of the totality of heaven and the underworld, has exalted among all who dwell in cult places, at whose side Nergal, the mighty one, the wise leader of the underworld, marches (whenever there is) fighting or combat, on whose head Sîn and Ningal put an everlasting tiara, for whom Šamaš and Aya opened the paths of justice.

The opening sections of Neo-Babylonian building inscriptions are often similar and all contain a selection of formulaic epithets and phrases drawn from a standard repertory. In this case, however, verbatim correspondences between two passages of significant length, and the fact that all the expressions found here are peculiar to these two texts and do not appear in any other Neo-Babylonian building inscription cannot be judged as mere coincidences, but rather prove that inscriptions 9 and 10 were written in the same period, and most

^{7.} Instead of this phrase, inscription 10 seems to have "in order to rule all of the countries."

^{8.} Here inscription 10 seems to have "(whenever there is) mighty war."

1.3.11 Inscription 11

Concordance: Berger 1973: 376 (Zylinder III, 3).

Tadmor 1965: no. 19.

Content: Restoration of the Ebabbar, the temple of Šamaš at Sippar, and of

the ziggurat Ekunankugga at Sippar.

Remarks: This inscription is known from a badly preserved clay cylinder which apparently was found at Larsa. It was published by Langdon (OECT 1 1923: 32–37, and pl. 23–28). According to Berger, the cylinder entered the Well-Blundell Collection (now in the Ashmolean Museum at Oxford) as having come from Larsa (Berger 1973: 376). It is impossible to determine if this information is reliable.

Evidence for dating: It has generally been believed that the main object of this inscription is the restoration of the Ebabbar of Sippar, on which basis Berger has dated it, together with inscription 5, to the second year of Nabonidus (Berger 1973: 111). This assumption seems incorrect in consideration of the following argument. There is no apparent reason why two distinct building inscriptions recorded on clay cylinders (inscriptions 5 and 11) should have been commissioned in the second year to commemorate the restoration of the Ebabbar, especially as inscription 11 by and large repeats the account found in inscription 5. Therefore inscription 11 was written for a different purpose, which, as can be deduced from its opening section, was the commemoration of the restoration of the ziggurat of the Ebabbar, the Ekunankugga:

Col. I, 1. ì-nu-um an-num ù den-líl 2. šá uru UD.KIB.NUNki iq-bu-ú e-de-eš-su 3. a-da-an-šu-num ki-i-ni ik-šu-dam 4. a-na e-pé-eš É.BAB-BAR.RA dUTU be-el ra-bí-ù 5. i-iḫ-su-sa šu-bat-sa re-eš-ti-tú 6. ša zi-qú-ra-at gi-gu-na-šu 7. re-ši-šu e-li ša pa-ni ul-lu-ú 8. lib-ba-šu-ni ḫa-di-iš ub-lam-ma.

When Anu and Enlil commanded the restoration of Sippar (and) the proper time fixed by them for the rebuilding of the Ebabbar arrived, Šamaš, the great lord, remembered his original dwelling. They joyfully decided to have the top of that temple tower, its sacred place, (built) higher than it was before.

It should be noted that inscription 5 does not make any allusion to the ziggurat Ekunankugga, nor in fact do inscriptions 6, 7, and 8, all containing accounts of the restoration of the Ebabbar. However, inscription 15, dated to the last years of the reign, and which also has a section concerning the Ebabbar of Sippar, does mention the restoration of the Ekunankugga. Therefore the ziggurat was rebuilt some years after restoration of the temple itself, after inscription 8 and before inscription 15 were written. Moreover, as seen earlier, there is archival evidence which strongly suggests that the ziggurat of Sippar was repaired in the tenth year of Nabonidus: text Nbn 428 mentions bricks for "the work to be done on the ziggurat," and letter orders Nbn 407 and 409 record the visit of "scholars from Babylon" to Sippar, presumably to supervise this restoration work (see sections 1.2.2.1.1 and 1.2.2.1.3). In consideration of that set of converging evidence, one can date the rebuilding of the ziggurat Ekunankugga to the tenth year of Nabonidus. This chronology would furthermore explain why the only known copy of inscription 11 was reportedly found at Larsa, as the rebuilding of the Ebabbar in this city also took place in the tenth year. It is not overly hazardous to assume that this copy of inscription 11 was inserted in the structure of the Ebabbar of Larsa to commemorate the fact that the two building works were contemporaneous. That the two buildings were dedicated to the god Samaš adds strength to this hypothesis.

Against the chronology proposed here one can point out, however, that inscription 16, dated to the last years of the reign, does not mention the ziggurat in its account of the rebuilding of the Ebabbar. Yet this can be easily explained by the fact that that section consists of a new version of inscription 5, revised in reference to the new exalted position of Sîn at the head of the pantheon imposed by Nabonidus after his return from Teima (see section 3.4.2). It was not intended as a recapitulatory report on previous building works, as was the case with the second section of inscription 15, which does mention the restoration of the ziggurat.

1.3.12 Inscription 12

Concordance: Berger 1973: 348-49 (Backsteine Ap I, 2).

Tadmor 1965: no. 12 (*VAB* IV, 12). Walker 1981: 91–92, no. 110.

Content: Titulary.

Remarks: Several exemplars of this stamped brick are known. Copies were published as I R 68, no. 4, and by Schott (Schott 1928–29; pl. 30, nos. 28 and 29). Nine of them were found at Larsa, in the structure of the Ebabbar (see I R 68, no. 4: "Brick from the Temple of the Sun at Senkereh"). Other duplicates were found more recently during the French excavations at Larsa (Birot 1968). Ten other duplicates were found at Uruk, in various locations, including northeast of the enclosure of the Eanna temple complex, in the walls of the temple itself, and northeast of the temple of Innin (see Berger 1973: 348, and Schott 1928–29: 61, nos. 28 and 29).

Evidence for dating: This inscription can be dated solely on the basis of archaeological evidence. As it was found in the Ebabbar of Larsa, which was certainly restored in the tenth year of Nabonidus, and at Uruk, where according to archival texts from the Eanna important building activities took place between the ninth and the eleventh years (see section 1.2.2.2.1), it should be dated to that period.

1.3.13 Inscription 13

Concordance: Berger 1973: 383 (Stelen-Fragment III, 1).

Tadmor 1965: no. 25.

Content: Narrative on the reign of Nabonidus and restoration of the

Ehulhul, the temple of Sîn at Harran.

Remarks: Two exemplars of this stela were found in 1956, during the British excavations at Harran, one in the pavement of the East entrance to the Great Mosque, the other in the pavement of the West entrance (Gadd 1958: 35).

Evidence for dating: This inscription can be dated on the basis of internal evidence. It contains a narrative on Nabonidus' reign which gives an account of the ten years he spent in the Arabian peninsula, after which he returned to Babylon and proceeded to rebuild the Ehulhul at Harran. Therefore it should be dated to the last part of his reign, certainly after the thirteenth year, most likely to the fourteenth or the fifteenth year (see section 3.4.2).

1.3.14 Inscription 14

Concordance: Berger 1973: 382 (Stelen-Fragment I).

Tadmor 1965: no. 16.

Content: Only a statement about the well-being of the country remains.

Remarks: The inscription is recorded on a stela, only the top portion of which is preserved. This monument is one of the first Babylonian antiquities to have reached Europe. It is already discussed by Rich, with a copy of the inscription and a drawing of the relief (Rich 1818: 53, and pl. 1, nos. 2a and 2b). It was subsequently republished by King (King 1912: 128–29, and pl. XCIIIf). This stela, whose find-spot is unrecorded, is now in the British Museum (see frontispiece).

Evidence for dating: This inscription can be dated on the basis of its similarities with inscription 13, which is to be dated after the middle of the thirteenth year. The affinities between inscriptions 13 and 14 were clearly demonstrated by Röllig (Röllig 1964a: 247–49). Both inscriptions are on stone stelas and both their upper registers show a relief of Nabonidus praying before the symbols of Sîn, Šamaš, and Ištar. Moreover, the preserved portion of inscription 14 repeats a section of inscription 13 which consists of a statement about the return of prosperity to the land after years of drought and economic instability. Here follows the relevant passage of inscription 14:

2. ina a-mat ^d30 3. LUGAL DIN[GIR.MEŠ] ^dIM ŠÈG ú-[maš]-ši-ra-am-ma 4. ^dé-a ú-paţ-ţi-ra nag-bu-šú meš-ru-ú 5. nu-uḥ-šú u ḥé-gál-la ina KUR-ia iš-ku-un

At the order of Sîn, the king of the gods, Adad released rain, Ea opened his underground springs, and established wealth, plenty, and prosperity in my country.

The corresponding passage of inscription 13 reads as follows:

Col. I, 35. ina kal MU.AN.NA.MEŠ an-na-a-tú la ba-ţa-a-lu 36. ina qí-bit ^d30 ^dIM GÚ.GAL AN-e u KI-tim A.MEŠ 37. ŠÈG i-šá-aq-qí-šu-nu-ti

During all those years, without cease, at the command of Sîn, Adad, the canal keeper of heaven and the underworld, provided them with rain.

In addition to these two passages, it is noteworthy that in inscription 14 these deeds are ascribed to Sîn (*epišti Sîn*), an expression which occurs only in inscriptions 13 and 16, both dated after the middle of the thirteenth year

9. Compare the drawings and photos of both reliefs in Börker-Klahn 1982: plate 266 (inscription 14), and plates 263a, 263b, 264a and 264b (inscription 13). A photo of inscription 14 was first published in King 1912: plate XCIIIf. Photos of inscriptions 13 and 14 can also be found in Gadd 1958: plates II and III.

(inscription 16, Col. II, 79, and inscription 13, Col. I, 1; see section 3.4.2). Therefore inscription 14 should also be dated to that period.

1.3.15 Inscription 15

Concordance: Berger 1973: 371-75 (Zylinder III, 2).

Tadmor 1965: no. 1 (VAB IV, 1).

Content: Restoration of the Ehulhul, the temple of Sîn at Harran.

Restoration of the Ebabbar, the temple of Šamaš at Sippar, and of

the ziggurat Ekunankugga at Sippar.

Restoration of the Eulmaš, the temple of Anunītum at Sippar-

Anunītum (probably the main object of the inscription).

Remarks: Two wholly preserved copies of this clay cylinder are known. One was found in the Ebabbar of Sippar, in a room adjoining that where the stone tablet of king Nabû-apla-iddina was discovered (Hilprecht 1903: 269–73). It entered the British Museum with the Abu-Habba Collection. A copy of it was published by Pinches as V R 64. The other was found in the "Museum" in the royal palace at Babylon (Unger 1931: 225, no. 21). This exemplar, now in the Berlin Museum, was published by Ungnad as VAS I: 53. In addition, thirteen fragments are known, most of which were apparently found at Sippar (Berger 1973: 371 and 373). Most of them belong to the Abu-Habba Collection in the British Museum. The others are in the Berlin Museum.

Evidence for dating: This inscription cannot have been written before the tenth year, as the restoration of the ziggurat of Sippar is mentioned in it (see section 1.3.11). Moreover, the rebuilding of the Eḥulḥul in Ḥarran probably took place in the last part of the reign, after Nabonidus' return to Babylon (see section 3.4.1). Therefore this inscription should be dated to that period. Archaeological and internal evidence suggests that its main purpose was not to commemorate the rebuilding of the Eḥulḥul, but that of the Eulmaš at Sippar-Anunītum (see section 3.4.2).

1.3.16 Inscription 16

Concordance: Berger 1973: 377-78 and 387 (Zylinder III, 4, and Tafel-

fragment VI, 1).

Tadmor 1965: no. 4 (VAB IV, 4).

Content: Restoration of the Ebabbar, the temple of Šamaš at Sippar.

Restoration of the Ebabbar, the temple of Šamaš at Larsa.

Restoration of the Eulmaš, the temple of Ištar of Akkad at Agade. Restoration of the Eulmaš, the temple of Anunītum at Sippar-Anunītum (probably the main object of the inscription).

Remarks: This inscription is known from one damaged clay cylinder published by King as CT 34, pl. 26–37; from four clay cylinder fragments, one of which was published as I R 69, while the others are still unpublished (see UET VIII/2, p. 37, no. 50); and a fragment of a clay tablet published by King as CT 34, pl. 23–25, which may have been either a copy or a draft of the inscription. A complete reconstruction of inscription 16, based on CT 34 and I R 69, was made by Langdon (Langdon 1915). Since the cylinder and the tablet fragment belong to the Abu-Habba Collection in the British Museum, one can presume that they were found at Sippar (Berger 1973: 377, 4. 2, and 387, 4). In addition, three of the cylinder fragments were found during the excavations at Ur, in the remains of the ziggurat: one fragment (I R 69) was found on top of the mound of the ziggurat in 1854–55 by Taylor, and two more were discovered by Woolley (excavation numbers U. 1560 and 1560a) in the rubbish against the north-east side of the ziggurat north-west of the central flight of stairs (UET VIII/2, p. 37, no. 50, and Woolley 1939: 133).

Evidence for dating: This inscription can be dated solely on the basis of archival evidence. The correlation established with letter YOS III: 4 proves that it was written between the thirteenth and the sixteenth year of Nabonidus (see section 1.2.2.2.2). The fact that copies of inscription 16 were found not only at Ur, in the remains of the ziggurat, but also at Sippar (find-spot unrecorded), can only be explained if one accepts the hypothesis that the inscription was written for the rebuilding of the temple of Anunītum at Sippar (together with inscription 15), and then placed also in the restored structure of the ziggurat of Ur, the rebuilding of which would have been undertaken at the same time (see section 3.4.2).

1.3.17 Inscription 17

Concordance: Berger 1973: 355-59 (Zylinder II, 2).

Tadmor 1965: no. 5 (VAB IV, 5).

Content: Restoration of the Elugalgalgasisa, the ziggurat of the Egišnugal

temple-complex at Ur.

Remarks: Eleven exemplars and one fragment of this clay cylinder are known. A copy was published as I R 68, no. 1, with variants from three duplicates noted in the margin. Another copy was published by as-Siwani with

variants from the duplicates noted in the margin and photos of three of them (as-Siwani 1964). All these were found in the ruins of the ziggurat of Ur. The four cylinders published as I R 68, no. 1, now in the British Museum, were found in 1854–55 on the mound of the ziggurat of Ur, on the second story, at each corner, in niches (Taylor 1855: 263–65). The find-spot of another exemplar, now in the Ashmolean Museum at Oxford (formerly the Well-Blundell Collection), is unknown. All other exemplars were found during Iraqi excavations at Ur, in niches on the first and second stories of the ziggurat (see as-Siwani 1964: 69). The find-spots of these cylinders are discussed by Ellis, who points out that one use of cylinders was to be buried in the walls of buildings (Ellis 1968: 110 and 112).

Evidence for dating: This inscription is dated to the second year by Berger on the assumption that the restoration of the Egišnugal must have been concomitant with the restoration of the Egipar and the consecration of En-nigaldi-Nanna as high priestess, which took place in the second year (Berger 1973: 112). It is correctly dated by Tadmor after the thirteenth year, on the basis of its affinities with inscription 16 and of the prominence it gives to the god Sîn (Tadmor 1965: 361). Berger's dating is wrong in the light of the following evidence:

Inscription 2 does not mention that the ziggurat of Ur was rebuilt when Nabonidus' daughter became high priestess of Nanna.

Inscription 7, which purportedly contains a comprehensive list of Nabonidus' building works in the first part of his reign, makes no mention of any building work at Ur except the restoration of the Egipar.

Inscription 17 ends with a prayer of Nabonidus to Sîn on behalf of his son Belshazzar. An identical prayer is appended to the four stelas copied in inscription 16 (see section 1.4.4) written after the middle of the thirteenth year.

Two fragments of inscription 16 were found during the excavation of the mound of the ziggurat of Ur (see section 1.3.16).

These last two arguments appear decisive for assigning inscription 17 to a late date in the reign. The exact correspondences between the closing sections of inscriptions 16 and 17 (prayer on behalf of Belshazzar) and the discovery of a fragment of inscription 16 in the ziggurat of Ur, the rebuilding of which is commemorated by inscription 17, are clear indications that the two inscriptions were contemporaneous and that the restorations they record were in one way or

another associated. As inscription 16 is surely to be dated to the last part of the reign, one can conclusively assign the restoration of the ziggurat of Ur and inscription 17 to the same period.

1.3.18 Inscription 18

Concordance: Berger 1973: 350 (Backsteine B I, 1).

Tadmor 1965: no. 13 (VAB IV, 13).

Walker 1981: 92, no. 111.

Content: Restoration of the Elugalgalgasisa, the ziggurat of the Egišnugal temple-complex at Ur.

Remarks: Several exemplars of this stamped brick are known. Twelve of them are in the British Museum (Walker 1981: 92), and, according to Gadd (UET I, p. xix, no. 188), many were left in situ. Copies were published as IR 68, no. 5; by R. C. Thompson (Archaeologia 70, 1918–20, p. 115, fig. 6, fragment); and by Gadd as UET I: 188. They have all been found during excavations at Ur, in the remains of the ziggurat. According to IR 68, no. 5, the brick is "from the Pyramid of the Great Ruin at Mugheir." This brick and its two duplicates are probably the ones found by Taylor in 1854–55 during his survey of the mound. All the others were found in the ziggurat and on its stairs during the British excavations at Ur (see Gadd, UET I, p. xix, no. 188). The one published by Thompson was reportedly also found at Ur.

Evidence for dating: The restoration of the ziggurat of Ur has been dated to the last part of Nabonidus' reign (see section 1.3.17). This stamped brick is the companion inscription to inscription 17, and is therefore to be dated to the same period.

1.3.19 Inscription 19

Concordance: Berger 1973: 351 (Backsteine B I, 2).

Tadmor 1965: no. 14 (VAB IV, 14).

Walker 1981: 92, no. 112.

Content: Restoration of the Enunmah, a part of the Egišnugal temple-complex at Ur.

Remarks: Several exemplars of this stamped brick are known. They are all listed in Walker 1981: 93. One exemplar is usually listed as coming from Tell al-Laḥm, but according to Thompson, it had been brought from Ur to Tell al-Laḥm during a short survey of the site (Archaeologia 70: 142). These bricks therefore

all come from Ur, where most of them were found in the remains of the ziggurat and the Enunmah (Gadd, *UET* I, p. xix, no. 189, and Walker 1981: 92). Several exemplars were left in situ.

Evidence for dating: The inscription can be dated on the basis of archaeological evidence. Since the restoration of the ziggurat of Ur took place after the thirteenth year (inscription 17) and exemplars of this inscription were found in its ruins, one can assume that the restoration of the Enunmah and other works in the Egišnugal temple complex were contemporaneous. Therefore inscription 19 is to be dated after the middle of the thirteenth year.

1.3.20 Inscription A

Concordance: Berger 1973: 354 (Zylinder II, 1).
Tadmor 1965: no. 21.

Content: Restoration of the Imgur-Enlil, the inner defence wall of Babylon. Remarks: This inscription is recorded on clay cylinders known in two exemplars. One was published as PBS 15: 80; its find-spot is unknown. The other was discovered during the recent Iraqi excavations at Babylon. It was found in a mud-brick box inside the wall of the tower located near the Ištar Gate. The box also contained two cylinders of Nabopolassar commemorating the restoration of Imgur-Enlil. This set of inscriptions was evidently deposited in the box when Nabonidus undertook to repair the wall (al-Rawi 1985). Interestingly enough, according to the Verse Account and the Cyrus Cylinder, Cyrus also proceeded to repair the wall Imgur-Enlil shortly after the capture of Babylon, thus completing the fortifications of Nebuchadnezzar II:

Verse Account, Col. V, 9. [....... du]b-šik-ku BAD TIN.TIR^{ki} uš-tak-lil 10. [......] ^dNA-Nì.GUB-URì ina mi-gir lìb-bi-šú e-pe-šú

[He (Cyrus) took up the earth] basket and completed the wall of Babylon in order to execute [the original plan of] Nebuchadnezzar of his own consent.

Cyrus Cylinder, l. 38. Bàd im-gur-den-líl Bàd Gal-a šá tin.ti[Rki] ši!-pir!-šú du-un-nu-nim áš-te-'e-e-ma

I (Cyrus) sought to strengthen the work of the wall Imgur-Enlil, the great wall of Babylon. ¹⁰

10. This line was properly understood only when a previously unidentified fragment of the Cyrus Cylinder (*BIN* II: 32) was joined to the main text: see Walker 1972a and Berger 1975.

Although these texts do not explicitly state that Nabonidus neglected the fortifications of Babylon, they certainly carry this message indirectly by stressing Cyrus' eagerness to repair the Imgur-Enlil while ignoring Nabonidus' own building activities here. Inscription A therefore provides more evidence that these two compositions were chiefly intended as propaganda. There is no evidence as to its date.

1.3.21 Inscription B

Concordance: Berger 1973: 360 (Zylinder II, 3). Tadmor 1965: no. 20.

Content: Restoration of the Emašdari, the temple of Ištar of Akkad at Babylon.

Remarks: The only known exemplar of this clay cylinder was found in Babylon during the excavations of the temple of Ištar of Akkad. It was published by Smith with a copy, a transliteration, and a translation (Smith 1925). The find-spot was discussed by Koldewey and Ellis (Koldewey 1913: 291–92, and Ellis 1968: 112): the cylinder was enclosed in a box of palm leaves coated with bitumen and placed upright in a cavity in the wall. There is no evidence as to the date of this inscription.

1.3.22 Inscription C

Concordance: Berger 1973: 346 (Backsteine A I, 1). Tadmor 1965: no. 11 (VAB IV, 11).

Content: Titulary.

Remarks: All exemplars of this stamped brick, published as I R 68, no. 3, were reportedly found at Babylon, on the bank of the Euphrates (I R 68, no. 3: "On brick from bank of River at Babylon"). They may have been inserted in the structure of the defensive wall which, according to Berossus, Nabonidus built along the Euphrates in Babylon: "During his reign the river walls of the city of Babylon were constructed from baked brick and bitumen" (Burstein 1978: 170). There is no evidence as to its date.

1.3.23 Inscription D

Concordance: Berger 1973: 347 (Backsteine Ap I, 1). Tadmor 1965: no. 10 (VAB IV, 10).

Content: Titulary.

Remarks: Several exemplars of this stamped brick are known. The inscription was published as I R 68, no. 2. Another copy was provided by Koldewey (1913: 77–79). All the exemplars were found at Babylon, some on the bank of the Euphrates (I R 68, no. 2: "On brick from bank of River at Babylon"), others in the walls of the royal palace at Babylon, in the so-called Südburg, in the Mittelhof (Koldewey 1931: 31–32). There is no evidence as to the date of this inscription.

1.3.24 Inscription E (Unpublished)

Concordance: Berger 1973: 353 (Backsteine U).

1.3.25 Inscription F

Concordance: Berger 1973: 343 (Perle).

Tadmor 1965: no. 23.

Content: Short statement concerning a votive dagger requested by Sîn in a

dream sent to Nabonidus.

Remarks: This inscription is recorded on a bead which was probably originally inlaid in the dagger. There is no evidence as to its date and its find-spot is unknown. It was published by Oppenheim (Oppenheim 1956: 192, quoted, p. 201).

1.3.26 Inscription G

Concordance: Recently published as CT 51: 75.

Content: Obviously a building inscription of Nabonidus, but its poor state of

preservation does not allow further precision.

1.3.27 Inscription H (Unpublished)

Concordance: Berger 1973: 345 (Pflasterstein U).

1.3.28 Inscription X

Concordance: Berger 1973: 379 (Zylinder-Fragment I, 1).

Content: Too fragmentary to assess.

Remarks: This fragment of a clay cylinder was found during the French excavations at Kish, in the surroundings of the Palace, on the ground (see de Genouillac, 1924: 34, no. 136, with copy on pl. 14, B. 136). There is no conclusive evidence that it belongs to an inscription of Nabonidus. De Genouillac classifies it as "fragment d'un barillet de Nabu-kudurru-uşur," since line 4 reads as follows: [....]URÌ LUGAL TIN.TIR^{ki}. However, since line 3 has LUGAL maḥ-ri LUGAL TIN.TIR^{ki}, one can presume that Nebuchadnezzar is mentioned as a predecessor of the king who commissioned the inscription. Nabonidus is most likely to be identified as this ruler. If so, the inscription might originally have commemorated the restoration of the walls of Kish and the rebuilding of the akītu-temple of the god Uraš in that city, both of which are mentioned in inscription 7.

1.3.29 Inscription Y (Unpublished)

Concordance: Berger 1973: 380 (Zylinder-Fragment I, 2).

1.3.30 Inscription Z

Concordance: Berger 1973: 381 (Zylinder-Fragment II, 1).

Content: Restoration of a palace at Babylon, located between "Samas"

street" and the Euphrates, in the "New City."

Remarks: The find-spot of this inscription, which consists of a fragmentary clay cylinder, is unrecorded. It was published as CT 37, pl. 21, no. 38346. It can be assigned to the Neo-Babylonian period on stylistic grounds. It is usually attributed to Nebuchadnezzar II, though arguments in favor of Nabonidus seem more conclusive: the object of the inscription may have been the creation of the Bīt šar Bābili, a palace-fortress which often appears in private business documents of the reign (see section 2.2.2.2).

1.3.31 Chronology of the Inscriptions

Table 2 is a chronology of the dated inscriptions of Nabonidus. Each inscription is listed according to its number, to its main object, and to the year or the period to which it belongs.

Table 2: Chronology of the Inscriptions

NO.	MAIN OBJECT	DATE
1	Assertion of Nabonidus' legitimacy and projected rebuilding of the Ehulhul at Harran	Middle of year 1
2	Consecration of En-nigaldi-Nanna and rebuilding of the Egipar at Ur	Second half of year 2
3	Consecration of En-nigaldi-Nanna and rebuilding of the Egipar at Ur	Second half of year 2
4	Rebuilding of the Egipar at Ur	Second half of year 2
5	Restoration of the Ebabbar of Sippar	End of year 2
6	Fashioning of a new tiara for the statue of Šamaš at Sippar	End of year 2
7	Restoration of the temple of Lugal-Marada at Marad	Between years 3 and 10, possibly before year 6
8	Restoration of the temple of Bunene at Sippar	Between years 4 and 13, possibly year 6
9	Restoration of the Ebabbar of Larsa	Year 10
10	Restoration of the temple of Ningal at Dūrum	Year 10
11	Restoration of the Ekunankugga, the ziggurat of the Ebabbar of Sippar	Year 10
12	No main object	Between years 9 and 11
13	Restoration of the Ehulhul at Harran	After year 13, possibly year 14 or 15
14	Restoration of the Ehulhul at Harran?	After year 13, possibly year 14 or 15
15	Restoration of the temple of Anunītum at Sippar-Anunītum	After year 13, probably year 16
16	Restoration of the temple of Anunītum at Sippar-Anunītum	After year 13, probably year 16
17	Restoration of the ziggurat of Ur	After year 13, probably year 16 or 17
18	Restoration of the ziggurat of Ur	After year 13, probably year 16 or 17
19	Restoration of the ziggurat and the Enunmah at Ur	After year 13, probably year 16 or 17

1.4 THE EXALTATION OF SÎN IN THE INSCRIPTIONS OF NABONIDUS

According to the methodological principles set forth earlier, conclusions based on the data furnished by the inscriptions should prove valid only if a significant portion of them could be dated with a reasonable degree of certainty. This requirement has been largely satisfied. Of the twenty-seven inscriptions which can be ascribed to Nabonidus with certainty, nineteen have been dated convincingly. The proportion of dated texts is even higher when one takes into consideration only those which yield a reasonable amount of information, that is excluding stamped bricks and fragments (inscriptions 3, 4, 12, 18, 19, and C, D, E, F, and G). There remains a corpus of sixteen inscriptions, mostly clay cylinders, fourteen of which have been dated. From that group (inscriptions 1, 2, 5 to 11, 13 to 17 and A, B, and H) only the place of inscriptions A and B still remains unknown.

Having put the major inscriptions of Nabonidus in historical sequence, a study of the exaltation of the god Sîn under his reign becomes possible. Use of the term "exaltation" seems amply justified when one considers Nabonidus' attempt to elevate Sîn to the head of the pantheon in the light of previous known examples of promotions of deities to a higher rank. The best known cases are the exaltation of Inanna at Uruk in the Early Sargonic period (Hallo 1968: 64-68) and the exaltation of Marduk in the reign of Nebuchadnezzar I (Lambert 1964: 3-13). Unlike these two earlier cases of successful divine exaltation, Nabonidus' attempt to propel Sîn to the status of chief god met with failure, partly because it faced staunch opposition in Babylonia, partly because of external circumstances; the sudden downfall of the empire in his seventeenth regnal year deprived the pro-Sîn faction, one may say, of the political means to carry out the king's grandiose plan for the moon god. The evidence for assessing the scope of Nabonidus' religious reforms is scarce: we have no text such as the Exaltation of Inanna or the enūma eliš to elucidate the theological foundations of the king's faith. Besides the building inscriptions of his reign, only the Verse Account contains allusions to his short-lived attempt to promote the cult of Sîn in Babylonia.

The publication of the Verse Account in 1924 drew scholarly attention to the fact that certain inscriptions of Nabonidus completely ignored the god Marduk or simply failed to acknowledge him as the head of the Babylonian pantheon while they contained praise of the god Sîn that seemed out of proportion within the tenets of Babylonian religion. Only with the studies of Landsberger and Tadmor was the question of the chronology of this body of evidence raised. Previously, the reign of Nabonidus had been approached as a monolithic entity,

Table 3: Epithets of Sîn and Marduk

INSCRIPTIONS OF THE FIRST YEARS			
NO.	EPITHETS OF MARDUK	EPITHETS OF SÎN	
1	rubû (I, 14, 22) bēlu (VII, 35; IX, 33) šar ilāni (I, 30; IX, 5; X, 30) bēl bēlē (I, 30; VII, 30)	bēl agî (X, 25)	
2	not mentioned	mār rubê (I, 2) bēl agî (I, 6; II, 34) bēlu šurbû (I, 22) ilu ellu (II, 34) ilu šurbû (II, 35) nūr tenīšēti (II, 34)	
5	enlil ilāni (II, 50) bēl bēlē (II, 51)	not mentioned	
6	bēlu rābu (I, 17)	not mentioned	

INSCRIPTIONS OF THE TEIMA PERIOD				
NO.	EPITHETS OF MARDUK	EPITHETS OF SÎN		
7	bēlu rābu (I, 25) bēl gimra (I, 1) enlil ilāni šaqû (I, 1) šar šamê ū erşetim (II, 36–37)	mār rubê (I, 11) bēlu rābu (II, 8)		
8	šar ilāni šaqû (II, 29) bēl bēlē (II, 30, 32)	mentioned without epithets		
9	rubû (II, 35) bēlu rābu (II, 10) bēlu šurbû (II, 48) enlil ilāni (I, 13) ašarēd ilāni (II, 35)	mentioned without epithets		
10	igigal ilāni (I, 10)	mentioned without epithets		
11	enlil ilāni (II, 23) šar šamê ū erşetim (II, 59)	not mentioned		

	INSCRIPTIONS OF THE LAST YEARS			
NO.	EPITHETS OF MARDUK	EPITHETS OF SÎN		
13	not mentioned	šar šarrāni (II, 20) bēl bēlē (I, 28; II, 20; III, 29) šar ilāni (I, 18, 28; II, 12; III, 20, 29) enlil ilāni (II, 20) bēlu ša ilāni (II, 14) bēl ilāni ū ištarāti āšibūtu šamê (I, 5)		
14	not mentioned	šar ilāni (I, 3, 14)		
15	bēlu rābu (I, 18) enlil ilāni (I, 23) rābu (I, 24) rābu (I, 34)	bēlu rābu (I, 9, 14, 21) nannari šamê ū erşetim (I, 18, 34) šar ilāni ša šamê ū erşetim (II, 26, 33)		
16	not mentioned	šar ilāni (I, 42; III, 27, 34) bēl ilāni ū ištarāti (I, 29) bēl ilāni (III, 73) bēl ilāni ū ištarāti ša šamê ū erşetim (I 42–43; III, 79–80)		
17	not mentioned	bēl ilāni (II, 3) bēl ilāni ša šamê ū erşetim (I, 28) šar ilāni (I, 29) šar ilāni ša šamê ū erşetim (II, 4) ilāni ša ilāni (I, 29; II, 5)		

with little or no development posited for the king's religious policy. Recently Tadmor suggested that Nabonidus' devotion to Sîn increased steadily throughout the years to reach a peak in the last part of his reign, when he presumably carried out those religious reforms which are echoed in the Verse Account (Tadmor 1965: 358–63). To prove his point, Tadmor devoted part of his study to a comparison of the epithets of Sîn and Marduk in some of the inscriptions of Nabonidus, proposing that variations in their frequency and intensity should mirror changes in the king's religious policy. I will take up the inquiry at that point, starting with Table 3 comparing the epithets of the two deities in the fourteen major dated inscriptions of Nabonidus. I have divided the inscriptions into three groups: those written before the king's departure for the Arabian peninsula, those written during his stay in the oasis of Teima, and those

written after his return to Babylon. The chronology of the stay in Teima is discussed in the third chapter (section 3.1).

Neo-Babylonian building inscriptions follow a somewhat rigid model, which can be summarily described as follows. The first component, which I will henceforth refer to as the "opening section," consists of an elaborate royal titulary giving the name of the acting ruler and a series of titles and epithets whose number may vary considerably. The compositional pattern of the opening section is as a rule: Royal Name - titles - epithets - anāku. The second component, the middle section, constitutes the core of the inscription. This section is often introduced by an *enūma* clause "when ...," which describes the circumstances that led to the restoration of the sacred building, followed by an *inūšu* clause "at that time...," which gives the details of the building operations with much emphasis on the various rituals involved at each stage of the rebuilding. Finally the third component, the "closing section," consists of a prayer addressed to the patron deity of the restored temple. In many instances, these inscriptions contain accounts of previous building works: these "recapitulatory sections" may be either integrated into the structure of the inscription as part of the *enūma* clause, in which case they belong to the middle section proper, or else they can stand isolated, in which case they precede the account of the main object of the inscription and constitute another middle section.

In building inscriptions, the patron deity of the temple is often glorified with inflated epithets, regardless of his actual rank in the pantheon. Exaltation of a deity in an inscription recording the rebuilding of his own temple may not necessarily mean increased royal patronage, especially if Marduk and the major gods are invoked in its opening section. Marduk holds a prominent position in the middle section and is portrayed as the main agent of the rebuilding of the temple together with the king, who proceeds at his command, and in its closing section, he is the supreme deity with whom other gods intercede on behalf of the king. Taking this pattern as the rule for orthodox inscriptions, it will be revealing to see when Nabonidus follows it and when he breaks significantly with it. A comparison of the epithets of Sîn and Marduk listed in Table 3 provides a complement to this inquiry.

1.4.1 The Inscriptions of the First Years

In addition to inscription 1, which does not belong to this category, three major building inscriptions have been dated to the first part of the reign: inscription 2, related to Sîn, and inscriptions 5 and 6, related to Sâmaŝ. One would expect Marduk to be glorified in all of them as the main dynastic god and as the head of

the pantheon in the opening sections, as the inspirer of the king's deeds in the middle sections, and as the supreme god with whom Sîn and Šamaš would intercede on the king's behalf in the closing sections. The peculiar nature of inscription 1 would even call for higher praise of Marduk: this stela, which consists of an apologetic account of the rise of Nabonidus to power was obviously intended as a piece of propaganda. Therefore one would expect the king's personal devotion to Sîn to be silenced in inscription 1, even though its closing narrative section consists of a statement of his intention to rebuild the Ehulhul at Harran. As for Sîn, one would expect him to be glorified only in inscription 2, which commemorates the consecration of En-nigaldi-Nanna as high priestess of Nanna (Sîn) and the rebuilding of the Egipar at Ur.

Inscription 1: Marduk is referred to throughout inscription 1. The historical prologue which narrates events prior to the accession of Nabonidus attributes the fall of Assyria to Marduk's wrath and shows him entrusting Nebuchadnezzar and Neriglissar with the restoration of cult centers. In the subsequent sections Nabonidus is elevated to kingship by order of Marduk, and in the reports on his first deeds as king he is consistently portrayed seeking Marduk's inspiration and approval. The inscription ends with a long praise of the Esagil and the New Year's festival, followed by Marduk's order to rebuild the Eḥulhul at Ḥarran. Sîn is mentioned only in connection with the projected rebuilding of this temple. So far this stela shows no apparent departure from orthodoxy. Marduk is consistently portrayed as the head of the pantheon and as the king's guide.

Inscriptions 5 and 6: Marduk is mentioned in two passages of inscription 5. The opening section describes the king as "the creature of Nabû and Marduk" (Col. I, 6. bi-nu-tu qá-at šá d Nà u d AMAR.UD), and, in the closing section, Marduk appears in the royal prayer to Šamaš:

Col. II, 48. i-na é.sag.íl u é.zi.da šá a-ram-mu lu-lab-bi-ir man-za-za 49. i-na maḫ-ri be-lum dna-bi-um u dnè.iri_{II}.gal 50. dingir.meš-e-a u dingir.meš si-ḫi-ir-ti é á-ki-it šá den-líl dingir.meš dšú 51. a-na ni-qí-i ma-aṣ-ḫa-ti pa-qa-du é.da.di.hé.gál ù ut-nen-ni en en.en 52. lu-ú sa-ad-ra-ak tal-lak-ti a-na da-rí-a-ti

In the Esagil and the Ezida, which I love, may (my) position last for a long time. Before the lord, Nabû, and Nergal, my gods and the gods of the enclosure of the *akītu*-temple of the leader of the gods, Marduk, to offer roasted flour, take care of the Edadiḥegal and implore the lord of lords, may my way be constant forever.

Marduk is also mentioned twice in inscription 6, which has two middle sections. One consists of a recapitulatory report on the rebuilding of the Ebabbar. The other reports on the main object of the inscription, the fashioning of a tiara for the statue of Šamaš. The first middle section opens with an *enūma* clause which portrays Marduk as the chief god:

Col. I, 17. e-nu-ma ^damar.ud en gal be-lu-ut kur-šú i-qí-pa-an-ni 18. za-na-nu-ut ma-ḫa-za ud-du-šu eš-re-e-ti ú-mál-lu-ú qa-tu-ú-a 19. a-na zi-in-na-a-ti é.sag.íl ù é.zi.da 20. ul ap-pa-ra-ak-ka-a ka-a-ana 21. re-eš mim-ma-a-a dam-qá ú-še-er-reb qe-reb-šu-un 22. i-gi-se-e šu-qu-ru-ti at-ta-nab-bal-šú-nu-ši 23. mim-ma šum-šu ţù-uḫ-ḫu-du ú-da-aš-ši i-na qé-er-bi-šu-un

Since Marduk, the great lord, entrusted me with the lordship of his land (and) put in my hands the maintenance of cult centers and the renovation of shrines, I have never stopped supporting the Esagil and the Ezida. My most precious possessions I have brought inside them. I have constantly carried sumptuous presents to them. I have let everything flow in abundance into them.

In the second middle section, Nabonidus seeks the approval of Šamaš, Adad, and Marduk by means of divination:

Col. II, 6. aš-šum e-peš AGA ša la za-ri-ni aš-ra-a-ti ^dUTU 7. ù ^dIM aš-te-'e-e-ma šum-ma ša e-li i-lu-ti-šu-nu ṭa-a-bu 8. ù e-li ^dAMAR.UD a-šib É.SAG.ÍL EN-ia

Concerning the fashioning of a tiara without a stand I sought after the sanctuaries of Šamaš and Adad, (to find out) if it pleased their godheads as well as Marduk, who dwells in the Esagil, my lord.¹¹

Sîn is absent from inscriptions 5 and 6. Nevertheless, the portrayal of Marduk is largely that of a figurehead appearing only in formulaic clichés. The inscriptions do not show him inspiring the king's undertakings, or giving direct orders to him.

Inscription 2: Inscription 2, related to Sîn, ignores Marduk completely. Sîn and his consort Ningal are consistently referred to as Nabonidus' "lords." They are the only gods mentioned in the inscription, with the exception of Šamaš and Adad, who appear in a short passage describing the extispicy performed by

11. The same statement is repeated a few lines later (1. 21).

Nabonidus before the consecration of his daughter (Col. I, 19-25). Marduk's absence is most likely to be explained by the king's reluctance to acknowledge him in an inscription related to his personal god. In inscription 2 the king already appears as a staunch devotee of Sîn.

A survey of the epithets of Sîn and Marduk is equally revealing. In inscriptions 1, 5, and 6, Marduk is given such epithets as šar ilāni "king of the gods," bēl bēlē "lord of lords," or enlil ilāni "leader of the gods." Although these epithets are appropriate, one feels that there is noticeable restraint in the way Marduk is exalted. Considering his usual array of titles one may say that only his minimal titulary has been employed. Indeed, the epithets of Marduk in inscriptions 1, 5, and 6 seem rather modest when compared with those found in the inscriptions of Nabonidus' predecessors (see Tallqvist 1938, s.v. Marduk). Sîn, on the other hand, bears not only the epithets bēl agî "lord of the tiara," and mār rubê "son of the prince," which are well-known titles of the moon god,12 as well as ilu ellu "shining god," a frequent epithet of Sîn in the late Assyrian tradition, 13 but also such titles as ilu šurbû "exalted god," and nūr tenīšēti "light of mankind," which occur as epithets of Sîn only in inscription 2, ¹⁴ and $b\bar{e}lu$ šurb \hat{u} "exalted lord," an epithet attested mostly in connection with Šamaš and with chief gods such as Anu, Enlil, Aššur, or Marduk; 15 it is also attested as an epithet of Sîn, but only in inscription 2. One can therefore conclude that this inscription shows some innovations in Sîn's titulary: the disproportionate number of epithets and their exalted tone suggest that Sîn was intentionally glorified more than tradition would have dictated.

Thus, the early inscriptions of Nabonidus depart slightly from orthodoxy. Inscriptions 5 and 6, while they do not go as far as to ignore Marduk completely as does inscription 2, portray him mostly as a passive god. Even inscription 1, a text that still fully acknowledges Marduk as the head of the pantheon and as the

^{12.} On *bēl agî* as an epithet of Sîn see *CAD* A, Part I, s.v. *agû* A, 1. a) 2', and Tallqvist 1938 s.v. *bēl agî*. On *mār rubê* see also Tallqvist 1938: 123 s.v. *mār rubê*.

^{13.} On that epithet see Tallqvist 1938: 9 s.v. *ilu ellu* and *CAD* E, s.v. *ellu* 2. The epithet is used also in connection with Girra, Ištar, Šerua, Nergal, Anu, Tiamat, Marduk, and Šulpae.

^{14.} The epithet $n\bar{u}r$ $ten\bar{i}s\bar{e}ti$ is attested only twice. The other occurrence is in a hymn to Ištar preserved in Old Babylonian and Neo-Assyrian copies (Lambert 1982: 200–01, III, 75). The epithet $ilu\ \bar{s}urb\hat{u}$ is to my knowledge only attested in no. 2 (see Tallqvist 1938: 12 s.v. $ilu\ \bar{s}urb\hat{u}$). The adjective $\bar{s}urb\hat{u}$, however, is very common as a divine epithet, especially in conjunction with $b\bar{e}lu$.

^{15.} See Tallqvist 1938: 55 s.v. bēlu šurbû.

king's guide, does not give him the appropriate epithets. Having recently ascended the throne, moreover as a usurper, Nabonidus could hardly have immediately introduced a major reform of Babylonian religion without seriously endangering his authority. His early inscriptions appear orthodox at first glance, but closer scrutiny reveals an intentional restraint in the glorification of Marduk. They were commissioned by a king who strove to present himself as an orthodox ruler well in line with his predecessors, but who wanted at the same time to publicize his religious beliefs.

1.4.2 The Inscriptions of the Teima Period

Five major building inscriptions have been dated to this period. Two of them, inscriptions 9 and 11, are related to Šamaš, inscription 7 is related to the god Lugal-Marada, inscription 8 to the god Bunene, and inscription 10 to the goddess Ningal, Sîn's consort. According to the pattern outlined above as orthodox, Marduk should be glorified in all these inscriptions as the chief god, while Sîn should hold a prominent position only in inscription 10.

Inscription 7: This inscription displays noteworthy features. The compositional pattern of its opening section is that of an *enūma* clause with a long series of royal epithets, followed by an *inūšu* clause, which adheres to the pattern: Royal Name - titles - *anāku*. The first lines of this section acknowledge Marduk as the chief deity and as the dynastic god:

Col. I, 1. ì-nu-um damar.ud den-líl dingir.dingir ša-qu-ú en gi-im-ra 2. ú-ša-pu-ú ma-al-ku a-na e-pé-eš e-nu-tim 3. dna-bi-um-na-a'-id šarri a-na za-ni-nu-tim im-bu-ù 4. ú-ul-lu-ú re-e-ši-šu e-li ka-li-šu-nu lugal.meš 5. qí-bi-tu-uš-šu dingir.dingir gal.gal ih-du-ú a-na šar-ru-ti-šu

When Marduk, the lofty leader of the gods, the lord of the universe, brought into being a sovereign to assume rulership, he called Nabonidus the king to the function of provider. He raised his head above all kings. At his command the great gods rejoiced at his kingship.

The two middle sections follow the same pattern. The long recapitulation of previous building works is introduced by an *enūma* clause, and the account of the rebuilding of the temple of Lugal-Marada by an *inūšu* clause. The first lines of the middle sections consist of a long praise of Marduk, the Esagil, and the Ezida:

Col. I, 25. e-nu-ma ^dAMAR.UD EN GAL-ú a-na be-lu-tu ma-a-tim im-bu-ù ni-bi-tim 26. DUMU ru-bé-e ^dna-bi-um zi-ik-ri LUGAL-ti-ia ú-šar-bu-ù

27. u_4 -mi-šam-ma a-ta-mi pu-lu-úḫ-tim i-lu-ti-šu-un 28. ka-a-a-nam aš-te-né-e'-a šá e-li-šú-nu ṭa-a-bi 29. a-na é.sAG.íL ù é.ZI.DA šu-tu-rak zi-in-na-a-tú 30. re-eš im-mi-ma-a-a dam-qa ú-še-er-ri-bu ma-ḫar-šu-un 31. gi-na-a la na-par-ka-a' aš-te-né-e'-a aš-ri-šu-un 32. ma-ḫa-zi-šu-nu ra-bu-tim a-na ta-na-da-a-tú aš-tak-ka-an 33. ú-šar-bi zi-ik-ra \langle -šú- \rangle nu in a-wa-ta kal! da-ád-me

Since Marduk, the great lord, called me to rule the land, (and) the son of the prince, Nabû, exalted my royal name, daily I have proclaimed the fear of their godheads, regularly I have sought after what pleases them. I have provided abundantly for the Esagil and the Ezida, my most precious possessions I have brought before them. With ceaseless offerings I have constantly cared for their sanctuaries. I have established the fame of their great shrines. I have made their names famous in the utterance of all regions.

In the closing section, the prayer to Lugal-Marada, this god is urged to intercede with Marduk on the king's behalf:

Col. II, 34. d LUGAL.AMAR.DA EN šur-bu-ú 35. UR.SAG mug-da-šar ana é šu-a-tim ha-diš ina e-re-bi-ka mim-mu-ú 36. e-te-ep-pu-uš ha-diš in nap-lu-si-ka in ma-har d AMAR.UD LUGAL 37. AN-e u KI-tim u_4 -mi-šam at-ma-a siG_5 -tim

O Lugal-Marada, exalted lord, mighty warrior, when you joyfully enter that temple and joyfully see everything I did, speak daily good recommendations on my behalf in the presence of Marduk, the king of heaven and the underworld.

Sîn is mentioned only once in inscription 7, in the list of Nabonidus' epithets. He holds the seventh position after Marduk, Anu, Enlil, Ea, Bēlet-ilī, and Nabû (Col. I, 11. dšeš.KI-*ri* DUMU *ru-bé-e ú-ṣab-ba-a nab-ni-it-su* Nannar, the son of the lord, conceived his shape). Therefore, inscription 7 appears to be orthodox.

Inscription 9: Inscription 9 refers to Marduk in no less than six instances. The first royal epithet in the opening section refers to the king as "the shepherd called by Marduk" (Col. I, 1. ¹dna-bi-um-na-a'-id LUGAL KÁ.DINGIR.RAki 2. re-é-a-um ni-bi-it dAMAR.UD). Marduk appears one more time in the list of royal epithets in his role as dynastic god:

Col. I, 13. ša dAMAR.UD den-líl DINGIR.DINGIR a-na za-na-an ma-ḥa-zi 14. ù ud-du-šu eš-re-e-ti 15. šu-um-šu ki-ni-iš iz-ku-ru a-na šar-ru-ti

Whose name Marduk, the leader of the gods, pronounced truthfully for kingship, in order to take care of the cult centers and restore the sanctuaries.

The middle section, an account of the restoration of the Ebabbar of Larsa, portrays Marduk playing a decisive role in the undertaking. Whirlwinds arose at his command to remove the heaps of sand that covered the Ebabbar, thus disclosing the original foundations of the temple:

Col. II, 10. i-na qí-bi-it damar.ud be-lu gal-ú it-bu-nim-ma 11. ša-a-ri er-bet-ti-šu-nu me-ḫe-[e gal.meš] 12. ba-aṣ-ṣa ša e-li uru ù é ša-a-šu 13. ka-at-ma in-na-si-iḫ-ma

At the command of Marduk, the great lord, the four winds arose, [great] whirlwinds, (and) the sand which covered that city and temple was removed.

Then, before the rebuilding of the temple starts, Nabonidus addresses a prayer to him:

Col. II, 34. áš-ši qá-ti ú-şal-[li en en.en] 35. den sag dingir.dingir ru-bu-um damar.ud 36. ba-lu-uk-ka ul in-na-an-da šu-ub-ti 37. ul ib-ba-áš-ši-mu ki-su-ur-šu 38. ša la ka-a-šú ma-an-ni mi-na-a ip-pu-uš 39. be-lu i-na qí-bi-ti-ka şi-ir-ti 40. ša e-li-ka ţa-a-bi lu-še-pe-eš

I lifted my hand and prayed to [the lord of lords], Bēl, the foremost among the gods: O prince Marduk, without you a dwelling cannot be established and its plan cannot be formed. Without you, who can do what? O lord, by your lofty command, may I do something which pleases you.

After omens are taken, Marduk is acknowledged for the positive answer in the extispicy:

Col. II, 48. a-na a-mat damar.ud be-lu šu-úr-bi-ia ù a-na a-mat 49. dutu ú dim en.meš gim-ri at-ka-al-ma

I trusted the word of Marduk, my exalted lord, and the word of Šamaš and Adad, the lords of the universe.

Finally, in the account of the rebuilding, Marduk appears once more in a short statement that the king "levied the troops of Šamaš and Marduk" to rebuild the Ebabbar (Col. II, 52. *ad-ka-am-ma um-ma-na-a-ti* ^dUTU ù ^dAMAR.UD). Sîn appears in inscription 9 only once in the list of Nabonidus' epithets, where he

holds the fourth rank after Marduk, Nabû, and Nergal (Col. I, 22. den.zu ú dnin-gal 23. a-ge-e du-úr U4.MEŠ i-pi!-ir ra-šu!-uš-šú On whose head Sîn and Ningal put an everlasting tiara). Therefore inscription 9 also appears orthodox.

Inscription 10: Only the opening section of this inscription is preserved. As pointed out earlier, it is almost identical with the opening section of inscription 9, on which basis it has been suggested that they were written at the same time. As in inscription 9, the king is described in the opening section as "the pious prince called by Marduk" (Col. I, 1. dna-bi-um-na-a'-id LUGAL TIN.TIR id 2. ru-bu-ú na-a-du ni-bi-it dAMAR.UD). Marduk appears again in that part of the inscription as the dynastic god:

Col. I, 10. ša damar.ud igi.gál dingir.meš mu [......] 11. na-ap-ĥa-ar kur.kur [.....] 12. šu-um-šu ki-ni-iš [iz-ku-ru ana lugal-ti]

Whose name (Nabonidus') Marduk, the leader of the gods, pronounced truthfully for kingship, [in order to rule?] the totality of the countries [.....]

Sîn is also mentioned in that section, after Marduk, Nabû, and Nergal: the king is one "on whose head Sîn and Ningal put an everlasting tiara" (Col. I, 21. ^dEN.ZU ù ^dnin-gal 22. a-ge-e du!-úr U₄.MEŠ 23. i-pi-ri ra-šu-uš-šu). The inscription is related to the goddess Ningal, Sîn's consort and is more orthodox than the earlier inscription related to Sîn, inscription 2, which made no mention of Marduk.

A comparison of the building inscriptions of the first years with inscriptions 7, 9, and 10 reveals that the latter show a marked increase in the quantity and the importance of the references to Marduk. In inscriptions 5 and 6 Marduk is mostly portrayed as a passive god. In the inscriptions of the Teima period, on the contrary, he is repeatedly glorified. Of particular significance is the prayer inserted in the middle section of inscription 9; nowhere in the inscriptions of Nabonidus is the universal character of Marduk's godhead so emphatically acknowledged. Admittedly inscriptions 8 and 11 show the same restraint in Marduk's glorification that is found in the early inscriptions. Marduk is only mentioned twice in inscription 8, in the opening and closing sections (Col. I, 4, and Col. II, 35, which bears a strong resemblance to inscription 5, Col. II, 48-52, quoted p. 47). He is also mentioned only twice in inscription 11: in the middle Section (Col. II, 21-23), and in the closing section (Col. II, 59-61). This can be explained, however, by the fact that inscriptions 8 and 11 are related to building works at Sippar and are therefore heavily dependent on the earlier

inscriptions from that city, inscriptions 5 and 6. On the whole one can conclude that the inscriptions of the Teima period attest to a return to orthodoxy.

This conclusion is confirmed by study of the epithets of Sîn and Marduk. Sîn appears briefly in inscriptions 7 to 10 without epithets, with the exception of mār rubê and bēlu rabû "great lord," in inscription 7. The epithet bēlu rabû is attested in the short recapitulatory section concerning the consecration of Ennigaldi-Nanna and the rebuilding of the Egipar, in which glorification of Sîn is expected. One would expect him to be much glorified in inscription 10 as consort of Ningal, the deity to whom the inscription is related. Rather, he is mentioned without epithets, while Marduk bears the title *igigal ilāni* "wise one among the gods." ¹⁶ The preference for Sîn that was incipient in the inscriptions of the first years has suddenly disappeared. This is confirmed by a survey of Marduk's epithets. The reserve manifest in inscriptions 1, 2, 5, and 6 has given way to full acknowledgment of his leading position. While he was šar ilāni and enlil ilāni in the early inscriptions, he is now šar ilāni šagû "lofty king of the gods," and enlil ilāni šaqû "lofty leader of the gods." A wider selection of his titles is employed, such as šar šamê ū erşetim "king of heaven and the underworld," ašarēd ilāni "foremost among the gods," or bēl gimra "lord of everything." Those epithets are much loftier than those found in the inscriptions of the early reign and are more appropriate for depicting the exalted rank of Marduk. 17 He also appears in all five inscriptions of the Teima period, although none of them are specifically related to him. All these features are characteristic of orthodox inscriptions.

1.4.3 The Inscriptions of the Last Years

Five major building inscriptions have been dated to this period. Three of them are related to Sîn (inscriptions 13, 14, and 17), and two others to Šamaš, Ištar, and Anunītum (inscriptions 15 and 16). This choice of deities certainly reflects Nabonidus' personal devotion: all the inscriptions are related to the triad Sîn-Šamaš-Ištar and to the daughter of Sîn, Anunītum. Furthermore, the

- 16. This epithet is frequently employed in reference to Marduk and Nabû. See *CAD* I, s.v. *igigallu* 1., and Tallqvist 1938: 4, s.v. *igigallu*.
- 17. On these three titles of Marduk see Tallqvist 1938: 36 s.v. *ašarēd ilāni* (mostly Marduk and Šamaš), 45, s.v. *bēl gimra* and 236, s.v. *šar šamê ū erṣetim* (mostly Marduk, Aššur, Enlil, and Šamaš).
- 18. The first middle section of inscription 15 is also related to Sîn, as it consists of a recapitulatory section on the rebuilding of the Ehulhul at Harran.

building works of that period exclusively concerned the shrines of Sîn (Eḥulḥul at Ḥarran and the ziggurat of Ur, commemorated by inscriptions 13, 14, and 17) and Anunītum (Eulmaš of Sippar-Anunītum: commemorated by inscriptions 15 and 16). The passages related to Šamaš and Ištar in these inscriptions consist of accounts of building works carried out in the earlier reign. Sîn is constantly exalted not only in inscriptions related to him but also in those related to other gods, while Marduk is virtually ignored, with the exception of inscription 15, in which he appears as a mere companion god to Sîn.

I will start with the inscriptions which are not related to Sîn: inscription 16, and the last two parts of inscription 15. Inscription 16 consists of copies of the text of four stelas, each commemorating the restoration of a temple. ¹⁹ One of them, the Eulmas of Sippar-Anunītum, was rebuilt in the last years of the reign and inscription 16 was intended to commemorate this event (see sections 1.3.15 and 3.4.2). The other stelas report on the restorations of the Ebabbar of Sippar, the Eulmas of Agade, and the Ebabbar of Larsa, all known to have taken place before Nabonidus' return to Babylon: the Ebabbar of Sippar was rebuilt in the second year, the Ebabbar of Larsa in the tenth year. The Eulmas of Agade was probably rebuilt in the seventh year (see p. 141). Inscriptions 16a and 16b are therefore new editions of inscriptions 5 and 9, written respectively before and during the Arabian sojourn.

Inscription 16a does not significantly depart from inscription 5, of which it constitutes an abridged version. But one change is significant: all references to Marduk have been removed in the new version. The same can be noticed in 16b, a new edition of inscription 9. As seen earlier, inscription 9 is one of the most orthodox inscriptions written during Nabonidus' stay in Teima. In 16b, the revised version, Marduk has totally disappeared. This inscription attributes the ruin of the Ebabbar to Sîn's anger with Larsa:

Col. I, 41. é.Babbar.ra é ^dutu šá ud.unug^{ki} šá u₄-mu ru-qu-ú-ti 42. ^d30 lugal šá dingir.meš en dingir.meš ú ^diš-tar 43. a-ši-bu-tú šá an-e ú ki-tim e-li uru 44. ù é šá-a-šu is-bu-su-ma ši-pik ba-aṣ-ṣi gal.meš 45. e-li-šú iš-šap-ku-ma la in-nam-ru 46. ki-is-si-šú

As for the Ebabbar, the temple of Šamaš at Larsa, because in distant days Sîn, the king of the gods, the lord of gods and goddesses dwelling in

19. For the sake of convenience, this inscription will henceforth be referred to as follows: 16a for the section concerning the restoration of the Ebabbar of Sippar, 16b the Ebabbar of Larsa, 16c the Eulmaš of Agade, and 16d the Eulmaš of Sippar-Anunītum.

heaven and the underworld, became angry with that city and temple, big heaps of sand accumulated over it and its chapel could not be seen anymore.

In 16b Nabonidus' rule is one that "Sîn and Šamaš love" (Col. I, 64. *i-na-an-na i-na* MU-10-KÁM *ina* BALA-*e-a ki-nim* 65. *šá* ^d30 *ù* ^dUTU *i-ram-mu* Now, in the tenth year of my legitimate reign which Sîn and Šamaš love). Inscription 9 reports that Marduk roused whirlwinds to remove the sands which covered the Ebabbar, thus disclosing its old foundations. The same event is reported in 16b with a virtually identical wording, with the exception that the whirlwinds arise at the command of Sîn and Šamaš:

Col. I, 46. i-na Bala-e ^{Id}nà-nì.gub-urì 47. lugal tin.tir ^{ki}lugal maḥ-ri a-lik maḥ-ri-ia 48. dumu ^{Id}nà-IBILa-urì lugal tin.tir ^{ki} 49. i-na qí-bi ^{Id} 0 ù ^{Id} utu en.meš-šú 50. it-bu-nim-ma šá-a-ri er-bet-ti me-ḥe-e gal.meš 51. ba-aṣ-ṣi šá e-li uru ù é šu-a-tim kát-mu 52. in-na-si-iḥ-ma ḥi-iṭ-ṭa-tum iḥ-ṭu-uṭ-ma 53. te-me-en-na é.Babbar.ra šá ^Iburna-bur-iá-àš 54. lugal pa-na-a a-lik maḥ-ri-šú i-pu-šu 55. i-mur-ma

In the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, a former king, my predecessor, the son of Nabopolassar, king of Babylon, at the command of Sîn and Šamaš his lords, the four winds arose, the great whirlwinds, (and) the sand which covered that city and temple was removed. He made an excavation and he discovered the foundation deposit of the Ebabbar, which Burnaburiaš, a former king, his predecessor, had made.

History is consistently revised in inscription 16 with the overt intent to celebrate Sîn's universal power. In 16c he entrusts the Assyrian kings Esarhaddon and Aššurbanipal with universal rule.

Col. II, 37. ¹An.šár-šeš-mu lugal ^{kur}aš-šur u ¹An.šár-dù-a dumu-šú 38. šá ^d30 lugal dingir.meš kiš-šat kur.kur ú-šat-li-mu-šú-nu-ti-ma

Esarhaddon, king of Assyria, and Aššurbanipal his son, to whom Sîn, the king of the gods, had entrusted the entire universe.

16d attributes the ruin of the Eulmaš of Sippar-Anunītum to Sîn, who aroused Sennacherib to destroy the temple and lay the city waste:

Col. III, 26. é.ul.maš šá ud.kib.nun^{ki d}a-nu-ni-tum 27. šá ^d30 lugal dingir.meš ugu uru ù é šá-a-šu 28. is-bu-su ú-šad-kám-ma ^{ld}30-

šeš.meš-su lugal ^{kur}aš-šur 29. ^{lú}kúr za-ma-nu-ú uru ù é šá-a-šú úšá-lik kar-mu-tú

As for the Eulmaš of Sippar-Anunītum, because Sîn, the king of the gods, became angry with that city and temple, he aroused Sennacherib, king of Assyria, the bitter enemy, and that city and temple he turned into ruins.

Sîn is at the head of the pantheon, the gods carefully obey his orders. Anunītum consents to return to the Eulmaš at his express command:

Col. III, 33. ^da-nu-ni-tum gašan gal-tum gašan-iá a-ši-bat é.ul.maš 34. i-na qí-bit ^d30 lugal dingir.meš ad a-li-di-šú 35. a-na uru ù é šu-a-tum tar-šu ú-sa-li-mu

Anunītum, the great lady, my lady, who dwells in the Eulmaš, consented to return to that city and temple at the command of Sîn, the king of the gods, the father her begetter.

In the prayers appended to the stelas copied in inscription 16, Šamaš, Ištar, and Anunītum are each asked in turn by the king to intercede with Sîn on behalf of the Esagil, the Ezida, the Egišnugal, the Ebabbar, the Eanna, and the Eulmaš:²⁰

Col. III, 70. ^da-nu-ni-tum gašan gal-tú ina ma-ḫar ^d30 ad a-li-di-ka 71. sig₅.meš é.sag.íl é.zi.da é.giš.nu_{II}.gal é.babbar.ra é.an.na 72. é.ul.maš šu-bat dingir-ti-ku-nu gal.meš liš-šá-kin šap-tuk-ka

O Anunītum, great lady, in the presence of Sîn, the father your begetter, may you speak good recommendations for the Esagil, the Ezida, the Egišnugal, the Ebabbar, the Eanna, and the Eulmaš, the dwellings of your great godheads.

In his new role as supreme deity, Sîn is now the god who calls rulers to kingship. In the opening section of inscription 15, Nabonidus is said to have been destined for kingship by Sîn and Ningal from his mother's womb (Col. I, 4. ša d EN.ZU \dot{u} d nin-gal i-na šà um-mi-[šu] 5. a-na ši-ma-at LUGAL- \dot{u} -tu i-ši-mu ši-[ma-at-su] Whose fate Sîn and Ningal have destined as a royal fate from his mother's womb). The subscription to that same inscription contains an address to

20. Col. I, 23-28 (to Šamaš), Col. II, 17-21 (to Šamaš), Col. III, 14-18 (to Ištar of Akkad) and Col. III, 70-72 (to Anunītum). As the four prayers are virtually identical I only quote the last one.

subsequent rulers whom "Sîn and Šamaš will call to kingship" (Col. III, 43. man-nu at-ta šá ^d30 ù ^dUTU a-na LUGAL-ú-tu i-nam-bu-šu-ma Whoever you are whom Sîn and Šamaš will call to kingship). In the subscription to inscription 16 all the events reported in the four stelas are simply called "the deed of Sîn" (see section 1.2.2.2.2), a statement that shows the extent of Nabonidus' religious reform.

The inscriptions related to Sîn (inscriptions 13, 14, 17, and the first middle section of inscription 15) also attest to a radical change. If in inscription 1 Marduk was still called by Nabonidus "my lord" (Col. V, 8; Col. VII, 9, 38; Col. X, 4), this epithet is reserved for Sîn in the late inscriptions (inscription 15, Col. I, 46; Col. II, 18-19; inscription 13, passim). Although Marduk appears in the first section of inscription 15, ordering the rebuilding of the Eḫulḫul in Ḥarran, Sîn appears together with him on an equal footing:

Col. I, 18. damar.ud en gal ù den.zu na-an-na-ri an-e ù ki-tim 19. iz-zi-zu ki-lal-la-an damar.ud i-ta-ma-a it-ti-ia

Marduk, the great lord, and Sîn, the luminary of heaven and the underworld, were standing together. Marduk spoke with me.

Col. I, 34. a-mat ^den gal-ú ^damar.ud ù ^den.zu na-an-na-ri an-e ù kitim 35. šá qí-bi-it-su-nu la in-nin-nu-ú a-na qí-bi-ti-šú-nu şir-ti 36. ap-la-ah

(This was) the word of the great Bēl, Marduk, and Sîn, the luminary of heaven and the underworld, whose commands cannot be changed. I revered their lofty command.

Marduk is absent from the remaining parts of the narrative. The ruin of the Ehulhul in 610 is now caused by Sîn's anger, who aroused the medes to accomplish his plan of destruction:

Col. I, 11. e-li uru ù é šá-a-šu lìb-bu-uš i-zu-uz-ma 12. ^{1ú}Erín-man-da ú-šat-ba-am-ma é šu-a-tim ub-bi-it-ma 13. ú-ša-lik-šu kar-mu-tu

(Sîn) became angry with that city and temple. He aroused the Medes, who destroyed that temple and turned it into ruins.

In inscription 1 the destruction brought about by the Medes is attributed to Marduk's anger (Col. II, 1-20). That inscription also states that it was Marduk who demanded from Nabonidus that the Ehulhul be rebuilt and Harran restored to her former glory (Col. X: 30-31). In inscription 15, it is now Sîn, Šamaš, and Ištar who order workers to be levied to rebuild that temple:

Col. I, 43. um-ma-ni-ia rap-šá-a-ti 44. šá ^den.zu ^dutu ù ^diš-tar en. меš-e-a ia-ti 45. i-qí-pu-nu 46. a-na e-pe-šu é.ни́с.ни́с.

My large troops which Sîn, Šamaš, and Ištar, my lords, entrusted to me for the rebuilding of the Ehulhul.

In the prayer appended to this section and addressed to him, Sîn is praised in terms strongly reminiscent of the prayer to Marduk inserted in inscription 9 (quoted above, p. 52):

Col. II, 26. den.zu lugal dingir.meš šá an-e ù ki-tim šá ul-la-nu-uš-šu 27. uru ù kur la in-nam-du-ú la i-tur-ru áš-ru-uš-šu

O Sîn, king of the gods of heaven and the underworld, without whom no city and no country can be established or restored.

In this prayer, all the gods are urged to pray to Sîn, their "father and creator":

Col. II, 30. dingir.meš a-ši-bu-tu ša an-e ù ki-tim 31. li-ik-ta-ra-bu é ^den.zu a-bi ba-ni-šu-un

May the gods who dwell in heaven and the underworld praise the temple of Sîn, the father their creator.

Sîn secures Nabonidus' throne (Col. II, 32-38). Ningal, Šamaš, and Ištar intercede with him on the king's behalf:

Col. II, 38. dnin-gal ama dingir.gal.gal. 39. i-na ma-har den.zu nara-mi-šú li-iq-ba-a ba-ni-ti 40. dutu ù diš-tar și-it šà-šú na-am-ra 41. a-na den.zu a-bi ba-ni-šu-nu li-iq-bu-ú sig_5 -tim

May Ningal, mother of the great gods, speak well of me before Sîn, her beloved. May Šamaš and Ištar, his luminous offspring, speak good recommendations on my behalf to Sîn, the father their creator.

Sîn's exaltation is brought to its peak in the account of the rebuilding of the Ehulhul preserved in inscription 13. In the opening clause of the text, the expression "the deed of Sîn" is encountered again:

Col. I, 1. i-piš-ti ^d30 gal-ti šá dingir.meš ù ^diš-tar 2. ma-am-ma-an _{NU.ZU-}šu šá ul-tu u₄-mu ru-qu-tu 3. a-na kur la tu-ri-du un.meš kur ip-pal-su-ma 4. i-na tup-pi la iš-tu-ru-ma la iš-tak-ka-nu

The great deed of Sîn, which no one among gods and goddess(es)

The Exaltation of Sîn

knew, which since distant days had not come down to the land. (Now), the people of the land have seen (it), but have not recorded (it) on tablets.

Sîn is said to have called Nabonidus to assume kingship (Col. I, 10. d30 *a-na* LUGAL-ú-ti 11. ib-ba-an-ni (Whom) Sîn called for kingship). In a dream he sends to him, he orders the rebuilding of the Ehulhul and promises to deliver all the countries into his hands:

Col. I, 11. ina šá-at mu-ši máš.ge₆ ú-šab-ra-an-ni 12. um-ma é.húl. Húl é ^d30 šá ^{uru}kaskal ha-an-tiš 13. e-pu-uš kur.kur.meš ka-la-ši-na a-na šu.min-ka 14. lu-mál-la

In a night dream which he (Sîn) sent to me thus (he spoke): Rebuild immediately the Ehulhul, the temple of Sîn at Harran, and I will deliver all the countries into your hands.

Subsequent turmoil in Babylonia which resulted in Nabonidus' departure to Teima is ascribed to the people's disregard of Sîn's power (Col. I, 14-27). It is Sîn who brings prosperity back to Babylonia, ensures Nabonidus' military successes in Arabia, reconciles the king to his subjects, and renders possible the rebuilding of the Eḥulhul (Col. I, 27–Col. II, 14). Sîn is the universal god who holds all heavenly functions:

Col. II, 14. d30 en šá dingir.meš šá ina u4-l-kám 15. ku da-nim zi-kiršu an-e ta-lap-pa-tú 16. u ki-tim ta-he-ep-pu-ú ha-mi-im garza 17. da-nù-ú-tú mu-gam-mi-ir garza den-líl-ú-tú 18. le-qu-ú garza dé-a-ú-ti 19. šá nap-har gi-mi-ir pa-ra-aş an-e ina šu.min-šú 20. tam-hu den-líl dingir.meš lugal lugal.lugal en en.en 21. šá a-na qí-bi-ti-šu la i-tur-ru 22. ù a-mat-su la ta-qab-bu-ú min-šú 23. šá pu-luh-ti dingir-ti-šú gal-ti an-e 24. u ki-tim ma-lu-ú ki-ma zi-mi-šú an-e 25. u ki-tim sah-pu šá la ka-a-šú man-nu 26. mi-na-a ip-pu-uš

O Sîn, lord of the gods, whose name on the first day (of the month) is "crescent of Anu," 21 you who "obscure" heavens and shatter the earth, (who) gathers to himself Anu's office, (who) controls Enlil's office, who holds Ea's office, in whose hands are grasped all heavenly offices, leader of the gods, king of kings, lord of lords, who does not reconsider his

21. The interpretation of the sign KU is problematic. I follow Röllig's suggestion, who takes it as a mistake for *uskaru* (U₄-SAKAR) "(moon)-crescent," the word which would be expected here given the context (see parallels listed in Röllig 1964a: 231). However, a reading gistukul mittu/kakku "weapon" cannot be dismissed.

order, and you do not utter your command twice, with the awesomeness of whose great godhead heaven and earth are filled, in the absence of whose features heaven and earth are upset, without you who can do what?

This utterance "without you who can do what?" was addressed to Marduk in inscription 9, dated to the tenth year (Col. II, 38, quoted above, p. 52). This usurpation of Marduk's prerogative attests to the abrupt reform imposed by Nabonidus after his return from Teima. Of course one expects any god to be exalted in inscriptions relating to his own temple. But the intensity of Sîn's exaltation in the Ehulhul inscriptions was unacceptable for Babylonian orthodoxy. In fact, Marduk is never thus glorified in the early inscriptions, nor even in those of the Teima period.

The intensity of Sîn's exaltation in the Ehulhul inscriptions is paralleled only in inscription 17, the last major inscription of Nabonidus. Sîn is the only god mentioned in it, and the prayer addressed to him occupies half of the entire text. The Esagil and the Ezida are described as "his dwellings:"

Col. II, 3. d 30 be-lí dingir.meš 4. lugal dingir.meš šá an-e ù kitim 5. dingir.meš šá dingir.meš 6. a-ši-ib an-e gal.mes 7. a-na é šu-a-ti 8. ha-di-iš i-na e-re-bi-ka 9. $_{5.5}$ 3. meš é.sag.íl 10. é.zi. da é.giš.nu $_{11}$ 3. Gal 11. é.meš dingir-ú-ti-ka gal-ti 12. liš-ša-ki-in šap-tuk-ka

O Sîn, lord of the gods, king of the gods of heaven and the underworld, god of gods, who dwells in the great heavens, when you joyfully enter that temple, may you speak favorable words for the Esagil, the Ezida, and the Egišnugal, the temples of your great godhead.

This usurpation of Marduk and Nabû's temples, also found in inscription 16, was a major component of Nabonidus' reforms. It is echoed in a passage of the Verse Account which depicts the king arguing with members of the clergy that the Esagil is a sanctuary of Sin, since it bears the symbol of the moon god (see page 219). Accordingly, the late inscriptions attribute to Sîn epithets normally borne by Marduk or such chief gods as Aššur and Enlil. He is now $b\bar{e}l\,b\bar{e}l\bar{e}$ "lord of lords," šar šarrāni "king of kings," $b\bar{e}l\,il\bar{a}ni$ "lord of the gods," šar ilāni "king of the gods," šar ilāni ša šamê ū erṣetim "king of the gods of heaven and

22. On bēl bēlē see Tallqvist 1938: 42 s.v. bēl bēlē (epithet almost exclusive to Marduk, also used in reference to Aššur and Enlil). On bēl ilāni, see Tallqvist 1938: 46 s.v. bēl ilāni (rābūti) (only used in reference to Aššur and Marduk; used in connection with Sîn only in the late inscriptions of Nabonidus). On šar ilāni see Tallqvist 1938:

The Exaltation of Sîn

the underworld," 23 $b\bar{e}l$ $il\bar{a}ni$ \bar{u} $i\bar{s}tar\bar{a}ti$ $s\bar{a}$ $s\bar{a}m\hat{e}$ \bar{u} ersetim "lord of the gods and goddesses of heaven and the underworld." 24 In inscription 17 Nabonidus, in an accent of supreme devotion, goes as far as to call Sîn $il\bar{a}ni$ $s\bar{a}$ $il\bar{a}ni$ "god of gods," probably the highest epithet ever given to a god in the Mesopotamian tradition. In the last years of his reign Nabonidus was no longer hesitant to publicize his fanatical devotion to Sîn and his intention to relegate Marduk to nearly total oblivion.

1.4.4 Conclusions

Upon his return from Arabia, Nabonidus imposed a major religious reform, resulting in the rejection of Marduk, the undisputed supreme god of Babylon for the past six centuries. ²⁵ This was already established by Tadmor. Yet the contention that the king's devotion to Sîn as mirrored in the inscriptions steadily increased throughout his reign needs to be reconsidered. Indeed, Sîn's glorification decreased after Nabonidus' departure for Teima, while Marduk was restored to his full position. One possibility is that the restoration of orthodoxy was propaganda intended for Babylonia. This might be supported by a passage of inscription 13, in which Nabonidus ascribes his departure to Teima to the impiety of the Babylonians:

Col. I, 14. un.meš dumu.meš tin.tir ^{ki} bár.síp ^{ki} 15. en.nun ^{ki} šeš. unug ^{ki} unug ^{ki} ud.unug ^{ki} ^{li}sanga.meš 16. un.meš ma-ḥa-zi ^{kut}uri ^{ki} a-na dingir-ú-ti-šu 17. gal-ti iḥ-ṭu-'i-i-ma i-še-ṭì-u ú-gal-li-lu 18. la i-du-u e-zi-is-su gal-tú šá lugal dingir.meš ^dšeš.ki-ri 19. par-ṣi-šú-nu im-šu-'i-i-ma

The citizens of Babylon, Borsippa, Nippur, Ur, Uruk, and Larsa, the governors and people of the cult centers of Akkad offended his great

godhead, they acted wickedly, they sinned, not knowing the great wrath of Nannar, the king of the gods, they forgot his rites.

A literal reading of this passage suggests that early attempts by the king to reform Babylonian religion provoked the anger of the clergy and the people and resulted in his self-imposed exile in Arabia. While in Teima, far away from his capital, and probably unsure of the fidelity of his subjects, Nabonidus would have returned to pure orthodoxy in the inscriptions intended for Babylonia, without however renouncing his grandiose scheme for Sîn. Yet there is no evidence that the king tried to impose the cult of Sîn as supreme deity in his early reign. Although the inscriptions of the early period already show a strong devotion to the moon god, the policies of Nabonidus appear to have been dictated by other factors as well, such as the need to establish his legitimacy and to be perceived as the champion of orthodoxy and Babylonian imperialism (see section 2.4.1). The report contained in inscription 13 need not be taken too literally. It probably aimed at providing a reason why the Ehulhul could not be rebuilt at the beginning of the reign, which appears to have been the king's original intention (see section 3.4.1).

In fact, the evidence may be summed up in one statement: the primary factor which determined the relative position of Sîn and Marduk in the inscriptions was not fluctuations in the king's religious policy, but simply his presence in, or absence from, the capital. As shown by Dougherty long ago (Dougherty 1929: 105-137), Nabonidus never directly intervened in the affairs of Babylonia during his ten-year absence, leaving his son Belshazzar with the entire responsibility over the administration (see section 3.3). The term co-regency is often employed in reference to that period, although Belshazzar never assumed any official title. The reality of administration was in his hands, including the responsibility for public works and the commissioning of inscriptions commemorating them. This last point is especially well illustrated by the letter sent by Belshazzar to the *šangu* of Sippar concerning the purification of the temple of Bunene after its restoration (see section 1.2.2.1.2). Therefore one can conclude that Belshazzar alone was responsible for the return to orthodoxy in the inscriptions of the Teima period. The king's long exile in Teima may well have been provoked by a split between him and an influential party led by his son. They would have convinced the king to stay away from Babylonia, fearing that his religious convictions might eventually lead to a confrontation with the oligarchy and the clergy of Marduk (see sections 2.2.2.1 and 3.2.3). There is evidence that the split between Nabonidus and the crown prince became overt after the return from Teima. After Nabonidus' return to Babylon, Belshazzar

^{233–34} s.v. *šar ilāni* (mostly Aššur and Marduk, used in reference to Sîn only in the late inscriptions of Nabonidus). On *šar šarrāni* see Tallqvist 1938: 237 (epithet of Aššur, Ea, and Enlil).

^{23.} See Tallqvist 1938: 234 s.v. šar ilāni (ša) šamê ū irṣiti (used in reference to Aššur, Marduk, and Nabû; epithet of Sîn only in the late inscriptions of Nabonidus).

^{24.} This epithet is attested only in the late inscriptions of Nabonidus.

^{25.} If we date the elevation of Marduk to the head of the pantheon to the reign of Nebuchadnezzar I (1126–1105 B.C.), following Lambert 1964. The problem of Marduk's rise in the second millennium B.C. is more recently discussed in Sommerfeld 1982.

was demoted from his administrative responsibilities and the officials whose incumbencies extended over the period of the king's absence were dismissed (see sections 3.1.2.1 and 3.1.2.2). One inscription written under Belshazzar's regency was re-edited after Nabonidus' return: namely, inscription 9, re-edited as inscription 16b. In addition, inscription 17 and the four stelas edited in inscription 16 all end with similar prayers urging the king, Belshazzar, and their subjects to receive Sîn's blessing. Here follow the quotations from inscription 16:26

Col. III, 73. pu-luḫ-ti ⁴30 en dingir.meš i-na šá-ma-mu 74. lìb-bi un.meš-šú šu-uš-ki-na-a-ma a-a ir-šá-a' ḫi-ṭi-ti suḤuš.meš-šú-nu 75. li-ku-nu ... 76. ù šá ¹den-lugal-urì dumu reš-tu-u 77. și-it lìb-bi-ia šu-ri-ku u₄.meś-šú a-a ir-šá-a' ḫi-ṭi-ti

Establish from heaven the fear of Sîn, the lord of the gods, in the heart of his people. May they not commit any sin and may their foundations be firm. And as for Belshazzar, my eldest son, my offspring, lengthen his days. May he not commit any sin.

Here follow the corresponding passages in inscription 17:

Col. II, 13. pu-luḫ-ti dingir-ú-ti-ka 14. gal-ti lìb-bi un.meš-šú 15. šu-uš-kin-ma la i-ḫaṭ-ṭu-ú 16. a-na dingir-ú-ti-ka gal-ti 17. ki-ma an-e iš-da-šu-nu 18. li-ku-nu . . . 24. ù šá lden-lugal-urì 25. dumu reš-tu-ú 26. și-it lìb-bi-ia 27. pu-luḫ-ti dingir-ú-ti-ka gal-ti 28. lìb-bu-uš šu-uš-kin-ma 29. a-a ir-šá-a 30. ḫi-ṭi-ti

(O Sîn), establish the fear of your great godhead in the heart of your people, so that they do not commit any sin against your great godhead. May their foundations be as firm as heaven. And as for Belshazzar, my eldest son, my offspring, establish the fear of your great godhead in his heart. May he not commit any sin.

The concept of sin (*hiṭītu*) against Sîn appears to have occupied a fundamental place in Nabonidus' religious thought in the later part of his reign. In inscription

26. References to inscription 16 are as follows: Col. I, 29-36 (to Šamaš). Col. II, 22-26 (to Šamaš). Col. III, 19-24 (to Ištar of Akkad). Col. III, 73-77 (to Anunītum). These prayers are all slightly different. The last one, addressed to Anunītum, is quoted here.

13, the postponement of the Ehulhul's rebuilding is attributed to the evil conduct of the citizens of Babylonia, who purportedly "faulted" against Sîn's godhead (Col. I, 14-19, quoted above). In the prayers just quoted the king endeavors to reconcile the Babylonians with Sîn and to convert them to his cult as supreme deity. Belshazzar was apparently no more a devotee of Sîn than Nabonidus' subjects, since the king also strove to reconcile Sîn to him, hoping to lay true religious foundations on which the future of his dynasty could be enduringly established. All this evidence leads one to attribute the return to orthodoxy during the Teima period to Belshazzar's conservatism and to his hostility to the religious tendencies of his father.

Thus, Nabonidus was already a convinced devotee of Sîn in the beginning of his reign. He may already have contemplated a major religious reform, but felt his rule still too uncertain to accomplish it. During his long absence his son Belshazzar favored an orthodox and conservative policy. The progression in Sîn's rise was stopped and orthodoxy reinstated. While in Teima Nabonidus' convictions may have strengthened, but we have no source to judge. The tone of the late inscriptions simply shows that upon his return, now strongly confident in his power, he felt the time ripe to accomplish a long-planned reform.

The Early Reign of Nabonidus

(556-553 B.C.)

This chapter is devoted to the history of the early reign of Nabonidus, a period that spans from May 556, when documents dated to Nabonidus' accession year first appear in archives, to May 553, when the king set out on a campaign west that ultimately led him to the Arabian peninsula. In terms of native chronology this period starts in the second month (Ayyaru) of the accession year of Nabonidus and ends in the second month of his third regnal year. Chapter 2 is divided into four sections. The first will concern the antecedents of Nabonidus and his career before he assumed kingship. The second section will be devoted to the circumstances of his rise to power. In the third I will attempt to reconstruct the chronology and the history of the early part of his reign. Finally, in the fourth section, I will try to assess the political program of Nabonidus in his early regnal years, mainly observing his reforms and his military policy.

2.1 THE ORIGINS OF NABONIDUS

Dougherty devoted a sizable portion of his study to the problem of Nabonidus' origins and background (Dougherty 1929, chapter 1). Since then, new sources have been discovered. An important text in this respect is inscription 13, which contains a few lines of decisive data on the antecedents of Nabonidus and the circumstances of his elevation to kingship:

Col. I, 7. a-na-ku ^{1d}PA-I 8. DUMU e-du šá man-ma-an la i-šu-ú šá LUGAL-u-tú 9. ina lìb-bi-ia la tab-šu-ú

I am Nabonidus, the only son, who has nobody. In my mind there was no thought of kingship.

One learns from this short statement that Nabonidus was the only child of his parents, could claim no one's support, and did not covet kingship, although he certainly was a leading figure in the conspiracy that led to the murder of Lābâši-Marduk in 556 B.C.

The data are 'partly corroborated by the inscription of Adad-guppi, mother of Nabonidus.¹ Twice he is referred to in this text as her only son (Col. I, 40. ldPa-I DUMU e-du și-it šà-iá and Col. II, 13. ldPa.Ní.TUK DUMU e-du și-it lib-bi-iá Nabonidus, my only son, my offspring). His father was one Nabû-balāṭsu-iqbi, whose name often closes Nabonidus' titulary in building inscriptions, in which he bears the titles rubû emqu "wise prince," rubû gitmalu "perfect prince," and šakkanaku qitrudu "heroic governor."² However, no person named Nabû-balāṭsu-iqbi who could reasonably be identified as the father of Nabonidus appears in Neo-Babylonian documents. By contrast, the father of Neriglissar, Bēl-šum-iškun, whose name similarly closes Neriglissar's titulary in building inscriptions, also with the title rubû emqu (see Seux 1967 s.v. rubû emqu), emerges from documents of the time of Nebuchadnezzar II as a tangible figure; he is the governor of Puqudu, a region located on the east bank of the Tigris in Babylonia (Unger 1931: 285, Col. IV, 24).

The solution to this problem should be found in Adad-guppi's inscription. Although it has been repeatedly stated that she was a high priestess of the moon god at Harran, there is no evidence for this assumption. The only titles she bears in her inscription are "mother of Nabonidus, king of Babylon," and "worshipper of Sîn, Ningal, Nusku, and Sadarnunna":

- Col. I, 1. a-na-ku $^{\rm fd}$ Im-gu-up-pi-i' ama 2. $^{\rm ld}$ na-bi-um-na-'i-id lugal tin.tir $^{\rm ki}$ 3. pa-li-ih-tu $^{\rm d}$ 30 $^{\rm d}$ nin-gal $^{\rm d}$ Nusku 4. ù $^{\rm d}$ sa-dàr-nun-na din-
- 1. This inscription has come down to us in two exemplars. The first one, which is very fragmentary, was published in Pognon 1907: 1–13 and plates 11–13. The other exemplar was published in Gadd 1958: 46–56 and plates I and IV–VIII. See also Oppenheim's translation in *ANET*: 560–62. Gadd's classification of the two copies has been followed, H1.A being the copy of Pognon and H1.B that published by Gadd. Unless otherwise indicated quotations will be made from H1.B. It is unlikely that Adad-guppi commissioned this inscription herself, although it is written in the first person. It was in all probability set up at Ḥarran several years after her death by Nabonidus to commemorate the rebuilding of the Eḥulhul, the temple of Sîn. On the literary genre of this text, which can be categorized as a "pseudo-autobiography," see Longman 1983.
- 2. The epithet *rubû emqu* is the most often employed, while *rubû gitmalu* and *šakkanaku qitrudu* are attested only once each. For complete references to their occurrences in the inscriptions of Nabonidus see Seux 1967 s.v.

GIR.MEŠ-iá 5. šá ul-tu mi-iş-ḫi-ru-ti-ia áš-te-e'-u 6. DINGIR-ú-ut-su-un

I am Adad-guppi, the mother of Nabonidus, king of Babylon, who worships Sîn, Ningal, Nusku, and Sadarnunna, my personal gods, whose godheads I have constantly sought after since my youth.

The fact that her ancestry is not provided may also point to modest familial antecedents. In fact, being the mother of Nabonidus seems to have been her only claim to fame. It has also often been assumed that she came from Harran, in view of her obvious concern for this city and especially for the Ehulhul, the sanctuary of her personal god. Although this assumption is in all probability correct, her inscription does not provide conclusive evidence for it. On the contrary, the only section reporting on her life portrays her in attendance on Nabonidus' predecessors at the royal court of Babylon:³

Col. II, 40. ina 21 mu.meš 41. šá ^{Id}nà-a-urì lugal tin.tir^{ki} ina 43 mu.meš šá ^{Id}nà-nì.gub-pap 42. dumu ^{Id}nà-a-urì u 4 mu.meš šá ^{Id}u.gur-lugal-urì lugal tin.tir^{ki} 43. lugal-ú-ti i-te-ep-pu-šu-u' 68 mu.an.na.meš 44. ina gab-bi lìb-bi-ia ap-làḫ-šú-nu-ti en.nun-tì-šú-nu aṣ-ṣ[ur-ma] 45. ^{Id}nà-i dumu ṣi-it lìb-bi-iá ina IgI ^{Id}nà-nì.gub-ú-ṣur 46. dumu ^{Id}nà-a-urì u ^{Id}u.gur-lugal-urì lugal tin.tir^{ki} uš-ziz-ma 47. ur-ri u mu-ši en.nun-tì-šú-nu iṣ-ṣur-ma 48. šá e-li-šú-nu ṭa-a-bi i-te-ep-pu-šú ka-a-a-na 49. mu-a bab-ba-nu-u ina pa-ni-šú-nu iš-ku-un ki-ma 50. dumu.sal ṣi-it lìb-bi-šú-⟨nu⟩ ul-lu-ú re-ši-i[a]

During the 21 years, the 43 years, and the 4 years when Nabopolassar, king of Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar, the son of Nabopolassar, and Neriglissar, king of Babylon, respectively reigned, during 68 years I whole-heartedly served them and performed duties before them. I introduced Nabonidus, my son, my offspring, to Nebuchadnezzar, son of Nabopolassar, and to Neriglissar, king of Babylon. Day and night he performed duties before them and regularly did whatever pleased them. He established my good name before them. They exalted me as though I had been a daughter born of their loins.

Since the years of Adad-guppi's birth and death are known, it is possible to

3. Since this passage is mutilated in H1.B, all broken passages have been restored according to H1.A, preserving however the line numbering of H1.B.

propose a tentative reconstruction of her and her son's early careers. Her inscription says that she was born in the twentieth year of Aššurbanipal (Col. I, 29) and died in the ninth year of Nabonidus (Col. III, 5-7). The date of her death is provided with greater precision in the Nabonidus Chronicle (Grayson 1975a: 107):

Col. II, 13. iti bará u₄-5-kám ama.lugal ina bàd-ka-ra-šú šá gú id buranun e-la-nu sip-par ki 14. im-tu-ut

On the fifth day of the month Nisanu (of the ninth year of Nabonidus) the queen mother died at Dūr-karāšu, which is on the bank of the Euphrates upstream from Sippar.

Therefore she was born in the year 649–48 B.C. and died on April 6, 547 B.C. According to this reckoning she should have died at the age of 101 or 102, although her inscription states that she was 104:

Col. II, 28. 104 MU.AN.NA.MEŠ SIG₅.MEŠ i-na pu-luḫ-ti šá ^d30 LUGAL DINGIR.MEŠ 29. ina lìb-bi-ia iš-ku-nu ú-bal-liţ-an-ni

Sîn, the king of the gods, made me live 104 good years in the fear of him which he had established in my heart.

One explanation for the discrepancy between the age she claimed and that which can be deduced from the chronology in her inscription is that she had lost memory of it, very likely for such an old person, especially in a time without a fixed universal calendar (von Voigtlander 1963: 221-33). According to the passage quoted above, she started her career at the court as early as 626 B.C., in the first regnal year of Nabopolassar, at the age of 23, and kept that position until the accession of her son, by which time she had reached 92 or 93. Although one need not take this passage too literally, it remains the sole source on Adadguppi's life. The current theory on her origins should be considered in its light. According to this theory, first expressed by Dhorme (1908) and later fully redeveloped by him (Dhorme 1947), Adad-guppi came from Harran and spent a good part of her life in that city as a high priestess of the moon god. While these arguments have been widely accepted, one should note that they are based on the fragment published by Pognon in 1907. Discovery of the complete version in 1956 has allowed a better assessment of the purpose and the genre of this inscription. Dhorme's contention was based on the following arguments:

1. Adad-guppi was a priestess of Sîn since, according to her inscription, she

spent her life in Harran praying for the return of Sîn to that city and the restoration of the Ehulhul.

- 2. Since her inscription bears a striking resemblance to the Aramaic inscription of Si'gabbar,⁴ a priest of the moon god in Neirab, she should have held a similar position in Harran.
- 3. That Adad-guppi was a high priestess of Sîn is probable because Nabonidus consecrated his own daughter as *entu* priestess to the moon god in Ur.

Argument 3 can be rejected. Consecration of En-nigaldi-Nanna as *entu* priestess and rebuilding of the Egipar in Ur can be explained by Nabonidus' commitment to the cult of Sîn and by the antiquarian interest characterizing the Neo-Babylonian period. In consecrating his own daughter, Nabonidus only revived a custom prevalent in Babylonia from Sargon of Akkad down to Old-Babylonian times (Hallo 1976) but also, apparently, known in the Post-Kassite period, since reference is made to an *entu* priestess at the time of Nebuchadnezzar I (1126–1105) in inscription 2 of Nabonidus (Col. I, 29-33) and in the Royal Chronicle (Col. III, 5-7). One should also note that king Adad-apaliddina, the eighth ruler of the second dynasty of Isin, in an inscription bears the title "son-in-law of (the god) Nanna(r)" (Brinkman 1968: 136). Assuming that the practice of consecrating a female priestess to the moon god involved some form of hierogamy, this unusual royal title would constitute further proof that the custom was still alive in Post-Kassite Babylonia.

Argument 2 is also spurious. If the inscription of Adad-guppi shares many features with that of Si'gabbar, it also resembles many other funerary inscriptions of first millennium Syria. As such inscriptions were not reserved for members of the clergy,⁵ one need not conclude on this basis that Adad-guppi was a high priestess of the moon god.

Argument 1, which was extensively developed by Dhorme, seems more conclusive. The largest part of the inscription of Adad-guppi concentrates on the ruin of the Eḥulhul in 610 B.C. and its subsequent rebuilding by Nabonidus. In fact, Sîn's resolution to return to Ḥarran and allow the restoration of the

- 4. On the reading of this name, see Kaufman 1970. The latest discussion of the inscription of Si'gabbar together with the inscription of Sîn-zēr-ibni, which is similar, is in Gibson 1975: 93–98, with full bibliography and commentaries.
- 5. See Hawkins 1980: the author discusses three Neo-Hittite funerary inscriptions from Syria which bear a strong resemblance to those of Si'gabbar and Sîn-zēr-ibni, and one which is very valuable for comparison with the stela of Adad-guppi. None of the three deceased was a priest.

Eḥulḥul is described as a reward to Adad-guppi for a life of constant devotion. The section where her devotion is portrayed contains the only information on the nature of her relationship to Sîn and the Ehulhul:

Col. I, 6. šá ina mu-16-kám ^dPA-A-urì 7. lugal tin.tir^{ki d}30 lugal DINGIR.MEŠ it-ti URU-Šu 8. u É-ŠÚ iz-nu-Ú i-lu-Ú Šá-ma-miŠ URU Ù 9. UN.MEŠ šá ina lìb-bi-šú il-li-ku kar-mu-ti 10. ina lìb-bi šá aš-ra-a-tú 430 dnin-gal dNUSKU 11. u dsa-dàr-nun-na áš-te-e'-u pal-ha-ku DINGIR-utsu-un 12. šá ^d30 lugal dingir ^{túg}síg-šú as-bat-ma mu-ši u ur-ra 13. áš-te-né-e'-a DINGIR-ut-su GAL-ti u₄-mi-šam la na-par-ka-a 14. šá d30 dUTU d15 u dim ma-la bal-ţa-ku 15. ina AN-e u Ki-tim pa-li-ha-at-sunu ana-ku mim-mu-u-a 16. dam-qa šá id-di-nu-nu U₄ mu-ši ITI u MU addin-šú-nu-tu 17. ^{túg}síg ^d30 lugal dingir.meš aș-bat-ma mu-ši u urra 18. IGI.MIN-ia it-ti-šú ba-šá-a ina su-pe-e u la-ban ap-pi 19. ku-ummu-sak ina mah-ri-šú-un um-ma ta-a-a-ru-tu-ku 20. a-na uru-ka libšá-ma ni-ši şal-mat qaq-qa-du 21. lip-la-hu DINGIR-ú-ut-ka GAL-ti a-na nu-uh-hu 22. šà dingir-ia u d15-ia lu-bu-šú síg.sag šu-kut-ti 23. KÙ.BABBAR KÙ.GI şu-ba-a-ti eš-šú šım.HI.A u ì.GIŠ.DÙG 24. la u-tah-ha a-na zu-um-ri-iá şu-bat nak-su 25. la-ab-šá-ku-ma mu-şe-e-a šaq-quum-mu a-dal-lal 26. da-li-li-šú-un ta-nit-tú DINGIR!-iá u diš-tar-iá 27. ina lìb-bi-ia iš-ša-kin-ma en.nun-tì-šú-nu as-sur 28. mim-mu-ú-a dam-qa la e-zib-ma na-šá-ku ma-har-šú-un 29. ul-tu MU-20-KÁM AN.ŠÁR-DÙ-A LUGAL kuraš-šur šá al-da-ku 30. a-di mu-42-kám an.šár-DÙ-A MU-3-KÁM daš-šur-e-tel-lu-DINGIR 31. DUMU-šú MU-21-KÁM dpa-A-PAP MU-43-KÁM ^dPA-NÌ.GUB-PAP 32. MU-2-KÁM ^lLÚ-^dAMAR.UD MU-4-KÁM ^{1d}U.GUR-LUGAL-URÌ 33. ina 95 MU.MEŠ ^d30 LUGAL DINGIR.MEŠ ŠÁ AN-e u KI-tim 34. ŠÁ ÁŠ-ra-a-ti DINGIR-ú-ti-ŠÚ GAL-ti ÁŠte-e'-u 35. ép-še-ti-iá sig₅.MEŠ ha-diš ip-pal-sa-an-ni-ma 36. su-pee-a iš-mu-u im-gu-ru qi-bi-tú ug-ga-ti 37. lìb-bi-šú i-nu-uh-ma a-na É.HÚL.HÚL É d30 38. šá qé-reb uru KASKAL šu-bat tu-ub lìb-bi-šú is-li-mu ir-šu-u 39. ta-a-a-ri

Because in the sixteenth year of Nabopolassar, king of Babylon, Sîn, the king of the gods, became angry with his city and his temple and went up to heaven, the city and the people (living) there became decrepit. I sought after the sanctuaries of Sîn, Ningal, Nusku, and Sadarnunna, worshipping their godheads. I laid hold of the garment of Sîn, the king of the gods, and day and night, all day long, without ceasing, I constantly sought after his great godhead. I was indeed a worshipper of Sîn, Šamaš, Ištar and Adad, in heaven and the underworld, as long as I lived. The

favors they had granted upon me, day and night did I grant to them, months and years. I laid hold of the garment of Sîn, the king of the gods, and day and night my eyes were set towards him. In prayers and prostrations I was bowing down before them (!) saying: "May you return to your city so that the black-headed people may worship your great godhead." In order to appease the hearts of my personal god and my personal goddess, I would not wear a dress of fine wool, nor jewels, nor silver and gold, nor a new garment, nor would I anoint myself with perfumes and sweet oil. I would go clothed with a torn garment and my coat was a sackcloth. I uttered their praise. The glorification of my personal god (!) and my personal goddess was established in my heart. I performed duties before them. I did not omit anything good I could bring before them. From the twentieth year of Aššurbanipal, king of Assyria, in which I was born, until the 42nd year of Aššurbanipal, the third year of Aššur-etel-ilāni his son, the 21st year of Nabopolassar, the 43rd year of Nebuchadnezzar, the second year of Awel-Marduk and the fourth year of Neriglissar, during 95 years I was constantly seeking after the sanctuaries of Sîn, the king of the gods of heaven and the underworld. (On account of) my good deeds, he looked joyfully upon me, heard my prayer, and received (my) utterance. The wrath of his heart calmed down; he became reconciled with the Ehulhul, the temple of Sîn in Harran, his favorite dwelling, and resolved to come back.

According to Dhorme the strength of Adad-guppi's piety, as portrayed in this section, proves that she was a priestess; only a member of the clergy could have been so overwhelmingly concerned with the maintenance of a cult (Dhorme 1947: 10):

Il me semblait qu'un lien étroit unissait au dieu et au sanctuaire la personnalité qui exprime ses sentiments avec une dévotion, une ardeur, un zèle, qui dénotent plus que la piété d'un profane.

However it is hard to determine the difference between priestly and lay piety in this period, not to mention that no act of piety performed by Adad-guppi is known to have been exclusive to the clergy. "Seeking after" the sanctuary of a god (ašar DN šite'u) or after his "godhead" (ilūt DN šite'u) or being a worshipper of a god (pāliḥ DN) are expressions which occur in almost every royal inscription of the Neo-Babylonian period in reference to the king's concern for the restoration and maintenance of cults and shrines. When Adadguppi "laid hold of the garment of Sîn" (1. 7), she was not necessarily perform-

ing a priestly act. Nebuchadnezzar employed the same expression to express his devotion to Marduk (see VAB IV, Nebuchadnezzar no. 13, Col. III, 25. áš-šum si-is-si-ik-ti dAMAR.UD EN-ia 26. şa-ab-ta-ku-ú-ma Since I laid hold of the garment of Marduk, my lord). So did Nabonidus in reference to his devotion to the gods (Inscription 6, Col. I, 7. a-na la ra-še-e hi-ṭi-tim 8. ṣa-ab-tu si-is-si-ikti DINGIR.MEŠ The one who lays hold of the garments of the gods in order not to commit any sin). The way Adad-guppi prayed to Sîn (supû, labān appi) was also characteristic of royal piety; references to kings performing these prayers are numerous (see CAD L, s.v. labānu 1., and AHw s.v. supû). The same can be said of the practices she followed to appease Sîn and Nusku (ll. 21-25): these rituals, such as not wearing costly garments or jewels, not using cosmetics, perfumes or oil, and putting on torn garments and sackcloth, are shared by all cultures of the ancient Near East. These mourning rituals are well known from the Bible and several parallels can be found at Ugarit and in Sumerian and Akkadian literature (Alster 1983). In performing these rituals Adad-guppi was only expressing her grief at the absence of Sîn from his temple. The god's departure was equated with death, and mourning was felt to be a suitable ritual to appease divine anger. But such rituals were not exclusive to the clergy. In inscription 1 of Nabonidus, for instance, it is reported that Nabopolassar lay down on the ground to express his despair at the destruction of the sanctuaries of Assyria by the Medes:

Col. II, 32. lugal tin.tir^{ki} 33. ši-pi-ir ^damar.ud 34. ša ši-il-lati 35. ik-kib-šu 36. la ú-bil šu.min-sú 37. a-na pel-lu-de-e 38. dingir.meš ka-la-ma 39. iš-ši ma-la-a 40. ma-a-a-al qaq-qar 41. i-na-al

The king of Babylon abhorred the insolent deed of Marduk. He did not lay his hands on the cult of any god and he wore dirty hair (and) lay down on the ground.

Lying down on the ground is a well-known sign of mourning (see II Sam. 13, 31 and 12, 16). So is heaping dust on one's head: inscription 1 certainly alludes to that practice when saying that Nabopolassar "wore dirty hair."

Thus there is no reason to assume that Adad-guppi's piety was necessarily that of a priestess. In her inscription she simply shows a concern for cultic matters typical of Neo-Babylonian building inscriptions. Nobody would assume that Nabopolassar and Nebuchadnezzar were priests, although their inscriptions are almost exclusively concerned with religious matters and display a piety at least equal to that of Adad-guppi.

Dhorme's second assumption is that her deeds necessitated her presence at Harran. The contrary is more likely. We are told that Adad-guppi laid hold of the garment of Sîn, set her eyes towards him, bowed down before him in prayer (ll. 17-21), and that she "performed duties" before Sîn, Ningal, Nusku, and Sadarnunna and brought before them "all the good things" (ll. 27-28). These passages refer to all the offerings and libations she made to their cultic statues. Yet these statues were not in the temple of Harran, which had been lying in ruins since 610 B.C., but in Babylon, where they were brought by Nabopolassar after the destruction of the city. Indeed, when Nabonidus restored the Ehulhul, "he took the hand of Sîn and led him from Babylon to the Ehulhul," as the inscription of Adad-guppi informs us:

Col. II, 17. qa-ti 18. d30 dnin-gal dnusku u dsa-dàr-nun-na ul-tu 19. šu.an.na uru lugal-ú-ti-šú iş-bat-ma ina qé-reb urukaskal 20. ina é.húl.húl šu-bat ţu-ub lìb-bi-šú-nu ina hi-da-a-tú 21. u ri-šá-a-tú ú-še-šib

He took the hand of Sîn, Ningal, Nusku, and Sadarnunna from Babylon his royal city and made (them) dwell in Ḥarran, in the Eḫulḫul, their favorite dwelling, in joy and happiness.

The same statement is found in inscriptions 13 and 15 of Nabonidus (see inscriptions 13, Col. III, 22-25, and 15, Col. II, 17-21). In both cases the wording is virtually the same as in the inscription of Adad-guppi. The booty taken by Nabopolassar at Ḥarran is also mentioned in the Neo-Babylonian Chronicle Series (see Grayson 1975a: 95, chronicle 3, ll. 63-64: The king of Akkad reached Ḥarran and he captured the city. He carried off the vast booty of the city and the temple). The booty probably included the four divine statues. This leaves little doubt as to where Adad-guppi spent most of her life of purported devotion to Sîn and his circle of deities: in Babylon.

In the absence of conclusive evidence, one cannot assume that Adad-guppi was a priestess of Sîn at Ḥarran. Her stela was part of a set of inscriptions intended to commemorate the restoration of the Eḫulḫul by Nabonidus. In her role as queen mother, it is only natural that she is depicted in her inscription expressing concern for the maintenance of cults and sanctuaries, as did all Neo-Babylonian kings. Her devotion was not characteristic of members of the clergy, but rather of members of the royal family. However, that Adad-guppi is attested in documents of the period, with the exception of the mention of her death in the Nabonidus Chronicle, only in connection with the rebuilding of the Eḫulḫul, must mean that her relationship to Ḥarran was a special one. Unlike other

building inscriptions of Nabonidus where the emphasis is put solely on the restoration of sacred buildings independently of their locations, it should be noted that the inscriptions related to the Ehulhul show almost as much concern for the city of Harran as for its main temple. In the inscription of Adad-guppi, one reads that "(Nabonidus) built anew the Ehulhul and completed its structure. He restored the city of Harran and rebuilt it even more beautifully than it was before" (Col. II, 15. É.HÚL.HÚL. 16. eš-šiš i-pu-uš-ma ú-šak-lil ši-pir-šú uruKASKAL e-li 17. šá ma-har ú-šak-lil-ma a-na áš-ri-šú ú-ter). In inscription 15 Nabonidus says: "The splendor of all the city of Harran I made shine like moonrise" (Col. II, 24. uru har-ra-an a-na pa-at gi-im-ri-šu 25. ki-ma și-it ITI ú-nam-mi-ir ša-ru-ru-šu). In inscription 1, Marduk orders Nabonidus to restore both "Harran and the Ehulhul" (quoted p. 107). Such commitment to a peripheral area of the empire can be explained only if one accepts that Nabonidus and his mother came from Harran. This is suggested by the Dynastic Prophecy, which states that "[he (Nabonidus) will establish] the dynasty of Harran" (see Grayson 1975b: 32-33, l. 12. BALA-e har-ra-anki [i-šak-kan]). Other evidence points to the Aramaean origin of his family. The name of his mother seems to be Aramaean.⁶ West Semitic theophoric names with "Adad" were very common in the region of Harran, as shown by the documents relating to its so-called "census" in Neo-Assyrian times (Fales 1973: 143). Moreover, as pointed out by J. Lewy, certain features of Nabonidus' religious beliefs can be accounted for only by a long familiarity with the culture of the region of Harran: when the author of the Verse Account charged Nabonidus with worshipping a foreign hypostasis of Sîn called Ilteri (Verse Account, Col. V, 11. u-šab-ra-an dil-te-ri kul-lat ú-ta-[ad-du-ni] The god Ilteri has made me see (dreams), he has made everything kn[own to me]), he certainly referred to Nabonidus' Aramaean origin. The god Teri/Ilteri was a well-known lunar deity in Neo-Assyrian times, venerated by the Aramaean tribes of Northern Syria (Lewy 1946: 426-33).

That Berossus calls Nabonidus a "Babylonian" does not contradict the evidence just outlined. Besides the fact that the word Babylonian was probably used by him in opposition to "Chaldaean" rather than as a word denoting ethnic

6. See von Soden 1968: 271; gu-up-pi-i' could stand for Aramaic ha/oppe and the name mean "Adad has protected." His etymology is not unlikely since the root hph/y is attested in Imperial Aramaic with the meanings "to cover, to protect": see Jean and Hoftijzer 1965: 122 s.v. hpy and hpywt. See however Foster 1982: n. 43, who discusses the name Gup-pé-e-Eš-tár, which appears in a text from the Sargonic period.

origins, Nabonidus could claim to be a Babylonian, if this meant that he had spent most of his life in Babylon. This raises the questions of what kind of career he had followed prior to his elevation to kingship, and when he had come from Harran to Babylonia. The answer should be found in the inscription of Adadguppi. The passage quoted above in which her career is briefly outlined states that she "served" the kings of Babylon and "performed duties" before them from the very first years of Nabopolassar down to the accession of her son (626-556 B.C.). This statement need not be taken too literally, but should rather be understood as expressing her loyalty to the Neo-Babylonian dynasty. Most likely she was brought to Babylon in 610 as a captive, after the destruction of Harran by Nabopolassar and his allies, the Medes. By this time she had already reached the age of 39 and one can consequently presume that Nabonidus was at least a young adult when he came to Babylon. However, according to Dhorme, there is evidence that Adad-guppi may have conceived her son at an advanced age (Dhorme 1947: 6): the expression narām ummīšu, "the beloved one of his mother," which designates Nabonidus in her inscription (Col. III, 9), may point to a late conception. Dhorme's opinion is based on the semantic range of equivalent expressions in the Bible. There is no evidence, however, that the phrase had the same meaning in Akkadian. Following Dhorme's argument, Nabonidus would have been born between 615 and 605, between the 35th and the 45th year of his mother. Yet, it should be pointed out that Adad-guppi claimed to have seen her descendants to the fourth generation (Col. II, 33. TUR.TUR.TUR.MEŠ-i a-di 4 li-pi-ia bal-ṭu-ut-su-nu 34. a-mur-ma áš-baa lit-tu-tu I saw my great-great-grandchildren in their lifetime until the fourth generation and was sated with extreme old age).7 Assuming the length of one generation to be between twenty and twenty-five years and positing that the fourth generation was, say, five years old at the time of her death in 547, it would mean that Nabonidus could hardly have been younger than 65 in his ninth regnal year and could well have been 70. This would place his birth at no later than ca. 615 B.C. It is unfortunate that no information on Nabonidus' father can be found. If he was from Babylonia, then he would have married Adad-guppi after she left Harran. This would place Nabonidus' birth around the beginning of Nebuchadnezzar's reign, which seems too late a date. It is not impossible, however, that he

^{7.} On Biblical and West Semitic parallels to this statement see Malamat 1982, to which add the Sheizar inscription discussed by Hawkins 1980: 219; this is the funerary stela of a woman named Kupapiyas who claimed she lived one hundred years and (saw?) her descendants to the fourth generation.

also came from Ḥarran, since the name Nabû-balāṭsu-iqbi is attested in documents from that city (Fales 1973: 59, text 21, Col. II, 3).

Let us now go back to the account of Adad-guppi's career. The terms used to describe her office at the court are uninformative. Nevertheless, there is no doubt that she held a reasonably influential position there, since she "introduced" Nabonidus to Nebuchadnezzar and Neriglissar. The remaining parts of the account of her career in her inscription also suggest this:

Col. II, 51. ár-ka-niš šim-ti ú-bil-šú-nu-ti 52. ma-na-ma ina DUMU.MEŠ-šú-nu 53. u man-ma ni-šú-[šú-nu] 54. u lúGAL.MEŠ-šú-nu šá i-nu-ma re-ši-[šú-nu] 55. ul-lu-ú ina bu-šu-ú ù Nì.GA 56. ú-at-tir-šú-nu-tú la iš-tak-kan-šú-nu-[tú] 57. qut-rin-nu ia-a-tú ITI-šam-ma la na-pár-k[a-a] 58. lu-bu-ši-ia dam-qu-ú-tú [GU₄.MEŠ] 59. UDU.NITA.MEŠ ma-ru-tú NINDA.ḤI.A KAŠ.SAG G[EŠTIN] 60. ì.GIŠ LÀL u GURUN gišKIRI₆ ka-la-ma ki-i[s-pi] Col. III, 1. a-kàs-sap-šú-nu-ti-ma sur-qin-nu 2. ṭaḥ-du-tú i-ri-ši ṭa-a-bi 3. a-na gi-na-a ú-kin-šú-nu-ti-ma 4. áš-tak-kan ina maḥ-ri-šú-un

Afterwards they (Nebuchadnezzar and Neriglissar) died. Nobody among their sons and nobody among [their] people or their high officials, whose possessions and properties they had increased when they had exalted [them], burnt incense for them. I, every month without cease, (dressed in) my fine garments, performed for them all the funerary offerings: [oxen], fattened sheep, bread, first quality beer, [wine], oil, honey, and fruits. I established for them regular abundant offerings of incense of pleasing scent, and I always set them in their presence.

This passage contains primarily a strong political message, which was obviously meant as a piece of propaganda against Awēl-Marduk and Lābâši-Marduk, the sons of Nebuchadnezzar and Neriglissar respectively. They purportedly neglected the offerings to the spirits of their deceased fathers, a crime of utmost impiety. Such severe judgment is consistent with Nabonidus' unfavorable account of the rules of Awēl-Marduk and Lābâši-Marduk in inscription 1 (Col. IV, 34-42 and Col. V, 25-34), and agrees well with Berossus' statement on the dissolute character of their rule (see p. 97). Therefore this passage may be interpreted as a justification for Nabonidus' usurpation. In

8. On the importance of funerary offerings in connection with the Mesopotamian concept of death and afterlife, see Bottéro 1980.

connection with the funerary aspects of the stela, especially with Col. III where the burial and mourning of Adad-guppi are described, one can also interpret this passage as a plea that nobody forget to bring funerary offerings to her, since she herself cared for the spirits of deceased kings, although she had no family ties with them.

The inscription sets Adad-guppi in opposition to the uppermost strata of the palace hierarchy. The terms mārū and nišū refer to the immediate and extended families of Nebuchadnezzar and Neriglissar. 9 The term rābūti refers to the high officials of the kingdom: it recurs in the so-called "Court Document of Nebuchadnezzar," which lists city and province governors under this heading (Unger 1931: 285, Col. IV, 20). One can therefore assume that Adad-guppi and Nabonidus belonged neither to the royal family, nor to the oligarchy but were rather courtiers of a less exalted rank. The circumstances of their rise appear then clearer. Owing to her ability or to a high position she might have held at Harran, Adad-guppi won Nabopolassar and Nebuchadnezzar's favor shortly after she was taken captive to Babylon. Having secured her own position at the court, she introduced her son to Nebuchadnezzar, who named him to an office, the nature of which remains unknown. The terms used in Adad-guppi's inscription to describe her son's position are rather vague: "he performed duties before them (Nebuchadnezzar and Neriglissar) and regularly did whatever pleased them." If his office was not among the highest, it was certainly not a mean one. Nabonidus claimed he knew the art of writing (inscription 7, Col. I, 10. ⁴na-bium pa-qí-du ki-iš-šá-ti iš-ru-uk-šu šu-ka-ma Nabû, the administrator of the universe, gave him the art of writing), 10 and his numerous quarrels with priests and scholars which are echoed in the Verse Account and the Royal Chronicle prove that he was a learned man. 11 This strongly suggests that Nabonidus had been a courtier at the palace of Babylon before he assumed kingship.

This inquiry would be incomplete without taking into account the numerous archival documents dated to Nabonidus' predecessors. However, a search in these documents for an individual called Nabonidus holding any significant office proves disappointing. The same is true of other sources. Nevertheless,

^{9.} I understand the word $ni\check{s}\check{u}$ here in its meaning "members of a family." See CAD N, Part II, s.v. $ni\check{s}\check{u}$ 4.

^{10.} It is noteworthy that the Verse Account affirms the contrary: Col. V, 10. *me-he-eş* GI *tup-pu ul i-di a-ta-mar ni-[şir-ti]* (Although) I (Nabonidus) do not know the art of writing, I have seen secret [things].

^{11.} Passim in the Verse Account. For the Royal Chronicle, see the account of the consecration of En-nigaldi-Nanna discussed in section 2.3.3.1.

there are three instances where Nabonidus might be mentioned. The first one is Herodotus, Book I: 74, which reports on a battle between the Lydians and the Medes who had been at war for five years:

They were still warring with equal success, when it chanced, at an encounter which happened in the sixth year, that during the battle the day was suddenly turned to night. Thales of Miletus had foretold this loss of daylight to the Ionians, fixing it within the year in which the change did indeed happen. So when the Lydians and the Medes saw the day turned to night they ceased from fighting, and both were the more zealous to make peace. Those who reconciled them were Syennesis of Cilicia and Labynetus the Babylonian.

The evidence fixes the date of this eclipse as May 28, 585 B.C. There is no problem in assuming that the form "Labynetus" goes back to the Akkadian name Nabû-nā'id, since Herodotus refers twice to Nabonidus the king by the same name. These passages read as follows:

Croesus was not content with the number of his force, for his army which had fought was by far smaller than that of Cyrus; therefore, seeing that on the day after the battle Cyrus essayed no second attack, he marched away to Sardis, intending to invite help from the Egyptians in fulfilment of their pledge (for before making an alliance with the Lacedaemonians he had made one also with Amasis king of Egypt), and to send for the Babylonians also (for with these, too, he had made an alliance, Labynetus being at the time their sovereign), and to summon the Lacedaemonians to join him at a fixed time (Book I: 77).

Cyrus, then, marched against Nitocris' son, who inherited the name of his father Labynetus and the sovereignty of Assyria (Book I: 188).

Much has been written on these three passages but there is as yet no consensus as to who precisely is indicated in each of them. The earliest full treatment of the problem was by Dougherty. According to him the first two Labynetuses are Nabonidus himself and the third one is his son Belshazzar (Dougherty 1929: 33–47). I accept his view here, except for the historical reconstruction he proposed (Nabonidus' marriage to an Egyptian princess, the Nitocris of Herodotus, who would have been the mother of Belshazzar). Other attempts at harmonizing the data from Herodotus with cuneiform evidence are not convincing. A summary of the question was made by Garelli, who admits that Herodotus' report remains puzzling (Garelli 1968: 275–76).

Nevertheless, only two possible reconstructions are not at variance with the evidence from cuneiform documents. There is no doubt that in his second mention of Labynetus Herodotus had king Nabonidus in mind, since the passage refers to the war between Croesus and Cyrus, which in all probability took place in the ninth year of Nabonidus, in 547 B.C. (see section 3.3.2). Problems arise with the third mention of Labynetus. Either one assumes that this Labynetus is king Nabonidus again, a reasonable assumption since that passage refers to the war of 539 B.C. between Persians and Babylonians, or, following Dougherty, one assumes that Herodotus was now referring to Belshazzar. In the first case, one would have to admit that Nabonidus the king was the son of the first Labynetus who concluded the peace between the Medes and the Lydians in 585 B.C., while in the second case the first two Labynetuses would be the same person, Nabonidus the king, and the third Labynetus his son Belshazzar. There are problems with both reconstructions, since there is neither evidence that Belshazzar ever bore his father's name, nor that Nabonidus' father ever bore that of his son. However, if one is to choose between these two hypotheses, the second one is more likely. As pointed out by Dougherty, the tone of Herodotus' second mention of Labynetus ("for with these too he had made an alliance, Labynetus being at the time their sovereign") necessarily implies that he was referring to a Labynetus mentioned before, the one who had mediated between the Medes and the Lydians. Herodotus' intention may also have been to tell his readers that the conciliatory role played by Labynetus in 585 had made it natural for the Lydians to make an alliance with him. Then the second hypothesis would be more likely and one would have to admit that the third Labynetus is Belshazzar. Such confusion between Nabonidus and Belshazzar is typical of Greek and Hebrew sources and there is no problem in admitting that Herodotus may have made the same kind of error. There is at least one instance where Belshazzar is given the name of his father in the later tradition. 12 Therefore, granting that Herodotus' report must reflect some historical truth, one has to admit that Nabonidus had already reached a position at the court that would enable him to be sent as an ambassador to Anatolia in 585. It is

12. See Josephus, *Jewish Antiquities*, X, 231: "It (the throne) then passed to Baltasares, who was called Naboandelos by the Babylonians." One might argue that in this case Josephus was only trying to harmonize Greek (Berossus) and Biblical (Book of Daniel) data. Nevertheless, the confusion between the personalities of Nabonidus and Belshazzar is otherwise well enough attested to assume that Herodotus made the same error.

possible that Nabonidus' office was a military one. The view that he had been a general in the Babylonian army was advanced by Olmstead as early as 1925 and accepted as the most likely hypothesis on Nabonidus' early career by von Voigtlander (Olmstead 1925: 44, and von Voigtlander 1963: 165).

I will now investigate the two instances where Nabonidus may be mentioned in cuneiform documents written prior to his accession. The first one is well known. In text *Nbk* 70, a contract known in two exemplars and dated to the eighth year of Nebuchadnezzar (597 B.C.), one Nabû-nā'id whose filiation is not recorded appears at the head of the list of witnesses. One of the copies contains many spelling irregularities, a fact which suggests that the scribe who copied it was a foreigner with little training in cuneiform.¹³

This interpretation seems even more likely when one considers that two of the people who are parties to the transaction bear West Semitic names. In each document the witness Nabû-na'id bears a different title: ša muḥḥi āli in the correct one (1. 9. 16 mu-kin-nu 16 NA-1 šá UGU URU), and apil awēl šarri in the faulty one (1. 9. Mmu-kin-nu ldNA-I A LÚ LUGAL). While the title ša muhhi āli is well attested in Neo-Assyrian and Neo-Babylonian sources, designating an official in charge of a city, the term apil awel šarri still poses problems. It could be understood as an indication either of ancestry, "descendent of a royal official," or of filiation, "son of a royal official," or the signs were inverted, a feature seen elsewhere in this copy, in which case one should read awel mar šarri, a common designation of the crown prince in the Neo-Babylonian period.¹⁴ Since the copy which gives this title to Nabû-nā'id the witness is the one which contains errors, it would be unwise to build any theory on it. Suffice it to say that, if one reads awel mar šarri, the Nabû-na'id mentioned here cannot be Nabonidus the future king. If Nabonidus was a son of Nebuchadnezzar, he would certainly not have failed to mention it in his inscriptions, since in the beginning of his reign he constantly referred to his prestigious predecessor (see sections 2.3.1.1 and 2.3.2.1). If one reads apil awel šarri, as it is written, and understands it as an indication of filiation or ancestry, then the identification of this Nabû-nā'id with Nabonidus the future king becomes plausible although it would be the only known occurrence of it as a patronymic. However, if Nabonidus was old enough in 597 to hold the office of ša muḥḥi āli, the date of his birth should be pushed back by at least ten years, to before 620. It would mean that he was at least 65 when he became king. This is by no means impossible.

The last document to be mentioned, CT 22: 185, a letter from the archive of the Ebabbar of Sippar, may contain relevant information:

obv. 1. IM 1d U.GUR-ŠU 2. a-na 1d EN-GI 3. lu-ú SILIM-mu a-na be-líiá 4. áš-šú 1 AD-na-dib 5. šá be-lí iš-pu-ra 6. 1d NÀ-na-id 7. il-tap-ra 8. um-ma erín.Meš 9. di-ka-a ù 10. u₄-9-kám at-ta 11. 1 AD-na-dib 12. 1 AD-DINGIR-a' rev. 13. a-na pa-ni-iá 14. al-ka-nu 15. a-na 1 EGIR-ki-a 16. ù 1 kan-na-nu 17. ki-i aq-bu-ú 18. ul im-gur-ma 19. Erín.Meš ul i-di-ku-nu 20. a-du-ú ina IGI-ka 21. šú-nu ù ia-a-šá 22. 1 AD-na-dib 23. ù 1d EN KASKAL-šú 24. ina še-ri 25. a-na pa-ni 26. be-lí-ia 1.e. 27. ni-il-la-ka

Letter of Nergal-gāmil to Bēl-ušallim. May my lord be well! As for Abu-nādib, concerning whom my lord wrote to me, Nabû-nā'id has written to me thus: "Levy the soldiers/workmen and on the ninth day, you, Abu-nādib (and) Abu-ila' shall come to me." When I spoke to Arkiya and Kannanu, they did not agree and did not levy the soldiers/workmen. Now: I, they, Abu-nādib, and his caravan leader will go in the morning to my lord.

The addressee of this letter can be identified as Bēl-ušallim, who was $q\bar{t}pu$ of the Ebabbar of Sippar in the beginning of the sixth century. His latest attestation is in the fourth year of Nebuchadnezzar (601 B.C.), but since the next incumbent is not attested until the 23rd year of this king (577 B.C.), he may still have been in office during the first two decades of the sixth century (San Nicolo 1941: 33). The Nabû-nā'id mentioned here seems to be an important person, since he is in a position of command and his orders are thought worth referring to by the $q\bar{t}pu$ of the Ebabbar. It is impossible to determine what kind of operation the letter alludes to. It could be concerned with a levy of soldiers as well as with mustering workmen for an unknown purpose. Be that as it may, the document still yields two interesting pieces of information. First, three of the men mentioned here bear West Semitic names. Second, the one Abu-nādib who occupies a central position in this letter reappears in another Neo-Babylonian document dated to the 34th year of Nebuchadnezzar (576 B.C.) in a very

^{13.} For example, the erroneous duplicate has *id-nam-din* instead of *id-din* (1. 4), *pu-ut-ti* instead of *pu-ut* (1. 5) and *i-li-mu* instead of *el-la-a'* (1. 6).

^{14.} There are three instances of inversion of signs in this document: the name ${}^{1}mar-duk-a$ is written twice ${}^{1}duk-mar-a$ (Il. 11 and 13), and the verb id-di-nam is written id-nam-din (I. 4). Thence reading ${}^{1\acute{u}}A$.LUGAL instead of A ${}^{1\acute{u}}L$ UGAL as suggested by Lewy 1949: 46, n. 89. I assume here that ${}^{1\acute{u}}A$.LUGAL and ${}^{1\acute{u}}D$ UMU.LUGAL mean "crown prince," and not "man of the crown prince," $l\acute{u}$ being in these cases a determinative.

interesting context: 15 this document (*Nbk* 266), which comes from the city Takrit, and was written by Nabû-aḫḫē-iddina, the head of the Egibi house and the business agent of Neriglissar the future king, records an argument between this Abu-nādib and one Nabû-ṣābit-qātē, a slave of Neriglissar, son of Bēl-šum-iškun, over the ownership of one hundred sheep and goats. The document states that if Abu-nādib cannot bring proof against Nabû-ṣābit-qātē's case, he must give the sheep and goats to Neriglissar. If the Nabû-nā'id mentioned in *CT* 22: 185 is Nabonidus the future king, his connection with Abu-nādib might suggest that he was somehow involved in the private activities of Neriglissar's household during the reign of Nebuchadnezzar. The possibility of such a close link between the two future sovereigns is important in connection with the evidence that I will present below concerning the role of Belshazzar in the conspiracy that brought Nabonidus to power (see section 2.2.2.1, and n. 19).

Admittedly, in none of the three documents just discussed is it certain that Nabonidus the future king is mentioned: Herodotus' report may contain little historical truth, and the two Nabû-nā'ids mentioned in documents from the time of Nebuchadnezzar could be completely different individuals. However, if these documents cannot constitute sources upon which solid historical reconstructions can be built, they do not contradict what has been said above of Nabonidus' origins and career: that he was already an aged man when he became king, that he had been a palace official for a good part of his life, and that he was of Aramaean background. Indeed, in the three documents in question these individuals who could be identified as Nabonidus act as officials; in two instances they are attested in connection with people of West Semitic origin; and all the documents show that they were already grown men between ca. 600 and 585.

Yet one may wonder why there is not a single certain mention of Nabonidus, nor of any member of his family, in documents prior to his accession to kingship, especially when one considers that Neriglissar and his family appear in some fifteen documents of the reigns of Nebuchadnezzar and Awēl-Marduk, and that Neriglissar himself is mentioned in the Bible as a high official of Nebuchadnezzar. One cannot dismiss of course the possibility that Nabû-nā'id was a throne name. However, this does not seem very likely, since such a practice is not attested for other rulers of the Neo-Babylonian dynasty. More-

15. Identity of the two Abu-nādibs is quite certain, since these are the only two known occurrences of this name in the Neo-Babylonian period. See Tallqvist 1905: 1, who compares the name with the Hebrew אבינרב.

over, one would expect Nabonidus to have chosen a more programmatic name than Nabû-nā'id "May Nabû be exalted," which, though it refers to one of the main patron gods of the dynasty, seems a rather weak statement when compared with the names of other Neo-Babylonian kings.

This lack of evidence is in fact to be expected and derives from the nature of Neo-Babylonian sources. Besides royal inscriptions and chronicles, the main sources for this period are administrative and economic records which stem from two kinds of archives: temple archives, the most important of which are those of the Eanna of Uruk and the Ebabbar of Sippar, and private archives of prominent business families, such as the Egibi and Nūr-Sîn houses. Therefore, we can expect only certain groups of people to be mentioned in Neo-Babylonian texts: those linked with the temple as an administrative and religious entity, that is, its administrators, officers, priests, workers, and slaves, and those linked with important business families, that is on one side their dependents (slaves, agricultural workers, debtors), and on the other side those members of the oligarchy who, on a more or less permanent basis, carried on business with them. Since no palace archive, nor any official archive apart from temple archives has yet been discovered, it is only natural that officers of the palace are only sporadically mentioned in Neo-Babylonian texts. That Nabonidus is not mentioned in such texts prior to his accession agrees with the suggestion that he was a palace officer.

The reason for Neriglissar's appearance in archival texts is understandable. His family belonged to the oligarchy and its wealth probably rested on its prominence among the tribe of the Puqudu, who had settled an important region along the Tigris in eastern Babylonia. Bēl-šum-iškun, his father, was governor of Puqudu in the time of Nebuchadnezzar (see p. 68). Neriglissar himself was governor of the Bīt Sîn-māgir, another Babylonian holding east of the Tigris, north of Puqudu. He appears in the Court Document of Nebuchadnezzar with the title ¹⁶sîn-māgir alongside his father Bēl-šum-iškun (Unger 1931: 285, Col. IV, 22). The chief city of the Bīt Sîn-māgir was apparently Opis. Documents from this city show that Neriglissar was also, predictably, a prominent landowner in that region (von Voigtlander 1963: 144-46). Neriglissar can also probably be identified as Nergal-śar-eşer (i.e. Nergal-šar-uşur), the Babylonian army commander mentioned in Jer. XXXIX:13 in the list of Nebuchadnezzar's officials besieging Jerusalem in 587 (von Soden 1972). There is also a possibility that Neriglissar was appointed to the office of qīpu of the Ebabbar of Sippar by Nebuchadnezzar (see n. 17). It is certainly the exalted position of his family among the oligarchy that enabled him to reach the highest administrative position under Nebuchadnezzar and even marry a daughter of the prestigious

The Accession of Nabonidus

king. 16 Neriglissar and his father are mentioned in the only sources which give information on the uppermost strata of the kingdom's hierarchy: the Court Document of Nebuchadnezzar, and the list of Nebuchadnezzar's officials present at the siege of Jerusalem. In the most important private archive of the period, that of the Egibi family (see section 2.2.2.1), they appear several times in their role as landowners and members of the oligarchy.

All the evidence points to one conclusion on Nabonidus' social position: he was not a member of the Babylonian oligarchy, nor did he attain the highest official charges. His rise did not rest on wealth, but apparently on his and his mother's ability at the court. It is unlikely that he could have claimed the support of any prominent group of the oligarchy in his early career. It therefore comes as no surprise that he could proclaim after thirteen years of reign: "I am Nabonidus, the only son, who has nobody. In my mind there was no thought of kingship."

2.2 THE ACCESSION OF NABONIDUS

2.2.1 Chronology

The last known document of the reign of Neriglissar, YBC 3433, is dated April 16, 556, and the earliest one of his son and successor Lābâši-Marduk, NBC 4534, is dated May 3 (Goetze 1944: 44). Therefore the death of Neriglissar must have occurred between these two dates, during or shortly after the New Year's festival of his fourth regnal year (April 11–21), and barely a month after he had returned from a long campaign in Cilicia. According to the Babylonian Chronicle Series, he returned to Babylon in the twelfth month of his third regnal year (Grayson 1975a: 104, 1l. 26-67). Soon after Nabonidus was recognized as king in the region of Nippur, according to a document dated May 25 (*BE* VIII: 39). By the end of June he was sole ruler of the empire.

The exact chronology of the rebellion against Neriglissar's son remains hard to determine. According to Berossus, Lābâši-Marduk reigned nine months, which is impossible according to dated documents. It is likely that, if Berossus' own manuscript used a numeral instead of the spelled-out number, confusion

16. On the probable identification of this daughter as Kaššaya see Weisberg 1974. More documents are referred to in Joannès 1980a.

between 9 (theta) and 2 (beta) could easily have arisen, hence the original text may have said two months (Parker and Dubberstein 1956: 13). The Uruk king list credits him with a reign of three months (Grayson 1980: 97), data not at variance with documents from this city, especially YBC 3817, which shows that Lābâši-Marduk was recognized as king there until at least June 19 (Goetze 1944: 44). The earliest dated document of Nabonidus from Uruk is dated July 1 (YOS VI: 1). The archive of Sippar provides similar dates: the latest date of Lābâši-Marduk is June 20 (Lab 3), while the earliest one of Nabonidus is June 26 (Nbn 1). The situation at Babylon, however, is problematic. The last document of Lābâši-Marduk from this city is dated May 24 (NBC 4534), roughly a month after his accession. The following day Nabonidus was recognized king in the region of Nippur. It has generally been assumed on this basis that the conspiracy took place in Babylon and succeeded at the end of May, while outlying regions such as Uruk and Sippar recognized Lābâši-Marduk for one more month, possibly because his death had been concealed until the end of June. Yet there is no evidence that Nabonidus was recognized in Babylon before July 14: the earliest Nabonidus document from the vicinity of Babylon is Nbn 4, from the city Šahrinu. That he was in control of Nippur by the end of May does not imply he was in control of the capital at that time. Nippur may well have been the base of the conspiracy and Babylon the last city to recognize Nabonidus.

Yet according to the two existing accounts of Nabonidus' accession, it appears that Lābâši-Marduk fell victim to a palace intrigue, in which case the conspiracy would have taken place in Babylon. It is also likely that Sippar and Uruk would have been the last cities to recognize Nabonidus. The father of Neriglissar, Bēl-šum-iškun, had been governor of Puqudu, and Neriglissar may have held high office at the Ebabbar in the reign of Nebuchadnezzar. He possessed large estates in the region and carried on business at Opis, the capital of the Bīt Sîn-māgir, of which he was appointed governor in the early sixth century. At Opis, members of the Egibi house acted as managers of his business. It is likely that Sippar would have remained faithful to his son longer than other cities. It should also be noted that, as early as July 4, Nabonidus went to Sippar to present a tithe of six minas of silver at the gate of the Ebabbar (see section 2.3.1.2). One may interpret this gesture of the king as an attempt to

^{17.} Wiseman 1961: 38, refers to an unpublished text (BM 55920) which suggests that Neriglissar was appointed during the reign of Nebuchadnezzar to oversee certain affairs of the Ebabbar. See in this connection the recently published *CT* 55: 673, unfortunately undated, which refers to one Nergal-šar-usur, $q\bar{t}pu$ of the Ebabbar.

The Accession of Nabonidus

reconcile himself with the establishment of Sippar. As for Uruk the situation is less clear. That Nabonidus held his court at Larsa when he visited southern Babylonia at the beginning of his first year may indicate that there was still some tension between him and Uruk. It seems strange that the affairs of the Eanna were settled at Larsa, while this city was normally dependent upon Uruk in the Neo-Babylonian period. Such tensions between Nabonidus and the establishment of Uruk can be explained only by reluctance to recognize him as king the year before.

In consideration of all this evidence the usual reconstruction of Nabonidus' accession seems correct. He was probably recognized as king as early as May 25 in central Babylonia (Babylon and Nippur), but outlying regions would have recognized Lābâši-Marduk until the end of June. This reconstruction of events fits the data provided by the Uruk king list and Berossus perfectly if one accepts that while the latter reads nine months for Lābâši-Marduk, two months is correct. Since Berossus presumably relied on documents from Babylon to write his Babyloniaca, it is understandable that he ascribed a reign of two months to Lābâši-Marduk, who was recognized in Babylon in Nisanu and Ayyaru only. That the Uruk king list gives three months as the length of his reign is accurate as well, since he was recognized in Uruk in Nisanu, Ayyaru, and Simānu.

2.2.2 Circumstances of the Accession of Nabonidus

Nabonidus had no claim to the throne, since he bore no relation to the royal family, a fact he was not reluctant to admit. In the Dynastic Prophecy he is described as a usurper, a "rebel prince" (Grayson 1975b: 32-33, l. 11: E_{11} - a_{10} NuN ha-a[m-ma-u.....] A re[bel] prince will arise [......]). That he was party to a conspiracy to usurp the throne is further proven by the two existing accounts of his elevation to kingship. The first one was written under Nabonidus' auspices and is contained in inscription 1:

Col. V, [.........] 1. a-na qé-reb É.GAL 2. ub-lu-u'-in-ni-ma 3. kul-lat-sú-nu a-na GìR-iá 4. iš-šap-ku-nim-ma 5. ú-šá-aš-ši-qu še-pa-a-a 6. ik-ta-na-ar-ra-bu 7. LUGAL-ú-ti

[.....] They brought me to the palace and all of them prostrated themselves at my feet and kissed them. They kept praising my kingship.

The second account, that of Berossus, well agrees with inscription 1 (Burstein 1978: 170):

Laborosoarchod, the son of Neriglisaros, who was only a child, was

master of the kingdom for nine months. Because his wickedness became apparent in many ways he was plotted against and brutally killed by his friends. After he had been killed, the plotters met and jointly conferred the kingdom on Nabonnedos, a Babylonian and a member of the conspiracy.

These two accounts call to mind that of the elevation of the Roman Emperor Claudius to the throne after the murder of Caligula. The most striking similarity lies in the two men's alleged reluctance to assume kingship: Nabonidus claims in inscription 13 that he had no pretension to the throne (see p. 67). The same claim is made in inscription 1, where Nabonidus, now recognized as king, visits the sanctuaries of Nabû and Marduk to seek their approval of his rule:

Col. VII, 38. i-nu-úḫ šà damar.ud en-iá 39. pa-al-ḫi-iš 40. at-ta-'i-id-ma 41. ina te-mé-qí u ut-nen-ni 42. aš-te-'a-a áš-ri-šu 43. aş-bat-ma su-pe-e-šu 44. a-mat lìb-bi-ia aq-bi-iš 45. um-ma lu-ú a-na-ku-ma 46. lugal mi-gir lìb-bi-ka 47. šá lugal-ú-tú ina šà-ia 48. la ba-šu-ú ia-a-ti 49. la mu-da-a-ka 50. šá at-ta en en.en 51. tu-mal-lu-ú šu.min-ú-a 52. ugu lugal.meš šá tam-bu-ma 53. iš-tu ul-lu i-pú-šu 54. be-lu-tú šu-ri-ku u4.meš-ia 55. lil-bi-ra šá-na-ti-ia 56. lu-pú-uš-ma za-ni-nu-tú

The heart of Marduk, my lord, calmed down. Reverently I praised (him) and sought after his sanctuary with prayers and supplications. Thus I addressed (my) prayers to him, telling him what was in my heart: Let me indeed be a king who pleases your heart, I who, not knowing, ¹⁸ had no thought of kingship for myself, when you, O lord of lords, have entrusted me with (a rulership) more important than the rulerships which have been exerted in the past by other kings whom you have called. Lengthen my days, may my years become old, let me fulfill the function of provider.

Nabonidus appears here as a man whose conscience is troubled. He is not certain whether his elevation to the throne is legitimate and ascribes his reluctance to accept kingship to his ignorance of Marduk's intentions, a fact which might point to his foreign origins. Of course, one might suggest that this

^{18.} The form $m\bar{u}d\hat{a}ka$ is a stative first pers. sing. of $m\bar{u}d\hat{u}$ "knowing." Therefore the phrase literally means "I who, not knowing, had no thought of kingship for myself," the king stressing his ignorance of Marduk's intention, and perhaps his ignorance of the cult of Marduk in general.

statement was a mere piece of propaganda, but since it is corroborated by Berossus' report and it was repeated again more than thirteen years later in inscription 13, at a time when the king certainly did not need to justify his rule anymore, one would tend to believe that it reflects some historical truth. Accepting that Nabonidus was put on the throne by a group of conspirators, to whom he belonged although he did not necessarily intend to become king himself, one may ask who their leader was. The first person who comes to mind is Belshazzar, Nabonidus' own son.

2.2.2.1 THE ROLE OF BELSHAZZAR

Belshazzar rapidly rose to a prominent position in the kingdom after the accession of his father. He is attested in thirty-seven archival texts dated from the first to the fourteenth regnal year of Nabonidus (see section 3.1.2.1). In most of them he is seen attending to official duties in his capacity as regent during his father's sojourn in Arabia. A smaller group of texts, which pertain to the private side of his activities, will be considered here. The texts in question are *Nbn* 9, 50, 184, 270, 581, and 688. Excluding *Nbn* 581, in which a member of the Nūr-Sîn house is party to the transaction, all these documents belong to the archive of the Egibi family. The second link between them is that in all cases, except *Nbn* 9, a servant of Belshazzar is party to the transaction. Therefore we have a small group of texts in which members of Belshazzar's household carry on business with members of the Egibi house. Here follows a description of these texts:

- Nbn 9: One Marduk-ēriba, son of Rīmūt, descendant of Miṣraya, who owes % mina and 5 shekels of silver to Bēl-rēṣū'a, the slave of one Nergal-šar-uṣur, gives his house to him as a pledge. This house adjoins a house belonging to Nabû-aḥḥē-iddina, son of Šulā, descendant of Egibi. (Babylon: Month Kislīmu Day 15 Accession year of Nabonidus)
- Nbn 50: Marduk-ēriba, son of Rīmūt, descendant of Miṣraya, and his wife Ba'u-ēţerat, sell a plot of land to Bēl-rēṣū'a, a slave of Belshazzar, the son of the king, for ¾ mina and 6 shekels of silver. The land adjoins a house belonging to Nabû-aḥḥē-iddina, son of Šulā, descendant of Egibi, and also to a house belonging to Belshazzar, the son of the king. (Babylon: Month Addaru Day 26 First year of Nabonidus)
- Nbn 184: Nabû-aḫḫē-iddina, son of Šulā, descendant of Egibi, leases a house to Nabû-mukīn-aḥa, the scribe of Belshazzar, the son of the king, for three years, for the sum of 1½ mina of silver. Nabû-mukīn-aḥa shall recoup his

money after three years, provided he has made the necessary repairs to the house. (Babylon: Month Nisanu - Day 21 - Fifth year of Nabonidus)

Nbn 270: Nabû-mukīn-aḥa, a slave of Belshazzar, the son of the king, owes ½ mina and 5 shekels of silver to Nabû-ṣābit-qātē, the major-domo of Belshazzar, the son of the king, the unpaid price for a slave named Nabû-karābi-ešme. The money owed is described as the "tithe of Bēl, Nabû, Nergal, and the Lady of Uruk." Nabû-ṣābit-qātē receives the amount from Nabû-aḥḥē-iddina, son of Šulā, descendant of Egibi, who now assumes the role of creditor. (Babylon: Month Šabāṭu - Day 9 - Seventh year of Nabonidus)

Nbn 581: Iddin-Marduk, son of Iqīša, descendant of Nūr-Sîn, owes 20 minas of silver to Belshazzar, the son of the king, the unpaid price for a quantity of wool he had received from Nabû-ṣābit-qātē, the major-domo of Belshazzar, the son of the king, and from the scribes of the son of the king. Until he repays the silver at the end of the eleventh year, everything he owns will be held as security by Belshazzar, the son of the king. If he fails to pay, the interest on the remnant of the capital will be credited against him. (Babylon: Month x - Day 20 - Eleventh year of Nabonidus)

Nbn 688: One Bēl-iddina, son of Bēl-šum-iškun, descendant of Sîn-tabni, owes 1 mina and 16 shekels of silver to Nabû-ṣābit-qātē, the major-domo of Belshazzar, the son of the king. A tract of land he owns is held as security. Nabû-ṣābit-qātē receives the amount from Nabû-aḥḥē-iddina, son of Šulā, descendant of Egibi, who now assumes the role of creditor. (Babylon: Month Addaru intercalary - Day 27 - Twelfth year of Nabonidus)

Belshazzar emerges from these documents as the head of a wealthy household and as a prominent businessman. Such involvement of a member of the royal family in private business was not the rule in the Neo-Babylonian period. In fact, the only other case known is Neriglissar, who had been a prominent man of business under the reigns of Nebuchadnezzar and Awēl-Marduk. After his accession, Neriglissar no longer appears in documents pertaining to the transactions of his household (*Ner* 7, 9, 39, and 58). They appear then to have been carried on by his son the crown prince (*Ner* 39) and one Nabû-ṣābit-qātē (*Ner* 7, 39, and 58), the major-domo of the crown prince, Nabû-aḥḥē-iddina still remaining the agent of their business.

While there is no problem then in following Neriglissar's career and in assessing the basis of his wealth, one may still wonder how Belshazzar suddenly became such a prominent member of the oligarchy, especially as he is never

mentioned in any private archive before the accession of his father. Nabonidus was in all probability a palace official before he became king, and one may theorize that his son had followed the same career. Belshazzar's sudden rise in circles where neither he nor his father seem to have been active before is obviously linked with Nabonidus' elevation to the throne. It appears in fact that the usurpation of May 556 did not merely involve a change of ruler, but also eventually led to the confiscation of the estates of Neriglissar's family to the profit of Belshazzar.

The first evidence for this is to be found in texts Nbn 9 and 50. In both texts the same man, Marduk-ēriba, sells part of his estates to one Bēl-rēṣū'a. That the transactions involved took place among members of the oligarchy is suggested by the fact that in both cases the estates sold adjoined those of Nabû-aḥḥēiddina, the head of the Egibi family until the thirteenth year of Nabonidus (Ungnad 1941), and in one case adjoined those of Belshazzar. The crucial fact is that, in the first document, Bēl-rēsū'a is called "a slave of Nergal-šar-uşur" (Nbn 9, obv. 1. ^{1d}EN-re-şu-ú-a 2. ^{1ú}gal-la šá ^{1d}U.GUR-LUGAL-URÌ), while in the other, drawn up sixteen months later, he is "a slave of Belshazzar, the son of the king" (Nbn 50, l.e. 12. 1d EN-re-ṣu-ú-a $^{1\acute{u}}$ qal-la 13. šá 1d EN-LUGAL-URÌ DUMU.LUGAL). Belshazzar is never mentioned in texts of the reign of Nabonidus solely by his name, but either by his name and his title "son of the king," or solely by his title "son of the king." Therefore the occurrence of the name Nergal-šar-usur in Nbn 9 can hardly be a scribal error for Bēl-šar-uşur. One may wonder about the identity of that Nergal-šar-uşur who had apparently given or sold his slave Bēl-rēṣū'a to Belshazzar sometime during the first year of Nabonidus. Since his filiation and ancestry are not stated in the document, one may infer that he was a well-known figure to the parties involved in the transaction. The only known prominent individual named Nergal-šar-uşur who could have been familiar with these people is of course king Neriglissar himself, who had died only eight months before the transaction recorded in this document. This evidence suggests that either members of Neriglissar's family were still alive, which is unlikely, or that his estates had somehow been "frozen" for some months after the murder of Lābâši-Marduk and then confiscated by Belshazzar in the first year of Nabonidus, which is the conclusion adopted here.

There is more evidence for this process in the texts discussed above. In *Nbn* 270, 581, and 688 Belshazzar's business is carried on by his major-domo, that is, the manager of his estates, one Nabû-ṣābit-qātē (ldnà-ṣa-bit-šu.min lágal.É šá lden-lugal-urì dumu.lugal). He was hardly a new figure: he appears in text *Nbk* 266: 5 as a slave of Neriglissar (obv. 5. ldnà-ṣa-bit-šu.min láqal-la šá

^{1d}U.GUR-LUGAL-URÌ),¹⁹ in texts *Ner* 7: 8 and *Ner* 58: 6 as a royal servant (^{1d}NÀ -ṣa-bit-šu.min ^{1ú}SAG.LUGAL) and in text *Ner* 39: 2 as the "major-domo of the son of the king" (^{1d}NÀ-ṣa-bit-šu.min ^{1ú}GAL.É šá ^{1ú}DUMU.LUGAL), that is, Lābâši-Marduk. Thus, the same individual, who had been for at least thirteen years a servant of the family of Neriglissar, reemerged after Nabonidus' accession as a servant of Belshazzar with the same function he had held in the reign of Neriglissar for the then crown prince, Lābâši-Marduk.²⁰

A third link between the family of Neriglissar and Belshazzar is Nabû-aḫḫē-iddina, the head of the Egibi house. He appears prominently in the private transactions of Belshazzar and his servants. Interestingly enough, he also appeared in those of Neriglissar and his family in the reigns of Nebuchadnezzar and Awēl-Marduk, and in Neriglissar's own reign. In fact, he had been Neriglissar's agent for more than forty years, playing the same role he later played for Belshazzar and his household, a readily available source of money to whom credits held against various debtors could be transferred. That Nabû-aḥḫē-iddina became the agent of Belshazzar after May 556 seems only natural, since he had been well acquainted with the affairs of this estate for several decades.

Further evidence is provided by text *AnOr* 8: 33, dated to the fourteenth year of Nabonidus. Its content suggests that it may be a record from the archive of the Eanna at Uruk. As is often the case with such documents, it records several administrative operations. The following one is of special relevance:

obv. 9. 2 U₈ 20 ka-lum 34 par-rat PAP 56 BABBAR-ti 10. 6 MÁŠ.TUR 7

- 19. The text is dated to the 34th year of Nebuchadnezzar and is the one which records a transaction between Abu-nādib and Neriglissar (see p. 84).
- 20. On the basis of the same evidence, Beljawski has concluded that the crown prince mentioned in Neriglissar's document is Belshazzar, since the estate involved appears to be the same. He would have been a son of Nebuchadnezzar adopted by Nabonidus after his usurpation of the throne (Beljawski 1971). This seems very unlikely. Further references to Nabû-şābit-qātē are YOS VI: 115 (seventh year of Nabonidus), which refers to the "income of the sons of Nabû-ṣābit-qātē" brought to Babylon by Nabû-šar-uṣur, the royal commissioner of the Eanna. In YOS VI: 143 (tenth year of Nabonidus), there is a reference to one Nabû-ṣābit-qātē, latar-ten-nu, an obscure function in that period. See also NCBT 1089 (YOS XIX: 287), where the income of Belshazzar, the son of the king, is brought from Babylon, where it was in the hands of Nabû-ṣābit-qātē, the laGAL.É. The text is from Uruk, but the reading of the year number is uncertain (possibly year 1 or 2). This Nabû-ṣābit-qātē is undoubtedly the one involved in the documents discussed here.

The Accession of Nabonidus

SAL.ÁŠ.GÀR PAP 13 GE₆-ti 11. PAP-ma 69 se-e-nu er-bi šá ^{ld}EN-LUGAL-URÌ DUMU.LUGAL 12. ina šu.MIN ^lina-gi[§]GE₆-dna-na-a A-šú šá ^lki-na-a 13. ^{lú}A.KIN šá ^{ld}EN-KAR-an-ni ^{lú}MIN-ú šá ^{kur}pu-qu-du

2 ewes, 20 male lambs, 34 female kids. Total: 56 white ones. 6 young kids, 7 female lambs. Total: 13 black ones. Grand total: 69 sheep and goats, the income of Belshazzar, the son of the king, (which) is in the hands of Ina-şilli-Nanāya, son of Kinā, the messenger of Bēl-šūzibanni, the official of the province of Puqudu.

The career of Bēl-šūzibanni can be reconstructed as follows. He first occurs in a text from the Yale Babylonian Collection, NCBT 203 (see Appendix 1 for copy), also from the archive of the Eanna of Uruk and dated to the 39th year of Nebuchadnezzar. He was at the time a slave of Neriglissar:

obv. 1. 7 GU₄ pu-ḥal ina lìb-bi 2 kừ.ME 2. er-bi [šá ¹] den-ú-šal-lim 3. A ¹ba-ri-ki ¹¹¹GAL bu-lim šá LUGAL 4. 1 GU₄ 3-ú kừ ku-um 1 GU₄ 5. šá ina iti še MU-38-káM dnà-nì.Gub-urì 6. LUGAL TIN.TIR ki a-na hu-bu-ut- $^{\text{T}}$ x- $^{\text{T}}$ lo. e. 7. i-b[u]-ku ¹den-kar-an-ni rev. 8. ¹¹²qal-la šá ¹du.Gur-LUGAL-urì 9. a-na é.An.na ma-he-er 10. iti še U₄-3-kám MU-39-kám 11. dnà-nì.Gub-urì LUGAL TIN.TIR ki

Seven oxen for breeding, including two pure ones, the income [of] Bēl-ušallim, descendant of Bariki, the chief herdsman of the king; and one three year old pure ox in replacement for one ox which was taken away in the month Addaru of the 38th year of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, as a loan; Bēl-šūzibanni, the slave of Neriglissar, has received for the Eanna. Month Addaru - 3rd day - 39th year of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon.

In text *Nbk* 411, dated to the last regnal year of Nebuchadnezzar, Bēl-šūzibanni reappears in his capacity as major-domo of Neriglissar's household (obv. 3. ^{1d}EN-KAR-an-ni ^{1ú}GAL.É 4. šá ^{1d}U.GUR-LUGAL-ú-şur). This document, written in Babylon, also involves Nabû-aḥḥē-iddina, the head of the Egibi house and the business agent of Neriglissar. Then, a few years later, Bēl-šūzibanni reemerges as $q\bar{t}pu$ of the Ebabbar of Larsa in YBC 3544, a text from Larsa dated to the third year of Neriglissar, published in Weisberg 1967: 26 (obv. 2. ^{1d}EN-šu-zib-an-ni ^{1ú}qí-i-pa šá É.BABBAR.[RA]). In consideration of the connections between Neriglissar and Uruk in the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, it is not surprising that, once king, he named his former major-domo to a high office at the

Ebabbar. Similar manipulations involving the administration and offering system of the Eanna under the same ruler are attested at Uruk (see section 2.3.2.1).

The evidence from AnOr 8: 33 shows that the career of Bēl-šūzibanni did not end with the ousting of the family of Neriglissar from power. On the contrary, he rose to the office of 16 šanû of Puqudu under Nabonidus. Puqudu was the home of the family of Neriglissar, where their prominence entitled them to hold large estates. AnOr 8:33 is similar to the Egibi documents discussed above: a former subordinate of Neriglissar is now associated with Belshazzar. This document shows Belshazzar receiving part of the yield from lands and cattle which had constituted the basis of Neriglissar's wealth in his native region of Puqudu, and which had been confiscated shortly after the murder of Lābâši-Marduk to Belshazzar's profit. 21

The data just outlined may help us assess some of the circumstances under which Nabonidus was put on the throne. There are four sets of evidence which converge to suggest that Belshazzar made himself the heir to one of the wealthiest families of the Neo-Babylonian kingdom. In all four cases the evidence indicates that some individuals held more or less the same position in relation to the involved estate before and after its supposed confiscation. Private documents of Belshazzar indeed bear a strong resemblance to those of Neriglissar: they deal with the same estate and involve the same parties. Only the owner differs. This change of owner does not seem to have caused much disturbance. Just as when Neriglissar became king his estates were transferred, at least from an administrative point of view, to his son the crown prince, Lābâši-Marduk, so were they transferred to Belshazzar after the murder of Lābâši-Marduk. The fact that all prominent administrators of this estate seem to have kept their positions under Belshazzar suggests that its confiscation did not meet with the disapproval of too many people.

With this remark one reaches the central message contained in the two accounts of Nabonidus' accession: according to Nabonidus himself, Lābâši-Marduk was a mere "young boy who had not yet learned proper behavior" (Inscription 1, Col. IV, 37. 'la-a-ba-ši-dAMAR.[UD] 38. DUMU-šu sa-ah-ri

^{21.} I assume that *erbu* here means "income" as "natural increase" of one's possessions, being well aware that the word is also used in that period to designate the offerings made to temples by prominent individuals, including the royal family (see *CAD* s.v. *erbu*). It is not clear from *AnOr* 8: 33 whether Belshazzar is offering part of his income from the Puqudu estate to the Eanna, or whether the temple acts as an intermediary in the administration of his holdings.

Table 4: Texts from Bīt šar Bābili²²

TEXT	DATE	ARCHIVE
YOS VI: 100	II - 26 - Year 5	Eanna of Uruk
GCCI I: 353	XI - 6 - Year 7	Eanna of Uruk
JRAS 1926: 107	IV - 14 - Year 10	Belshazzar
Nbn 610	IV - 22 - Year 12	Egibi (IMB)
Nbn 764	II - 21 - Year 14	Egibi (IMB)
Nbn 765	III - 4 - Year 14	Egibi (IMB)
Nbn 769	III - 24 - Year 14	Egibi (IMB-sl)
Nbn 802	VIII - 5 - Year 14	Nūr-sîn (Nuptā)
Nbn 806	VIII - 22 - Year 14	?
Nbn 807	VIII - 26 - Year 14	Egibi (UŠD)
Nbn 816	X - 17 - Year 14	Egibi (IMB)
Nbn 837	II - 2 - Year 15	Egibi (IMB)
Nbn 838	II - 14 - Year 15	Egibi (IMB)
Nbn 853	III - 7 - Year 15	Egibi (IMB)
Nbn 861	IV - 5 - Year 15	Egibi (IMB)
Nbn 863	IV - 9 - Year 15	Egibi (IMB)
SCT 80	XI - 29 - Year 15	?
Nbn 946	x - 27 - Year 15	Nūr-Sîn
Nbn 966	IV - 22 - Year 16	Nūr-Sîn + (Egibi)
Nbn 967	IV - 22 - Year 16	Egibi (IMB + K)
CTMMA I: 31	IV - 23 - Year 16	Egibi (IMB + K)
Nbn 974	V - 22 - Year 16	Egibi (IMB)
Nbn 1005	XI - 15 - Year 16	(Egibi)
Nbn 1013	XII - 9 - Year 16	Egibi (IMB + NZI)
Nbn 1019	XII - 27 - Year 16	Egibi (IMB-sl)
Nbn 1030	II - 3 - Year 17	Egibi (IMB-sl)
CT 55: 117	II - 28 - Year 17	(Nūr-Sîn)
Nbn 1044	V - 19 - Year 17	(Egibi)
Nbn 1047	VI - 5 - Year 17	Egibi (IMB)
Nbn 1048	VI - 5 - Year 17	Egibi (IMB + NAI)
TCL XII: 120	VI - 5 - Year 17	Egibi (BAI + NAI + IMB)
Nbn 1056	x - 22 - Year 17	Egibi (IMB)
Nbn 1102	VII - 9 - Year x	?
Nbn 1113	VIII - 17 - Year x	Egibi (IMB) + Nūr-Sîn
		(Nuptā)

The Reign of Nabonidus

22. Legend: NAI Nabû-aḥḫē-iddina, the head of the Egibi house until ca. the thirteenth year of Nabonidus. IMB Itti-Marduk-balātu, his son, who succeeded him. Kalbā, a brother of Itti-Marduk-balātu. UŠD Uraš-šiptu-damqāte, their sister. NZI Nabû-zēr-iqīša, their cousin. BAI Bēl-aḥḫē-iddina, another cousin. (IMB-sl) the transaction is carried on by slaves of Itti-Marduk-balātu. (Egibi) members of the house appear

39. la a-hi-iz ri-id-di Lābâši-Marduk, his young son, who did not know proper behavior). According to Berossus, he was murdered by his "friends" because "his wickedness became apparent in many ways." If one is to give credence to these reports, his death would not have caused many people grief, and it may even have relieved his immediate entourage. Who then were these "friends" who plotted to murder him, if not all those members of his household who so readily accepted Belshazzar as their new lord? And who was their leader. if not Belshazzar himself, the main beneficiary of the conspiracy?²³ He and his father had had every opportunity to become acquainted with state affairs and court intrigues. They had witnessed the rise of Neriglissar, who had become a prominent official and had even married a daughter of Nebuchadnezzar. They had also seen how he usurped the throne after the murder of his brother-in-law, Awel-Marduk. As seen earlier, it is even possible that Nabonidus himself had been involved, at least sporadically, in the business transactions of the family of Neriglissar in the reign of Nebuchadnezzar (see p. 84). Now that Neriglissar had died and the family of Nebuchadnezzar was practically extinct, they knew that the throne was available to the strongest contender. The kingdom needed an experienced ruler once again: according to Berossus' account, Neriglissar had usurped kingship because Awel-Marduk had managed affairs in a lawless and outrageous fashion (Burstein 1978: 170):

His (Nebuchadnezzar's) son Eveilmaradouchos became master of the kingdom. Because he managed affairs in a lawless and outrageous fashion he was plotted against and killed by Neriglissar, his sister's husband. He was king for two years.

Now that a similar figure, Lābâši-Marduk, had become king, the time had come to correct things again and to put an energetic personality on the throne. There is certainly some truth in Nabonidus' claim that he did not intend kingship for

only as witnesses or scribes, same for (Nūr-Sîn). Note that Nuptā married Itti-Marduk-balāṭu, thus uniting both houses. See Ungnad 1941.

^{23.} In this connection see text YBC 3765 published in Dougherty 1929: 67–69, obv. 2. ^{Id}EN-LUGAL-URÌ ^{Iú}SAG.LUGAL. The text is dated to the accession year of Neriglissar and comes from Babylon. It records a commercial transaction. In view of the function (palace eunuch?) of the Bēl-šar-uṣur mentioned here, identity with Belshazzar seems unlikely. Yet, if it is the case, then it would provide a strong piece of evidence that Belshazzar was well acquainted with palace intrigues and with the entourage of king Neriglissar.

The Accession of Nabonidus

himself. According to Berossus, his choice as ruler even seems to have been an afterthought. Indeed, Belshazzar could hardly claim the throne while his own father was still alive, but the safest way to secure it for himself in the future was to propose Nabonidus to the conspirators as ruler. Since he was already an aged man, his reign would be transitional, and Belshazzar could expect to become king himself within a few years.

2.2.2.2 THE BĪT ŠAR BĀBILI

The last document to be discussed which pertains to the private activities of Belshazzar's household is *JRAS* 1926: 107. It records a dispute between two parties, one of which is Itti-Nabû-gūzu, a servant of Belshazzar, over the ownership of three slaves. The other litigant finally agrees to bring the slaves to Itti-Nabû-gūzu in the presence of Belshazzar, the son of the king. The interest of this document lies not so much in the transaction it records as in the locality where it was written: a city called *Bīt šar Bābili*, "House(hold) of the king of Babylon."

In previous studies of the reign of Nabonidus the city *Bīt šar Bābili* has received little or no attention. I devote part of this work to its study for the following reason: this locality is so far attested only in documents from the reign of Nabonidus,²⁴ on which basis one can assume that it was created by him and that its disappearance was caused by the downfall of the kingdom in his seventeenth regnal year. Table 4 includes all the documents written in this city, with their dates and the archives to which they can be assigned (see p. 96).

In addition, two other texts contain references to the $B\bar{\imath}t$ $\check{s}ar$ $B\bar{a}bili$, but they were written in other localities: TuM II: 51, dated to the seventh year, from the city Šātir, and CT 56: 359, dated to the second year, a document from Sippar.

24. There is one exception: a text published in *Revue Archéologique* VI (1849), pl. 129 (also Ker Porter, *Travels*, Vol. II, p. 420: according to Borger, *HKL* II, p. 234, s.v. Ker Porter, the text is BM 68610 = Layard, 80A) contains a reference to it: rev. 18. ¹*Il-tú-li-ma-tu-u*' 19. ¹⁶NAM šá É.LUGAL.TIN.TIR^{ki}. The text is discussed in van der Spek 1986: 202–11 and is dated to the ninth year of the son of Alexander (314 B.C.). One may wonder why this locality reappears more than two centuries after its last attestation (539 B.C.). Perhaps it was revived after the downfall of the Achaemenid dynasty. It could also in this case refer to a totally different place. Mention should also be made of text *CT* 55: 127, written in ^{uru}LUGAL.E, and dated to the 38th year of Nebuchadnezzar. In my opinion this is not the *Bīt šar Bābili*, but a rare designation of Babylon, which might be the one mentioned as the twelfth *Schmuckname* of Babylon in VAT 13101 (published in Unger 1931: 231: ^{uru}LUGAL[.....KI.MIN U]RU šar-ri[......]MEŠ).

The first question which should be raised is whether the *Bīt šar Bābili* was a city as such or just a new designation for the royal palace of Babylon. The evidence suggests that it was, if not an independent locality, surely a special district of Babylon: the name *Bīt šar Bābili* is almost always preceded by the determinative for "city," URU (written most of the time "uué.LUGAL.TIN.TIR^{ki}), and one of the texts listed above, *Nbn* 1030, records the rental of a house located in the *Bīt šar Bābili*, thus proving that, if the locality may have included the royal palace within its limits, it also contained residential quarters (obv. 1. É *šá* uulé.LUGAL.E^{ki} Document concerning a house located in the *Bīt šar Bābili*).

Therefore, one may surmise that, no later than his second year, Nabonidus selected a district of Babylon and renamed it $B\bar{\iota}t$ šar $B\bar{a}bili$. It is impossible to determine, even approximately, to which part of the capital the new city corresponded. Text Nbn 1102, however, offers tantalizing hints. It records the sale of some land and a house which adjoin the irrigation dikes of Babylon (obv. 8. ki-la-a-ta šá TIN.TIR ki) and the "exit of the king" (obv. 6. mu-su-u šá LUGAL). The land is furthermore said to be near the Kutha-canal (obv. 2). However, the fact that this document was written in $B\bar{\iota}t$ šar $B\bar{a}bili$ does not imply that the land sold was located there. Another document from this city (Nbn 967) records the sale of a house in Kish.

Unger's suggestion that the $B\bar{\imath}t$ šar $B\bar{a}bili$ was the native designation of the so-called "Summer Palace of Nebuchadnezzar," located outside Babylon near the northern end of the peripheral wall, is based on the fact that this area was called Babil until modern times, not very conclusive evidence (Unger 1931: 86–87). But there is no doubt that the $B\bar{\imath}t$ šar $B\bar{a}bili$ was located in the capital, since texts written there were found together with texts from Babylon and its suburbs. Furthermore, most documents from $B\bar{\imath}t$ šar $B\bar{a}bili$ belong to the archive of the Egibi house, and they are not fundamentally different from other documents of this archive written in Babylon. In most cases, the parties to the transactions are the same.

One may ask if monumental inscriptions or historical and literary texts contain any allusions to the creation of the $B\bar{\imath}t\ \check{s}ar\ B\bar{a}bili$ by Nabonidus. Two such texts may be relevant. The first one is inscription Z, a rather fragmentary text, the obverse of which contains remnants of the titulary of a Neo-Babylonian king whose name is lost ($CT\ 37$, plate 21, BM 38346: see section 1.3.30). The remaining parts of the reverse read as follows:

rev. 1. iš-tu sila.dagal ká.gal ^dutu a-di ki-šá-ad ga-at-ti 2. ša lugal.meš ad.meš-e-a qer-ba-šu i-pú-šu ga-nu-ni 3. tal-la-ak-ta-šu la šu-ud-du-la-at 4. la du-um-mu-qu ši-pí-ir-šu 5. in gu-šu-ur ^{giš}ERIN

ba-nu-ú şú-[lu]-ul-šu 6. šá é.GAL šu-a-tim šu-bat hi-da-a-tim 7. ú-ra-áš gan-né-e maš-ta-ku ri-ša-a-tim 8. x - x - x - x GAR šem? ub-lam-ma

[...] from the square (in front) of the Šamaš-gate to the bank of the Euphrates, wherein my royal ancestors had established their living quarters, its entrance way was not wide enough (and) its work had not been finely carried out. With beautiful rafters of cedar wood I... the roof of that palace, a dwelling of joy, ?, a cella of happiness, I brought [...]

The inscription is usually ascribed to Nebuchadnezzar, but there is no evidence to support this assumption. In fact, it even seems dubious that Nebuchadnezzar ever restored this palace, since it is never mentioned in those inscriptions of his which contain a list of all the building works he undertook in Babylon (*VAB IV*, Nebuchadnezzar nos. 1, 13, 14, 15, and 19). Therefore there is a strong possibility that the inscription belongs to Nabonidus, as believed by Berger (Berger 1973: 381), although he has no conclusive evidence either. According to inscription Z, the palace was located between the Šamaš-gate and the Euphrates, which is known from topographic documents of Babylon to be in the southern portion of the "new city." The existence of this palace is not otherwise documented, but it may have been used by the late Assyrian kings as their Babylonian residence, according to the evidence from the following document dated to the fourth year of Esarhaddon (Strassmaier 1893: text no. 5):

obv. 1. 8 nik-kàs gi.meš a.šà ki-šub-bu-ú 2. ki-tim uru gibil ki šá qé-reb tin.tir ki 3. 2 gar uš.an.ta im.mar.tu da sila.dagal.la 4. mutaq ding[ir u] lugal

24 ? square cubits²⁶ of fallow land located in the territory of the "new city" in Babylon. (Its) upper limit, 28 cubits (long), adjoins to the west the square (near) the passage of the god and the king.

This text, which was discussed by Unger years ago (Unger 1931: 80–81), probably deals with the same area described in inscription Z, and also suggests that some sort of royal residence was located there (*mūtaq šarri*). Since the text dates from the reign of Esarhaddon, it seems likely that this residence was used by the Assyrian kings and it may even have been built by them for their sojourns

in Babylon. If so, Nabonidus could be the author of inscription Z, since he is the only Neo-Babylonian ruler who refers to the Assyrian kings as his "ancestors," as does the author of inscription Z^{27} The inscription would then record the creation of the $B\bar{\imath}t$ šar $B\bar{a}bili$ by the king at the very beginning of his reign.

The other possible allusion to the *Bīt šar Bābili* is more crucial. The first two lines of the entry of the Dynastic Prophecy devoted to the reign of Nabonidus state that "A re[bel] prince will arise [......] The dynasty of Ḥarran [he will establish]." The remaining lines with Grayson's restorations read as follows (Grayson 1975b: 32–33):

13. 17.ta mu.[a]n.na.me[š lugal-ú-tu dù-uš] 14. ugu kur i-dannin-ma [e]zen é.s[ag.íl ú-šab-ṭal] 15. bàd ina \mathbf{E}^{ki} (erasure) [dù-uš] 16. Hul-tim a-na \mathbf{k}^{ur} uri \mathbf{k}^{i} ú-ṣa-am-m[a-ar]

For seventeen years [he will exercise sovereignty]. He will oppress the land and the [fes]tival of the Es[agil he will cancel]. A fortress in Babylon [he will build]. He will plot evil against the land of Akkad.

The report in line 15 seems particularly relevant. Of course, BAD ($d\bar{u}ru$) can be translated "wall" as well as "fortress," and one could argue that the author of the Dynastic Prophecy was referring to the wall Nabonidus is known to have built along the Euphrates to strengthen the defensive system of the capital: the construction of this wall is mentioned by Berossus and stamped bricks of Nabonidus were found on the Euphrates where it originally stood (see sections 1.3.22 and 1.3.23, inscriptions C and D). However, since the text is otherwise biased against Nabonidus, a statement concerning his strengthening of Babylon's fortifications, a deed to his credit, seems unlikely. The wording of the text, *ina Bābili* "in Babylon," makes the translation "fortress" more probable. If "wall" was meant, one would expect $d\bar{u}r$ $B\bar{a}bili$ "the wall of Babylon," followed by $ippu\bar{s}$ "he will build," or in this case, $u\bar{s}aklal$ "he will complete."

Accepting as a reasonable hypothesis that the "fortress" allegedly built by Nabonidus is identical with the *Bīt šar Bābili*, one would expect to find in documents written here some information about the place and Nabonidus' goal

^{25.} See Unger 1931: 70-71 (Šamaš-Tor), 80-81 (Neustadt) and 112 (Šamaš-Strasse).

^{26.} See AHw, s.v. nikkas: it is not certain that this word followed by qānē means three cubits.

^{27.} See inscription 15, Col. II, 7. e-li šá LUGAL.MEŠ ab-bé-e-a ép-še-ti-šu ú-dan-[nin-ma] "I strengthened its structure (of the Ehulhul) more than my royal ancestors (Shalmanezer III and Aššurbanipal) had." Admittedly, since Nabonidus was rebuilding an Assyrian temple, one might argue that it was quite normal in that case to refer to the Assyrian kings as his ancestors.

in creating it. As already stated, one of the texts records transactions of Belshazzar's household. The only other document in which the royal house is involved is CT 56: 359, a text from Sippar, the earliest to mention the $B\bar{\imath}t$ šar $B\bar{a}bili$:

obv. 1. 5 udu.nitá ni-din-it lugal 2. šá $^{\rm Id}$ nà-ba. $\langle\langle\kappa u\rangle\rangle$.ug $_7$ -tin šá muḥ-ḥi pad.Ḥi.a lugal 3. ta é.lugal.tin.tir $^{\rm ki}$ 4. i-bu-uk-ku udu.nitá 5. ina é ú-ru-ú ina igi 6. $^{\rm I}$ zalág- $^{\rm d}$ utu $^{\rm iti}$ du $_6$ rev. 7. u $_4$ -24-kám mu-2-kám 8. $^{\rm d}$ nà-i lugal tin.tir $^{\rm ki}$

Five male sheep, a gift of the king, which Nabû-mīta-uballit, the man in charge of the king's provisions, has brought from the *Bīt šar Bābili*. The male sheep are in the stables, under the responsibility of Nūr-Šamaš. Month Tašrītu - Day 24 - Second year of Nabonidus, king of Babylon.

This document suggests that the *Bīt šar Bābili* included some kind of monumental structure which may have served as a royal storehouse, a fact which calls to mind the palace in the "new city" mentioned in inscription Z. In consideration of the evidence from *JRAS* 1926: 107, one may even guess that the locality served as the administrative center of Belshazzar's household, a hypothesis which deserves consideration.

Most of the texts written in the Bīt šar Bābili belong to the archive of the Egibi house. More specifically, most of them record the transactions of Itti-Mardukbalātu, who became the head of the house in the thirteenth year of Nabonidus, when he succeeded his father Nabû-ahhē-iddina: the two mentions of the latter in Nbn 1047 and TCL XII: 120 are generally thought to be posthumous. One may wonder why so many of the transactions carried on by Itti-Marduk-balāţu were recorded in the Bīt šar Bābili. The most likely explanation is that of a strong link between him and Belshazzar, and there is evidence that such a link existed. Nabû-ahhē-iddina became Belshazzar's agent after the confiscation of Neriglissar's estates. The last attestation in this capacity is from the twelfth year of Nabonidus (Nbn 688), when he probably died. From this time on, transactions of his son and successor Itti-Marduk-balāţu appear in great number in the Bīt šar Bābili. Belshazzar and his household appear in none of these documents, but there is at least one instance where their transactions are carried on in the Bīt šar Bābili (JRAS 26: 107). According to text Nbn 1030, a slave of Itti-Marduk-balāţu lived in this locality (obv. 4. ldNà-u-ter-ri 5. lúgal-la šá lKIdAMAR.UD-TIN ina lìb-bi áš-bu-u' A house located in the Bīt šar Bābili in which PN and Nabû-uterri, a slave of Itti-Marduk-balāţu, live). Three other documents, Nbn 1047, 1048, and TCL XII: 120, may even prove that IttiMarduk-balāţu himself had his residence there: they all deal with a dispute over the ownership of a house, which had belonged to Nabû-aḥḥē-iddina, between his son and one Bēl-rēmanni. According to Nbn 1047, Itti-Marduk-balāţu was actually living in this house (rev. 12. £ GAL- \acute{u} š \acute{a} 1 KI- 4 AMAR.UD-TIN ina lìb-bi a-šab The large house in which Itti-Marduk-balāţu lives). As already pointed out concerning text Nbn 1102 (see p. 99), that these three documents were written in the $B\bar{\imath}t$ šar $B\bar{a}bili$ does not necessarily mean that the house involved was located there. It is also known from Nbn 9, discussed in the preceding section, that properties of Belshazzar adjoined those of Nabû-aḥḥē-iddina. Perhaps they were located in the future $B\bar{\imath}t$ šar $B\bar{a}bili$; the evidence suggests that the households of Belshazzar and the Egibi were in close contact with each other and both based, especially in the last years of Nabonidus, in the $B\bar{\imath}t$ šar $B\bar{a}bili$.

Thus there is a strong probability that the *Bīt šar Bābili* was a creation of Nabonidus, since it is attested only in his reign and abruptly disappeared after his downfall. This is corroborated by the Dynastic Prophecy, which adds one important piece of information to the archival evidence: the *Bīt šar Bābili* was not only a residential district of Babylon, but also a "fortress." This fortress may have been the palace on the west bank of the Euphrates, the restoration of which is commemorated in inscription Z, and tentatively assigned to Nabonidus. This palace would have been a residence of the Assyrian kings in the seventh century and its rebuilding by Nabonidus could then be explained by his strong ties to the Sargonid dynasty, documented in several instances in his inscriptions. This palace and its surroundings might have been turned into a new city after the restoration; it might have served as an administrative center for the estates held by the royal family and the groups who supported it.

If this reconstruction is correct, one may see in the creation of the *Bīt šar Bābili* the embodiment of a new tendency which had emerged with Neriglissar; the monarchy became more and more involved in private business and in temple affairs. The estates of the family of Neriglissar were confiscated by Belshazzar in the beginning of his father's reign, and there is no doubt that these estates formed the economic basis of Belshazzar's household with *Bīt šar Bābili* as the administrative center. The very name suggests new tendencies. It was named according to a well-known pattern in the Neo-Babylonian period: ^{uru} £ PN (^{āl} *bīt* PN), of which many examples are known. These cities were named after their most prominent households and some of them were created as early as the Kassite period (Brinkman 1976: 465–66 and Oelsner 1982). The creation of such a city in relation to the royal household shows well the evolution of the concept of kingship from a "public" to a more "private" one. The rise of Neriglissar had corresponded to the intrusion of the oligarchy into state affairs.

With Nabonidus this tendency reached its peak: his usurpation can be seen partly as an attempt by a group of people, led by his son Belshazzar, to increase their economic power through political manipulation (von Voigtlander 1963: 160–62). This attempt had started with the confiscation of Neriglissar's estates, and it can be suggested, although it cannot be proven, that the increased involvement of the monarchy in temple affairs in the reign of Nabonidus aimed chiefly at controlling their immense estates (especially in the case of the Eanna of Uruk) to the profit of this rising group (Martirossian 1983: 128–30).

In connection with what has been said of Nabonidus' accession in the preceding sections, one may theorize that the political ambitions of this group of people formed the driving force behind the conspiracy against Lābâši-Marduk, and there is evidence to suggest that Belshazzar may have been their leader. As will be shown presently, Nabonidus' aims after his accession were of a different nature, though they did not apparently conflict with those interests.

2.3 HISTORY OF THE EARLY REIGN OF NABONIDUS

2.3.1 The Accession Year (May 556-March 30, 555)

The entry of the Chronicle devoted to the accession year is lost. So are the relevant passages in the Royal Chronicle. As for the Verse Account, its first section is so mutilated that no pertinent information can really be obtained from it, apart from general statements concerning the unjust character of Nabonidus' rule. Furthermore, it is not even certain that the Verse Account reports events in strict chronological order. Therefore, one has to rely on monumental inscriptions and archival texts for the study of the accession year. Evaluation of these sources shows that, in the beginning of his reign, Nabonidus was chiefly preoccupied with three interrelated issues: the legitimacy of his rule, the military situation of the empire, and restoration of the Eḫulḫul of Ḥarran.

2.3.1.1 THE EVIDENCE FROM MONUMENTAL TEXTS

Our main source is inscription 1. This long text was written shortly after the beginning of Nabonidus' first regnal year (see section 1.3.1). The inscription, spread over eleven columns, can be divided into three distinct parts, excluding Col. XI, a kind of appendix which contains quotations from hepatoscopic texts. The first part of the inscription (Cols. I–IV) consists of a narrative on Babylo-

nian history from Sennacherib to the accession of Nabonidus. One can presume that this narrative was intended as an explicatory prologue to the second part (Cols. V–IX), which narrates Nabonidus' deeds from his accession to his visit to southern Babylonia at the beginning of his first regnal year. Then there is an abrupt change of subject: the third part (Col. X) consists of an elaborate statement of Nabonidus' intention to restore the Ehulhul.

Although the components of this inscription at first glance seem disconnected, closer scrutiny reveals that the text has unity and conveys a central message: it presents Nabonidus' project to restore the Eḥulhul as a legitimate concern for a Babylonian ruler and as the logical outcome of Neo-Babylonian history. This emerges clearly from a comparison between the first and third parts of the inscription. The first part reports on the reign of four previous kings, Sennacherib, Nabopolassar, Nebuchadnezzar, and Neriglissar: although neither Sennacherib, nor Nabopolassar, nor Nebuchadnezzar are mentioned by name in Cols. I and II, there is no doubt from the context that they are meant. The narrative focuses exclusively on the fate of cults and cult centers and progresses in six successive stages:

- 1. Sennacherib destroys the sanctuaries of Babylon and carries the statue of Marduk to Aššur, where it stays for 21 years: according to the Chronicles, the statue of Marduk stayed in Aššur for twenty years: the last eight years of Sennacherib and the twelve years of Esarhaddon. It came back to Babylon in the accession year of Šamaš-šum-ukīn in 648 B.C. (see Grayson 1975a: 127, ll. 31-36, for the Esarhaddon chronicle, and 131, ll. 1-8 for the Akītu chronicle).
- 2. Then the "appointed time" arrives when Marduk decides to go back to the Esagil. As retaliation he causes Sennacherib to be murdered by his own son: identification of Sennacherib's murderer as his son Arad-Mullišu was recently assessed with the help of a fragmentary letter from the archive of Nineveh (Parpola 1980).
- 3. Marduk's retaliation against Assyria continues. He provides Nabopolassar with the Medes as allies. They destroy the cult centers of Assyria and those of Babylonia which had been hostile to Nabopolassar.
- 4. Although Nabopolassar is stricken with awe at the sight of the devastated cult centers, he does not intervene. He mourns in despair.
- 5. The anger of Marduk has now calmed down. He allows restoration of a

The History of the Early Reign

certain number of cults, with which he entrusts Nebuchadnezzar and Neriglissar.

6. Nebuchadnezzar and Neriglissar proceed to restore the cults (Eanna at Uruk and Eulmaš at Sippar-Anunītum). Then Neriglissar dies and his son Lābâši-Marduk ascends the throne "against the will of the gods."

The destructions brought about by Sennacherib were the most tragic events in the history of Babylon and, at the same time, marked the beginning of a renaissance which was to culminate with the rise of the Neo-Babylonian empire. From the point of view of Babylonian theologians, the destruction of Assyria was retaliation for the desecration of Babylon, and Nabopolassar the tool of Marduk. But this deed of revenge entailed the destruction of many cult centers, including the Ehulhul, by the Medes. It is only in the reigns of Nebuchadnezzar and Neriglissar that the wrath of Marduk finally abated, allowing these kings to reestablish certain interrupted cults.

This prologue evidently aimed at showing that the "divine mission" of the Neo-Babylonian dynasty had not yet been fulfilled. At Uruk, Nebuchadnezzar had replaced an incorrect image of the Lady of Uruk, set up in the reign of Eriba-Marduk, with an appropriate statue, and had reinstalled the incorrect image in another cella (see section 1.3.1). When Nabonidus went to Larsa in his first regnal year to settle the affairs of the Eanna, he referred several times to the "practices of the time of Nebuchadnezzar" (see section 2.3.2.1), showing that he intended to complete the pious deeds of his predecessor. Restoration of the cult of Anunītum at Sippar-Anunītum had been initiated by Neriglissar: as her temple lay in ruins, he had had her statue put in a chapel at Sippar and although he made provisions for her $nidb\hat{u}$ offerings and her attire, he did not restore her temple. It remained to Nabonidus to follow Neriglissar's lead: he restored the temple in the last part of his reign, referring again to Sennacherib as the perpetrator of its destruction in inscription 16 (see 1.4.3). But in his accession year, his main preoccupation was the Ehulhul, as shown in the third part of inscription 1:

19. 54 Mu.an.na.meš 20. e-nu-ma ^d30 21. i-tu-ru áš-ru-uš-šú 22. i-na-an-na 23. a-na aš-ri-šu 24. i-tu-ra-am-ma 25. ^d30 en a-gi-i 26. iḫ-su-su šu-bat-sú 27. ṣir-ti u dingir.meš 28. ma-la it-ti-šú 29. ú-ṣu-ma! ku-um-mi-šú 30. ^damar.ud-ma lugal dingir.meš 31. iqta-bi pa-ḫar-šú-un

[As to the temples of the gods] whose storehouses [were empty?] and where they had not established their residence [since.....], Marduk, my lord, waited for me and entrusted me with the restoration of the divine cults. He decreed by his pure utterance the appeasement of the angry gods and my (re)establishment of their dwellings (as a duty) for my rule. (Concerning) Harran (and) the Ehulhul, which had been lying in ruins for 54 years because of its devastation by the Medes (who) destroyed the sanctuaries, with the consent of the gods the time for the reconciliation approached, 54 years, when Sîn should return to his place. When he returned to his place, Sîn, the lord of the tiara, remembered his lofty seat, and (as to) all the gods who left his chapel with him, it is Marduk, the king of the gods, who ordered their gathering.

The key elements of the first part are repeated here. The wrath of Marduk has calmed, and he entrusts Nabonidus with the restoration of the interrupted cults, just as he put into the hands of Nebuchadnezzar and Neriglissar the restoration of cults at Uruk and Sippar. The destructions caused by the Medes in the time of Nabopolassar are referred to again, but specifically in connection with the Ehulhul and the city of Harran. The introduction of this new element is crucial: the restoration of the cult of Sîn at Harran is placed on the same level as the cults of Ištar and Anunītum at Uruk and Sippar. It is presented as a legitimate concern for a Babylonian ruler. The restoration of the temple of Sîn in the Syrian city was in Nabonidus' mind the culmination of the mission of restoration of the Neo-Babylonian dynasty, which originated with the decree of Marduk in the time of Sennacherib. The structure of inscription 1, in which these two interrelated parts frame the narrative of Nabonidus' first deeds as king, aimed precisely at presenting the reestablishment of Sîn's cult at Harran as such.

In addition to inscription 1, another source informs us that Nabonidus' decision to restore the Eḫulḫul was made at the very beginning of his reign, namely inscription 15, written after the return from Teima:

Col. I, 16. i-na re-eš lugal-ú-ti-ia da-rí-ti ú-šab-ru-u'-in-ni 17. šu-ut-ti 18. damar.ud en gal ù den.zu na-an-na-ri an-e ù ki-tim 19. iz-zi-zu ki-lal-la-an damar.ud i-ta-ma-a it-ti-ia 20. dnà-ní.tuk lugal tin.

TIR^{ki} i-na Anše.Kur.Ra ru-ku-bi-ka 21. i-ši sig₄.Ḥī.A É.Ḥứl.Ḥứl e-pu-uš-ma ^den.Zu en gal-ú 22. i-na qé-er-bi-šu šu-ur-ma-a šu-ba-at-su 23. pa-al-ḥi-iš a-ta-ma-a a-na ^den-líl dingir.meš ^damar.ud 24. é šu-atim ša taq-bu-ú e-pe-šu 25. ^{lú}erín-man-da sa-ḥi-ir-šum-ma pu-ug-gu-lu e-mu-qá-a-šu 26. ^damar.ud-ma i-ta-ma-a it-ti-ia ^{lú}erín-man-da šá taq-bu-ú 27. ša-a-šu kur-šu ù lugal.meš a-lik i-di-šu ul i-ba-áš-ši 28. i-na ša-lu-ul-ti mu.an.na i-na ka-šá-du 29. ú-šat-bu-niš-šum-ma ^lku-ra-áš lugal ^{kur}an-za-an ìr-su ṣa-aḥ-ri 30. i-na um-ma-ni-šu i-ṣu-tu ^{lú}erín-man-da rap-šá-a-ti 31. ú-sap-pi-iḥ 32. ^liš-tu-me-gu lugal ^{lú}erín-man-da iṣ-bat-ma ka-mu-ut-su a-na kur-šu 33. il-qé

In the beginning of my everlasting reign they (Marduk and Sîn) caused me to see a dream. Marduk, the great lord, and Sîn, the luminary of heaven and the underworld, were standing together. Marduk spoke to me: "Nabonidus, king of Babylon, carry bricks on your horse, build the Ehulhul and establish the dwelling of Sîn, the great lord, in its midst." Reverently I spoke to the Enlil of the gods, Marduk: "(But) that temple which you told (me) to build, the Mede surrounds it, and his might is excessive." Marduk spoke to me: "The Mede whom you mentioned, he, his country and the kings who march at his side will cease to exist." (And indeed), when the third year arrived, he (Marduk) aroused Cyrus, king of Anšan, his young servant, ²⁸ who scattered the large (armies) of the Mede with his small army, and (who) captured Astyages, king of the Medes, and took him to his country as captive.

Tadmor argued that the expression $r\bar{e}s$ šarrūti employed in inscription 15 does not refer to the "accession year," the šanat $r\bar{e}s$ šarrūti, but to the early part of the reign, and might mean a period of several years (Tadmor 1965: 352–53). His point of argument is that the Eḥulhul was not rebuilt in the beginning of Nabonidus' reign, as previously assumed on the basis of the above temporal expression, but more likely after Nabonidus' return from Teima, granting that it may have been started earlier. However, inscription 15 does not state that Nabonidus rebuilt the temple in the beginning of his reign, but only that he had a dream concerning it in his $r\bar{e}s$ šarrūti. Since inscription 1 already contains a statement about Nabonidus' intention to rebuild the Eḥulhul, there is little doubt that the king had this dream in his accession year.

The dream reported in inscription 15 introduces one element which is absent from inscription 1: the restoration of the Ehulhul is jeopardized by the pressure put by the Medes on the region of Harran. Of course, the dream is reported well after the situation it describes, but the length of time which separates Nabonidus' decision to restore the Ehulhul from its actual realization can be explained only if one accepts the notion that the incursions of the Medes in northern Syria posed a serious problem in the early part of his reign, forcing the king to postpone his project. According to inscription 15, Marduk assured Nabonidus that the Medes would not be a problem in the future, a promise which became true in the beginning of his third regnal year, when Cyrus, "aroused" by Marduk, revolted against his Median overlords. This second temporal expression, ina šalulti šatti "in the third year," was also discussed by Tadmor, who claimed that it should be understood as a metaphoric device describing the final concretization of a long expected event (Tadmor 1965: 353–54). Yet there is no need to follow Tadmor, since the inscription does not say that the restoration of the Ehulhul took place in the third year of Nabonidus, but only that by then it had become a possibility because of the revolt of Cyrus, which provoked a sudden weakening of Median power. According to the Nabonidus Chronicle, this revolt ended in the sixth year of Nabonidus with Cyrus' victory over Astyages (Grayson 1975a: 106, Col. II, 1-4). This passage, whose beginning is lost and which follows a sizeable gap in the chronicle, is generally assumed to belong to the entry for the sixth year because it precedes the entry devoted to the seventh year.

S. Smith suggested long ago that Nabonidus had made an alliance with Cyrus, thus hoping to rid Babylonia of the threat posed by the Medes since the time of Nabopolassar (Smith 1944: 32-34). Although the evidence from inscription 15 does not conclusively point in that direction, it at least proves that Nabonidus was following the international situation with anxiety, seeking to create problems for the Medes by encouraging uprisings among their vassals. The beginning of Cyrus' revolt coincided exactly with the beginning of Nabonidus' campaign to the west and Arabia. Unless one assumes that the king was totally devoid of strategic ability, it seems hard to believe that he would have engaged a significant part of the Babylonian army in a long campaign to Arabia without making sure that the northern and eastern borders of the empire would be secure, at least for a certain number of years. Therefore, there is enough evidence to suggest that, if he did not make a formal alliance with Cyrus, he was at least well enough aware of the internal situation of the Median kingdom to be certain that Cyrus would rise against Astyages soon, and that he could make plans for Syria and Arabia accordingly.

This shows how interwoven were Nabonidus' plans for Harran and the

^{28.} The similarity which this passage bears to *Isaiah* 42: 1, in which Cyrus is called the servant of the God of Israel, has long been noted (see S. Smith 1944: 49–75, and M. Smith 1963).

Ehulhul with his evaluation of the military situation of the kingdom. In fact, one can easily perceive that a broader issue was raised in his accession year: which kingdom, the Babylonian or the Median, would replace Assyria as the hegemonic power in the Near East. Nabonidus' projects for Ḥarran, which had enjoyed a special status under the last Sargonid kings, and which was situated on the border between the Medes and the Babylonians, inevitably raised this issue. It is virtually impossible to draw a firm line between religion and politics when trying to evaluate Nabonidus' goals.

It has already been emphasized that the Median problem is not mentioned in inscription 1, though it depicts the Medes as the tools of Marduk's wrath against Assyria. However, Nabonidus' military concerns are by no means absent from this text:

Col. V, 14. šá ^{1d}Nà-ku-dur-ri-urì 15. ù ^{1d}U.GUR-LUGAL-URÌ 16. LUGAL.MEŠ a-lik mah-ri-ia 17. na-áš-pa-ar-šu-nu 18. dan-nu a-naku 19. um-ma-na-ti-šu-nu 20. qá-tu-ú-a paq-da 21. a-na qí-bit-šunu 22. la e-ga-ku-ma 23. ka-bat-ta-šu-nu 24. šu-tu-ub-ba-ak 25. ¹LÚ-^dAMAR.UD 26. DUMU ^{1d}NÀ-NÌ.GUB-URÌ 27. u ¹la-a-ba-ši- ^dAMAR. ud 28. dumu 1d [u.gur]-lugal-urì 29. [um-ma-na-a]t-šú-nu 30. [id-ku-ú]-ma 31. [.....]-ti 32. [ù a-de-e]-šu-nu 33. [ú]-paat-ti-ru 34. [a]-ma-a-ti-šu-nu[....] (gap of several lines) [....] Col. VI 1. [.... pa-al-hi]-iš 2. [..... šu-n]u-ti-ma 3. ú-sal-li-šú-nu-ti 4. a-na te-hu-ti mulgal 5. u d30 a-ta-me ina šà-ia 6. 1-en et-lu ina áia 7. iz-ziz-ma i-ta-ma-a 8. a-na ia-a-ti 9. um-ma țe-hu-ti mimma 10. i-da-ti lum-ni 11. ul i-ba-áš-ši 12. i-na máš. GE₆-im-ma 13. šu-a-ti ^{1d}NÀ-NÌ.GUB-URÌ 14. LUGAL pa-ni maḥ-ra-a 15. u 1-en lúgìr.sì.ga 16. ina gišgigir ú-zu-uz-zu 17. lúgìr.sì.ga-ú 18. a-na ^{1d}NÀ-NÌ.GUB-URÌ 19. i-ta-me um-ma 20. KI ^{1d}NÀ-NÍ.TUK 21. du-buub-ma máš.ge₆ 22. ši-i šá it-tu-lu 23. lu-šá-an-ni-ka ka-a-šú 24. ^{1d}NÀ-NÌ.GUB-URÌ 25. iš-me-e-šu-ma 26. i-ta-me it-ti-iá 27. um-ma mi-na-a dum-qí 28. šá ta-aţ-ţu-lu qí-ba-a 29. ia-a-ši a-pul-šu-ma 30. aq-bi-iš um-ma 31. i-na máš.ge₆-ia 32. mulgal d30 u damar.ud 33. ina gé-reb šá-ma-me šu-lu-tú 34. da-am-gí-iš 35. ap-pa-liš-šúnu-ti 36. ina MU-iá il-sa-an-ni-me [....]

I am the strong delegate of Nebuchadnezzar and Neriglissar, my royal predecessors! Their armies are entrusted to me. I am not negligent about their orders. I fulfill their wishes. Awēl-Marduk, the son of Nebuchadnezzar, and Lābâši-Marduk, the son of [Neri]glissar, [who called up] their [troo]ps but [....... and] they released (them) [from] their [oaths of

loyalty]. Their order[s] (gap of several lines) [..... reverent]ly [...... to th]em and I prayed to them. I was wondering concerning the conjunction of the "Great Star" and Sîn, (when) a young man took his stand at my side. Thus he spoke to me: "The conjunction does not involve evil portents." In that same dream, Nebuchadnezzar, my royal predecessor, and an attendant were standing on a chariot. The attendant thus spoke to Nebuchadnezzar: "Speak with Nabonidus, let him tell you the dream he saw!" Nebuchadnezzar listened to him and thus spoke to me: "Tell me what favorable signs you have seen!" Thus I answered him, saying: "In my dream, the 'Great Star,' Sîn, and Marduk were extremely high in the midst of the firmament. As I looked at them for something favorable, he (Marduk?) called me by my name, saying: [....]"

The first section of this passage constitutes Nabonidus' earliest self-justification for usurping the throne. According to him, his legitimacy rested on a single fact: he was the "true" successor of Nebuchadnezzar and Neriglissar since he was the only one able to lead their armies and therefore to fulfill their political will. It is unfortunate that the last lines are not more intelligible, but there is a strong probability that they portrayed Awēl-Marduk and Lābâši-Marduk as totally incompetent in military matters. This statement of Nabonidus appears even more singular when one considers that Neo-Babylonian inscriptions are as a rule exclusively concerned with religious matters. The choice he made here to proclaim himself an experienced general who could fulfill the political will of Nebuchadnezzar, the foremost conqueror of the dynasty, strongly testifies to his anxiety concerning the military situation of the kingdom in his accession year, and well agrees with the dream reported in inscription 15, which emphasizes the threat posed by the Medes in northern Syria.

Nabonidus' plea does not end with this statement, but goes on with a report of a dream he had shortly after his accession. Oppenheim has commented at length on it, pointing out that it constitutes a unique example of its kind in antiquity: it is the only reported dream with no unity of action and subject and where the scene changes with characteristic oneiric rapidity, and it is also the only case in which a deceased person is said to have appeared (Oppenheim 1956: 202–06). As argued by Oppenheim, these unusual features give to this dream a flavor of authenticity which other such examples do not have and suggest that Nabonidus broke here with the traditional pattern of dream reports to add more strength and genuineness to his vision. The dream is very important in two respects: the mention of Nebuchadnezzar, and the relation it bears to the dream of inscription 15. As can be expected from a usurper, Nabonidus undoubtedly felt uneasy and

threatened in the first months of his reign, and accordingly he must have been extremely anxious about the meaning of any ominous sign observed in this period. Apparently he saw an astronomical phenomenon in his dream, which involved the conjunction of a meteor, the moon (Sîn), and Jupiter (Marduk), and became worried concerning the meaning of the conjunction of the meteor and the moon. Then a young man appeared who calmed the king's troubled mind by giving a favorable interpretation of his vision. The status of this young man is not specified, but there is a strong probability that he was a scholar who specialized in astrological lore: his reassuring intervention is reminiscent of the dreams reported in *Ludlul bēl nēmeqi*, in which two young priests successively appear to the author of the poem to assure him that his misfortunes will end soon (see Lambert 1960: 48–51). Nabonidus then saw Nebuchadnezzar for obvious political reasons. He was seeking a posthumous confirmation of his rule by his prestigious predecessor. This logically followed from Nabonidus' claim to be the executor of Nebuchadnezzar's political mandate. Oppenheim assumed that Nabonidus was not personally known to the great king, since he needed to be introduced by the attendant (Oppenheim 1956: 204b). Now that it is known from the inscription of Adad-guppi that Nabonidus was a member of Nebuchadnezzar's court, another interpretation of this passage is possible. Nebuchadnezzar could have appeared in a variety of situations in his role as king, and one has to ask why Nabonidus chose this particular motif of the king standing on his chariot with an attendant. The answer is obvious: he referred to Nebuchadnezzar as a warrior and as the great conqueror of the dynasty, an image consistent with the essence of the political mandate he claimed to have received from him. The attendant who accompanies the king in the dream is a girseqû; one can surmise, following Oppenheim, that the term refers here to the eunuchs who are so often depicted standing on royal chariots in Assyrian iconography. Nebuchadnezzar's attention apparently being absorbed by other matters, the attendant, whose function was to check who approached the royal chariot, suddenly noticed Nabonidus' presence. The wording of the short dialogue which ensued suggests that Nabonidus was well known to Nebuchadnezzar and his attendant, since they apparently had no problem recognizing him. It also aimed at showing the full understanding which purportedly existed between the two kings: indeed, Nebuchadnezzar did not answer the attendant's request by merely letting Nabonidus repeat his dream, but by asking him what favorable signs he had seen, thus implying that the omen could be nothing but good, since it concerned the man he had already selected to be his "true successor." Then Nabonidus, encouraged by Nebuchadnezzar, went on to tell the favorable signs he saw. He was looking at the three celestial bodies when one of them (the verb

is in the singular) called him by his name. One can presume, again for obvious political reasons, that Jupiter (Marduk) is the one who addressed himself to Nabonidus. Unfortunately, the text breaks off at that crucial point, but it is evident that the lost lines contained the words spoken by Marduk, since the verb *ilsanni* is followed by *-me*, the particle of direct speech.

Any attempt at restoring Marduk's speech is in the realm of pure guesswork. The most one can safely assume is that it provided a confirmation of Nabonidus' legitimacy, which was the rationale for reporting the whole dream: the fact that Nabonidus claims to have been "called by his name" constitutes in itself good evidence for this. It calls to mind the numerous passages of Neo-Babylonian inscriptions where the king is "called by his name" by Marduk to assume kingship (see Seux 1967 s.v. nabû, for references to such passages). However, the following suggestion may also be ventured. Since Nabonidus claimed that the dream concerning the Ehulhul reported in inscription 15 happened in the beginning of his rule, one may wonder why no mention of it is made in inscription 1, the central message of which is precisely the idea that this temple should be rebuilt. This apparent anomaly disappears if one accepts the notion that the dream of inscription 15 is a later version of that reported in inscription 1: in the two dreams Sîn and Marduk appear standing together, and in both cases Marduk speaks on behalf of Sîn. Of course, the two dreams are otherwise different, but one may assume that Nabonidus selected only the part of his dream related to the Ehulhul and expanded it into a new dream report which could more convincingly transmit his message. One might suggest that that part of his dream which provided the material for the report of inscription 15 was contained in the address of Marduk to Nabonidus which is now lost, and that it may have consisted of an order to rebuild the Ehulhul.

There is no need to discuss at length the remaining portions of the second part of inscription 1, in which all deeds reported to have been performed by Nabonidus until the beginning of his first regnal year convey the same message: they establish the new king's legitimacy. In another dream he beheld the goddess Gula and prayed to her until she finally looked at him, thus indicating mercy. This visit to Gula's shrine suggests that Nabonidus may have suffered from health problems at that time, a not so surprising fact when one considers the advanced age he had already reached when he became king: it is further borne out by a passage of the Chronicle for his third regnal year, which seems to suggest that he suffered some ailment during the military campaign to Lebanon (Grayson 1975a: 105, Col. I, 14. [LUGAL G]IG-ma TIN-ut [The king became] ill but recuperated). Then Nabonidus visited the sanctuaries of Nabû and Marduk to seek their confirmation of his rule. After this, he proceeded to adorn several

temples in Babylon: he renewed the attire of Ea, Nabû, and Tašmêtum, fashioned a throne of gold for Ea, and undertook minor works of restoration in the capital. Then the New Year's festival of the first year is described briefly in a passage which aimed at publicizing the king's devotion to the dynastic gods: Nergal, Nabû, and Marduk. The last deed reported is the king's visit to southern Babylonia.

Although he was put on the throne by a group of conspirators whose probable aim was to control political power in order to achieve personal goals, Nabonidus seems to have had precise political ideas of his own. His first sizeable project after his accession was to restore Harran and the Ehulhul to their former glory. Nabonidus' motives for this may have been primarily personal, but the way he translated them into political terms suggests that the issue was subordinate to a broader one, the contest for hegemony over the Near East between the Medes and the Babylonians, a problem which had remained unresolved ever since the downfall of Assyria at the end of the sixth century. Inscription 1 and the dream in inscription 15 amply testify to this. The inclusion of Harran in the Babylonian realm necessitated the breakdown of the Median kingdom, which could best be achieved by stirring up rebellions against Astyages in conjunction with vigorous military actions in that region. It is likely that Nabonidus conceived such plans. The tone of inscription 1 also suggests that he put forward an aggressive military policy shortly after his accession. He claimed to be the heir to the political mandate of Nebuchadnezzar and Neriglissar because he now led their armies. Nebuchadnezzar is referred to in his dream as a conqueror. Furthermore, mention of Nabonidus' campaign to Cilicia at the end of his accession year is made in the section describing the New Year's festival which followed that campaign, a rare allusion to military actions in Neo-Babylonian inscriptions. Another important feature of inscription 1 is its last column, a list of quotations from hepatoscopic texts which has received little attention. This extispicy report gives the impression of being an artificial scribal exercise rather than a genuine record of observations, since all the apodoses are favorable. One can then speculate that the choice of apodoses was made according to specific purposes and must reflect the king's state of mind and political intent when the stela was set up. Of eight observations listed, six are provided with apodoses bearing on military matters, such as "Sîn and Šamaš will walk at the side of my army," "my army will take the spoil of the enemy's army," or "the enemy's army in its main body will fall" (see Starr 1983: 129–30). The ratio of such apodoses to other ones is here far higher than in other known examples of similar reports, a fact which again strongly testifies to Nabonidus' preoccupation with the military situation of the empire in his accession year. Finally, the recent publication of a

text which might be a copy of Nabopolassar's official declaration of war on Sînšar-iškun has furnished further testimony (Gerardi 1986). This document, composed in the form of a speech addressed by one ruler (Nabopolassar) to another (Sîn-šar-iškun), recalls the crimes committed by the Assyrians against the cult centers of Babylonia and Marduk's ensuing rejection of Assyria. Retaliation for those crimes justifies the declaration of war and Nabopolassar is portrayed as the avenger of Babylon. As noted by its editor, this text represents an attitude which is compatible with inscription 1 of Nabonidus. In fact, the historical prologue of inscription 1 merely repeats, though more elaborately, the key elements of the declaration of war: the destruction of Assyria in the seventh century is seen as retaliation for the destruction of Babylon by Sennacherib. So, this motive may be regarded as a true *mythe fondateur* of the Neo-Babylonian empire, as one of the cornerstones of its political ideology. Thus Nabonidus was doing nothing less than declaring war on the Medes. Just as Sennacherib had condemned Assyria to eventual annihilation at the hand of the Babylonians by his desecration of cult centers, the Medes had doomed themselves to destruction by their daring gesture against Harran and the Ehulhul. Nabonidus was now the avenger of Babylon, just as Nabopolassar had been a century earlier.

2.3.1.2 THE EVIDENCE FROM ARCHIVAL TEXTS

The earliest document showing Nabonidus performing royal duties is dated July 4, 556, barely two weeks after his recognition as king in all Babylonia. On the occasion of a short trip to Sippar, he presented a tithe of six minas of gold to the Ebabbar (*Nbn* 2):

obv. 1. 6 ma.na kù.gi eš-ru-ú 2. šá lugal ina ká.gal 3. šá é.babbar.ra id-din-nu 4. $^{\rm iti}$ sig_4 u_4-26-kám 5. mu.sag.nam.lugal.la 6. $^{\rm Id}$ nà-i lugal tin.tir $^{\rm ki}$

Six minas of gold, a tithe which the king presented at the gate of the Ebabbar. Month Simānu - Day 26 - Accession year of Nabonidus, king of Babylon.

As suggested earlier, the purpose of this visit to Sippar may have been to gain the favor of the city's establishment, which was still recognizing Lābâši-Marduk as king only two weeks before. It could be argued of course that Nabonidus was in this case attending to a purely administrative matter, but his very presence at Sippar at such a crucial moment rather suggests that he was trying to establish his rule more firmly in a city which had not been very favorable to him. It may also have been during this first visit that the king made some changes in the

administration of the city, as can be judged from the following table of incumbents of the two main offices attested in the documents from Sippar. Table 5 is based on the data presented in San Nicolo 1941: 33–36. Unfortunately, the documents from Sippar recently published as *CT* 55, 56, and 57 do not provide more evidence for the period involved here (see Frame 1984: 750):

Table 5: Prosopography of Sippar

qīpu ša ebabbar	EARLIEST REFERENCE	LATEST REFERENCE
Nabû-balāţu-ēreš	VI - 25 - Nbk 27	X - 10 - Ner 2
Nergal-šar-bulliţ	IX - 26 - Nab 1	I - 25 - Nab 3
šangu Sippar		
Ebabbar-šadûnu	X - 27 - Nbk 7	same
Mušēzib-Marduk	VIII - 17 - Nab 2	IX - 11 - Nab 13

The office of *šangu Sippar* "governor of Sippar" is not well enough documented to prove that Nabonidus dismissed its incumbent in his accession year. The evidence for the office of *qīpu ša Ebabbar* "administrator of the Ebabbar," is more conclusive. One can assume that Nergal-šar-bullit was put in charge when Nabonidus visited Sippar in his accession year, since his second visit to this city took place in his second regnal year (see section 2.3.3.2). A turnover of officials is also attested at Uruk (see section 2.3.2.1).

The king is not mentioned in any other documents of his accession year, which is to be expected since there is evidence that he conducted a campaign to Cilicia in the fall of 556. A campaign to the same region was led by Neriglissar just the year before and Nabonidus undertook another one in his first regnal year. All these military actions along the northwestern border show the permanent state of unrest in that region and confirm Nabonidus' concern for the security of the empire.

The last relevant archival texts dated to the accession year are from Borsippa. One, *TCL* XII: 71, is dated October 31, 556, and is therefore contemporaneous with Nabonidus' first campaign to Cilicia. It refers to a delivery of bricks for rebuilding the walls of Borsippa (obv. 1. 5 GÍN KÙ.BABBAR NÌ.GA ^dNÀ MAN.ŠÚ 2. *šá* sig₄.Hi.A *šá ana* BÀD *šá bar-sip*^{ki} Five shekels of silver, the property of Nabû, the king of the universe, concerning bricks for the wall of Borsippa). Another document from the same city, *TMH* II: 83, dated January 15, 555, is a contract to deliver 6400 bricks, and might be related to the same building work.

Restoration of the wall of Borsippa is not mentioned in inscriptions of Nabonidus. However, similar undertakings in neighboring cities are recorded in inscription 7: restorations of the walls of Kish, Kutha, and Ubaṣṣi. As seen earlier (see section 1.3.7), these building works belong to the first years of the reign. That Nabonidus ordered the repair of the fortifications of four cities in the region of Babylon suggests that he may have feared a Median attack against the heart of Babylonia. Perhaps the restoration of the inner defense wall of Babylon (inscription A) and the building of fortifications along the Euphrates (Berossus) should be dated to that period as well. There is no evidence to support this assumption, but nevertheless it seems likely.

2.3.2 The First Year (March 31, 555-April 18, 554)

After his campaign to Cilicia Nabonidus returned to Babylon for the New Year's festival. According to inscription 1, he presented large quantities of silver and gold to Marduk, Nabû, and Nergal on the tenth day of the festival (April 9). He also dedicated 2,850 prisoners of war from Cilicia to Nabû and Nergal as temple slaves (inscription 1, Col. IX, 3-47). Then Nabonidus left the capital for a short trip to southern Babylonia, where he visited Ur, Uruk, Larsa, and Kesh (inscription 1, Col. IX, 48-57). This visit is well documented in archival texts from Larsa and Uruk. Study of these documents shows that while the king was chiefly preoccupied with military matters and external affairs in his accession year, he had become increasingly concerned with the domestic affairs of Babylonia.

2.3.2.1 THE AFFAIRS OF THE EANNA

The first text concerning his visit to southern Babylonia, YOS VI: 11, was written at Larsa and is dated April 27, 555 (Nisanu - Day 28 - First year of Nabonidus). Its importance is shown by the fact that at least three copies of it were made. ²⁹ It records that, while at Larsa, Nabonidus granted to two individuals, one Kalbā and one Šum-ukīn, the privilege of cultivating a large tract of land belonging to the Eanna of Uruk. In exchange for this privilege the two men were to return part

29. In addition to *YOS* VI: 11, there is VAT 8418, published in Schwenzner 1924, and AO 19924, published in Durand 1981: pl. 64. Collation of YBC 3951 (*YOS* VI: 11) has shown that the date of the document is Nisanu 28 and not 29 as suggested by Dougherty's copy. The two duplicates are also dated Nisanu 28.

The History of the Early Reign

of the harvest every year to the temple, which provided seeds and implements as the initial supply.

It is hard to determine Nabonidus' goal in granting this privilege. Perhaps he intended to increase the agricultural yield of Babylonia by encouraging private entrepreneurs to develop unproductive land. But in this case he was perhaps also doing a favor to someone who had been a close relation of his or of Belshazzar's before he became king. Indeed, the affairs of Kalbā steadily deteriorated after a few years of initial success, and by the end of the reign he had accumulated an enormous debt to the Eanna. However, as shown by the following letter, published as *YOS* III: 2, Nabonidus still supported him, even though his enterprise had proved to be such a failure that the administrators of the Eanna referred his case to the king. This letter, though undated, can be ascribed to the end of the reign since the addressees, Kurbanni-Marduk and Ilirēmanni, are known to have been incumbents of the offices of *šatammu* and *bēl piqitti* of the Eanna from the thirteenth to the sixteenth year of Nabonidus (see section 3.1.2.2):

obv. 1. a-mat Lugal 2. a-na lkur-ban-ni-damar.ud 3. u ldingir.meš-re-man-ni 4. šu-lum ia-a-ši 5. lìb-ba-ku-nu lu-ú 6. ţa-ab-ku-nu-ši 7. a-na ugu lkal-ba-a 8. lášá ugu gíšbán 9. šá a-na pa-ni-ia 10. taš-pur-a-ni 11. um-ma 12. 40-a' 4 lim 13. 63 gur še.bar 14. u zú.lum.ma 15. re-e-hi ina pa-ni-šú 16. man-ma la ú-sa-am-meš 17. ma-la šá i-na-aš-šá-am-ma 18. i-nam-dak-ku-nu-ši 19. mu-uh-ra-áš

Order of the king to Kurbanni-Marduk and Ili-rēmanni. I am well! May you be pleased! Concerning Kalbā, the man in charge of the measure, concerning whom you wrote to me thus: "He owes 44,063 *gur* of barley and dates," nobody shall bother him. Whatever he shall bring and give to you, accept it!

The following text concerning this visit is YOS VI: 10. Although Nabonidus is not explicitly mentioned in it, there is no doubt that it records orders given by him, since the text was also written at Larsa and is dated the same day as the grant to Kalbā (Nisanu - Day 28 - First year of Nabonidus). This document lists nine orders transmitted by Nabû-dīni-ēpuš, the rāb unqāti "keeper of the seals," to Nabû-šar-uṣur, a royal servant:

30. On the general issues raised by this text and similar ones from the Eanna archive, see Cocquerillat 1968.

obv. 9. lìb-bu-ú 10. šá ina pa-ni d Nà-Nì.Gub-urì gi-nu-ú a-ki-i é. sag.íl u é.zi.da 11. a-na 16 Bappir.Meš 16 Muhaldim.Meš ù a-ki-i 16 Gal.dù.Me šá d En u d Nà 12. qaq-qa-ra-a-ti a-na 16 Gal.dù.Me šá d Gašan šá unug^{ki} i-din uzu Gaba šá udu.Nita gal-i 13. šá še-e-ri a-na qu-up-pi šá lugal ú-su-uk 6 uzu Gaba.Me ù 14. qé-me-e šá sá.du₁₁ a-na 16 Ku₄.É i-din 1 uzu Zag ka-ba-áš-ti 15. [šá] uzu šá 16 Ku₄.É a-na 16 Nà-Mu-giš a 1 Dù-dingir i-din rev. 16. ká mu-ter-re-e-ti šá é.an.Na a-ki-i la-bi-ri lìb-bu-u 17. šá ina pa-ni 16 Nà-Nì.Gub-urì si-i-ri šu-ku-un 16 Nà-Dù-šeš 18. ù 16 ba-la-ţu a.Me šá 16 ri-dnà a 16 ì.Sur-gi-né-e 19. a-na é.an.Na la ir-ru-bu-u' giš.Šub.ba-šú-nu a-na 1 16 Gal.dù-i pi-qid 20. še.bar pap-pa-su šá u₄.Meš šá lugal ina é.an.Na pu-uḥ-ḫi-ir 21. 10 16 Su. ha.Me a-na ugu 16 Su.ha.Me maḫ-ru-tu ina é.an.Na gul-li-ib 22. pad.hi.a šá dumu.sal lugal a-na qu-up-pi šá lugal ú-su-uk

1) As (it was done) in the time of Nebuchadnezzar, give the regular offerings to the brewers (and) bakers, as (it is done) in the Esagil and the Ezida, and (give) plots of land to the *rāb bani* of the Lady of Uruk, as (it is done) for the *rāb bani* of Bēl and Nabû. 2) Put the breast of the big sheep (from the meal) of the morning into the king's box. 31 3) Give to the "entrants" six sheep breasts and the flour of the fixed offerings. 4) Give to Nabû-šum-līšir, descendant of Epeš-ili, one thick shoulder cut of meat (as it is given) to an "entrant." 5) Plaster the double gates of the Eanna just as it was of old, in the time of Nebuchadnezzar. 6) Nabû-bāni-aḥa and Balāṭu, sons of Arad-Nabû, descendants of the "oil presser for regular offerings," shall not enter the Eanna (anymore). Entrust their prebends to a *rāb bani*. 7) Gather the porridge for the day (of the offerings) of the king in the Eanna. 8) Shave (ritually) ten (more) fishermen, in addition to the fishermen (who are already) in the Eanna. 9) Put the rations of the king's daughter into the king's box.

Two other texts record similar reorganizations of temple matters ordered by Nabonidus at the same time. YOS VI: 71, a text from Uruk dated to the sixth year (Araḥsamnu - Day 23 - Sixth year of Nabonidus. YOS VI: 72 is a duplicate) records a problem which had arisen concerning sacred garments to be given to the Lady of Uruk. Belshazzar had written to Nabû-šar-uşur, the royal commissioner of the Eanna, to inquire about the matter. After investigation the colle-

^{31.} On the various "income boxes" in Neo-Babylonian temple records, see Oppenheim 1947.

gium of the Eanna informed Nabû-šar-uşur that the matter had already arisen twice, first under Nebuchadnezzar, and then under Neriglissar, but both kings had decided that the garment should not be given, and, they added:

rev. 33. ù ina mu-1-kám ^{ld}nà-ní. tuk lugal tin. tir^{ki} lú uru ^dgašania-a-a 34. ina ud. unug^{ki} a-na lugal en-i-ni ki-i iq-bu-ú lugal en-a-ni 35. lú šá a-na muḫ-ḫi iq-ba-áš-šú iṭ-ṭi-ru ù lugal en-a-ni 36. ul iq-bi um-ma in-na

And in the first year of Nabonidus, king of Babylon, when a man of the city Bēltiya spoke at Larsa to the king our lord, the king our lord spared the man who had addressed him concerning the matter, but the king our lord did not say "give."

There is no doubt that the order given in this text by Nabonidus belongs to the series of administrative decisions made at the end of May 555. His stay in southern Babylonia must have been short, since the wording of the following document suggests that by the beginning of July he had already left the region. In this text,³² Nabû-šar-uşur, the royal commissioner of the Eanna,³³ transmits to the governor of Uruk and the collegium of the Eanna an order given by the king:

rev. 15. lìb-bu-ú šá Lugal iq-ba-an-na-a-šú um-ma maš-šar-ti 16. šá É.An.na a-ki-i la-bi-ri šá pa-ni 1d nà-nì.gub-urì lugal tin.tir ki 17. in-na-a' 1d ku $_4$.É 1d ki-na-al-ti 1d umbisag.meš šá É.An.na 18. gis da.meš u šá-ṭa-ra-ni šá É.An.na šá pa-ni 1d nà-nì.gub-urì 19. i-mu-ru-ú-ma a-na u $_4$ -mu 10 gis ma-ši-hu šá še.bar 20. 3%-ú gis ma-ši-hu šá zú.lum.ma 15%-ú gis ma-ši-hu šá se.zíz.àm 3 silà ina gal-ti 21. as-né-e igi d Gašan šá unug^{ki} 9 šal-šú gis ma-ši-hu šá še.bar 22. 3%-ú šá zú.lum.ma 1 šal-šú šá še.zíz.àm 3 silà ina gal-ti as-né-e 23. igi d na-na-a 6 4-ú lá-ti gis ma-ši-hu šá še.bar 3 šal-šú šá zú.lum.ma 24. 1 šal-šú šá še.zíz.àm $^{1/2}$ silà as-né-e igi d Gašan šá sag 25. 4 %-ú gis ma-ši-hu šá še.bar 3

- 32. This text belongs to the collection of the Princeton Theological Seminary (PTS 2097) and will be published by Grant Frame. I wish to thank him here for having allowed me to use his copy of this text.
- 33. So far the earliest attestation of Nabû-šar-uṣur as ša rēš šarri bēl piqitti Eanna was in a text dated to the third year of Nabonidus (YOS VI: 41). Another text, YBC 4140 (YOS XIX: 91), shows that he already held that function in the second year (day and month broken). The evidence from PTS 2097 now proves that his promotion to that office, a creation of Nabonidus, coincided with the king's visit to Larsa.

šal-šú šá zú.lum.ma 14-ú šá še.zíz.àm $26.1\frac{1}{2}$ silà as-né-e igi d urì-a-mat-su $46\frac{5}{6}$ -ú ma-ši-hu šá iti $_{4}$.meš 27. šá é d Amar.ud u é.kur.meš še.giš.ì gi-nu-ú ù gu-uq-qu-ú 28. mut-ta-qa dan-nu nam-ha-ru ù mimma šá é.an.na 29. a-ki-i šá ina pa-ni 1d nà-nì.gub-urì na-ad-nu li-inna-di-nu

In accordance with what the king ordered us, thus: "Give the maššartu of the Eanna as it was of old, in the time of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon," the entrants, the priests, (and) the scribes of the Eanna checked the writing boards and the records of the Eanna of the time of Nebuchadnezzar and: every day, 10 measures of barley, 3\% measures of dates, 1% measures of emmer, 3 $q\hat{u}$ of Telmun dates by the great (measure), for the Lady of Uruk; 9½ measures of barley, 3½ (measures) of dates, $1\frac{1}{3}$ (measures) of emmer, $3 q\hat{u}$ of Telmun dates by the great (measure), for Nanāya; 5\\(^3\)4 measures of barley, 3\\(^3\)3 (measures) of dates, $1\frac{1}{3}$ (measures) of emmer, $1\frac{1}{2}q\hat{u}$ of Telmun dates (by the great measure), for Bēlit ša Rēš; 45% measures of barley, 31/3 (measures) of dates, 11/4 (measures) of emmer, $1\frac{1}{2}q\hat{u}$ of Telmun dates (by the great measure), for Uşur-amātsu; 46% measures a month (for the) days (of the offerings) to the temple of Marduk and to all the temples, sesame, regular offerings, guaqû offerings, pastries, (cultic) vats and jugs, and everything pertaining to the Eanna, as it was given in the time of Nebuchadnezzar, let it be given!

All these texts suggest that, within the span of a few days, Nabonidus undertook a detailed reorganization of the Eanna. It is unnecessary to try to determine the precise scope of all the administrative decisions made by the king during his visit, some of which seem to have been settlements of minor problems which had been pending for a number of years, such as *YOS* VI: 71, and probably orders nos. 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, and 8 in *YOS* VI: 10. However, text PTS 2097 and orders nos. 1, 5, and 9 of text *YOS* VI: 10 deserve special attention.

Order no. 9 specifies that the "rations" (kurummatu) of the king's daughter, her regular share of the sacrificial offerings, will be transferred to the king's box in the Eanna. Another order concerning reallotment of prebendal meat cuts is no. 2, according to which the breast of sheep will also be transferred to the king's box. McEwan (1983) edited a large tablet from the archive of the Eanna consisting of a list of parts of sacrificial animals together with their regular recipients. The text, a Neo-Babylonian copy of a tablet composed during the reign of Nabû-apla-iddina or shortly after, associates the breast of sheep with the $\bar{e}rib\ b\bar{t}i$ prebend, but does not mention that the king's daughter was entitled to a

The History of the Early Reign

share of the offerings. This must have been a later innovation; the evidence points to the reign of Nebuchadnezzar since we know that his daughter Kaššaya, the wife of Neriglissar, possessed her own "cash box" (quppu) in the Eanna, and was connected with the temple (Weisberg 1974 and Joannès 1980a). After his accession Nabonidus probably installed his own daughter in the Eanna in the position formerly held by Kaššaya. Order no. 9, however, indicates that he changed his mind during his visit to Uruk and Larsa. The document implies that the allotment of rations to the king's daughter was cancelled, on which basis one may infer that the king had plans for her transfer to a new office outside Uruk, and indeed there is no mention of the king's daughter in the Eanna archive later than YOS VI: 10.

As for her identity all the evidence points to En-nigaldi-Nanna, who was consecrated as high priestess of Nanna at Ur a little more than a year after Nabonidus' visit to southern Babylonia. The king claimed he visited Ur during that trip, and the sources related to the consecration of En-nigaldi-Nanna suggest that her elevation to that office had long been planned by her father (see section 2.3.3.1). Text NCBT 482 (YOS XIX: 254) adds a relevant piece of information: it informs us that the governor of Ur, one Sîn-nādin-aḥa, went to Uruk at the end of August 555, that is, four months after YOS VI: 10 was written:

obv. 1. 1 ma.na kù.babbar 2 gín kù.gi 2. šá $^{\text{Id}}30$ -na-din-šeš 3. $^{\text{Id}}$ É.maš šeš.unug $^{\text{ki}}$ 4. a-na ka-si-ia 5. ina nì.ga rev. 6. $^{\text{iti}}$ Kin u₄-3-Kám mu-1-kám 7. $^{\text{d}}$ Nà-i lugal tin.tir $^{\text{ki}}$

One mina of silver and two shekels of gold, which Sîn-nādin-aḥa, the governor of Ur, (has received?) from the (temple's) properties for mustard. Month Ulūlu - Day 3 - First year of Nabonidus, king of Babylon.

This is the only recorded occurrence of the visit of a governor of Ur to Uruk in that period. One may theorize that Sîn-nādin-aḥa came to Uruk to make preparations for the consecration of En-nigaldi-Nanna as high priestess of Ur, which was to take place the following year.

Text PTS 2097 alludes to a general reorganization of the system of offerings in the Eanna. Although it refers specifically to the allotment of *maššartu* offerings to four goddesses, the last lines of the text indicate that the scope of the reform was broader: offerings to all the temples of Uruk were to be modified as well as "everything pertaining to the Eanna," specifically the *ginû* and *guqqû* offerings and the allotment of sesame, pastries and cultic vessels. As was the case with orders nos. 1 and 5 of text *YOS* VI: 10, this reorganization of cultic matters aimed at reinstating old practices "of the time of Nebuchadnezzar."

It was not the first instance in which Nabonidus referred to his prestigious predecessor. He claimed in inscription 1 to be his "true" successor, and he "spoke with him" in a dream he had shortly after his accession. He also emphasized that Nebuchadnezzar had reestablished the proper cult of Ištar in the Eanna of Uruk, which had been interrupted in the reign of Eriba-Marduk. In conformity with this, he now insisted that things be done in Uruk as they had been "in the time of Nebuchadnezzar." I assume here, of course, that Nebuchadnezzar II is meant in YOS VI: 10 and PTS 2097, without totally dismissing the possibility that Nebuchadnezzar I could be meant. The first possibility is more likely, since, according to PTS 2097, finding the records of Nebuchadnezzar seems to have been a routine operation of a type recorded in other instances. Letters YOS III: 45 and 106, for example, refer to similar searches in the archives from the time of Nebuchadnezzar, Neriglissar, and Nabonidus made under Cyrus or Cambyses.

This insistence on reverting to the usages of the time of Nebuchadnezzar suggests that matters had deteriorated or that practices had been modified in the short reigns which followed. Unfortunately, no record comparable to PTS 2097 from the time of Awel-Marduk, Neriglissar, or Labâši-Marduk alludes to such a process, but it is likely that the disruptions took place in the reign of Neriglissar, in consideration of the well documented interventions of that king in the administration of the Eanna (see p. 125). Perhaps he ordered a revision of the offering system which had been in effect until the reign of Nebuchadnezzar. This can be inferred from a group of texts published by Freydank a few years ago (Freydank 1971). These texts record daily maššartu distributions of dates, emmer, and barley to various groups of individuals, mostly brewers and bakers, in connection with their duties before the same goddesses mentioned in PTS 2097. Freydank divided these texts into five groups according to their content: texts from groups 1, 2, and 3 belong, according to him, to the reign of Nabonidus, since they all contain at least one text dated to his reign or texts which can be ascribed to it upon prosopographical evidence. Group 4 is undatable and group 5 would belong to the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, since one of the texts is dated to the 36th year of his reign (Freydank 1971: 13–16). Since this last group records deliveries of foodstuffs in mašīhu as opposed to the other groups where the gur is used, Freydank suggested that a change was introduced under Nabonidus in the delivery of offerings (Freydank 1971: 52). There is no doubt that maššartu offerings were measured in mašīhu under Nebuchadnezzar, as we now have texts from his reign in which maššartu offerings measured in mašīhu are listed in connection with the goddesses mentioned in PTS 2097 (YOS XVII: 166, 167, and 172). The new evidence from PTS 2097 now suggests

that the change did not occur under Nabonidus, but under one of his immediate predecessors, most likely Neriglissar, and that Nabonidus ordered a reinstatement of the old practices. The fact that allotments were still made in *gur* even after his reform does not contradict this. PTS 2097 refers to records from the time of Nebuchadnezzar, when the *mašīḥu* was used to measure the offerings involved here: it is not unlikely that the *gur*, which had probably been introduced under Neriglissar, was kept as a unit, even after the reinstatement of the practices of the time of Nebuchadnezzar, and that the quantities listed in PTS 2097 were converted into that unit.

Nabonidus' involvement in the affairs of the Eanna was not limited to cultic matters. The privilege granted to Kalbā and Šum-ukīn proves that he intended to increase royal intervention in the economic affairs of the temple. More evidence for this process can be obtained from the study of prosopography. Under Neriglissar, for the first time, one can detect that changes of high officials in Uruk corresponded to increased political pressure from the monarchy. Considering the four main offices of Uruk and the Eanna, governor of Uruk (šākin ţēmi ša Uruk), trustee of the Eanna (qīpu ša Eanna), administrator of the Eanna (šatammu Eanna) and scribe of the Eanna (tupšar Eanna), one realizes that the incumbents of the first three offices were removed in the beginning of Neriglissar's reign and replaced by new ones (in one case twice), who in their turn were replaced again in the beginning of Nabonidus' reign, as Table 6 shows. It is based on the data listed in Kümmel 1979: 139-43. No new document allows closer datings of these officials' incumbencies for the period involved. Some problems relating to the function of qīpu under Neriglissar are referred to below.

Admittedly neither Tābiya nor Zēriya are attested as holding their offices before Nabonidus' sixth year, but one may assume that they were nominated in the beginning of the reign, in view of all the administrative changes which took place at that time.

Such frequent and general turnovers of officials had not been the rule under Nebuchadnezzar, in whose reign most incumbents held their positions for a significant length of time. Awēl-Marduk does not seem to have made changes himself, since administrators in place in the last years of Nebuchadnezzar apparently kept their offices under him, as is certainly the case for the *qīpu* Sîniddina. Both Zēriya the *šatammu* and Anu-šar-uṣur the *šākin ṭēmi* are attested for the first time only in the first year of Awēl-Marduk, but since the last attestations of their respective predecessors are from the 28th and the 19th year of Nebuchadnezzar (see Kümmel 1979: 139 and 142 s.v. Marduk-ēriba and Marduk-bēlšunu), one can assume that they were nominated in the last part of the latter's reign.

Table 6: Prosopography of Uruk I

šākin ţēmi ša Uruk	EARLIEST REFERENCE	LATEST REFERENCE
Anu-šar-uşur Marduk-šum-iddina Ţābiya	I - 19 - Am 1 XII - 14 - Ner 1 XII? - x - Nab 6	III - 24 - Am 1 VII - 26 - Nab 2
qīpu ša Eanna		
Sîn-iddina Enlil-šar-uşur Mušēzib-Marduk Gabbi-ilī-šar-uşur	V - 8 - Nbk 35 III - 28 - Ner 1 III - 15 - Ner 2 I - 8 - Nab 1	II - 19 - Am 2 same II - 22 - Lab 0
šatammu Eanna		
Zēriya Bāniya Zēriya	I - x - Am 2 III - 5 - Ner 2 VI - 30 - Nab 6	III - 28 - Ner 1 IV - 18 - Nab 1

With Neriglissar, on the other hand, royal intervention is manifest: all officials were dismissed in his first regnal year. According to Kümmel, such direct royal intervention can be felt only under Neriglissar, Nabonidus, and possibly also Cambyses (Kümmel 1979: 146). One may even suggest that the general turnover of officials that took place in his first year was linked somehow to the revision of the offering system of the Eanna discussed above, known to have occurred between the death of Nebuchadnezzar and the accession of Nabonidus. There may have been significant disruptions, when one considers the apparently fierce competition over the office of $q\bar{t}pu$ after his second year: in addition to the incumbents listed in the table, there is even a possibility that one Nabû-aha-iddina also held this office under Neriglissar or Lābâši-Marduk (see Kümmel 1979: 141, n. 244). One interesting case is Zēriya, who lost his office under Neriglissar but was reinstated by Nabonidus. Perhaps he had shown some opposition to Neriglissar's policy towards the Eanna and this may have been the reason for his nomination by Nabonidus, who was trying to revert to the practices of the time of Nebuchadnezzar, thus correcting the disruptions caused by Neriglissar's manipulations.

Nabonidus' intervention was not limited to dismissing officials appointed by Neriglissar. The office of *tupšar Eanna*, was apparently abolished, since the last attestation of a current *tupšar Eanna*, Nabû-aḥḥe-bullit, is from the second year of Nabonidus. Afterwards the function reappears in his twelfth year, but from

this time on it was held jointly by several individuals and it does not seem to have been an important one (see Kümmel 1979: 143-44). Instead two new offices were created; significantly, both were to be held by royal servants (ša rēš *šarri*), thus increasing royal surveillance of the temple administration. The first office, that of ša rēš šarri bēl piqitti Eanna "royal servant in charge of the affairs of the Eanna," was held by Nabû-šar-uşur, who is first attested in his new capacity in PTS 2097. The importance of this new office, which seems to have overshadowed that of the *šatammu* and the *qīpu* until the thirteenth year of Nabonidus, is shown by the great number of documents in which Nabû-šar-uşur acts as the main, or often the sole delegate of the Eanna. He also appears to have served as the link between the temple and the royal administration, since many letters addressed to him by Belshazzar are known (see section 3.1.2.3), while this is not the case for the other major officials of the temple. However, another change seems to have taken place after Nabonidus' return from Teima in his thirteenth year: from that time until the end of his reign, the new *šatammu*, Kurbanni-Marduk, seems to have been the official who dealt with the palace. According to Saggs, who has studied the respective attributions of the two offices of *šatammu* and *bēl piqitti*, the former appears to have been based at Uruk, while the latter seems to have worked more outside the city, inspecting the estates and supervising field and canal work (Saggs 1959). His conclusions are shared by Garelli, who more recently has offered a good summary of the reponsibilities of each official (Garelli and Nikiprowetzki 1974: 159-61), and also by Joannès (Joannès 1981a: 131-36).

The second office, that of ša rēš šarri ša ina muḥḥi quppi ša šarri "royal servant in charge of the king's box," though not attested before Nabonidus' second year, was probably created at the same time. It was held jointly by three different individuals who also kept their positions until the thirteenth year, like Nabû-šar-uşur: the three officials are Liblutu, Ayyigašu, and Marduk-bullitanni. ³⁴ In addition, Kalbā and Šum-ukīn, the two beneficiaries of the land grant made by the king at Larsa, were promoted in connection with their new enterprise to the function of ša muḥḥi sūti ša bēlit ša Uruk "the man in charge of the measure of the Lady of Uruk."

During the same trip Nabonidus paid visits to Ur, Kesh, and Larsa. It is

34. See Kümmel 1979: 145, on their period of incumbency, to which add NBC 4535 (*YOS* XIX: 126) as the now the earliest attestation of Ayyigašu, which is II - 15 - Fourth year of Nabonidus and YBC 4140 (*YOS* XIX: 91) as the earliest attestation of Liblutu, from the second year (month and day lost).

impossible to determine whether he undertook projects of reform similar to those of Uruk in these cities. There are no texts from Ur and Kesh dated to his reign and texts from Larsa are too few to allow even a tentative reconstruction of the archive of the Ebabbar. Since in inscription 1 those cities are referred to as $m\bar{a}h\bar{a}z\bar{i}$ "cult centers," one may venture that the chief purpose of his trip was to inquire into cultic matters and to find out if reforms were needed. But this is the realm of pure speculation. There is very little information on the king's activities after he went back to Babylon. According to the entry of the chronicle for the first year, which is very damaged, there was another campaign to Cilicia at the end of the year, which seems to have been successful.

2.3.3 The Second Year (April 19, 554–April 6, 553)

The entry of the chronicle for the second year consists of the single statement that in the month Tebētu (January 553) the weather in Hamath was cold (Grayson 1975a: 105, Col. I, 9-10). This might explain why there was no campaign to Syria and Cilicia that year. However, there may be a more likely explanation: Nabonidus was perhaps preparing for the long campaign which was to lead him to Arabia. Since that campaign started shortly after the beginning of his third year, one can presume that he refused to waste his energies and those of his troops on another Syrian or Cilician campaign and therefore stayed in Babylonia. Much of the evidence concerning the date of the consecration of Nabonidus' daughter, the rebuilding of the Egipar at Ur, the restoration of the Ebabbar at Sippar, and the fashioning of a new tiara for the statue of Šamaš has already been discussed in the preceding chapter (see sections 1.2.1, 1.2.2.1.1, and 1.3.2 to 1.3.6). These projects absorbed the attention of Nabonidus for most of the second year and were his last notable undertaking before his departure for Arabia.

2.3.3.1 The Consecration of the Daughter of Nabonidus

According to inscription 2, the consecration of En-nigaldi-Nanna came as the result of an astronomical observation (see section 1.3.2):

On account of the wish for an *entu* priestess, in the month Ulūlu, the month (whose Sumerian name means) "work of the goddesses," on the thirteenth day the moon was eclipsed and set while eclipsed. Sîn requested an *entu* priestess. Thus (were) his sign and his decision.

It is known from the Royal Chronicle that the eclipse must have taken place in the second year of Nabonidus or slightly before and there is no problem in

The History of the Early Reign

identifying it as that of September 26, 554 B.C. This eclipse was nearly total, lasted for 188 minutes, and reached its greatest magnitude at 1:42 GMT in the morning, which means 4:42 in Babylonian time. Placing the sunrise in Iraq around 6:00 for that period of the year, it means that the moon did set heliacally while eclipsed.³⁵

While there is no reason to doubt that the eclipse happened as reported in the inscription, some problems seem to have arisen concerning its meaning. H. Lewy has pointed out that, according to the astrological series *enūma Anu Enlil*, an eclipse of the moon in Ulūlu observed during the morning watch, as was the case here, meant that Sîn requested an *entu* priestess (H. Lewy 1949: 49). Here follows the relevant passage of the series (Virolleaud 1908: Sîn XXIV, 52 and XXV, 72):

AŠ ina ^{iti}KIN AN.MI EN.NUN.U₄.ZAL.LE GAR-un ^d30 NIN.DINGIR.RA URU₄-eš (šumma ina ulūlu attalû šāt urri iškun sîn entu ēreš)

If in the month Ulūlu an eclipse (of the moon) occurs during the morning watch, Sîn wants a high priestess.

However, according to the Royal Chronicle, things do not seem to have been quite so simple: the astrological series *enūma Anu Enlil* was brought from Babylon for the interpretation of the eclipse, but Nabonidus appears not to have "understood" what it meant:

Col. III 2. [.....] tup-pi.meš èš.gàr $_{\text{u}_{\text{-}}}$ An- $_{\text{-}}$ den-líl-lá 3. $_{\text{e}_{\text{-}}}$ pi-sa-an ul-tu tin.tir $_{\text{-}}$ ia a-na nap-lu-su 4. $_{\text{-}}$ lúl-duB.sar.meš ú-bil-lu-nu ma-har-šú la še-mu 5. [l]a i-di lib-bu-uš ma!-la qa-bé-e-šú

The scribes brought baskets from Babylon (containing) the tablets of the series *enūma Anu Enlil* to check (it, but since) he did not hearken to (what it said), he did not understand what it meant.

The passage is difficult, but its general implications are clear. Whether Nabonidus had already made up his mind as to the meaning of the eclipse and therefore refused to check the astrological series, or did check them but disagreed with the scribes on their interpretation, it seems that the consecration of En-nigaldi-Nanna was felt to be uncalled for. This alleged stubbornness of the

35. I wish to thank Prof. Asger Aaboe who helped me with the astronomical material relating to this eclipse. The tables used here to translate the data into modern astronomical terms are those of von Oppolzer 1962: lunar eclipse no. 1007.

king is perhaps reflected in the Book of Daniel, in the passage where Nebuchadnezzar (i.e. Nabonidus), after having dismissed the plea of the "Chaldaeans," states that the matter is settled for him (*Daniel II*, 3-5):

And the king said to them, "I had a dream, and my spirit is troubled to know the dream." Then the Chaldaeans said to the king, "O king, live forever! Tell your servants the dream, and we will show the interpretation." The king answered the Chaldaeans, "The word from me is sure: if you do not make known to me the dream and its interpretation, you shall be torn limb from limb, and your houses shall be laid in ruins."

But this does not imply that Nabonidus was necessarily wrong in his interpretation of the eclipse; on the contrary, all the evidence suggests that he was right. However, he may have "forced" things slightly. Perhaps the eclipse needed to be total, which was not the case. As seen earlier, the cancellation of one of his daughter's offices at Uruk when he visited the city in May 555, and the fact that he visited Ur during the same trip, together with the presence of the governor of Ur at Uruk a few months later all suggest that Nabonidus already had some project in mind for Ur. Of course, nobody could predict that an eclipse would happen on that precise day, but predicting that an eclipse would happen sometime in that period of the year was within the scientific capabilities of Babylonian astronomers. It is conceivable that, being well aware of this, the king made advance preparations for the consecration of his daughter and, when the eclipse did happen, intentionally twisted its ominous meaning to fit his plans.

However, the consecration of En-nigaldi-Nanna met some opposition, and, if it is not to be ascribed to incorrect interpretation of the eclipse, the only other reason would be that the institution of *entu* priestesses had become so obsolete that, even though the eclipse meant that Sîn wanted a priestess, the consecration of one was considered improper. This interpretation may be supported by the evidence from the Royal Chronicle:

Col. III, 5. zána.rú.a 6. ldnà-nì.gub-urì lugal tin.tir ki dumu ldninurta-sum-mu 7. [šá] şa-lam nin.dingir.ra par-şi-šú al-ka-ka-ti-šú 8. [u k]i-du-de-e-šú šaṭ-ru ugu-šú it-ti ṭup-pi.meš 9. [... ... a-n]a tin.tir ki ina la e-de-e 10. [...] i-ra-am-mu qa-tuš-šú 11. [...]

A stela of Nebuchadnezzar I, king of Babylon, son of Ninurta-nādinšumi, on which there was a picture of an *entu* priestess and her rituals,

The History of the Early Reign

131

rules, and ceremonies were written, with the tablets [...] to Babylon, unwittingly [...] he lay his hands [...]

The text is unfortunately damaged at the crucial point; it seems to report that Nabonidus, after having brought back the stela and tablets to Babylon, committed some impious act concerning them. The "tablets" in question might be the astrological series just referred to in the preceding lines of the text. More likely they were old records from Ur, as can be seen in inscription 2:

Col. I, 26. áš-šú iš-tu U₄.meš ru-qu-tim pa-ra-aş en-ti ma-šu-ú-ma 27. la ud-du-ú ši-ki-in-šu u₄-mi-šá-am uš-ta-ad-da-an 28. a-da-an-nu ik-šu-da-am-ma up-ta-at-ta-a-ni Ká.meš 29. ap-pa-li-is-ma ^{zá}na.rú.a la-bi-ri ša ^dna-bi-um-ku-dur-ri-ú-şur 30. dumu ^{ld}nin-urta-na-din-šu-mi Lugal pa-na ma-aḫ-ra-a 31. ša ṣa-lam nin.dingir.ra ba-aš-mu ṣe-ru-uš-šu 32. si-ma-a-ti-šu lu-bu-uš-ta-šu ù ti-iq-ni-šu 33. it-ti-i iš-ṭu-ru-ma a-na é.ge₆.pàr ú-še-ri-bu 34. ṭup-pa-nu ù ^{giš}li.U₅.um.meš libir.ra.meš at-ta-şi da-al-tú 35. ki-ma la-bi-ri-im-ma e-pú-uš 36. ^{zá}na.rú.a si-ma-ti-šu ù ú-na-a-at é-šu 37. e-eš-ši-iš ab-ni ṣe-ru-uš-šu aš-ṭu-ur-ma 38. ma-ḥa-ar ^den.zu ù ^dnin-gal en.meš-e-a ú-ki-in

Because since distant days the ritual of high priesthood had been forgotten and its nature was not known, daily did I seek advice. The appointed time arrived and the gates were opened before me. I beheld an ancient stela of Nebuchadnezzar (I), son of Ninurta-nādin-šumi, a former king, upon which was fashioned the picture of an *entu* priestess. They had also written down her insignia, her garments, and her ornaments, and placed it in the Egipar. I took out the old tablets and writing boards, and restored the panels³⁶ according to the ancient customs. I made anew the stela, her insignia and the (ritual) vessels of her residence, which I inscribed and set up before Sîn and Ningal my lords.

36. Clay's copy has BA at the end of the line, but a recent collation of the text has convinced me that the scribe wrote the sign UD over BA without erasure. In that case the previous reading da-al-ba, which did not really make sense, should be replaced by da-al-tú. The word daltu "door" would refer to the panels of the writing boards, a meaning which fits the context perfectly: "I took out the old tablets and writing boards and I restored the panels according to the ancient customs." Admittedly, the word daltu does not have this meaning in Akkadian, but its Hebrew cognate not not be possibility that daltu had the same meaning in Akkadian, see Parker 1961: 41, text ND 2653. On writing-boards in general see Wiseman 1965.

The similarities between this inscription and the Royal Chronicle are striking. First, the "tablets brought to Babylon" mentioned in the Royal Chronicle were probably the old records from the time of Nebuchadnezzar I found in the Egipar. Second, Nabonidus did not only find the stela, he restored it and apparently relied on its inscribed portions to revive the rituals and ceremonies of the *entu* priestess, which "had been forgotten since distant days." According to the Royal Chronicle, Nabonidus handled the stela and the tablets "unwittingly/ignorantly." Furthermore, "he laid his hands upon it/ them." The implication that his interpretation of these old rituals was wrong or that his idea of reviving them was impious, and that his antiquarian interest was encroaching on orthodoxy is stressed.

The Royal Chronicle does not refer to a general reform of the cult at Ur: after the passage reporting that the stela and the tablets were taken to Babylon, there is a gap of a few lines, and, when the text becomes intelligible again, the consecration of En-nigaldi-Nanna is briefly mentioned and the report on the restoration of the Ebabbar begins. Inscription 2, on the other hand, alludes to a reorganization of cultic matters in the Egišnugal and the other temples of the city. These reforms are described in an *inūšu* clause which follows the account of the restoration of the Egipar and the consecration of En-nigaldi-Nanna:

Col. II, 18. ì-nu-šu ša den.zu ù dnin-gal en.meš-e-a 19. sa-at-tuk-ki-šu-nu e-li ša pa-na ú-ṭa-aḥ-ḥi-id 20. mi-im-ma šum-šu in é.Kiš.Nu.gál ú-da-aš-ši 21. ša u₄-mi 3 udu.nita e-li 1-en udu.nita gi-na-a la-bi-ri 22. a-na d30 ù dnin-gal en.meš-e-a lu ú-ki-in 23. bu-ša-a ma-ak-ku-ru qé-re-eb é.Kiš.Nu.gál ú-da-aš-ši 24. aš-šum bur-sag-ge-e ul-lu-li-im-ma ḥi-ṭi-ti la ra-še-e 25. ra-am-ku-ut é.Kiš.Nu.gál ù é.meš dingir. meš 26. e-nu i-šip-pí zabar.dab.ba lúnumun.lum lúen-gi-ṣu 27. lúa-ri-ru lúgal.dù lúdí lí didul.ú.Ḥa [lú]ì.du_8.gal-lum 28. lúti-ir é lúla-ga-ru šá-ki-nu taq-ri-ib-ti 29. lúnar.meš mu-ḥa-ad-du-ú lìb-bi dingir. meš 30. lúki-ni-iš-tum šu-ut na-bu-ú šu-ma-an-šu-un 31. i-li-ik-šu-nu ap-ṭu-ur-ma šu-bar-ra-šu-nu [áš]-ku-un 32. ub-bi-ib-šu-nu-ti-ma 33. a-na den.zu ù dnin-gal en.meš-e-a ú-zak-ki-šu-nu-ti

At that time, I made the fixed offerings of Sîn and Ningal, my lords, more abundant than before. I provided abundantly for everything pertaining to the Egišnugal. I established for Sîn and Ningal, my lords, a daily (regular offering) of three male sheep, more than the old regular offering of one male sheep. I provided the inside of the Egišnugal with abundant possessions and properties. In order to keep the meal offerings (ritually) clean and not to have any sin committed, the high priest, the purification

The History of the Early Reign

priest, the *zabardabbu* priest, the NUMUN.LUM priest, the cook, the miller, the *rāb bani*, the builder, the DUL.Ú.ḤA priest, the chief of the door-keepers, the *tīr bīti* priest, the *lagaru* priest who performs the intercession ritual, the singers who rejoice the heart of the gods, (all) the priests according to their names, (all) the priesthood of the Egišnugal and of the temples of the gods, I released them from their service obligation and I set them free. I purified them (ritually) and I consecrated them to Sîn and Ningal, my lords.

Unfortunately there are no archival texts from Ur dated to the reign of Nabonidus, so that it remains impossible to evaluate the scope of the reforms listed in this passage. Nevertheless, it is striking that Nabonidus yielded here to his personal religious inclinations: the regular offerings for Sîn and Ningal were increased threefold, and the priesthood of the city was granted a privileged status, the nature of which, however, is impossible to determine.

2.3.3.2 THE RESTORATION OF THE EBABBAR OF SIPPAR

The second major undertaking of that year was the restoration of the Ebabbar of Sippar, which is described in the Royal Chronicle. All the evidence concerning its chronology has been discussed in the preceding chapter. A decision was made to restore the Ebabbar at the end of Nabonidus' first year. Excavations were conducted during the first half of the second year and the old foundations were reached in Ulūlu (September), at the same time as the eclipse discussed above. The rebuilding of the temple took six more months, and, at the beginning of his third year, Nabonidus could dedicate the Ebabbar and present to Šamaš a tiara made "according to the ancient customs." There is evidence, according to CT 56: 420, that the king visited Sippar in Tašrītu (October) of the second year, a few weeks after the old foundations of the Ebabbar were discovered. One can therefore presume that the purpose of this second visit to Sippar was to personally supervise the rebuilding of the temple:

obv. 1. [73] udu.nitá sizkur lugal šá lugal 2. ina ká.gal-ú šá É.Babbar.ra ip!-ru-us-su 3. 8 udu.nitá eš-ru-ú šá 1d nà-numun-mu 4. a-šú šá 1s eš-ba-nu pap 81 udu.nitá 5. ina lìb-bi 10 udu.nitá a-na é na-da-ri 6. [......] 1d en-lugal-urì šá pad.hi.a lugal 7. [..........] na-šu-ú 61 udu.nitá 8. [.......] ina igi 1z zalág- d utu rev. 9. [......]-ši 10. [.....]-un iti du_6 11. u₄-23-kám mu-2-kám 1d nà-ní.tuk 12. lugal tin.tir ki

[73] male sheep, the offering of the king, which the king selected at the

gate of the Ebabbar. 8 male sheep, the tithe of Nabû-zēr-iddina, son of Aḫu-banû. Total: 81 male sheep, of which 10 male sheep, to the *bīt nadari* [......] Bēl-šar-uṣur, the man in charge of the king's provisions, ³⁷ [......] have been brought. 61 male sheep [.........] under the supervision of Nūr-Šamaš [......] Month Tašrītu - Day 23 - Second year of Nabonidus, king of Babylon.

Such texts mentioning royal offerings ($n\bar{n}q\bar{e}$ šarri) are quite frequent in the archive of the Ebabbar (Nbn 265 and 387 and CT 56: 416, 418, 421, and 422). However, this is the only such text where the king is specified as having selected the sheep himself at Sippar. In this connection the following passage from inscription 5 should be noted:

Col. I, 26. u₄-mi-šam-ma ut-nen-ni-šum-ma a-na ša-at-ti ni-qa-a aq-qí-šum-ma eš.BAR-a ap-ru-us-su 27. ^dUTU EN şi-i-ri ul-tu u₄-me ru-qu-tu ia-a-ši ú-qa-ma-an-ni 28. an-na šá-lim-ti eš.BAR-a ki-nim ša ša-la-mu šip-ri-iá u kun-nu eš-re-e-ti 29. ^dUTU ù ^dIM ú-šá-áš-ki-nu i-na te-er-ti-ia 30. a-na eš.BAR-šu-nu ki-nim šá la in-nu-ú ma-gal at-kal-ma

Daily I prayed to him (Šamaš) and concerning it (the restoration of the Ebabbar) I made offerings to him and reached a decision. Šamaš, the lofty lord, had waited for me since days of old. A positive and sure answer, a firm decision that my work should be completed and the shrines secured did Šamaš and Adad establish in my omen. Their true decision which is not to be changed did I trust greatly.

It is possible that some of the sheep selected by the king in CT 56: 420 were meant to be sacrificed for the extispicies mentioned in inscription 5. We know from Babylonian rituals for the repair of temples that such extispicies and sacrifices were performed at various stages of the rebuilding, e.g., upon laying the new foundations of the temple, after the old ones had been disclosed, which is precisely the case here (Thureau-Dangin 1921: 42–45).

During the excavation of the foundations of the Ebabbar, an old statue of Sargon of Akkad was discovered. No inscription of Nabonidus alludes to this discovery, which is only known from the following account found in the Royal Chronicle:

^{37.} This Bēl-šar-uşur is not the king's son, but a namesake who often appears in the Ebabbar archive in his function of *ša kurummat šarri* "man in charge of the king's provisions."

Col. III, 29. şa-lam 'Lugal-ú-kin ad 'na-ram-d'30 ina qé-reb 30. te-me-en-na šá-a-šú ip-pa-al-li-is-ma meš-li 31. sag.meš-šú né-si-ma il-li-ku la-ba-riš la ut-tu-ú Col. IV, 32. bu-un-na-an-nu-šú áš-šú dingir.meš pi-it-lu-hu šu-qu-ri 33. lugal-ú-tú ú-še-šib-ma lú-um-ma-nu mu-de-e šip-ri 34. sag.du alan šá-a-šú ú-di-iš-ma ú-šak-lil 35. bu-un-na-an-nu-šú-nu šú-a-tim a-šar-šú nu kúr-ir 36. qé-reb é.babbar.ra ú-še-šib-šú ú-kin-šú tak-li-mu

He (Nabonidus) beheld a statue of Sargon, father of Narām-Sîn, within the foundations. Half of its head was broken and it was so worn that its face could not be recognized. Because of (his) reverence for the gods and (his) respect for kingship, he summoned the skilled craftsmen, renovated the head of that statue and restored the face of it (!). He did not alter its location but placed it in the Ebabbar and established an oblation for it.

The discovery of old royal statues in foundations is not specifically covered by the rituals for the repair of temples. However, that text does contain provisions for the case of a royal image falling over and breaking, or of its shape becoming altered (Thureau-Dangin 1921: 38–39 and Hallo 1988: 63), an eventuality not so remote from what the Royal Chronicle describes. The alteration of a royal image seems to have been interpreted as a bad omen for the reigning monarch.

According to inscription 5, Nabonidus also set up his own statue in the Ebabbar:

Col. II, 9. ši-ţir šu-mi-ia u şa-lam lugal-ú-ti-ia 10. da.rí.a ú-kin qé-reb-šú

An inscription of mine and a statue of my everlasting kingship did I set up in it (in the Ebabbar).

Col. II, 22. e-ep-še-tu-ú-a dam-qa-a-ta ši-țir šu-mi-ia u șa-lam LUGAL-ú-ti-ia 23. ha-di-iš na-ap-li-sa-a-ma

(O Šamaš), look joyfully at my good deeds, the inscription of mine, and my royal statue.

The setting up of this statue is also reported in inscription 8, in the recapitulatory account of the restoration of the Ebabbar:

Col. I, 35. ši-ţir šu-mi-iá 36. u şa-lam lugal-ú-ti-iá ma-ḫar ^dutu ù ^da-a 37. en.meš-ú-a Col. II, 1. ú-ki-in a-na du-ur u₄-mi

I set up forever an inscription of mine and my royal statue before Šamaš and Aya my lords.

The statue of himself which Nabonidus set up in the Ebabbar certainly had a different purpose from that of Sargon. As can be deduced from inscription 8, his statue was a votive one, which probably depicted him praying, and which was placed in the cella of Šamaš and Aya. The statue of Sargon, on the other hand, was destined to be a deified royal image worshipped in the temple. However, since this is the only known occurrence of a Neo-Babylonian king setting up his own statue in a temple, one may venture that Nabonidus was influenced in his decision by the discovery of Sargon's statue, which originally was probably also a votive statue placed in the temple of Šamaš. This would provide one more example of Nabonidus trying to link himself with great rulers of the past. It is noteworthy that the Royal Chronicle ascribes the king's decision to restore Sargon's image to "his reverence for the gods and his respect for kingship." It shows how much he valued his role as king and how great was his ambition to make his reign worthy of those of his most illustrious predecessors.

According to the Royal Chronicle, Nabonidus placed Sargon's statue in the Ebabbar and "established an oblation for it." As pointed out by Kennedy, offerings to a statue of Sargon are mentioned in eight texts from the archive of the Ebabbar of Sippar dated to the reigns of Nabonidus, Cyrus, and Cambyses (Kennedy 1969: 79): the first five texts he discusses have recently been published as *CT* 57: 307 and 312, *CT* 56: 451 and *CT* 57: 242 and 617. *CT* 56: 442, which apparently was not known to him, should be added to this group. There is no doubt that these texts refer to the offering which, according to the Royal Chronicle, was instituted by Nabonidus in his second year. In many instances, the offering to the statue of Sargon is listed in these texts together with offerings to "the dwelling of Marduk and Şarpanitum and the dwelling of Anu and Nabû," such as in *CT* 57: 312, dated to the fifteenth year of Nabonidus:⁴⁰

obv. 1. 294 ma-ši-hi sat-tuk u 2. 36 ki.min 4 bán šá šu-bat ^damar.ud 3. u ^dṣar-pa- \langle ni \rangle -tum šu-bat ^da-num u [d nà] 4. 1 ki.min 4 bán šá ṣal-mu Lugal.gi.na 5. pap 332 ma-ši-hi 2 bán sat-tuk

^{38.} See CAD S s.v. salmu a) 2 for references to such statues.

^{39.} See ibid, c) 2 for deified royal images worshipped in temples.

^{40.} These offerings are listed in the same order in CT 56: 442, quoted below, in CT 57: 242, obv. 3-8, where the amounts given and the recipients are identical to CT 56: 442, and CT 57: 307, obv. 5-8, in which the four gods are not mentioned by name.

The Early Reign (556-553 B.C.)

294 measures of fixed offerings; and 36 measures and 4 $s\bar{u}t\bar{u}$ for the dwelling of Marduk and Şarpanitum, and the dwelling of Anu and [Nabû]; 1 measure and 4 $s\bar{u}t\bar{u}$ for the statue of Sargon. Total: 332 measures and 2 $s\bar{u}t\bar{u}$ of fixed offerings.

In the following text, CT 56: 442, probably to be dated to the second year of Nabonidus, 41 the same offerings are listed, but with one further specification:

obv. 19. 3[6] ki.min 4 b[án] šá u_4 -mu [...] šá šu-bat 20. d Amar.ud ù d ṣar-pa-ni-tum šu-bat d a-num u d nà 21. šá 1d nà-i lugal tin.tir ki ú-ki-in a-na 22. 1d utu-dù ù 1 ṣil-la-a sum-in 23. 1 ki.min 4 bán še.bar sat-tuk šá alan lugal.gin a-na 1d utu-dù 1 ṣil-la-a sum

3[6] measures and $4 s[\bar{u}t\bar{u}]$ (of regular offerings) for the days [......] for the dwelling of Marduk and Şarpanitum (and) the dwelling of Anu and Nabû, (an offering) which Nabonidus, king of Babylon, established, has been entrusted to Šamaš-ibni and Şillā. 1 measure and $4 s\bar{u}t\bar{u}$ of barley, the fixed offering for the statue of Sargon, has been entrusted to Šamaš-ibni and Şilla.

There is little doubt that the offerings to the four gods were instituted by Nabonidus at the same time as the offering to the statue of Sargon, on the occasion of his trip to Sippar in the fall of 554. It is impossible to determine whether they were an innovation or if the king reinstated old offerings interrupted under one of his predecessors, as was the case at Uruk the year before. Be that as it may, the important fact is that these offerings were established for Marduk, Şarpanitum, and Nabû, the main dynastic gods. Perhaps Nabonidus was trying to appear more "orthodox" after having yielded to his personal religious inclinations in his reorganization of cultic matters at Ur.

A last series of archival texts from Sippar consists of documents mentioning daughters of Nabonidus. The earliest one is CT 56: 237, dated to the end of the fifteenth year, which records a distribution of various commodities: one of the recipients is a "slave of the king's daughter" (obv. 4. ¹šEš-[..]-ia ¼qal-la 5. šá DUMU.SAL LUGAL). Another text, Nbn 971, dated to the following year, records the purchase of sesame by a daughter of the king, the reading of whose name is uncertain (obv. 2. ¹¹²ak-ka-bu-u'-za?-ma DUMU.SAL-su LUGAL). The third text,

Nbn 1043, dated to the last days of the reign, records the receipt of the tithe of another daughter of the king. (obv. 3. fina-£.SAG.ÍL-ri-Imat] 4. DUMU.SAL LUGAL). These texts show that at least two daughters of Nabonidus had connections with the Ebabbar. Of course, the texts are from the last years of the reign and do not show Nabonidus' daughters holding cultic offices in the Ebabbar, but one cannot dismiss the possibility that they were consecrated as priestesses during the king's visit in the second year. Sippar had not been very favorable to Nabonidus in the beginning of his reign and therefore the consecration of his daughters as priestesses there might have ensured some kind of surveillance of the city.

The Ebabbar was dedicated in the beginning of Nabonidus' third year and the new tiara for Šamaš brought from Babylon at the same time for the ceremonies. Shortly after the New Year's festival, the king set out for his long campaign to the west and Arabia, and did not return to Babylon for several years.

2.4 CONCLUSIONS

I will now assess the character of the early part of Nabonidus' reign in two of its aspects: his policy concerning Babylonia proper, and his policy concerning international relations, particularly with reference to his military involvement in Syria, Palestine, and Northern Arabia.

2.4.1 Nabonidus and Babylonia

A study of the relative importance of Sîn and Marduk in the earliest inscriptions of Nabonidus has shown that his devotion to Sîn was already a factor in the early years of his reign, but that, probably motivated by the need to secure his rule and to present himself as a worthy successor of the other Babylonian kings, he put his personal devotion in the background (see section 1.4.1). Analysis of his first deeds as king confirms these conclusions. His special devotion to Sîn accounts for his decision to restore the Ehulhul of Ḥarran, which is the earliest major step after his accession, although it did not take place until his return from Teima. Furthermore, the king recognized in inscription 1 that he was to some degree ignorant of the cult of Marduk, but that he still intended to acknowledge him as supreme god when acting as king of Babylon.

Study of his involvement in cultic matters leads to the same conclusion. Nabonidus granted special favors to Ur, which agrees well with the intensity of Sîn's glorification in inscription 2. But in his dealings with Uruk and Sippar, he

^{41.} There are traces of two horizontal wedges after the sign MU, which could be remnants of SAG (for MU.SAG.NAM.LUGAL.LA), or stand for numbers 2 or 8, 2 being more likely since 8 is rarely written with horizontal wedges.

does not appear to have been the heretic the Verse Account would have us believe he was. On the contrary, he even established offerings for Marduk and Sarpanitum at Sippar, a rather unexpected deed for a king whose devotion to Sîn is generally depicted as exclusive. He also reinstated the offerings for the temple of Marduk at Uruk as they had been in the time of Nebuchadnezzar, who was hardly a heretic. The other actions taken by the king at Uruk show that, in religious matters, he wanted to be perceived more as a restorer of old practices than as an innovator. He reinstated offerings which had apparently been interrupted under Neriglissar and dismissed all the officials who might have been associated with these interruptions.

Whether these actions were motivated by pure propagandistic purposes or by a genuine concern for religious matters is not very relevant, and by its nature the evidence cannot answer this question. The important fact is that, in the first part of his reign, nobody could charge Nabonidus with upsetting the cultural and religious foundations of Babylonia. The only deeds which could have been perceived with hostility were the consecration of his daughter and increased royal authority in temple affairs, which is well documented for the Eanna of Uruk. Nevertheless, when one considers only the early part of his reign, Nabonidus does not appear fundamentally different from his predecessors, save that his inscriptions display a stronger piety and are a truer reflection of a strong individuality by breaking with traditional patterns.

One aspect of Nabonidus' personality deserving more consideration is his interest in the past. This was noticed early by historians, who portrayed Nabonidus as an aged antiquarian solely interested in archaeological excavations and completely detached from the realities of government. These activities were put in their proper perspective by Goossens, who demonstrated that they derived from the well-established belief that temples could be properly rebuilt only if their old foundations were found and the new structure erected according to the original layout (Goossens 1948). This explains why so much importance is given in building inscriptions of Neo-Babylonian kings to finding early foundation deposits (temennu). Goossens concluded that Nabonidus was no more of an antiquarian than Nabopolassar and Nebuchadnezzar, but that he was certainly more pious. Yet Nabonidus' antiquarian interest was not limited to finding ancient temennu. His revival of the institution of the entu priestess at Ur, which had apparently fallen into oblivion centuries before, is a good example. Another is the restoration of a votive cylinder seal which had been offered by Aššurbanipal to Sîn (inscription 1, Col. X, 32-51). This cylinder seal was placed in the Esagil by Nabonidus. Of course one might argue that in these two cases the king was strictly motivated by his personal devotion, not by any particular historical concern.

However, there is evidence suggesting that Nabonidus' interest in the past went further than reviving forgotten aspects of the cult of Sîn. He is the only Neo-Babylonian king who makes references to history in his inscriptions. Inscription 1 is a good example: it refers to no less than eight Assyrian and Babylonian rulers, in four cases in relation to events connected with their reign (Eriba-Marduk, Sennacherib, Nabopolassar, and Neriglissar), and in five cases for political or religious reasons (Aššurbanipal, Nebuchadnezzar, Awēl-Marduk, Neriglissar, and Lābâši-Marduk). As seen earlier, most of these references are not incidental: they belong to historical narratives with a specific purpose. They attest not only to curiosity about the past, but also to true historical consciousness. Nabonidus sought to put his own accession to kingship into historical perspective going back as far as Sennacherib, who had reigned more than a century and a half earlier.

If one considers the later inscriptions, one finds similar material in the stela of Adad-guppi. In three instances this text refers to kings in whose reigns she lived. The one pertinent to our discussion is the chronology of her life (this passage is fully quoted p. 73): the inscription states that she was born in the twentieth year of Aššurbanipal and lived to see his 43rd year, the third year of Aššur-etel-ilāni, the 21st year of Nabopolassar, and so on for each Neo-Babylonian king until her death in the ninth year of Nabonidus. The chronological problem posed by this reckoning has been the subject of much discussion, from which a consensus has emerged that it contains an error of two years (Borger 1965, Reade 1970, and von Voigtlander 1963: 221-29). All these studies have assumed that the purpose of the stela was to provide accurate chronological data, which is arguably not the case. Indeed, if the computation was made according to the chronology of Harran, why were Sîn-šar-iškun and Aššur-uballit II, the last two Assyrian monarchs, overlooked? On the other hand, if the computation was made according to the chronology of Babylon, why were years not counted according to the reigns of Šamaš-šum-ukīn and Kandalānu, and why was Aššur-etel-ilāni mentioned, since according to the stela the last year of Aššurbanipal (627-626 B.C.) immediately preceded the first regnal year of Nabopolassar in Babylon (626-625 B.C.)? In fact, the succession of kings provided in the inscription of Adad-guppi does not fit any known Assyrian or Babylonian city. This may indicate that the choice of rulers was made to fulfill a specific purpose, and one may wonder why the chronology was inserted in the inscription at all, since its only apparent purpose was to give the age of Adad-guppi. There was no need to mention all these kings: a statement that she was born in the twentieth year of Aššurbanipal and died in the ninth year of Nabonidus would have sufficed. The reason for inserting the chronology was to give a selective list of Nabonidus' predecessors in order to show imperial continuity between the Assyrian and

The Early Reign (556-553 B.C.)

Neo-Babylonian kingdoms. That the last contenders to the Assyrian throne were omitted is because they were not considered legitimate by Nabonidus, since power had already shifted to Babylonia by the time they ruled. Mention of Aššurbanipal was natural, since he was the most prestigious Assyrian monarch and his rule coincided with the maximal territorial expansion of Assyria. This also explains why Aššur-etel-ilāni was mentioned in the list, although his reign overlapped that of Nabopolassar: he was the son and legitimate successor of Aššurbanipal. But this was the only concession made to Assyrian dynastic continuity. The last monarchs were skipped and the rest of the chronology was computed according to the reigns of Neo-Babylonian rulers. Nabonidus' vision of imperial continuity is here manifest.

In another instance where the inscription of Adad-guppi refers to Neo-Babylonian kings (see p. 69), only Nabopolassar, Nebuchadnezzar, and Neriglissar are mentioned. The omission of Awēl-Marduk is significant: he and Lābâši-Marduk are charged with incompetence in military matters in inscription 1, and they are indirectly accused of having neglected the funerary offerings to their fathers in the stela of Adad-guppi. Omission of these minor kings provides another example of Nabonidus reinterpreting the past in order to promote his own vision of history. According to him, the successive empires of Assyria and Babylonia were two historical manifestations of the same imperial idea, and royal legitimacy rested more on the ability to fulfill this imperial mission than on a legalistic claim to the throne by right of descent. Unlike his predecessors, Nabonidus seems to have subordinated his political decisions to a personal interpretation of history and to have justified these decisions by repeated references to the past.

Nabonidus' antiquarian interest was also stronger than that of his predecessors, as can be concluded by comparing their respective inscriptions. While Nebuchadnezzar and Neriglissar would mention only briefly finding the old *temennu* and the name of the king who had deposited it, Nabonidus is often more explicit. In three instances he attempts to date these kings: he dates Ḥammurabi 700 years before Burnaburiaš (Ebabbar of Larsa: inscriptions 9, Col. II, 21-22 and 16, Col. II, 1-2), Šagaraktišuriaš 800 years before himself (Eulmaš of Sippar-Anunītum: inscription 15, Col. III, 27-29), and Narām-Sîn 3200 years (!) before himself (Ebabbar of Sippar: inscription 15, Col. II, 57-58). In one case he even quotes fully the inscription laid by one of his predecessors, the Kassite king Kurigalzu (inscription 16, Col. II, 35-36). Furthermore, Nabonidus is the only king of the period whose building inscriptions offer historical reasons for a given temple to fall into disrepair: the ruin of the Eḥulhul is in two instances ascribed to the Medes (inscription 1, Col. X, 12-15, and

inscription 15, Col. I, 8-13), and that of the Eulmaš of Sippar-Anunītum to Sennacherib (inscription 1, Col. IV, 14-23, and inscription 16, Col. III, 26-29).

Another interesting example of Nabonidus' antiquarian interest is the discovery of the statue of Sargon in Sippar. He may have intended to connect himself with this most prestigious ruler of Mesopotamia's past by setting up a similar statue of himself in the Ebabbar. According to the Royal Chronicle, Nabonidus restored the statue of Sargon because of his "reverence for the gods and (his) respect for kingship." This statement is crucial, as it provides a unique piece of evidence for assessing the nature of Nabonidus' antiquarian interest: his restoration of Sargon's statue was motivated not solely by religious factors, but also by a purely profane interest in the past, particularly in this case where it concerned the first great imperial period in Mesopotamian history. 42 Nabonidus' interest in the Sargonic dynasty went even further. He restored the temple of Ištar of Akkad in Agade and excavations lasted for three years before the old temennu was found (inscription 16, Col. II, 59). Since this temennu was discovered in the seventh year of Nabonidus, 43 one may conclude that decision to restore this temple was made at the latest in the fourth year, and it is therefore very likely that the king was influenced in his decision by finding Sargon's statue. Even more interestingly, an excavation of the palace of Naram-Sîn in Agade was apparently undertaken at the same time, as the following text suggests (Clay 1912a). Its obverse consists of an impression in clay of an inscription of king Šar-kali-šarrī, and the reverse reads as follows:

rev. 1. zi-i-pa a-gur-ru zákal 2. ša a-sa-ar-ru pa-li-su-tim 3. ša ina É.GAL [a]-sa-ar-ru 4. ša dna-ra-am-den.zu lugal 5. i-na qé-er-ba a-ga-dè^{ki} 6. ^{Id}NÀ-NUMUN-SI.SÁ DUB.SAR i-mu-ru

Impression⁴⁴ from a diorite slab of the asarru⁴⁵ seen in the [a]sarru

- 42. Of course, one might argue that, as Sargon's statue was to receive quasi-divine honors, Nabonidus was still primarily motivated by cultic matters.
- 43. Grant Frame has informed me that, according to an unpublished fragment of a previously unknown cylinder of Nabonidus, the *temennu* of the Eulmaš of Agade was found in his seventh regnal year and the temple rebuilt the same year. The fragment is to be published by Frame.
 - 44. This word is discussed by Stol 1978 with references to previous discussions.

The Early Reign (556-553 B.C.)

palace of Narām-Sîn, the king, which Nabû-zēr-līšir, the scribe, found in Agade.

This document is not dated, but another document with a copy of an inscribed brick of Kurigalzu found in the $b\bar{t}t$ $ak\bar{t}tu$ of Agade by the same scribe is dated to the eighth year of Nabonidus. Its colophon reads as follows (CT 9: 3b, BM 22457):

rev. 14. ša mu-úḥ sig₄. Al. ùr. Ra 15. é a-ki-ti šá i-na a-ga-dè^{ki} 16. i-na iⁱⁱDU₆. Kù MU-8-KÁM 17. ^dNÀ-na-'i-id LUGAL KÁ. DINGIR. RA^{ki} 18. ^{ld}NÀ-ŠE. NUMUN-SI. SÁ DUB. SAR 19. DUMU ^lna-bu-un-na-a A!?. AB!? 20. i-mu-ru i-is-su-ḥa-am

(Inscription) which is on a brick which Nabû-zēr-līšir, the scribe, descendant of Nabunnaya, found and excerpted in Agade in the month Tašrītu of the 8th year of Nabonidus, king of Babylon.

Joannès recently reconstructed the career of Nabû-zēr-līšir (Joannès 1988). According to a number of private transactions from Babylon, he was a scribe in the capital from the accession year of Neriglissar to the third month of the eighth year of Nabonidus. According to BM 22457 he was transferred to Agade shortly afterwards, presumably as one of those expert *ummānu* from Babylon who specialized in archaeological excavations and the interpretation of old inscriptions. According to Joannès the sophisticated orthography of the documents written by Nabû-zēr-līšir in Babylon attests indeed to his high level of training. The chronology of his involvement with Agade shows that excavations in the *bīt akītu* and the palace of Nāram-Sîn were a follow-up on the rebuilding of the Eulmaš, completed a few months earlier. The sequence of discoveries at Agade follows a pattern identical with the excavations at Sippar: restoration of a sacred building led to further archaeological finds which were then used for "scholarly" and political motives.

So we have two well-documented instances of Nabonidus trying to connect himself with the Sargonic dynasty for reasons which were not entirely religious. His antiquarian and historical interest may thus be explained from a political angle.

The rise of Babylonia to a position of hegemony in the Near East was in all respects a new development. For most of the preceding millennium the city had been overshadowed by more powerful states, primarily Assyria, and the period of glory under its first dynasty was rather short, lasting only one generation at the end of Ḥammurabi's and the beginning of Samsu-iluna's reigns (Hallo and Simpson 1971: 101–03). Furthermore, this period does not seem to have been

remembered as particularly glorious in the later tradition. The transfer of power from Assyria to Babylonia at the end of the seventh century was made with no apparent spirit of continuity: Neo-Babylonian kings never referred to Assyria in their inscriptions, save for Nabopolassar when mentioning victories over its last rulers, nor did they ever claim its heritage, apparently content with the share of the Assyrian realm to which they had fallen heir. Their titulary is rather modest and bears little relation to that of the Sargonid kings expressing a more consistent imperial ideology. In short, Neo-Babylonian kings considered themselves rulers of one city, Babylon, and the extent of the territories they controlled did not seem to change their concept of kingship.

Nabonidus often breaks with this tradition in his own inscriptions: he calls the Assyrian kings his "royal ancestors" (inscription 15), and considers the sequence of the Neo-Assyrian and Neo-Babylonian states to be one of imperial continuity (inscription 1 and stela of Adad-guppi). When preoccupied with establishing the supremacy of Sîn after his return from Teima, he even went one step further by assuming the titulary of the Assyrian kings in two of his inscriptions (inscriptions 15 and 19) and referring to them as "having been entrusted by Sîn with the rule over mankind" (inscription 15), all of which points to his own ambition of establishing undisputed hegemony of Babylonia in the Near East. His interest in the Sargonic dynasty, which had always been remembered in the literary and historical tradition as the climax of Mesopotamian power, and which undoubtedly inspired the late Sargonid kings, can also be explained in the light of his imperial ambitions. In short, Nabonidus considered his own reign a resurrection of a universal empire on the Assyrian and Akkadian model, but centered in Babylon, a project which his predecessors never seemed to have contemplated, or at least one to which they never gave any political expression. It is significant that the structure of the "Cyrus Cylinder," which can be considered on the same level as the Verse Account as a piece of propaganda, follows the pattern of Neo-Assyrian royal inscriptions (Harmatta 1971). It is even more revealing that this text refers to Aššurbanipal, as is known by a new fragment of the cylinder (Berger 1974: 202-03, for a new edition of the joined passage). This suggests that the major issue of the reign was the contest as to which of these two powers was the true heir to the Assyrian empire.

2.4.2 The Military Policy of Nabonidus

Nabonidus' claim to the Assyrian heritage was to have important consequences on the international level. His decision to rebuild the Ehulhul involved a redefinition of the respective spheres of Median and Babylonian influence in the Near East. In accordance with his projects for Ḥarran, Nabonidus put forward an aggressive military policy from the very beginning, and he based his legitimacy to a large extent on the need for Babylonia to be ruled by a man experienced in military matters, which is easily perceived by studying inscription 1.

Nevertheless, apart from his second campaign to Cilicia in the fall of 555, Nabonidus does not seem to have contemplated any large scale military project in his first and second regnal years. This impression may be due to the nature of the evidence, which bears solely on the king's actions concerning the cult centers of Babylonia. It is likely that Nabonidus was waiting for Cyrus' revolt to start, a welcome event which would give him total freedom of action in Syria, Palestine, and Arabia. However, his decision to campaign in Arabia is usually described more as a sudden move than as a carefully planned military program. Further investigation of the sources suggests that this judgment may be too hasty.

If Nabonidus had some general projects in mind for the west and Arabia, one would expect to find some corresponding evidence in the inscriptions from the period immediately preceding his departure for those regions, in the second month of his third year. Two major inscriptions, nos. 5 and 6, can be dated to the end of his second year. They are of purely religious content, but the structure of such texts is free enough that a variety of material can be inserted in them without breaking down their overall coherence. The first relevant passage is a section of the prayer to Šamaš appended to inscription 5:

Col. II, 39. me-lam-mu bir-bir-ru-ka zi-i-me be-lu-ú-tu ša-lam-ma-at LUGAL-ú-tu 40. a-na ša-la-la KUR ^MKÚR-ia šu-lik-ki i-da-a-a lu-ur-ḫi-iṣ KUR a-a-bi-ia 41. lu-nar za-a'-ri-ia šil-lat na-ki-ri-ia lu-ku-ul bu-še-e ma-ti-tan 42. lu-še-ri-bi a-na qé-reb ma-ti-ia a-na-ku lu-ú LUGAL za-ni-in 43. mu-diš ma-ḫa-zu mu-šak-lil eš-re-e-ti a-na u₄-me da-ru-tu 44. a-na zi-kir šu-mi-ia kab-tu kul-lat na-ki-ri lit-tar-ri li-nu-šu 45. lik-ni-šu a-na še-e-pi-ia a-na u₄-me ṣa-a-ti liš-du-du ni-i-ri 46. bi-lat-su-nu kabit-ti a-na qé-reb uru-ia tin.tir^{ki} li-bil-nu ana maḫ-ri-iá

(O Šamaš), cause the radiance of your rays, lordly features, and royal brilliance, to march at my side for plundering the land of my enemy. May I overwhelm the country of my foes. May I slay my opponents. May I take booty from my adversaries. May I bring to my country the possessions of all lands. I am indeed a king provider who restores the sacred places and completes the (rebuilding of) sanctuaries forever. At the mention of my prestigious name, may all my adversaries be afraid and

quiver, may they bow down at my feet, may they pull my yoke for long days, may they bring into my presence their important tribute in my city Babylon.

Inscription 6, written at the same time, contains similar material in the appended prayer to Šamaš. The passage involved is much shorter than the preceding one, since the prayer of inscription 5 is six times longer than that of inscription 6:

Col. II, 46. i-pa-at ki-ib-ra-at er-bé-et-tim 47. nu-ḫu-uš ta-ma-a-ti ḫi-și-ib ša-di-i 48. ù ma-ti-ta-an ša-ti-ša-am-ma 49. a-na é.sag.íl é.gal an-e ù ki-tim lu-še-^[rib]

Let me bring every year in the Esagil, the temple of heaven and the underworld, the rich yield of the four regions, the abundant products of the seas, and the income of the mountain regions and all the countries.

The following passage of inscription 1, from the section reporting on the New Year's festival of Nabonidus' first year, is very valuable for comparison with the preceding one:

Col. IX, 11. 100 gun 21 ma.na 12. kù 5 gun 17 ma.na 13. kù.gi e-li kad₄-re-e 14. ša ka-al mu-1-kam 15. šá ina šu-ken-né-e 16. i-na i-pat ma-ti-tan 17. hi-şi-ib kur.meš 18. er-bi kal da-ad-me 19. ku-bu-ut-te-e lugal.meš 20. bu-še-e šá-ad-lu-ti 21. ša nun ^damar.ud 22. i-qí-pa-an-ni

(I brought to Marduk, Nabû, and Nergal) 100 talents and 21 minas of silver, 5 talents and 17 minas of gold, in addition to the yearly presents of submission (coming from) the overwhelming abundance of all countries, the rich yield of the mountains, the produce of all inhabited regions, the tribute of foreign kings and the vast possessions which prince Marduk had entrusted to me.

Thus, in the two inscriptions written just before the most important military campaign of his reign, Nabonidus made significant references to his imperial policy. Of course, these two passages are not the only examples of their kind: similar ones can be found in the inscriptions of Nebuchadnezzar and all the expressions employed here belong to the common stock of Assyrian and Babylonian royal inscriptions. But this does not imply that their occurrence in inscriptions 5 and 6 is meaningless. On the contrary, they must reflect the king's state of mind and political intent just before he set out for his campaign to the

west. This is borne out by the fact that similar passages are absent from inscriptions written after the third year, during the period of his stay in Arabia, when such texts were commissioned by Belshazzar.

The vocabulary used in these passages is rather vague. However, the expressions hişib šadî, nuhuš tâmāti, and hişib šadî ū mātitān, found in inscriptions 1 and 6, warrant special attention. They are commonly attested in Neo-Assyrian royal inscriptions, and in rarer instances in Neo-Babylonian ones, in particular hişib tâmāti and hişib šadî, which respectively seem to refer to the Syro-Palestinian area and to the mountainous regions east of Mesopotamia. Significantly, they recur in inscription 13, written after the return from Teima:

Col. I, 31. ina mu šá-a-šú ina itiBARÁ 32. u itiDU₆ un.meš kururlki u kurhat-ti hi-sib kur-i 33. u tam-tim i-leq-qu-nim-ma

In that year, in the months Nisanu and Tašrītu, the people of Akkad and Syria could receive the yield of the mountain regions and of the coastal regions.

This section reports on the results of Nabonidus' campaign to the west and Arabia, the most tangible of which was apparently the flowing of its products into Syria and Babylonia. The entry of the Nabonidus chronicle for the third year also reports that, after the victorious campaign against Ammananu (Lebanon), the products of the region were sent to Babylon (see Grayson 1975a: 105, 11. 11-13).

The words šadû "mountains" and tâmātu "seas" in the inscription must be examined. There is no major problem posed by tâmātu, obviously used in inscription 13 in reference to Palestine and Phoenicia, and the regions located along the gulf of Aqaba and the Red Sea, that is to say, Transjordan, Madyan, and Northern Hedjaz. All these regions were economically intertwined and it seems therefore reasonable to assume that the semantic range of tâmātu was extended so as to include northern Arabia. The problem posed by šadû is more complicated. It cannot refer here to the mountain ranges of western Iran, which never fell under Babylonian control. Judging from the context in which it occurs in inscription 13, it must refer to mountain ranges located south of Syria, such as the Lebanon mountains and the Anti-Lebanon (Ammananu). In inscription 9, dated to the tenth year, several years after the consolidation of Nabonidus' new Arabian realm, the king receives the otherwise unattested epithet kāšidu šadî elûtim, "conqueror of lofty mountains" (inscription 9, Col. I, 10; see Seux 1967: 139). This epithet might refer to Lebanon, but more likely, to the new territories conquered by Nabonidus in northern Arabia, where indeed high mountain

ranges exist. Most of this region is covered with mountains, which are most dense near the Red Sea, gradually decrease to the east, and end at the Nafūd, the desert northeast of Teima which lies between this region and southern Mesopotamia. Therefore it seems highly probable that, as is the case with $t\hat{a}m\bar{a}tu$, the semantic range of $\check{s}ad\hat{u}$ was extended here so as to include not only the Ammananu, but also the parts of northern Arabia conquered by Nabonidus. In light of this, one may suggest that references to these same regions in inscriptions written before the campaign of the third year constitute evidence that Nabonidus had been contemplating the consolidation of Babylonian power in Lebanon and Transjordan and the conquest of Arabia since his accession year.

The Teima Period and the End of the Reign

(553-539 B.C.)

The fragmentary character of the evidence for this period precludes any attempt to reconstruct its history in detail. This relative lack of evidence is due for the most part to the loss of several entries in the chronicle and of the entire Royal Chronicle from this period. Therefore, I will adopt a thematic approach, investigating five aspects of the reign: the chronology of the Teima period, the sojourn of Nabonidus in Arabia, Belshazzar's administration of government during his father's absence, Nabonidus' policy after his return to Babylon, and the events connected with the downfall of the empire.

3.1 CHRONOLOGY OF THE TEIMA PERIOD

One of the chief problems related to Nabonidus' sojourn in Teima is its chronology. As yet, no agreement has been reached, and no convincing chronological framework has been proposed. According to some scholars, Nabonidus went to Arabia in his third or fourth year and came back to Babylon ten years later (Tadmor 1965: 356, years 4–13; von Voigtlander 1963: 183 and 198, years 3 or 4–13; Garelli 1968: 285, years 4–14). Others claim that his sojourn extended from his sixth to his sixteenth year, a suggestion gaining increasing favor (Röllig 1964a: 244 and von Soden 1983: 67). A recent attempt has even been made to determine the chronology of the Teima stay on the basis of the data found in the Book of Daniel (Hasel 1977, years 6–16). Since most of these studies fail to consider archival texts, a thorough reconsideration of the chronological problem, including this type of evidence, is strongly called for.

3.1.1 Direct Evidence for the Stay in Teima

The preserved parts of the Nabonidus chronicle cover three segments of the

reign: from the first to the third year, from the end of the sixth to the eleventh year, and the seventeenth year. For the seventh, ninth, tenth, and eleventh years, the following statement is repeated (Grayson 1975a: 106–08):

The king (was) in Teima (while) the crown prince, his officers, (and) his army (were) in Akkad. The king did not come to Babylon in the month Nisanu. Nabû did not come to Babylon. Bēl did not come out. The New Year's festival did not take place. The offerings were presented to the gods of Babylon and Borsippa, as in normal times, in the Esagil and the Ezida.

The entry for the eighth year consists of a blank space, and the entry for the seventeenth year shows that the king had returned to Babylon since the New Year's festival was performed. On the basis of the chronicle alone, Nabonidus arrived in Teima between the third and the seventh year, and left between the eleventh and the seventeenth.

The Verse Account provides a substantial report on his stay in Teima. The beginning of this report reads as follows:

Col. II, 17. šá-lul-ti Mu ina k[a]-šá-d[u] 18. ka-ra-áš ip-ta-qid ana reštu-ú bu-kúr-šú 19. ^{lú}ERÍN-ni ma-ti-tan ú-ta-'i-ir KI-šú 20. ip-ta-ţa-ar šu.MIN-su ip-ta-qid-su LUGAL-tú 21. ù šu-ú né-su-ti iş-şa-bat ḫarra-[nu] 22. e-mu-qu ^{kur}uRI^{ki} te-bu-ú it-ti-[šú] 23. ana ^{uru}te-ma-a' qéreb a-mur-ri-i iš-ta-kan IGI-[šú]

In the beginning of the third year, he (Nabonidus) entrusted the military camp to his first born (son). He put under his (command) the army of all the lands. He let everything go and entrusted the kingship to him and, as for himself, he took the path to distant regions. The military forces of Akkad taking the field with [him], he set out towards the city Teima, in the midst of Amurru.

This report connects Nabonidus' departure for Arabia with the campaign to the west he undertook in his third year. This campaign is described in the chronicle and in the Royal Chronicle. However, both texts break off in the middle, giving no information on the date or the circumstances under which Nabonidus conquered Teima. Nevertheless, according to the Verse Account the campaign of the third year is the one which eventually ended up in Arabia.

The last piece of evidence is inscription 13, which contains a statement by Nabonidus himself about the length of his stay in Teima. It explains the king's exile as a result of the impiety and rebellious behavior of the Babylonians (see p. 62):

Col. I, 22. u ana-ku 23. ul-tu uru-ia tin. tir ki ú-še-ri-qa-an-ni-ma 24. ú-

ru-uḥ urute-ma-a uruda-da-⟨nu⟩ urupa-dak-ku 25. uruḥi-ib-ra-a uruiá-di-ḥu u a-di uruiá-at-ri-bu 26. 10 mu.an.na.meš at-tal-[l]a-ku qé-reb-šú-un a-na uru-ia tin.tir^{ki} la e-ru-ub

And as for me, I removed myself out of my city Babylon, and (I proceeded) on the way (to) Teima, Dadanu, Padakku, Ḥibra, Yadiḥu, and as far as Yatribu. During ten years I went back and forth between them (and) did not enter my city Babylon.

The inscription continues with a report on Nabonidus' activities in his Arabian kingdom, after which the king describes the circumstances of his return:

Col. II, 11. 10 mu. An. Na. meš ik-šu-dam a-dan-nu 12. im-lu-u u₄-mu šá iq-bu-u lugal dingir. meš ^dšeš. ki-ri 13. ina ^{iti}du₆ u₄-17-kám u₄-mu ^d30 im-ma-ag-gàr 14. pi-šìr-šú

(After) ten years the appointed time arrived, fulfilled were the days which Nannar, the king of the gods, had said. On the seventeenth day of Tašrītu, "a day (upon which) Sîn is propitious," is its (ominous) meaning

The rest of this column consists of a long prayer to Sîn, the end of which is totally lost. The narrative on the return to Babylon resumes with the third column:

Col. III, 1. [] it-ti "ḤAL 2. [III]EN.ME.LI a-lak-tú ul par-sat a[t-
t]il-[ma] 3. [ina š]at mu-ši máš.ge ₆ pár-da-at a-di a-mat [] 4. im-
li мu ik-šu-du a-dan-nu šá [] 5. ul-tu ^{uru} te-ma-a ú-[
] 6. TIN.TIR ^{ki} URU be-lu-t[i-ia
] 8. šul?-ma kád?-ra-a il?-qu-ú a-na [] 9. [
] LUGAL.MEŠ qer-bu-tú 10. il-lu-nim-ma u-na-áš-šá-qu GìR.MIN-
iá 11. u ru-qu-tú iš-mu-u ip-la-hu dingir-ut-su gal-tú 12. din-
GIR.MEŠ U ^d INNIN.MEŠ Šá ip-par-du-ma i-ri-qa 13. is-saḫ-ru-nim-ma i-
qab-bu-ú ba-ni-ti 14. u ina par-su ^{lú} ḤAL iš-šá-kin UZU dum-qi-iá ina nu-
uh-šú 15. u tuh-du u hé-gál-la un.meš-iá ina kur-i.meš né-su-ti 16.
ar-te-ed-dam-ma ina šá-lim-ti aṣ-bat ú-ru-uḥ 17. ma-ti-ia

[...] I did not stop going to the diviner and the dream

1. The first part of this prayer is quoted, p. 60.

interpreter.² I I[ay do]wn [and in a] frightening night dream, with? the order [....]. Fulfilled was the year, the appointed time arrived, of [... ...]. From Teima I [proceeded? to] Babylon, [my] lord[ly] city [....]. They saw and [......]. They took? presents? of well-being?, to [...]. The neighboring kings came up to me and kissed my feet, while the distant ones heard and revered his (Sîn's) great godhead. The gods and goddesses who had fled to remote places³ surrounded me and spoke good (things) on my behalf. And by the verdict of the diviner, my good sign was established. In abundance, plenty, and prosperity, I led my people from remote uplands and I took the road to my country in peace.

The chronological information provided by inscription 13 is quite clear: Nabonidus stayed ten years away from Babylon and returned on Tašrītu 17 of an unspecified year. To make sure that this day was the appointed one, he successfully consulted diviners, and apparently a frightening dream induced him to leave Arabia. Two questions arise: why did Nabonidus choose Tašrītu 17 as the date of his departure, and what is the meaning of imli šattu "the year was fulfilled," in column III? The first question finds a ready answer in the inscription itself: this day was favourable according to the omens. This is corroborated by hemerological texts, which list Tašrītu 17 as a day upon which "Sîn is propitious to mankind" (see Röllig 1964a: 253, n. 100). But there may be more to it. According to Neo-Assyrian sources, the akītu festival of Sîn in Harran started on the seventeenth day of an unspecified month (see Thureau-Dangin 1921: 88). Since akītu festivals generally took place in Nisanu or Tašrītu (spring and fall festivals), there is a probability that that of Sîn at Harran started on Tašrītu 17 (Thureau-Dangin 1921: 86-88, and Pallis 1926: 11-49). If so, the report on Nabonidus' return to Babylon becomes more understandable. By the time inscription 13 was written, the king no longer concealed his exclusive devotion to Sîn. He would thus have made the date of his return coincide with the akītu festival of Sîn at Harran, for purely religious reasons. This contention is borne out by the fact that, as noted earlier (see p. 60), the long prayer inserted

into the middle of Nabonidus' report on his return to Babylon portrays Sîn as the universal god holding all heavenly functions. In this respect, the prayer is very similar to the prayers and hymns to Marduk which were recited during the New Year's festival in Babylon. It is therefore possible that it was part of the liturgy of the *akītu* festival of Ḥarran, which possibly marked the beginning of the religious year in that region. This interpretation furnishes an answer to the second question, the meaning of the expression *imli šattu*. It refers to the fact that Nabonidus returned to Babylon at the start of a new year, in Ḥarranian terms of course: it should be kept in mind that inscription 13 was intended for Ḥarran, not for Babylonia. The year referred to is the one which had just ended before his departure, the tenth full year of his absence from Babylon. These ten years were evidently not Babylonian years, since they were counted from Tašrītu and not from Nisanu. By using the religious calendar of Ḥarran, Nabonidus showed his neglect of the Babylonian New Year's festival, one of the main charges brought against him in the Verse Account.

Another text containing direct allusions to the Teima period is the "Prayer of Nabonidus" from Qumran, which ascribes a length of seven years to the king's stay in Arabia (Milik 1956). Since this document comes from a later and foreign tradition, which is otherwise known to have undergone further distortion in the Book of Daniel, it would be unwise to credit the chronological information it gives with any accuracy: the number seven was most probably used in this case as a round figure, a meaning it often has in the Bible and in the later Jewish tradition.

The last pieces of direct evidence are two archival texts from Uruk which have long been known. The first one, GCCI I: 294, reads as follows:

obv. 1. 50 gín kù.babbar a-na 2. 1 anše.a.ab.ba 3. ù a-na zíd.da-šú 4. a-na $^{\rm Id}$ nà-dib-ud-da 5. a $^{\rm Id}$ 15-na-din-šeš lo. e. 6. šá a-na $^{\rm kur}$ te-ma-a 7. šap-ra na-din rev. 8. $^{\rm it}$ še u₄-5-kám mu-5-kám 9. $^{\rm d}$ nà-ní.tuk lugal e^{ki}

Fifty shekels of silver for one dromedary and for his flour have been given to Nabû-mušētiq-uddi, descendant of Ištar-nādin-aḥa, who has been sent to Teima. Month Addaru - Day 5 - Fifth year of Nabonidus, king of Babylon.

This text does not provide definitive evidence that Nabonidus was in Teima at the end of his fifth year. There is no mention of the king, and it is known that relations between Teima and Babylonia existed well before: a text from the seventh year of Nebuchadnezzar published by Dougherty years ago mentions

^{2.} Röllig 1964a: 225, proposes another translation of this line, taking *it-ti* as "sign, omen:" das Omen des Opferschaupriesters (und) des Traumdeuters unterbrach den Weg nicht. My translation is based on the occurrence of the same phrase, word for word, in Ludlul bēl nēmeqi: see Lambert 1960: 32, ll. 52-54 (Tablet 1), who had noticed that inscription 13 contained this quotation from Ludlul (ibid, p. 284).

^{3.} Lit., "who had fled and kept far away."

the arrival in Babylonia of a man from Teima (Dougherty 1929: 117). There is also a letter from Ur, published as *UET* IV: 167, which refers to two families of Temanites who apparently stopped at Eridu on their way to Ur (see Ebeling 1949: 163–64, no. 303): Pohl has dated the letter to the reign of Esarhaddon on prosopographical grounds (Pohl 1950: 383). Nevertheless, another text, *YOS* VI: 134, offers more conclusive evidence:

obv. 1. ina u₄-mu ^{lú}mu-kin-nu it-tal-kám-ma 2. a-na ^{ld}en-tuk-lat-ú-a ^{lú}qal-la šá ^{ld}nà-du-numun 3. uk-tin-nu šá anše.a.ab.ba šá pad.hi.a Lugal 4. it-ti-šú a-na ^{ku}rte-ma-a iš-šu-ú 5. ul-tu ^{ku}rte-ma-a ú-ter-ra-am-ma 6. a-na kù.babbar id-di-nu uk-tin-nu-uš 7. 1 en 30 anše. A.ab.ba a-na ^dgašan šá unug^{ki} 8. i-nam-din (ll. 9-15: witnesses) rev. 16. unug^{ki} ^{iti}ne u₄-20-1-lá-kám mu-10-kám 17. ^{ld}nà-ní.tuk lugal tin.tir^{ki}

On the day a witness comes and testifies against Bēl-tuklatū'a, the slave of Nabû-mukīn-zēri, and proves that he sold for silver a dromedary with which he took the king's provisions to Teima and (which) he led back (here), he shall give the dromedary back thirtyfold to the Lady of Uruk. (Witnesses). Uruk: Month Abu - Day 19 - Tenth year of Nabonidus, king of Babylon.

This text corroborates the information found in the chronicle to the effect that Nabonidus was permanently established in Teima in the tenth year of his reign.

These sources show that the stay in Teima extended over a period comprised within narrow chronological limits: a consecutive period of ten years between the third year and the middle (Tašrītu) of the sixteenth year. If one is ready to assume that *GCCI* I: 294 implies the king's presence in Teima, then the *terminus ante quem* for his return to Babylon would be Tašrītu of his fifteenth year. But this is by no means certain. The chronological problem cannot be solved with the help of sources bearing directly on the king's sojourn in Teima. The indirect evidence will now be considered.

3.1.2 Indirect Evidence for the Stay in Teima

According to the Verse Account, Nabonidus entrusted his son Belshazzar with kingship upon his departure for Teima (*iptaqissu šarrūtu*). The existence of this "double kingship" is alluded to by the chronicle, which draws a clear distinction between the king established in Teima and the crown prince, the army, and the high officials staying in Babylonia. The archival evidence, studied at length by

Dougherty, corroborates literary sources: in documents dated to the period of the Teima stay, Belshazzar often appears attending to administrative matters which would normally be the king's responsibility (Dougherty 1929: 105–137). Therefore, one can expect that, if the length of Belshazzar's incumbency as regent can be determined with any greater precision, this will provide some chronological information as to the length of the sojourn of Nabonidus in Arabia.

3.1.2.1 Belshazzar's Incumbency

The first step is to gather all the references to Belshazzar in texts from the reign of Nabonidus and to study in what capacity he is attested in each of them. Table 7 includes all such documents except letters, which are not dated. They will be considered in the following sections. In each case I have tried to determine the nature of the matters attended to by Belshazzar by dividing them into three categories: private, official, and semi-official. Such a sharp division is often hard to make, especially when it involves texts from temple archives, which are often a mixture of private and public documents. Therefore the following principles have been followed: "official" documents are those in which duties performed by Belshazzar, or at his command, are known normally to have been performed by kings, or by other officials acting upon their orders. Documents designated "private" are those in which the household of Belshazzar is involved in transactions with private parties: they have all been discussed in the preceding chapter (see section 2.2.2.1) with the exception of text 1, which merely mentions the existence of an agricultural settlement belonging to the son of the king in the vicinity of Uruk (obv. 8. hu-uṣ-ṣe-e-ti šá DUMU.LUGAL).

The situation is less clear with "semi-official" documents. Apart from texts 35 to 37, which will be discussed later (pp. 203–05), four such documents are known: text 2 records the receipt of the *erbu* of Belshazzar in the Eanna, texts 10 and 34 the receipt of his tithe (*ešru*), and text 11 is a legal document concerning service (*ilku*) to be performed for the *bīt redûtu*, in which the matter is brought before Belshazzar. These documents have been included in the category "semi-official" for the following reasons: the receipt of *erbu* and *ešru* in temples is attested in connection with a variety of individuals, from the king to private parties, and it is not even clear that these words always refer to the same operation. Moreover, *erbu* and *ešru* of the king and various members of the royal family are often mentioned in temple archives and the institution they refer to seems to have functioned on a permanent basis. Therefore, texts 2, 10, and 34 do not provide evidence that Belshazzar was acting as regent. The same is true of text 11: the *bīt redûtu* is a well-known institution in Neo-Babylonian and Neo-

Table 7: Texts Mentioning Belshazzar⁴

NO.	TEXT			DAT	ΓE		PLACE	ТҮРЕ
1	TCL XII: 73	II	-	8	-	Year 1	Uruk	P
2	NCBT: 1089	III	-	7	-	Year 1?	[Uruk]	so
	YOS XIX: 287							
3	Nbn 50	XII	-	26	-	Year 1	Babylon	P
4	NBC 4505	IV	-	17	-	Year 4	[Uruk]	0
	YOS XIX: 256							
5	YBC 11260	VIII	-	17	-	Year 4	[Uruk]	Ο?
	YOS XIX: 291							
6	CT 55: 588	x	-	13	-	Year 4	[Sippar]	0
7	IAA 285	x	-	X	-	Year 4?	[Sippar]	О
8	Nbn 184	I	-	21	-	Year 5	Babylon	P
9	GCCI I: 405	IV	-	19	-	Year 5	[Uruk]	О
10	GCCI I: 322	VI	-	29	-	Year 5	[Uruk]	SO
11	VAS VI: 70	VII	-	24	-	Year 6	Illipaya	SO
12	YOS VI: 71	VIII	-	23	-	Year 6	Uruk	О
13	YOS VI: 103	I	-	X	-	Year 7	[Uruk]	О
14	Nbn 265	VIII	-	X	-	Year 7	[Sippar]	О
15	YOS I: 39	X	-	17	-	Year 7	?	0
16	Nbn 270	XI	-	9	-	Year 7	Babylon	P
17	Nbn 272	XI	-	12	-	Year 7	[Sippar]	O?
18	Nbn 331	П	-	11	-	Year 9	[Sippar]	0
19	Nbn 332	II	-	12	-	Year 9	[Sippar]	0
20	GCCI I: 355	IV	-	27	-	Year 9	[Uruk]	O?
21	Nbn 387	XII	-	7		Year 9	[Sippar]	0
22	Nbn 401	I	-	9	-	Year 10	[Sippar]	0
23	JRAS 1926:	IV	-	14	-	Year 10	Bīt šar	P
	107						Bābili	
24	YOS VI: 131	VIII	-	16	-	Year 10	Uruk	0
25	Nbn 581	X	-	20	-	Year 11	Babylon	P
26	YOS VI: 150	X	-	28	-	Year 11	[Uruk]	0
27	YOS VI: 232	I	-	20	-	Year 12	Uruk	0
28	YOS VI: 155	IX	-	30	-	Year 12	Uruk	0
29	YOS VI: 225	XI	-	6	-	Year 12	Uruk	0
30	PSBA 1916:	XII2	-	9	-	Year 12	Babylon	P
	27							_
31	Nbn 688	XII2	-	27	-	Year 12	Babylon	P

^{4.} Legend: P Private matter; SO Semi-official matter; O Official matter. Whenever place names are given within brackets, identification of the archive of origin (Eanna of Uruk or Ebabbar of Sippar) has been based upon internal evidence.

NO.	TEXT		DATE					TYPE
32	AnOr 8: 30	I	-	9	_	Year 13	Uruk	0
33	CT 56: 351	III	-	X	-	Year 13	[Sippar]	0
34	YOS VI: 233	IV	-	27	-	Year 13	Uruk	so
35	Nbn 824	x	-	26	-	Year 14	Sippar?	SO?
36	AnOr 8: 33	IX	-	3	-	Year 14	?	so
37	CT 56: 429	XI	-	15	-	Year 14	Sippar?	SO?
38	CT 55: 569	x	-	15	-	Year x	[Sippar]	О

Assyrian times as the official household of the crown prince (see Renger 1980: 248–49). In text 11, Belshazzar is attending to an official matter, but in his capacity of crown prince, not as regent.

Setting aside for the moment texts 35 to 37, what first emerges from Table 7 is that documents which show Belshazzar attending to official matters cover a well-defined period from the middle of the fourth year to the first months of the thirteenth year. These documents will be studied in detail below (sections 3.3.1.2 and 3.3.1.3). Only those coming from the beginning and the end of his regency will be considered here, as they bear directly on the chronological problem. The earliest text, no. 4, reads as follows:

obv. 1. $\frac{1}{3}$ gín kù.babbar šám 1 anše 2. a-na 1d nà-šeš.me-gi a-šú 3. šá 1 Lú- d na-na-a na-din 4. 1 gín a-na 1 Zalág-e-a 1 lib-luț 5. u 1d na-na-a-mu šá re-ha-a-tú 6. a-na dumu.lugal iš-šu-ú na-[din] rev. 7. [.. ma].na 50 gín kù.babbar 2 gín 4-tú kừ.[gi] 8. [er-b]i šá a-na quup-pe-e 9. šá ká i-ru-bu a-di 3 ma.na k[ù.babbar] 10. ù 11 2 gín kù.gi mah-ru-ú 11. [10 15]u u₄-17-kám mu-4-kám 12. [d nà-n]í.tuk lugal tin.tir ki

½ shekel of silver, the price of one ass, has been given to Nabû-aḥḥē-ušallim, son of Awēl-Nanāya. One shekel (of silver) has been gi[ven] to Nūrē'a, Liblut, and Nanāya-iddina, who took the *rēḥātu* to the son of the king. [x mi]nas (and) 50 shekels of silver, (and) two shekels (and) one fourth of go[ld], the [inc]ome which entered the gate's box, together with three minas of s[ilver] and ½ shekel of gold, have been received. [Month Dû]zu - Day 17 - Fourth year of Nabonidus, king of Babylon.

Text 5, written four months later, mentions that people were sent to the son of the king. The matter is not specified, but it may have had something to do with the $r\bar{e}h\bar{a}tu$. Text 9, written one year later, is important for understanding the implications of text 4. The beginning reads as follows:

obv. 1. 1[6] gín kù.babbar a-na şi-di-ti-šú-nu 2. a-na ¹dnà-gi a ¹ìr-dnà u ¹den-šeš-su 3. šá re-ḫa-a-tú a-na lugal iš-šu-ú 4. 12 gín kù.babbar a-na şi-di-ti-šú-nu 5. šá ul-tu ¹iine a-di ¹iiab 6. a-na ¹zalág-e-a u ¹ki-na-a šá re-ha-a-tú 7. a-na dumu.lugal iš-šu-ú na-din

1[6] shekels of silver, for their travel provisions, to Nabû-ušallim, descendant of Arad-Nabû, and Bēl-aḥḥē-ēriba, who took the $r\bar{e}h\bar{a}tu$ to the king, (and) 12 shekels of silver, for their travel provisions from the month Abu to the month Tebētu, to Nūrē'a and Kīnā, who took the $r\bar{e}h\bar{a}tu$ to the son of the king, have been given.

The rest of the text records the distribution of various commodities, all evidently travel provisions and equipment, part of which are specified as:

rev. 13. a-na na-še-e a-na ^{1d}NÀ-GI 14. u ^{1d}EN-tuk-lat-ú-a šá re-ḥa-a-ti 15. a-na LUGAL a-na [......] na-áš-šu-ú

Collation of the tablet has led to the following improved readings:

rev. 13. a-na na-še-e a-na ^{1d}NÀ-GI 14. u ^{1d}EN-tuk-lat-ú-a šá re-ḥa-a-ti 15. a-na LUGAL a-na ^{kur}t[e-m]a-a i-na-áš-šu-ú

(Goods) to take (with them) to Nabû-ušallim and Bēl-tuklātū'a who shall take the *rēḥātu* to the king, to the land of Te[im]a

According to Oppenheim, the *rēḥātu*, a word which literally means "remains," were offerings which, after they had been presented to cultic statues, were sent to the king for his consumption. The only case known to him where a person other than the king enjoyed the privilege of partaking of the "leftovers" from sacrificial meals is precisely text 9. This well agrees with the concept of "double kingship" instituted by Nabonidus before his departure to Arabia.⁵

Let us now turn to the chronological implications of texts 4 and 9. According to text 9, the $r\bar{e}h\bar{a}tu$ were divided up between the king and his son and taken to them by two different teams of officials, showing that Nabonidus and

5. See Oppenheim 1977: 189, with many examples quoted of sacrificial meals sent to the king. There is however another known example of a crown prince enjoying this privilege in Neo-Assyrian times (ABL 187): see Dougherty 1929: 100, n. 330, who discusses text 9.

Belshazzar were by then stationed in two different locales. These officials were active between the month Abu (fifth month) and the month Tebetu (tenth month). Text 9 is dated to Dûzu (fourth month) of the fifth year, indicating that the rēhātu were taken to the king and his son between Abu and Tebētu of the fourth year. Text 4 corroborates this information. It records allotments of silver to three individuals who took the $r\bar{e}h\bar{a}tu$ to the son of the king before the fourth month of the fourth year. One individual, Nūrē'a, appears to be performing these duties in both texts. Text 9 contains even more conclusive evidence: it records that two other men, one Nabû-ušallim and one Bēl-tuklātū'a, are to take the *rēḥātu* to the king at a place the name of which is only partly legible. According to the collation, the reading kur is certain, traces of te and ma are clear, and the last sign is a. Therefore, it is quite probable that Teima was meant. Furthermore, Bēl-tuklātū'a, who is mentioned in text 9, reappears in YOS VI: 134, dated to the tenth year, where he is said to have taken the king's provisions to Teima (see p. 154). This makes it all the more probable that Teima is to be read in text 9.

To sum up, the evidence from texts 4 and 9 indicates that, by the middle of the fourth year (summer 552), the double kingship instituted by Nabonidus was already in effect, and that he had already selected a permanent place of residence, since his share of the $r\bar{e}h\bar{a}tu$ could be sent to him on a regular basis. This residence was evidently Teima, where he must have arrived no later than the fourth month of his fourth year.

Text 6, a document from Sippar, corroborates the evidence from Uruk. It is badly preserved, but there is no problem in assigning it to a series of texts dealing with the royal offerings $(n\bar{\imath}qu)$ for the Ebabbar. As will be seen below (see section 3.3.1.2), we can determine conclusively that, after the third year, these offerings were divided between "offerings of the king" $(n\bar{\imath}q\bar{e}\ \bar{s}arri)$, and "offerings of the son of the king" $(n\bar{\imath}q\bar{e}\ m\bar{a}r\ \bar{s}arri)$, a fact which clearly points to the period of the co-regency. That Belshazzar is attested in connection with these offerings in the fourth year indicates that he was already acting as regent.⁶

Having determined the terminus post quem for Belshazzar's incumbency, I

6. Admittedly, text 6 is badly preserved, but the similarities it bears to other texts concerning royal offerings insure its belonging to that series of texts. Lines 2 to 4 of the text should be reconstructed as follows: 2. PAP 23 UDU.NITÁ 3. [SIZKUR.MEŠ šá] DUMU.LUGAL ina KÁ.GAL-i 4. [šá É.BABBAR.RA ip-ru-us-su] "Total: 23 male sheep, [the offerings of] the son of the king, (which the son of the king) [has selected] at the gate [of the Ebabbar]." Similar texts are quoted pp. 132–33 and p. 200.

will now turn to the last documents which show him acting in his capacity of regent. Several texts prove that Belshazzar was performing official duties in the king's stead from the fourth to the beginning of the thirteenth year. It is also known that Nabonidus himself was attending to official matters in his first regnal years: all this evidence has been discussed in the preceding chapter. Therefore, one can easily determine with the help of archival texts when Nabonidus was replaced by Belshazzar as the acting ruler in Babylonia. However, the matter is not so easy for the last years of the reign, since Belshazzar abruptly disappears as regent in the beginning of the thirteenth year, but Nabonidus is not attested in dated archival texts after this period either. In other words, neither the king nor his son is attested performing official duties after the beginning of the thirteenth year. This might be due to a gap in the documentation. Yet, the number of available texts considerably increases in that period, making it difficult to attribute the absence of Nabonidus and Belshazzar to mere coincidence. Nevertheless, the problem can be solved from the study of official letters, which can be dated approximately upon prosopographical evidence: they show that Nabonidus had resumed rule by the middle of his thirteenth year (see section 3.1.2.3).

In consideration of this, one can reasonably assume that Belshazzar's withdrawal from official duties in the first months of the thirteenth year roughly coincided with Nabonidus' return and marks the end of his incumbency as regent. His last attestation in this capacity is in text 33, dated to the third month of the thirteenth year: it records the selection of sheep for the "offerings of the son of the king" ($n\bar{l}q\bar{e}m\bar{a}r\,\bar{s}arri$) at Sippar. Since up to that point Belshazzar was regularly performing official duties, one may conclude that Nabonidus returned to Babylon shortly afterward in Tašrītu of the thirteenth year.

3.1.2.2 Prosopography of Uruk

E. von Voigtlander suggested years ago that Nabonidus' return to Babylon may have coincided with a general turnover of officials at Uruk in the thirteenth year (von Voigtlander 1963: 198). The prosopographical evidence known at that time, however, was not very conclusive. New data from unpublished texts in the Yale Babylonian Collection shows that her assumption was right. Table 8 shows the five main offices of Uruk with their holders. It is based on the data listed in Kümmel 1979: 139–45. New dates are indicated by references to unpublished documents.

All the officials who had been nominated in the beginning of Nabonidus' reign are last attested as incumbents at the end of the twelfth year or the

Table 8: Prosopography of Uruk II

šākin ţēmi ša Uruk	EARLIEST REFERENCE	LATEST REFERENCE
Ţābiya	XII? - x - Nab 6	II - 10 - Nab 13 (NBC 4578 = YOS XIX: 295)
Nādinu	X - 22 - Nab 13 (NBC 11487 = YOS XIX: 92	VI - 3 - Cyr 1
qīpu ša Eanna		
Gabbi-ilī-šar-uşur Anu-šar-uşur	II - 8 - Nab 1 VI - 1 - Cyr 1	IV - 11 - Nab 13 III - 23 - Cyr 7
šatammu Eanna		
Zēriya	VI - 30 - Nab 6	V - 2 - Nab 13 (YBC 11608 = YOS XIX: 64
Kurbanni-Marduk	X - 12 - Nab 13	XII - 7 - Nab 16
Nabû-mukīn-zēri	IV - 14 - Nab 17	VIII - 8 - Cyr 1
bēl piqitti ša Eanna		
Nabû-šar-uşur	III - 2 - Nab 1 (PTS 2097)	V - 28 - Nab 12
Ilī-rēmanni	III - 4 - Nab 14 (NCBT 1286 = YOS XIX: 52)	XII - 7 - Nab 16
Nabû-aḫa-iddina	IV - 14 - Nab 17	IX - 21 - Cam 4
ša muḫḫi quppi		
Libluțu	x - x - Nab 2 (YBC 4140= YOS XIX: 91)	IV - 11 - Nab 13
Ayyigašu	II - 15 - Nab 4 (NBC 4535 = YOS XIX: 126)	XII2 - 15 - Nab 12
Marduk-bulliţanni Silim-ilī	IV - 8 - Nab 4 XII - 10 - Nab 15 (NBC 4594 = YOS XIX: 93	VII - 27 - Nab 12 X - 18 - Cam 6

beginning of the thirteenth year. Admittedly, their successors are not all attested immediately after, but the chronology is quite precise for two of them: the

governor of Uruk, Ṭābiya, was removed between the second and the tenth month of the thirteenth year, and Zēriya, the $\check{s}atammu$, between the fifth and the tenth month of the same year. The data concerning the office of $b\bar{e}l$ piqitti, created by Nabonidus in his first year when he visited Larsa, is less precise: the change occurred between the middle of the twelfth and the beginning of the fourteenth year. As for the other two offices, the lack of evidence is more serious: the successor of Gabbi-ilī-šar-uṣur, the $q\bar{\imath}pu$, is not attested before the first year of Cyrus, and the new $\check{s}a$ muhhi quppi, Silim-ilī, first appears at the end of the fifteenth year. Incidentally, a further change was involved concerning this last office: it had been held jointly by three officials until the thirteenth year, but this practice seems to have been abolished at that time, since afterwards only one man appears as its incumbent.

Even though definitive chronological evidence is still wanting for these last two offices, there is little doubt that their holders were changed in the thirteenth year of Nabonidus. Royal intervention in the nomination of high officials at Uruk had become a decisive factor under Neriglissar and in the beginning of Nabonidus' reign, when it became a practice to remove all incumbents at the same time and nominate new ones (see pp. 124–25). The same practice seems to be involved here: a general turnover of officials definitely took place in the thirteenth year, as was suspected by von Voigtlander. Assuming that all current incumbents were dismissed at the same time, one may attempt to date the change with greater precision on the basis of the chronology of the office of *šatammu*: the change must have occurred between the fifth and the tenth month of the thirteenth year. It immediately followed the last attestation of Belshazzar in his capacity as regent.

3.1.2.3 Correspondence from Uruk

The last series of texts bearing on the chronological problem contains letters from Uruk sent by the king, by Belshazzar, or by officials quoting their orders. Such letters are unfortunately undated, with the exception of *YOS* III: 115, which reads as follows:⁷

obv. 1. a-mat lu[gal] 2. a-na ¹kur-ban-ni-⁴[amar.ud] 3. š[u-lu]m ia-a-[ši] 4. lì[b-b]a-ka lu-ú 5. ṭa-ab-ka 6. lu-ú ti-i-du 7. iiiše a-ga-a 8. šá mu-15-kám 9. ud-di-ir-ri

Order of the ki[ng] to Kurbanni-[Marduk]. I am w[ell]! May you be ple[ased]! May you know (that) I intercalated this month Addaru of the fifteenth year.

It is known from dated documents that there was an intercalary month Addaru in the fifteenth year of Nabonidus, and that Kurbanni-Marduk was then *šatammu* of the Eanna of Uruk. This letter, incidentally, proves that Nabonidus had already returned to Babylon by the end of his fifteenth year.

With the help of the new prosopographical data presented in the preceding section, it is now possible to arrange the letters according to an approximate chronological order. Table 9 lists all such texts.

The first seven letters undoubtedly belong to the period of Belshazzar's regency. Four of them were sent by him, in two others his orders are quoted, and in the last he is associated with Nabonidus in the salutation formula. In all these cases, Nabû-šar-uṣur is the sender or the addressee of the letter. According to dated documents, his incumbency as $b\bar{e}l$ piqitti of the Eanna extended from the beginning of the first year to the middle of the twelfth year, and he was dismissed with the other officials of Uruk in the middle of the thirteenth year.

The last eight letters show the king assuming full responsibilities of government: three of them are sent by him, while five others refer to his orders. The recipients are Kurbanni-Marduk, Ili-rēmanni, and Nādinu. According to prosopographical evidence, the first one was *šatammu* of the Eanna from the end of the thirteenth until the end of the sixteenth year, the second one was *bēl piqitti* of the Eanna from the beginning of the fourteenth to the end of the sixteenth year, and the last one was governor of Uruk from the end of the thirteenth year of Nabonidus until the first year of Cyrus. In other words, they all belonged to the new team of officials who, according to my reconstruction, were appointed in the middle of the thirteenth year.

Therefore, this fairly large number of official letters can be divided into two groups: those written when Belshazzar was regent, and those written when Nabonidus was the sole active ruler. These two groups do not overlap chronologically. Belshazzar is attested in his capacity as regent during the incumbency of Nabû-šar-uşur (years 1–12/13), and Nabonidus is attested only in connection with officials who held their functions after the middle of the thirteenth year.

3.1.3 The End of the Teima Stay

The evidence can be summarized as follows:

1. According to sources bearing directly upon the sojourn of Nabonidus in

^{7.} This letter has been discussed by Parker and Dubberstein 1956: 1, and more recently by Parpola 1983: 504.

Table 9: Royal Correspondence from Uruk⁸

TEXT	SENDER	ADDRESSEE	REMARKS
TCL IX: 136	Belshazzar	Nabû-šar-uşur	_
TCL IX: 137	Belshazzar	Nabû-šar-uşur	
NCBT 21 YOS XIX: 103	Belshazzar	Nabû-šar-uşur	
NCBT 42 YOS XIX: 104	Belshazzar	Nabû-šar-uşur	-
TCL IX: 132	Nabû-šar-uşur	šākin ţēmi	Refers to order of SK
YBC 11441 YOS XIX: 105	х	Nabû-šar-uşur	Refers to order of SK
YOS III: 194	Arad-Nanāya	Nabû-šar-uşur	K and SK referred to in address
YOS III: 2	The king	Kurbanni-Marduk and Ilī-rēmanni	
YOS III: 4	The king	Kurbanni-Marduk	
YOS III: 115	The king	Kurbanni-Marduk	
YOS III: 44	Nabû-kibsu šar-uşur	Kurbanni-Marduk	Refers to order of K
YOS III: 129	Bēl-eţir	Kurbanni-Marduk	Refers to order of K
YOS III: 153	Šum-iddina	Ilī-rēmanni	Refers to order of K
YOS III: 190	Šum-iddina	Ilī-rēmanni	Refers to order of K
BIN I: 29	Innin-aḫḫē- iddina	Nādinu	Refers to order of K

Teima, the king went to Arabia as the result of a military campaign which started in the beginning of his third year. He stayed ten years away from Babylon, then returned in Tašrītu of an unspecified year. This period of ten

8. Legend: K King, and SK Son of the King.

years is to be inserted between the third year and the middle of the sixteenth year.

- 2. According to dated archival texts, Nabonidus was the active ruler in Babylonia in his accession year and his first two regnal years. There is a gap in the archival evidence for the third year. Belshazzar is attested as regent from the middle of the fourth to the beginning of the thirteenth year. Nabonidus never appears in texts dated to this period. After the beginning of the thirteenth year, neither Nabonidus nor Belshazzar is attested performing official duties in the existing archives.
- 3. There was a general turnover of officials at Uruk between the fifth and the tenth month of the thirteenth year. All the officials dismissed at that time had been in charge since the beginning of the reign.
- 4. According to letters from the archive of the Eanna at Uruk, Belshazzar's regency corresponded to the incumbency of Nabû-šar-uşur, who held his office until the middle of the thirteenth year, and Nabonidus is attested as the active ruler for the period corresponding to the incumbency of officials who held their offices from the middle of the thirteenth year until the end of the reign.

All the evidence points to one conclusion: Nabonidus went back to Babylon in Tašrītu (seventh month) of his thirteenth regnal year (October 543). He immediately undertook major administrative changes, which are well documented only at Uruk: the turnover of officials in this city must have taken place in the eighth or ninth month of that year (November–December 543), after Nabonidus' return in the seventh month, and before the first attestation of one of the new officials in the tenth month (Kurbanni-Marduk). Belshazzar was then demoted from his official reponsibilities: he is last attested as regent five months before Nabonidus' return (May 543). After his return, Nabonidus took the reins of government again, as can be deduced from letters addressed to Uruk officials in charge during the last four years of his reign. The fact that he is not attested in dated archival texts during this last period does not mean that he was absent from Babylonia, but only that he did not apparently visit the administrative centers of Uruk and Sippar to perform royal duties.

3.1.4 The Beginning of the Teima Stay

Having determined the date when Nabonidus went back to Babylon, one should have no difficulty calculating when he arrived in Teima. According to inscrip-

tion 13, his absence lasted for ten years. Counting years backwards from Tašrītu of the thirteenth year, one obtains as a result Tašrītu of the third year as the beginning of the period meant in this inscription. Since the only sources for the third year are the fragmentary accounts found in the chronicle and the Royal Chronicle, one should compare the evidence they yield with these chronological results. The entry of the chronicle for the third year, the end of which is lost, reads as follows:

Col. I, 11. [MU-3-KÁM i] tine kuram-ma-na-nu šá-di-i 12. [
] gišṣip-pa-a-tú gurun ma-la ba-šu-ú 13. [] ina lìb-bi-
ši-na ana qé-reb E ^{ki} 14. [LUGAL G]IG-ma TIN-uṭ ina ^{iti} GAN LUGAL
erín-šú 15. [id-ke-e-ma?]-tim u ana dnà den.kal šeš 16. [
] x mu šá ^{kur} MAR.TU a-na 17. [^{kur} ú]-du-um-mu it-ta-du-ú
18. []-ma erín.meš ma-du-tu 19. [к]á.gal
ururug-di-ni 20. [
] x qu 22. [e]rín.meš

[The third year the mon]th Abu, the country Ammananu, mountains [...] orchards, all of the fruit(s) [...] from within them, to Babylon [... ... the king became i]ll, but recuperated In the month Kislīmu, the king [mustered?] his army [and] and to Nabû, Bēl-dān, brother9 [...] of Amurru, to [... ...] he/they encamped [against? the land of E]dom. [... ...] the large armies [... ... the g]ate of the city Rugdini¹o [... ... he ki]lled him [...] x [...] his army.

The relevant parts of the Royal Chronicle, which immediately follow upon the report of the rebuilding of the Ebabbar of Sippar (end of the second and beginning of the third year), read as follows:

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Col. IV, 50. <sup>16</sup>RA.GA[B] ul-tu <sup>kur</sup>ḫat-ta [......] 51. ú-šá-an-n[a-a ṭ]è-e-me um-ma [.......] 52. [........] x na-šá x [.........] 53. [... DINGIR].MEŠ GAL.ME[Š ......] 54. [....... ku-u]n lìb-b[u .......]
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- 9. The reading of this line presents several problems. If a personal name is to be understood here, the best interpretation is that proposed by Tallqvist, ^{ld}NÀ-*tat!-tan-*URÌ (*Nabû-tattān-uṣur*): see Grayson 1975a: 282, addenda to Chronicle 7, i 15. But this is not certain. I follow here Grayson's interpretation of the line, which is admittedly not very satisfactory.
- 10. This city is otherwise unknown. It could also be read Šindini or Šundini, which are likewise unknown localities.

55. [
tum $^{gi\$}$ TUKUL in-na- $\$[\'u?-\'u?]$ 57. [u]n.meš kur hat-tum ina iti GU $_4$
мu-3-ка́м 58. [тіn.]тіr ^{ki} pa-ni erín.ме-šú iṣ-ba-tu 59. [
i]d-ke-e-ma ina 13-ta u_4 -mu a-na $$ 60. [ša?-di?]-i ik-šu-du šá UN.MEŠ a-
ši-bi ^{uru} am-ma-na-nu 61. [] x nu sag.meš-šú-nu ú-bat-tíq-ma
62. [] a-na gu-ru-un-né-e-ti 63. [] x i-lu-ul-ma 64. [
] \dot{u} ?-z[a]-az u[ru] 65. [] x x []
A messenger [arrived?] from Syria [and] repeat[ed the in] formation as
follows: $[\ldots \ldots]$ x? x $[\ldots \ldots]$ the great go[ds $\ldots \ldots$
faithf]ul hear[t] x? the road, the mountains $x[a]$
ro]ad of death, the weapon was car[ried? against? the peo]ple of Syria. In
the month Ayyaru of the third year, he took the lead of his army [in
Bab]ylon [mus]tered (it) and in thirteen days they reached the m[oun-
tains?]. They $[\dots]$ x of the people who lived in the city of Ammananu,
cut off their heads and [gathered? them?] into heaps. [] he hung
and [] he di[vi]ded? the c[ity] x x []
ne rest of the fourth column is missing, and the first twelve lines of the fift

The rest of the fourth column is missing, and the first twelve lines of the fifth column are too badly preserved to yield any valuable information. Then the text becomes more intelligible for a few lines, after which it breaks off:

Col. V, 13. [..........] x šeš-šu erín.h.[a-šú] 14. [...........] x

gišтикиц iš-ši-ma ana še? [] 15. [] danna qaq-qa-ri
ur-ḥi pa-áš-qu-tú 16. [] x ri nam-ra-ṣa 17. [a-ša-ar kib-si
šu-up-ru]-su-ma GìR.MIN la i-ba-áš-šu-u 18. [] a-na zi-kir
šu-mi-i-šú 19. [] x gi edin.na a 20. [me]š
LUGAL šá da-da-na 21. [ME]š né-su-tú in-né-riq 22.
[ú?]-kap-pir-m[a]ni? meš na-x []
[] x? [his] armie[s] he carried the weapon to [] leagues distance, difficult roads [] of hardship, [where passage is preven]ted and no feet go ¹¹ [] at the mention of his name []? of the steppe? [] the king of Dadanu[] distant [] he was remote ¹² [
IIE : Cut OII aii u : : :

^{11.} This line is restored by Lambert on the basis of the occurrence of the same expression in the inscriptions of Nebuchadnezzar II: see Lambert 1968: 8, note on V 17.

^{12.} This verb is left untranslated by Lambert. It could be a faulty N-stem form of $r\hat{a}qu$ "to be remote, distant," though this interpretation is dubious.

The chronicle and the first segment of the Royal Chronicle quoted above provide complementary information allowing the following reconstruction of events. According to the Royal Chronicle, Nabonidus departed for the west in the second month (Ayyaru) of his third year (May 553), and arrived in the Ammananu (Anti-Lebanon)¹³ shortly after. The campaign, which apparently aimed at suppressing a revolt in that region, seems to have been swift and successful, since the text goes on to report that "he decapitated the people who lived in Ammananu." The chronicle starts after completion of this campaign: in the month Abu (August 553), the king and the army are still in Ammananu, sending its products to Babylon. Then Nabonidus falls ill but recovers, and, in the month Kislīmu (December 553), after an overall stay of seven months in that region, the army moves southwards to Amurru, ¹⁴ and encamps against Edom in southern Transjordan. The capture of an otherwise unknown city is mentioned, and the text breaks off.

When the Royal Chronicle resumes (Column V), Nabonidus and his army are unquestionably campaigning in northern Arabia, as the king of Dadanu is mentioned. Since the preserved parts of this column yield no indication as to when Nabonidus reached that region, one needs to assess the length of the gap at the end of the fourth column in order to determine the chronology of the Arabian campaign. According to Lambert's reconstruction of the tablet, there are about thirty lines missing at the end of column IV, since only the bottom right-hand portion of the tablet has yet been recovered (Lambert 1968: 1). He apparently assumes that these missing lines reported on the events of the fourth year, since he places the Arabian campaign (column V) in the fifth year and suggests that Teima may have been conquered and selected as a permanent residence for the king only in the sixth year (Lambert 1968: 4 and Lambert 1972).

This assumption appears unfounded for the following reasons. The text was originally divided into six columns, three on the obverse, and three on the reverse. Only the bottom right-hand portion of the tablet is preserved, that is, half of columns III and IV and several broken lines in columns II and V, while

columns I and VI are totally lost. This text differs from the chronicles in that each event is reported with an abundance of detail. For example, thirty-three lines are devoted to the restoration of the Ebabbar of Sippar, and the elevation of En-nigaldi-Nanna to the high priesthood originally occupied at least fifty lines (second half of column II and first half of column III). Accordingly, one may expect that the campaign of the third year was reported with the same wealth of detail, since the suppression of the revolt in Ammananu occupies about fifteen lines in column IV. Then, it is likely that the last thirty lines of this column, now lost, dealt with the other events of this campaign reported in the chronicle: the sending of the region's products to Babylon, the king's illness, the preparations for the campaign against "Amurru," and the war against Edom. Therefore, the conquest of Dadanu, reported in the first twenty-five lines of column V, should be placed immediately after the war against Edom, which, according to the chronicle, took place in December 553. So the Arabian campaign began in January or February 552, the conquest of Dadanu took place in March or April and the capture of Teima and the other Arabian cities in the first months of Nabonidus' fourth regnal year.

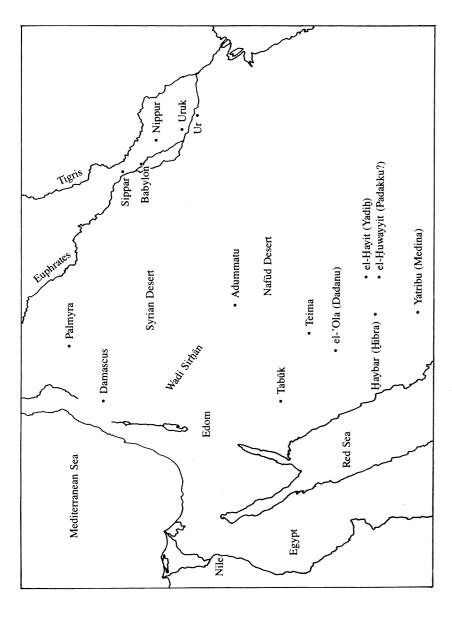
This reconstruction not only fits the structure of the Royal Chronicle perfectly but also is the only one which agrees with all sources: the Verse Account links the departure for Teima with the campaign of the third year, and, according to the archival evidence concerning the beginning of Belshazzar's regency, Nabonidus was already permanently established in Teima in the summer of 552 (Dûzu of his fourth year). One might object that my interpretation of the ten year computation found in inscription 13 (Tašrītu of year 3 - Tašrītu of year 13) is in flagrant contradiction with this, since it would place the beginning of the Teima sojourn one year too early. However, inscription 13 does not specifically say that Nabonidus lived ten years in Teima, but only that he "wandered" ten years in Arabia. According to the chronicle, Nabonidus was in Ammananu in Tašrītu of his third year, making preparations for the campaign to Edom, which started three months later, after the king recovered from his illness. These preparations and the march of the army through Transjordan and northern Arabia were apparently included in the ten year computation of inscription 13.

3.2 THE SOJOURN IN ARABIA

There is little textual or archaeological evidence for Nabonidus' sojourn in Arabia, so that such fundamental questions as the purpose of the conquest of the region and the reasons for the king's self-imposed exile in Teima cannot be

^{13.} See Honigmann 1932: 96; Ammananu is to be identified as Lebanon, Anti-Lebanon, or another mountain range in Syria, Anti-Lebanon being the most likely hypothesis.

^{14.} Amurru designates in this case the regions south of Syria (Hattu), that is, Palestine, Transjordan, and northern Arabia. In the Verse Account, Teima is said to be in the "midst of Amurru."



answered without a number of conjectures which may prove wrong in the light of future discoveries.

3.2.1 Textual Evidence

In addition to the archival, literary, and monumental sources discussed in the preceding part alluding to the king's presence in Teima, two sources give accounts of the conquest of Arabia and the establishment of Nabonidus' residence there. The first one, the Verse Account, reads as follows:

He took distant paths (and) roads. As soon as (he) arri[ved], he slew the ruler of Teima [wi]th wea[pons], and slaught[ered] the inhabitants of the city a[nd] the country (and) their herds. As for himself, he took up residence (in) [Tei]ma, the forces of Akkad [staying with him? He em]bellished the city and built [his palace] (there) like the palace of Babylon. He built x of [.......] The fortifications of the city and x [......] He surrounded it (with) guards [......] They groaned [......] They brick form and [......] Through work [......] In i[t] He [........] He killed the people [.......] Women, children, an[d] He used up their possessions [.........] The barley

^{15.} Possibly a D-stem perfect of nasāsu "to complain, to groan."

The Sojourn in Arabia

The Verse Account is, of course, a biased document. In this case however, its information is largely corroborated by inscription 13, which reflects the king's own view of his campaign to Northern Arabia and subsequent occupation of the region:

Col. I, 27. ina a-mat ^d30 28. LUGAL DINGIR.MEŠ EN EN.EN ŠÁ DIN-GIR.MEŠ u dINNIN a-ši-bu-ti 29. šá AN-e ú-šal-lim ina qí-bit d30 dšeš.KIri 30. dutu dinnin dim u du.gur en.nun-tim šu-lum u tin 31. ip-qídu it-ti-ia ina mu šá-a-šú ina itiBARÁ 32. u itiDU6 UN.MEŠ kurURIki u kurhatti hi-sib kur-i 33. u tam-tim i-leq-qu-nim-ma ina dan-na-tú um-maa-tú 34. itiSIG4 itiŠU itiNE itiKIN itiDU6 ina ITI.MEŠ an-nu-tú 35. ina kal MU.AN.NA.MEŠ an-na-a-ti 36. ina qí-bit d30 dIM gú.GAL AN-e u KI-tim A.MEŠ 37. ŠÈG i-šá-aq-qí-šu-nu-ti Níg.šu-šú-nu u bu-šá-šú-nu 38. ina šu-lum ir-ru-bu-nu a-na mah-ri-iá ina a-mat 39. d30 ((u)) dinnin belit mè šá nu-kúr-ti u su-lum-mu-ú 40. ina ba-li-šu ina kur la ib-ba-áššu-u ù kak-ku 41. la in-né-ep-pu-šu šu.min-su anà muh-hi-šú-nu 42. ta-ap-ri-ik-ma LUGAL? kur?mi-şir uruma-da-a-a 43. kura-ra-bi u nap-har LUGAL.MEŠ na-ki-ru-tú a-na 44. su-lum-mu-ú u ţu-ub-ba-a-ti i-šap-paru-ma 45. a-na maḥ-ri-ia un.meš kura-ra-bi šá giš? Tukul? 46. iš?-qal $[\ldots]$ ša ^{kur}ak-ka-di-i^{ki} 47. u e- $[\ldots]$ šu ana 48. ha-ba-ti u la-qé?-e? šá bu-še-e iz-zi-zu Col. II, 1. i-na a-mat ^d30 ^dU.GUR kak-ki-šu-nu 2. ú-šab-bir-ma nap-har-šú-nu ik-nu-šu a-na GìR.MIN-iá? 3. dutu en ur-ti šá ina ba-li-šú pu-ú 4. la ip-pat-tu-ú u pu-u la uk-ta-at-ta-mu 5. mu-šal-lim qí-bit dšeš.ki-ri AD ba-ni-šú? 6. UN.MEŠ kururiki u kurhat-ti šá ú-mál-lu-u 7. šu.min-ú-a pu-ú u lìb-bi kinù it-t[i-i]a? 8. iš-kun-šú-nu-ti-ma i-na-as-sa-ru EN.NUN-tim 9. ú-šalla-mu qí-bi-ti ina pi-rik KUR-i. MEŠ 10. né-su-ti ur-hu pa-rik-tú šá at-talla-ku

At the order of Sîn, the king of the gods, the lord of lords, which the gods and goddess(es) dwelling in heaven fulfill, at the command of Sîn-Nannar, Šamaš, Ištar, Adad, and Nergal granted me a watch of wellbeing and health. ¹⁶ In that year, in the months Nisanu and Tašrītu, the

people of Akkad and Syria could take the products of the mountains and the sea, and in (times of) strong heat, (in) the months Simānu, Dûzu, Abu, Ulūlu, and Tašrītu, in (all) these months, through all these years, at the command of Sîn, Adad, the canal keeper of heaven and the underworld, provided them with rainwater to drink. They brought their property and possessions to me in peace. At the order of Sîn, Ištar, ¹⁷ the lady of combat, without whom neither hostilities nor peace are created in the land, and (without whom) weapons are not wielded, intervened with her hands against them, 18 and the king(s)? of Egypt, Media, Arabia, and all the kings of hostile countries sent (embassies)19 to me for peace and good (words). The people of Arabia, who weapons? x [... of Akkad, and [... would rise for plundering and taking booty, at the command of Sîn, Nergal broke their weapons and all of them bowed down at my? feet. (As for) Šamaš, the lord of the order, without whom no mouth is open or shut, (the one) who fulfills the command of Nannar, the father his? creator, he provided²⁰ the people of Akkad and Syria, whom he had entrusted into my hands, with a steadfast mouth and heart fo[r m]e? They fulfilled my orders and kept the watch in the distant mountainous regions and difficult roads which I traversed.

The first conclusion emerging from these sources is that Nabonidus went to Arabia as a conqueror, and that he met serious though not insuperable opposition. The extent of his conquests is known from inscription 13, which lists Teima, Dadanu, Padakku, Ḥibra, Yadiḥu, and Yatribu (quoted, p. 237). These cities have been identified as corresponding to modern Teima, el-'Ola (ancient Dedan), el-Ḥuwayyit (ancient Fadak?), Ḥaibar, el-Ḥayit (ancient Yadi'?), and Medina: the identification of Teima, Dadanu, Ḥibra, and Yatribu is well established. Padakku is the Fadak of Arabic sources, a settlement of some importance at the time of the rise of Islam; its identification with modern el-Ḥuwayyit is uncertain. Yadiḥu could be the Yadi' of Arab geographers, located between Fadak and Ḥaybar, and could possibly correspond to modern el-Ḥayit (Gadd 158: 79–89). These localities formed a continuous string of

^{16.} Lit., "(they) entrusted me with a watch of well-being and health."

^{17.} Line 39 has d 30 u d INNIN, but u is certainly a mistake of the scribe: Ištar must be the subject of *taprik*.

^{18.} The verb is surely *parāku* "to stand across," which in its idiomatic use with "hands" would mean something like "to intervene." See *AHw* s.v. *parāku* G 8).

^{19.} This phrase could also simply mean "they wrote to me."

^{20.} Lit., "he set for them."

The Sojourn in Arabia

oases between Teima and Medina. They all appear to have been independent political entities, since the Royal Chronicle mentions a king of Dadanu and the Verse Account specifies that Nabonidus "slew the ruler of Teima." The political fragmentation of the region certainly made its conquest easier and accounts for the relative swiftness with which Teima was reached, subdued, and made into a permanent royal residence. It is hard to determine the extent of the territories controlled by Nabonidus, apart from the cities mentioned in inscription 13, their immediate surroundings, and the route which linked them to the Syro-Palestinian area. It is possible that nomadic and semi-nomadic tribes offered more resistance than settled areas. According to the Verse Account (Col. II, 26) Nabonidus slaughtered the herds of the inhabitants of the country: this may suggest that the king was thus trying to destroy the means of subsistence of these tribes in order to force them to settle in areas under direct Babylonian control. The conquest of the region must have provoked an important influx of foreigners: according to inscription 13, people from Babylonia and Syria, soldiers, merchants, and civil officers of all kinds, were relied upon to execute royal orders in the conquered territories (Col. II, 3-10). According to Gadd, Jewish exiles may even have figured prominently among the people brought by Nabonidus to Arabia, since at the time of the rise of Islam, Jewish colonies were flourishing in the oases mentioned in inscription 13 (Gadd 1958: 86-88). Thus, one may conclude that the conquest of Arabia was an enterprise not fundamentally different from previous Assyrian and Babylonian penetrations into Syria, Palestine and Cilicia.

The only Arabian city where Nabonidus' activities are documented is Teima. According to archival and literary texts from Babylonia, this city was his permanent place of residence during his stay in Arabia. The Verse Account adds substantial evidence to this: the king built a palace there which was a replica of the royal palace in Babylon, though probably much smaller. He also fortified the city, embellished it, and stationed an important part of the army in military quarters (Col. II, 28–35). That important building activities followed Nabonidus' arrival is further suggested by broken passages of the Verse Account, which allude to hardship suffered by the natives through the building works imposed on them (Col. III, 1-6). According to inscription 13, Teima functioned as the second capital of the empire during Nabonidus' sojourn, and ambassadors were apparently received by the king in his new residence (Col. III, 42-45).

3.2.2 Evidence from Arabia

Evidence from Arabia does not add much to what is already known from Babylonian sources. None of the cities conquered by Nabonidus have been

excavated yet with the exception of Teima which has been the object of a recent archaeological survey (Bawden, Eden, and Miller 1980). Previous evidence known from other short explorations of the site was discussed by Dougherty and also more recently by Winnett and Reed (Dougherty 1930; Winnett and Reed 1970: 22–37 and 88–95). According to the recent survey, the ancient settlement of Teima far surpassed the modern town in size: its walls enclosed an area of roughly eight square kilometers, and three major architectural units have been identified within the area encompassed by these fortifications (Bawden et al. 1980: 70). In addition, remains of an extensive irrigation system have been found. The attribution of such a large number of works to Nabonidus must remain conjectural, but, according to the authors of the survey, the high concentration of indigenous sherds from the Iron Age period in the southern part of the site supports the contention that sixth-century Teima underwent a major expansion of its settlement from a more restricted earlier occupation of the site (Bawden et al. 1980: 91).

The most promising area is Qasr al-hamra, which lies on the northwestern end of the site. It consists of four distinct buildings (Sections 1, 2, 3 and 4), whose precise functions remain to be determined by future excavations (Bawden et al. 1980: 82-86). It appears that this area constitutes one of the larger architectural complexes of the Neo-Babylonian period in the Near East. The archaeological evidence would therefore confirm the Verse Account on the building activities of Nabonidus in Teima. For the time being, only Area A of Section 1 has yielded material which warrants consideration. Its most interesting architectural unit is a platform measuring about four square meters, standing on a low terrace, which appears to have been surrounded by mud brick walls. A number of objects stood on the platform, among them a stone plaque with interesting iconographic motifs. The composition on the front depicts an individual approaching an altar which supports a frontal bull's head with a disc between its horns. An offering table stands behind the altar, and three religious symbols are depicted above the scene: a crescent, a star, and a winged disk. Other motifs appearing on the other decorated side of the plaque include a winged disk, a star disk, a walking bull carved in profile bearing a disk between its horns, and a standing human figure.

These iconographic motifs are suggestive of Babylonian influence at Teima, although other cultural expressions are also represented: the motifs of the bull with a disk between its horns and of the winged disk are reminiscent of Egyptian iconography, though the latter is known in Babylonia as a symbol of Šamaš (Seidl 1959: 485, and van Buren 1945: 94–103). The winged disk is also a common symbol of the god Aššur in Assyria. The crescent, representing the moon god Sîn, the star and the star disk denoting Ištar or the planet Venus (Seidl

1959: 485, and van Buren 1945: 82–85), and the standing human figures, whose rounded forms and style of dress are clearly of late Babylonian character, all point to Babylonia. So do the walking bull, which recalls the animals depicted on the Ištar gate at Babylon, and the offering scene on the front of the plaque, which has many parallels on late Babylonian cylinder seals. Another strong cultural influence is that of South Arabia, the central divinity on the face being symbolized by a frontal bull, which is more common in this region than in other cultures of the Ancient Near East.

Therefore, these recent discoveries confirm what could already be deduced from the "Teima stone," a stela found on the site in 1880 (Dougherty 1930: 296–98, and Gibson 1975: 148–51): the region was at the crossroads of various cultural influences, prominently those from Babylonia, Egypt, and South Arabia. The inscription on the stela was written by a priest named Slmšzb, son of Ptsry. It records the introduction of the cult of Şalm of Hgm in Teima and the privilege granted to Slmšzb and his descendants as priests. This makes it probable that the monument was set up in the temple of Şalm. The name of the priest should be vocalized Salmšēzib "Salm has saved," and is clearly Aramaic. His father bears an Egyptian name, probably to be vocalized Petosirī. This blending of cultural elements, with a priest bearing an Aramaean name, his father an Egyptian one, and a god apparently of local origin, attests to the diversity and the cosmopolitan character of Teima in the first millennium B.C., a fact already stressed by Rashid and Segall, who devoted short studies to the interpretation of some of the works of art found at Teima (Rashid 1974 and Segall 1954). Two other features of the Şalmšēzib stela are noteworthy: the inscription refers to the monument as a swt', clearly the Aramaic equivalent of Akkadian asumittu "stela" (Kaufman 1974: 38 and 157), and one can hardly disregard the importance of this fact when one bears in mind that one of the components of Nabonidus' reforms after his return to Babylon was to set up asumittus propagandizing the new cult of Sîn in all major Babylonian cities (see section 1.2.2.2.2). Another feature of the stela is a relief carved on its edge depicting in the upper register a standing bearded human figure holding a long rod and wearing a tiara. The identity of the figure is uncertain, but it has been suggested that it represents the deified Nabonidus, who would have been the god Salm himself, since it is almost identical with the reliefs depicting the king on inscriptions 13 and 14 (see Winnett and Reed 1970: 92-93). This seems dubious, as Assyrian and Babylonian religious beliefs had been averse to deification of living rulers for the millennium preceding the reign of Nabonidus. The most likely interpretation is that the relief represents a king in prayer, perhaps Nabonidus himself if the monument is to be dated to his reign, which is very uncertain. However, if the god Şalm of Hgm was Nabonidus, then the name of this deity should definitely be connected with Akkadian *şalmu* "statue," the name under which statues of deified rulers were worshipped in Assyria and Babylonia (Hallo 1988: 63). If this is true, it is not unlikely that Nabonidus would have been influenced by the discovery of the statue of Sargon during the excavation of the Ebabbar (see section 2.3.3.2), for which he instituted divine offerings. Perhaps his desire to link himself with great rulers of the past induced him to accept a similar form of worship of himself in his Arabian capital. The tradition preserved in the Book of Daniel (chapter 3) of Nebuchadnezzar (i.e. Nabonidus) making a statue (*ṣalmā*') and forcing his subjects to worship it may ultimately go back to this deed of Nabonidus.

The lower register of the "Teima stone" depicts a priest praying before an altar on which a frontal bull's head is standing. As a short inscription under the relief tells us, the priest is Şalmšēzib: the inscription reads şlmšzb kmr' "Şalmšēzib, the priest." The bull probably symbolizes the god Salm, who would therefore also be depicted on the stone plaque from Qasr al-hamra. During an archaeological survey of northern Arabia conducted in 1962, a number of inscriptions were found on the summit of Jabal Ghunaim, located about fourteen kilometers south of Teima. They are related to other inscriptions found in that region, with which they form a specific sub-group of North Arabian inscriptions labeled "Taymanite" by Winnett and Reed (1970: 88-112). Inscriptions in a closely related script dating to the eighth or seventh century have been found in southern Babylonia, suggesting that close relations already existed between the two regions in that period (see Winnett and Reed 1970: 90; Burrows 1927; Albright 1952 and Biggs 1965). These inscriptions from Babylonia, some of which are datable on other than paleographic grounds, prove that Taymanite inscriptions could date as far back as the seventh century. The inscriptions found at Jabal Ghunaim often mention the god Salm, who therefore appears to have been the main deity worshipped in the region. His nature still presents problems. It has been suggested that he was a moon god, mainly because of the common association of the bull with lunar deities in Arabia, particularly in South Arabia (Winnett and Reed 1970: 92-93; and Ryckmans 1951: 327), and J. Lewy collected evidence that similar associations between the bull and the lunar deity existed in Syria and Mesopotamia. According to him, Nabonidus was attracted to Arabia by the great antiquity of its cults of the moon (J. Lewy 1946: 445-49). In a recent reassessment of the question, however, Dalley has collected evidence that the god Salm was in fact a solar deity; the term salm would refer to the divine symbol on which oaths of loyalty to the king and his family were sworn (Dalley 1986). Therefore, all arguments that Nabonidus established a particular

form of worship of the moon god in his Arabian capital must remain conjectural, especially as the chronology of this material is very uncertain: it could belong to the reign of Nabonidus, but a later date is also possible.

3.2.3 Reasons for the Sojourn in Teima

A number of conjectures have been made as to the reasons for the expedition to Arabia: arguments of strategic, economic, and religious nature have been invoked, none of which is entirely convincing. In fact, the problem should be approached from two different angles. The first question is why did Nabonidus stay ten years in Arabia, since the appointment of a governor at Teima and the stationing of a permanent military force would have sufficed to ensure Babylonian control over the region. The second is what Nabonidus' motive was for conquering northern Arabia and penetrating the peninsula as far as Yatribu (Medina).

The second question does not present any particular problem when considered in proper historical perspective. Teima had had relations with Mesopotamia long before Nabonidus: merchants from Teima appear in Assyrian documents of the seventh century, and various types of Arabian script found on inscriptions in southern Babylonia suggest persistent relations between the two regions. But direct involvement of a Mesopotamian power in northern Arabia started only with the establishment of an Assyrian policy of permanent occupation of conquered territories in the Syro-Palestinian area, and when the Assyrian armies reached the western end of the Fertile Crescent in an attempt to annex these regions to the empire. These conditions were first met in the reign of Tiglath-pileser III. Indeed, the Arabs are not mentioned in Assyrian inscriptions until 738 B.C., with the exception of the Monolith Inscription of Shalmaneser III, which mentions Arabs among the leaders of the coalition opposing the Assyrian army at Qarqar in 853 B.C. From 738 B.C. on, references to Arabs in Assyrian inscriptions increase (Eph'al 1982: 75 and 81).

In the century which follows the first major Assyrian campaign against the Arabs, the history of the empire's relations with northern Arabia can be characterized as one of increasing Assyrian penetration. Under Tiglath-pileser III and Sargon II, the major aim of the Assyrian authorities appears to have been the integration of various nomadic groups into their control system in the semi-desert regions of Syria and Transjordan, and the control of the trade routes which linked Arabia with Syria and passed east of Palestine (Eph'al 1982: 92–111). Teima is already mentioned in a list of nomadic groups in Transjordan included in an inscription of Tiglath-pileser III, and it appears to be the

southernmost Arabian locality mentioned there (Eph'al 1982: 87–92). The reference to Teima does not imply that Assyrian armies reached the city, but only that they fought against nomadic groups from there. The Sabaeans are also mentioned in the list although the Assyrians never reached South Arabia, but only campaigned against tribes from that region.

A second stage was reached in the reigns of Sennacherib, Esarhaddon, and Aššurbanipal. Although, according to Eph'al, most of the material about the Arabs found in the inscriptions of these kings concerns the nomads of the southwestern border region of Mesopotamia, increased involvement in northern Arabia is also shown by the campaign against Adummatu (Eph'al 1982: 118-25). The evidence points to an identification of this region with the Dūmat al-Jandal of Arabic sources and the Dumah of the Bible, which lay north of the desert of the Nafūd and constituted the only important settlement in the region before Teima. Vaglieri describes it as "an oasis at the head of the Wadi Sirhan, which runs from south-east to north-west, linking central Arabia on one side and the mountains of Hawran and Syria on the other; it is thus situated on the most direct route between Medina and Damascus, being about 15 days' journey on foot from the former and about 7 days or rather more from the latter" (Vaglieri 1965). The strategic location of Adummatu on the north-south trade route might account for the Assyrian campaign against it. The campaign against Adummatu, which probably took place between 691 and 689 B.C., resulted in the submission of the region, which remained under firm Assyrian control at least until the beginning of the reign of Aššurbanipal.²¹ The gradual weakening of the empire in his reign resulted in Assyrian withdrawal from the region: the last major campaigns to northern Arabia took place during and after the suppression of the revolt of Šamaš-šum-ukīn (651-648 B.C.) and aimed at conquering the peoples of Qedar and Nebaioth,²² who were apparently threatening Assyrian positions in Transjordan and southern Syria (Eph'al 1982: 142-65). A first major war took place between ca. 650 and 647, and a second one between ca. 641 and 638. Most of these campaigns were conducted on desert terrain between southern Syria and northern Arabia. Briant has pointed to the innovative

^{21.} Divine images carried off by the Assyrians were returned to Adummatu between 691 and 676, and Tabûa, an Arab princess raised at the Assyrian court, was appointed as queen. Later on Yauta', son of Ḥazael, king of Qedar, revolted against Esarhaddon (between ca. 673 and 669), but the revolt was suppressed. The relation between these two kings and Tabûa is uncertain, but the episodes relating to them are conflated in the inscriptions of Aššurbanipal (Eph'al 1982: 126–30).

^{22.} Probably to be identified as the Nabateans of later periods.

character of the Arabian wars of Aššurbanipal: the herds of the Arab tribes were either captured or destroyed and all water points garrisoned, so that the nomads would be forced to settle in areas under direct Assyrian control or perish in the desert without any means of subsistance. Therefore one can assume that the campaign aimed at establishing definitive Assyrian control over the area, in the form of permanent occupation (Briant 1982: 155). Nabonidus probably followed the same strategy when, as the Verse Account reports, he "slaughtered the herds of the inhabitants of the country." Perhaps Aššurbanipal even tried to restore Assyrian positions in Adummatu. After this campaign, nothing is known of the political situation of Arabia, but one can assume that the Assyrians withdrew from the region to concentrate their efforts on the northern and eastern borders of the empire, which at that point were seriously threatened by the Medes.

Only in the reign of Nebuchadnezzar II did Mesopotamian power in the region resume. Babylonian penetration into northern Arabia followed the same pattern as had previous attempts by the Assyrians: when Babylonian forces reached the western end of the Fertile Crescent and integrated Judah, Moab, and Edom into the empire, they came into direct contact with the tribes and states of northern Arabia and eventually tried to annex them (Eph'al 1982: 170–79, and Lindsay 1976). Therefore, Nabonidus' campaign to Arabia, far from being a "strange move," as it is often depicted, must be seen as the logical consequence of the growing Babylonian imperialism in the west. His claim to the Assyrian heritage might also partly account for his interest in northern Arabia. But his campaign not only resulted in a restoration of Assyrian positions in the region, which had been lost in the later years of the reign of Aššurbanipal; he led his armies much farther south than any previous Mesopotamian ruler, and established Babylonian control over the most important caravan cities linking South Arabia with Syria. Moreover, his conquest of the region does not stand out as an isolated example when one considers later sources concerning Arabia: it appears that the Persians fell heir to Nabonidus' Arabian kingdom in 539 and kept control over it for a certain period.²³ According to Strabo (Geography XVI, 4, 27), the last project contemplated by Alexander the Great before his sudden death at Babylon was the conquest of the Arabian peninsula, which he intended to make into the center of his empire:

As for the blest lot of Arabia, one might make even Alexander a witness

23. On the possibility that there was a governor of Dadanu in the Persian period, see Eph'al 1982: 204–05, who discusses a Lihyanite inscription mentioning a *fht ddn*. More conclusive is *BE* VIII/1: 65, dated to the fifth year of Cyrus, which mentions one Sîn-šar-uşur, 16 MIN-u šá 11 uru qé-da-ri "official (governor?) of Qedar."

thereof, since he intended, as they say, even to make it his royal abode after his return from India. Now all his enterprises were broken up because of his sudden death; but, at any rate, this too was one of his enterprises, to see whether they would receive him voluntarily, and if they did not, to go to war with them; and accordingly, when he saw that they had not sent ambassadors to him, either before or after (his expedition to India), he set about making preparations for war, as I have stated heretofore in this work.

In Geography XVI, 1, 11, Strabo describes the preparations made by Alexander for the conquest of Arabia, a project never carried out by his successors. Had Alexander lived longer, he might have fulfilled his plan and established his capital in Arabia, thus following the example of Nabonidus' creation of a second royal residence at Teima. Another similar example is that of Aelius Gallus, the Roman general sent by the emperor Augustus in 27 B.C. to conquer Arabia, which expedition resulted in failure. Therefore, Nabonidus' conquest of Arabia does not stand out as a particularly strange move: such projects were characteristic of the imperialistic policy of all major empires that gained control of the Syro-Palestinian area in the first millennium B.C. Its singularity lies rather in its having been successful, unlike all other attempts.

Logically the same motives lay behind all these attempts at controlling northern Arabia, and Nabonidus should a priori be no exception to the rule. All classical authors agree on the immense wealth of the region (Briant 1982: 142–45), which was based mostly on the control of the trade routes traversing it and linking the Syro-Palestinian area to South Arabia. Particularly striking is the account of Diodorus of Sicily (*Library of History* III, 47, 5):

This tribe (the Sabaeans) surpasses not only the neighbouring Arabs but also all other men in wealth and in their several extravagancies besides. For in the exchange and sale of their wares they, of all men who carry on trade for the sake of the silver they receive in exchange, obtain the highest price in return for things of the smallest weight.

Strabo's report on the preparations made by the Roman general Aelius Gallus for the conquest of the region also confirms the immense wealth of the Arabian tribes (*Geography* XVI, 4, 22):

He (Gallus) conceived the purpose of winning the Arabians over to himself or of subjugating them. Another consideration was the report, which had prevailed from all time, that they were very wealthy, and that they sold aromatics and the most valuable stones for gold and silver, but never expended with outsiders any part of what they received in exchange; for he expected either to deal with wealthy friends or to master wealthy enemies.

The Arabs referred to by Strabo are those who lived south of the Nabataeans, in the regions conquered by Nabonidus. Products which traveled along the routes they controlled included frankincense and myrrh as well as several kinds of spices (van Beek 1960). Gold, precious stones, and livestock are also known to have been local products. On gold, the report of Diodorus of Sicily (*Library of History* III, 45, 7–8) is particularly revealing:

Gold they (the Arabs) find in underground galleries which have been formed by nature and gather in abundance. And as for size the smallest nugget found is about as large as the stone of fruit, and the largest not much smaller than a royal nut. This gold they wear about both their wrists and necks, perforating it and alternating it with transparent stones. And since this precious metal abounds in their land, whereas there is a scarcity of copper and iron, they exchange it with merchants for equal parts of the latter wares.

The Arabs referred to here are those of northern Arabia. All the items mentioned by Strabo and Diodorus already appear in the lists of tribute imposed by the Assyrian kings upon North Arabian tribes. We know that Tiglath-pileser took from Samsi, queen of the Arabs, 30,000 camels, 20,000 sheep, and 5000 bags of spices. Later tributes paid by her included gold and precious stones (Eph'al 1982: 85-86, and n. 259). Sargon's inscriptions tell of the receipt of gold, precious stones, ivory, willow seeds, all kinds of aromatic substances, horses, and camels (Eph'al 1982: 109). Tribute paid to Sennacherib included the same items in huge amounts (Eph'al 1982: 123–25). After the death of Hazael, Yauta' had to add to the tribute paid by his father a supplement of 10 minas of gold, 1000 choice gems, 50 camels, and 1000 bags of spices (Eph'al 1982: 128). Since all these products are mentioned by classical authors as well, one can conclude that the same conditions prevailed in the Neo-Babylonian period, and that Nabonidus was attracted to the region by the prospect of taking possession of these vast riches and of controlling the trade which passed through the caravan cities located between Yatribu (Medina) and Edom (southern Transjordan). The decision to establish a royal residence at Teima may have been motivated ultimately by the location of this city at the crossroads of a vast network of trade routes, as there is strong evidence that a route existed between Teima and Babylonia in addition to the main north-south route which passed through it. According to Eph'al, who has summed up the current knowledge of ancient trade routes in that region, the branch-off point of the road from southern Arabia to the Levant and Mesopotamia was Yatribu (Medina): it may be no accident that Nabonidus' southernmost conquest was precisely this city, from which Arabian trade could be controlled without penetrating further south. From Yatribu there were three different routes: Route 1 led directly to Mesopotamia, passing southeast of the Nafūd desert, and avoiding all the major oases mentioned in inscription 13. Route 3 went directly to Dedan, and from there to Tabūk and Tranjordan. Route 2 passed through Ḥaybar and Fadak to end up in Teima, where it branched off into three routes: a) to Adummatu and Babylon, b) to Tabūk and Transjordan, c) to Transjordan, avoiding Tabūk. The strategic importance of Teima is therefore obvious, although other locations could have been chosen, notably Adummatu (Eph'al 1982: 14–15).

That Nabonidus' conquests were motivated by these factors is also supported by the cuneiform evidence. The monumental inscriptions written prior to the third year make frequent allusions to the wealth coming from the western regions of the empire, and there is little doubt that northern Arabia was considered a natural extension of those regions (see section 2.4.2). Inscription 13 also publicizes the economic advantages brought by the conquest of northern Arabia (Col. I, 31-38, quoted, pp. 172-73; see also Röllig 1964: 246-52). Other conjectural reasons which have been advanced are not substantiated by the evidence. The argument of strategy can be discarded, as the engagement of a substantial part of the army hundreds of miles away from the regions of the empire most likely to be threatened does not stand out as being a particularly wise strategic move.²⁴ The theory that Nabonidus went to Arabia to release the pressure put by the nomadic and semi-nomadic tribes on the western provinces of the empire also seems dubious, although inscription 13 alludes to the pillaging activities of these tribes (Col. I, 45-48). It is unlikely, however, that they ever posed a serious threat to the empire. As demonstrated by Briant, the numerous references to the Arabs as "robbers" and "pillagers" in Assyro-Babylonian inscriptions and classical sources should be understood as ideological justifications for the expansionist policy of the successive empires of the Near East in northern Arabia (Briant 1982: 9-56).

A hypothesis which deserves more consideration is that Nabonidus went to

^{24.} See section 2.3.1.1, on the connection between the campaign to Arabia and Cyrus' revolt against the Medes: it is quite certain that Nabonidus made sure that the Medes would not be a threat for a number of years. Nevertheless, the campaign could hardly be defended from a strategic point of view.

Arabia for purely religious reasons (J. Lewy 1946 and Lambert 1972). There is some evidence which points in this direction. Ilteri, the lunar god worshipped by Nabonidus according to the Verse Account, was known among north Arabian tribes: the father of two of the Arab leaders who opposed Aššurbanipal in Transjordan, Abiyate' and Ayamu, was called Te'ri, undoubtedly the name of the moon god Ser/Ter/Teri, Ilteri in the Verse Account (Eph'al 1982: 168–69). The god Salm, who appears to have been the main deity of the Teima region, may have been a lunar god also. Nevertheless, it is hard to believe that such an important enterprise as the conquest of northern Arabia was motivated solely by these reasons. A good argument to reject the hypothesis that Nabonidus went to Arabia for religious reasons is that the Verse Account, in its section dealing with the king's stay in Teima, does not make any allusion to his religious activities there. Had there been any, the author of the Account would have mentioned them, as the text focuses mostly on the king's religious convictions. However, religious factors can explain why Nabonidus' stay in the region extended over such a long time. Control of trade routes, collection of tribute, or any other military or commercial operation could have been ensured by the appointment of a Babylonian governor at Teima and the permanent stationing of part of the armed forces there. Therefore, the king's presence was unwarranted, and should be explained as the result of a political crisis in Babylonia.

According to Nabonidus himself, his departure for Arabia was provoked by the impiety of the Babylonians, who disregarded Sîn's godhead and committed faults against him (quoted, p. 62). There is no evidence for any such rebellion in Babylonia in the first years of Nabonidus' reign. Yet there is evidence that his religious beliefs were already an important element of his policy in that period (section 1.4.1), that they may have aroused some opposition (section 2.3.3.1), and that after his departure orthodoxy was reestablished by Belshazzar. It is also quite possible that Belshazzar and his party had been the leading force in the usurpation of 556 and constituted the real power behind the throne (section 2.2.2.1). Thus one may venture that they convinced Nabonidus to stay away from Babylonia, fearing that his religious convictions would eventually lead to a serious confrontation with large segments of the oligarchy and the population, notably the clergy of Marduk. The idea that Nabonidus was forced to give up part of his power in favor of his son Belshazzar as the result of a political struggle among the ruling circles was already expressed by Goodspeed at the beginning of the century and was taken up later by de Genouillac (Goodspeed 1906: 372 and de Genouillac 1925: 79). The sojourn in Teima could thus be explained as the result of the political divergences between Nabonidus and his son, while the conquest of northern Arabia was certainly motivated by purely imperialistic goals, mostly by the vast wealth of the region. The king was apparently willing to renounce some of his prerogatives in favor of Belshazzar, since the Verse Account and inscription 13 both describe his departure as voluntary, and he took with him supporters who shared his religious ideas. In inscription 13, Nabonidus twice alludes to the fact that he had such supporters: in Col. II, 6-10, people from Akkad and Syria who executed his orders in Arabia are mentioned, and in Col. III, 15-17, the king states: "I led my people from remote mountains and I took the road to my country in peace." Arabia may have been chosen as a place of exile because of the importance of the moon god there, and because of its relatively cosmopolitan character, which made it more propitious terrain for the introduction of new cults than Babylonia. Teima in particular may have been selected as a permanent residence because of its direct connection with Babylonia, via the route which crossed the Arabian peninsula, south of the Nafūd desert.

3.3 BELSHAZZAR'S ADMINISTRATION OF GOVERNMENT

During Nabonidus' absence Belshazzar assumed the regency, and it appears that the king never directly intervened in the internal affairs of Babylonia while residing in Teima. The only potential evidence to the contrary is a letter published by Moore, the first part of which reads as follows (Moore 1939: text no. 67):

obv. 1. IM $^{\rm Id}$ NÀ-na-'i-id 2. a-na $^{\rm Id}$ NÀ-šeš.meš-mu 3. $^{\rm Id}$ MIN-ú ina $^{\rm d}$ EN $^{\rm d}$ NÀ 4. u a-de-e šá LUGAL 5. tú-tam-man-ni ki-i a-di 6. u₄-15-kám šá $^{\rm iti}$ DU₆ 7. kù.babbar-a ma-la ina muḫ-ḫi 8. unug^ki gab-bi te-eţ-ţer-an-ni

Letter of Nabû-nā'id to Nabû-aḥḥē-iddina, the official. You swore to me by Bēl, Nabû, and the majesty of the king that, on the fifteenth of Tašrītu, you would pay me all the silver which is (credited) against Uruk.

The rest of the letter contains similar commands addressed to that official. Its general tone, the dry style of the address, and the expression *tutamanni* "you swore to me," all suggest that the sender may have been Nabonidus himself. The mention in Il. 21-22 that the things claimed by the king are to be given to one Temuda, the "Arab," possibly points to Teima as the origin of the document. It has recently been discussed by D. Cocquerillat (1984: 69).

3.3.1 The Division of Power

According to the Verse Account, Nabonidus formally entrusted Belshazzar with kingship (šarrūtu) upon his departure for the west and Arabia. In so doing, the king did not seek to abdicate, but only to institutionalize a division of royal prerogatives between himself and his son. The extent to which Belshazzar assumed royal functions can be determined with a reasonable degree of precision through an investigation of literary and archival sources.

3.3.1.1 ROYAL PREROGATIVES KEPT BY NABONIDUS

Some royal prerogatives appear not to have been entrusted to Belshazzar, namely:

- 1. The title of king (šarru): Belshazzar never assumed the title of king. Even in documents written during the Teima period, he is always referred to as "son of the king" (mār šarri), the standard designation of the crown prince in the Neo-Babylonian period. The title of king remained an exclusive privilege of Nabonidus. The only sources which refer to Belshazzar as "king of Babylon" come from the Greek and Jewish traditions: they erroneously state either that Belshazzar was the last king of Babylon, 25 or that Belshazzar was a second name borne by one or the other ruler of the Neo-Babylonian dynasty. 26
- 2. Regnal years: a fact which confirms the preceding point is that texts from the period of the sojourn in Teima are always dated according to the regnal years of Nabonidus. Not a single text mentions regnal years of Belshazzar, nor does he ever appear together with his father in date formulas. Admittedly, such double datings do not occur until the Seleucid Era, although there is evidence for co-regencies well before this period. The only source in which years are counted according to the "reign" of Belshazzar is the Book of Daniel: chapter seven mentions "the first year of Belshazzar, king of Babylon," and chapter eight "the third year of the reign of king Belshazzar."
- 3. The New Year's Festival: the entries of the chronicle corresponding to the
- 25. These sources are the Book of Daniel (fifth chapter), and Saint Jerome (in his commentary to the Book of Daniel). See Dougherty 1929, pp. 4–14, and Sack 1982. A convenient and complete discussion of the Greek and Jewish sources can be found in Clinton 1841, pp. 366–91.
- 26. According to Syncellus, "Baltasar" was another name borne by "Nireglesarus," and according to Josephus, "Baltasar" was another name of "Naboandelos." See sources quoted in the preceding note.

sojourn in Teima repeatedly state that the New Year's festival did not take place. Unless one assumes that it was simply cancelled by Nabonidus, which would have been an unwise political move, one may conclude that the festival could not take place only because of the king's absence, and that Belshazzar was not entitled to play the king's role in the ceremonies. In fact, when Nabonidus returned to Babylon, the festival simply resumed, as the chronicle indicates. This is another important limitation to the "kingship" assumed by Belshazzar during the Teima period.

4. Building inscriptions: the existence of such limitations can also be deduced from a survey of building inscriptions written during the period under discussion (inscriptions 7 to 12; see sections 1.3.7 to 1.3.12). Although, as suggested earlier, these inscriptions were commissioned by Belshazzar without any detectable intervention from Nabonidus, they always refer to the king as the active ruler, while the crown prince is not mentioned once. Furthermore, they are composed so as to produce the impression that Nabonidus was present in Babylonia: he is described as leading excavations of temples which were restored while he was in Arabia, and there is not a single allusion to his absence from the capital. For example in inscription 7 (restoration of the temple of Lugal-Marada at Marad), the king is described as leading excavations and restoration of the temple (Col. II, 27-34). In inscription 8 (restoration of the temple of Bunene at Sippar), the king is described as purifying the temple upon its dedication, while it is known from letter CT 22: 68 that this ritual was performed at the command of Belshazzar (Col. I, 31-33; see section 1.2.2.1.2). The fiction of Nabonidus' full kingship was carried out for the whole period of Belshazzar's regency.

These are the main four limitations to Belshazzar's "kingship." Other royal prerogatives may have been kept by Nabonidus, but the evidence is not always very conclusive. For example, it seems that Belshazzar was not allowed to replace officials: at Uruk, all the main offices of the city and the temple were held by the same incumbents from the beginning of the reign until Nabonidus' return. These officials had all been nominated by the king in the early part of his reign, most if not all of them during his visit to Larsa and Uruk in his first year (see section 2.3.2.1). They were all dismissed after his return to Babylon in his thirteenth year (see section 3.1.2.2). The situation seems to have been the same at Sippar. The $\delta ang\hat{u}$ Mušēzib-Marduk, who was already in charge in the second year of Nabonidus, was dismissed after Nabonidus' return: he is last attested in the ninth month of the thirteenth year, and his successor first appears in the seventh month of the fifteenth year. There is a lack of documentation for the

office of $q\bar{t}pu$: Nabonidus' new appointee in his first regnal year, Nergal-šarbullit, is last attested at the beginning of the third year. His successor, Bēl-aḥḥē-iqīša, is first attested in the eighth month of the ninth year (CT 56: 369), and kept his office until the fourth year of Cyrus (San Nicolo 1941: 33–36). Therefore, the change must have occurred during Belshazzar's regency, unless Nergal-šarbullit was dismissed just before the king's departure for the west in the beginning of his third year. If so, he may have been one of those "impious subjects" who apparently committed rebellious acts according to Nabonidus' own report in inscription 13, and whose behavior led the king to depart for Arabia. One might also ascribe this relative stability of offices to Belshazzar's conservatism. Yet Sippar and Uruk have yielded the only extant official archives from the Neo-Babylonian period, and one should be cautious in drawing general conclusions on the basis of the situation prevailing in these two local administrations. It is possible that Belshazzar did proceed to change officials at other levels.

3.3.1.2 ROYAL PREROGATIVES SHARED BY BELSHAZZAR

If some royal prerogatives remained the exclusive privilege of Nabonidus, there is also evidence that others were divided between the king and his son. There are four well-documented examples of such a division of royal prerogatives.

- 1. Sacrificial meals: the evidence from Uruk pertaining to this has already been discussed (see section 3.1.2.1). The privilege of receiving the remainders of meals presented to cultic statues had always been exclusively the king's. After the departure for Arabia, these remainders were divided between Nabonidus and Belshazzar and taken to them in Teima and Babylon. However, one cannot determine if this practice was institutionalized all over the kingdom or was peculiar to the Eanna of Uruk.
- 2. Royal offerings: several texts from Sippar record the selection by the king, his son, or temple officials—in most cases at the gate of the Ebabbar—of sheep described as "offerings of the king" (nīqē šarri), or as "offerings of the son of the king" (nīqē mār šarri). Table 10 lists all such texts dated to the reign of Nabonidus. The standard phrase describing the operation recorded by these texts follows this pattern: "x sheep, offerings of the king/of the son of the king, which the king/the son of the king/PN, has selected at the gate of the Ebabbar/has brought from GN."²⁷ In some cases, however, it is not clear whether the "offerings of the son of the king" were selected by Belshazzar
 - 27. Such texts are quoted, pp. 132–33 (CT 56: 420), and p. 200 (Nbn 332).

Table 10: Royal Offerings at Sippar²⁸

TEXT	DATE					NŠ	NMŠ	SELECTED BY	
CT 56: 421	I	-	1	-	Y	1	х		
CT 56: 420	VII	-	23	-	Y	2	х		Nabonidus
CT 56: 418	VIII	-	8?	-	Y	2	х		
CT 55: 588	х	-	13	-	Y	4		х	Belshazzar?
CT 56: 416	I	-	1	-	Y	5	х		
CT 56: 422	X	-	Х	-	Y	6	x		
Nbn 265	VIII	-	х	-	Y	7	х	х	Belshazzar?
Nbn 332	II	-	12	-	Y	9		х	Belshazzar?
Nbn 387	XII	-	7	-	Y	9	х		Belshazzar
Nbn 401	I	-	9	-	Y	10		х	
CT 56: 351	III	-	х	-	Y	13		х	Belshazzar?

himself or by a temple official.²⁹ The solution to this problem must await the publication of more texts of this kind. For the time being, the data is clear enough to draw the following conclusions: in the first two years of Nabonidus, only "offerings of the king" are attested, and in one case they are selected by the king himself. After the departure for Teima, "offerings of the son of the king" were instituted, but the "offerings of the king" still continued to function on a permanent basis. Two texts which clearly allude to the new situation are *Nbn* 265, where the two kinds of offerings are listed together, and *Nbn* 387, where the "offerings of the king" are selected by Belshazzar. This division of offerings was apparently in effect for the whole period of the king's stay in Teima, since "offerings of the son of the king" are attested from the fourth year until the beginning of the thirteenth year. However, the

^{28.} Legend: NŠ "offerings of the king," and NMŠ "offerings of the son of the king."

^{29.} In such cases, a question mark has been added to the last column of Table 10 after Belshazzar's name. In all these cases, the phrase describing the operation is "x sheep, $n\bar{l}q\bar{e}$ ša mār šarri ina abulli ša Ebabbar iprusu." This could be a shortened form for $n\bar{l}q\bar{e}$ mār šarri ša mār šarri ina abulli ša Ebabbar iprusu, since the offerings are always specified as being $n\bar{l}q\bar{e}$ šarri. The full form of the phrase is found in CT 56: 420, in connection with the offerings of the king.

Belshazzar's Administration

documentation stops at this point, so that it is impossible to determine whether there was a reversion to the former practice after Nabonidus' return, or if the "offerings of the son of the king" were carried on until the end of the reign. This division of royal offerings between the king and his son may have been practiced in all Babylonian temples during the Teima period, but there is no evidence to either prove or disprove this. At Uruk, only two texts mention royal offerings. TCL XII: 123 consists of a list of the "offerings of the king" ($n\bar{i}q\bar{e}$ ša šarri) from the first to the sixth year of Nabonidus. NBC 4578 (YOS XIX: 295), dated to the beginning of the thirteenth year, records that the "offerings of the king" ($n\bar{i}q\bar{e}$ šarri) are under the responsibility of Tābiya, the governor of Uruk. These texts do not mention "offerings of the son of the king." Nevertheless, this evidence is too meager to conclude that such offerings were not instituted in the Eanna of Uruk.

3. Oaths by the king and his son: in a certain number of texts from the Neo-Babylonian period, oaths are taken by individuals who promise to perform various types of services. These oaths are always sworn by several gods and by the "majesty of the king." The standard formula for such oaths is *ina* DN DN DN \bar{u} *ina* $ad\hat{e}$ δa RN δar $B\bar{a}bili$ "by DN DN DN and by the majesty of RN, king of Babylon." This form of oath was discussed at length by Weisberg (1967: 16–17 and 29–42). Dougherty noticed long ago that in some texts from the reign of Nabonidus, such oaths are sworn "by the majesty of Nabonidus, king of Babylon, and Belshazzar, his son" (Dougherty 1929: 96–97). Table 11 lists all occurrences of oaths by the king and his son in texts from the reign of Nabonidus.

The documentation is scanty and oddly distributed, but there appears to have been a tendency, towards the end of Belshazzar's regency, to swear oaths "by the majesty of Nabonidus and Belshazzar," while until the tenth year they were solely sworn "by the majesty of Nabonidus." It is hard to determine whether the association of Belshazzar with his father was included in his prerogatives. Perhaps he was ignoring the arrangements made upon the departure for Teima and this may have been one of the reasons why Nabonidus came back to Babylon in the thirteenth year, being concerned with the increasing power of his son in Babylonia.

4. The Verse Account and the chronicle allude to the division of armed forces between the king and his son. The chronicle often refers to the crown prince and "his army" as stationed in Akkad, and the Verse Account specifies that Nabonidus gave Belshazzar the command of the "army of all the lands" (*ummāni mātitān*), while he himself marched to Arabia with the "forces of

Table 11: Oaths Sworn in the Name of the Royal Family³⁰

TEXT	DATE	PLACE	ОК	OKS
AnOr 8:19	VI - 15 - Y 0	Uruk	х	
NBC 4592 YOS XIX: 113	II - 18 - Y 1	Uruk	х	
Nbn 197	VIII - x - Y 5	Sippar	х	
JRAS 1926: 107	IV - 14 - Y 10	Bīt šar Bābili	х	
YOS VI: 232	I - 20 - Y 12	Uruk		x
VAS VI: 84	VI - 8 - Y 12	Babylon	х	
YOS VI: 225	XI - 6 - Y 12	Uruk		х
PSBA 1916: 27	XII2 - 22 - Y 12	Maḫra		х
AnOr 8: 30	I - 9 - Y 13	Uruk		х

Akkad" (emūq Akkad). There is a probability that the distinction drawn by the author of the Verse Account reflects historical fact. Virtually nothing is known about the army in the Neo-Babylonian period, but one may assume, on analogy with facts known about the Persian army, that it consisted of native soldiers, of contingents levied upon conquered people, and of mercenaries. This latter part of the army would be the ummāni mātitān entrusted to Belshazzar, while the king went to Arabia with the Babylonian army proper (emūq Akkad), which is only natural for a war of conquest, since the loyalty of these soldiers was certainly stronger than that of foreign contingents and mercenaries. Similarly, when Nabonidus fought against Cyrus near Opis in 539, he was leading the "army of Akkad," (ummāni Akkad) (see p. 224), and not the "army of all the lands."

These are the only four documented instances where royal prerogatives appear to have been formally divided between the king and his son. In addition, there are two documents in which Belshazzar is associated with Nabonidus in the same manner as in the oaths referred to above. The first one, YOS III: 194, is a letter sent to Nabû-šar-uşur, the $b\bar{e}l$ piqitti of the Eanna, the salutation formula of which refers to the king and the son of the king. This letter was discussed by Dougherty (1929: 98–99). The relevant passage reads as follows:

30. Legend: OK Oath by the king, and OKS Oath by the king and his son.

Belshazzar's Administration

3. u₄-mu-us-su 4. ^dGašan šá unug^{ki} 5. u ^dna-na-a a-na 6. Tin zi.meš tu-ub lìb-bi 7. tu-ub uzu la ba-še-e 8. mu-ur-şu u pa-ni 9. ha-du-tu šá lugal u dumu.lugal 10. a-na muh-hi en-ia 11. ú-şal-lu

Every day I pray to the Lady of Uruk and to Nanāya on behalf of my lord (Nabû-šar-uşur) for the life, the joy, the well-being, the health and the happiness of the king and the son of the king.

The other one, YOS I: 39, is a dream report which reads as follows (see Dougherty 1929: 97–98, and Oppenheim 1956: 205):

obv. 1. i-na ^{iti}AB U₄-15-kám MU-7-kám 2. ^dNÀ-NÍ.TUK LUGAL TIN.TIR^{ki} ¹MU-DU 3. i-qab-bi um-ma ^{mul}GAL ^ddil-bat 4. ^{mul}GAG.SI.SÁ ^d30 ù ^dUTU 5. ina šu-ut-ti-ia a-ta-mar ù a-na 6. dum-qí šá ^dNÀ-NÍ.TUK LUGAL TIN.TIR^{ki} 7. EN-iá ù a-na dum-qí 1.e. 8. šá ^{ld}EN-LUGAL-URÌ DUMU.LUGAL rev. 9. EN-iá uṣ-ṣal-li-iš-šú-nu-tu 10. U₄-17-kám šá ^{iti}AB MU-7-kám 11. ^dNÀ-NÍ.TUK LUGAL TIN.TIR^{ki} ¹MU.DU 12. i-qab-bi um-ma ^{mul}GAL 13. a-ta-mar ù dum-qí 14. ^{ld}NÀ-NÍ.TUK LUGAL TIN.TIR^{ki} 15. EN-iá ù ana dum-qí šá ^{ld}EN-LUGAL-URÌ 16. DUMU.LUGAL EN-iá uṣ-ṣal-li-iš

In the month Ṭebētu, on the fifteenth day, the seventh year of Nabonidus, king of Babylon, Šum-ukīn speaks as follows: "I saw a meteor, Venus, Sirius, the moon, and the sun in my dream, and I prayed to them for the well-being of Nabonidus, king of Babylon, my lord, and for the wellbeing of Belshazzar, the son of the king, my lord." On the seventeenth day of the month Ṭebetu, the seventh year of Nabonidus, king of Babylon, Šum-ukīn speaks as follows: "I saw a meteor and I prayed to it (for) the well-being of Nabonidus, king of Babylon, my lord, and for the well-being of Belshazzar, the son of the king, my lord."

Nabonidus and Belshazzar are referred to exactly in the same manner by the individual who had the dream. The only difference is that one bears the title of "king," and the other of "son of the king." That both Nabonidus and Belshazzar are called "my lord" by Šum-ukīn confirms the practice attested by two leases of land from Uruk (YOS VI: 11 and 150; see p. 117, for a discussion of YOS VI: 11, and p. 193, for a comparison of this text with YOS VI: 150), in each of which the king and his son are addressed by the petitioners as "my lord."

3.3.1.3 ROYAL DUTIES PERFORMED BY BELSHAZZAR

In addition to the material already discussed, several documents and letters show Belshazzar performing administrative duties normally performed by the king himself. The texts are YOS VI: 71, 103, 131, 150, and 155; and letters TCL IX: 132, 136, and 137, NCBT 21 and 42 (YOS XIX: 103 and 104), YBC 11441 (YOS XIX: 105), and CT 22: 68. Five other letters, published as CT 22: 62, 63, 150, 235, and 245, contain significant references to the "son of the king"; very likely they belong to the period of Belshazzar's regency, since he is the only crown prince of the Neo-Babylonian and Achaemenid periods known to have been entrusted with such important administrative responsibilities. However, these letters will be used cautiously, as none of them can be dated, not even on prosopographical evidence. Most of them are addressed to lesser officials, the chronology of whose incumbencies has not yet been established. High officials are usually not mentioned by their names in the address formulas, but solely by their titles, so that the chronology of such correspondence can hardly be established (CT 22: 150, 235, and 245 are simply addressed to the šangû of Sippar).

The text which best shows the importance of Belshazzar's function as regent is YOS VI: 150, dated to the eleventh year of Nabonidus. In this document, Belshazzar grants to one Ibni-Ištar, a širku of the Lady of Uruk, the privilege of cultivating a tract of land belonging to the Eanna. In return, he had to give part of the yield to the temple, which initially provided tools and animals. The privilege granted to Ibni-Ištar bears a strong similarity to that granted by Nabonidus to Kalbā and Šum-ukīn ten years before. In fact, as pointed out by Dougherty, the wording of the two documents is virtually identical and the position held by Belshazzar in YOS VI: 150 is equal to that held by Nabonidus in YOS VI: 11 (Dougherty 1929: 117–24). In both cases the petitioners address Nabonidus and Belshazzar as "their lord" and the verb şullû "to pray, to beseech" is used to describe their demand. ³¹ The two documents record that the

^{31.} YOS VI: 11, obv. 1. 1 MU-GI.NA A-*šú* šá 1 EN-NUMUN A 1 ba-si-ia u 1 kal-ba-a A-*šú* šá 1 BA-šá 2. a-na d NÀ-I LUGAL TIN.TIR ki LUGAL EN-*šú-nu ú-ṣa-al-lu-ú um-ma* "Šum-ukīn, son of Bēl-zēri, descendant of Basiya, and Kalbā, son of Iqīša, thus besought Nabonidus, king of Babylon, their lord." YOS VI: 150, obv. 1. 1 ib-ni- d INNIN A-šú šá 1 ba-la-tu 1 Gasan šá unugki a-na d EN-LUGAL-urì 2. DUMU.LUGAL EN-šú ú-ṣa-al-li um-ma "Ibni-Ištar, son of Balāṭu, a *širku* of the Lady of Uruk, thus besought Belshazzar, the son of the king, his lord."

king or his son "hearkened, listened to them,"³² and then proceeded to grant them the privilege asked for. In both cases, it seems that they have full power to lease out the land belonging to the Eanna. Therefore, in regard to this administrative operation, Belshazzar was acting with full royal prerogatives.

Text YOS VI: 155, dated to the end of the twelfth year, consists of a list of sheep and goats, which are said to have been given to one individual for pasturing, at the command of Belshazzar (see Dougherty 1929: 131):

obv. 6. ina qí-ba-a-tum ^{1d}en-lugal-urì dumu.lugal ¹numun-ia ^{1d}sà. Tam é.an.na 7. a-šú šá ¹ib-na-a a ¹e-gi-bi ù ¹⁶umbisag.meš šá é. an.na 8. șe-e-ni.àm 2,036 a-na re-e'-i-tum 9. a-na ^{1d}na-na-a-šeš-mu a-šú šá ¹la-a-qí-pi id-di-nu

At the command of Belshazzar, the son of the king, Zēriya, the *šatammu* of the Eanna, son of Ibnā, descendant of Egibi, and the scribes of the Eanna, gave 2,036 sheep and goats to Nanāya-aḥa-iddina, son of Laqīpi, for pasturing.

Text YOS VI: 131 records another order given by Belshazzar, which was transmitted to Nabû-šar-uşur and the assembly of the Eanna by one Nabû-aḥḥē-uşur, who is referred to as the "messenger of the son of the king" (mār šipri ša mār šarri). The order reads as follows (see Dougherty 1929: 130–31):

obv. 9. 3 ÁB.GU₄.HI.A šá ina qa-bu-ut-tum 10. šá ^dGAŠAN šá UNUG^{ki} šá ina IGI ^lba-ni-ia lo. e. 11. A-šú šá ^{ld}AMAR.UD-SU ^{ld}ba-ú-SUR A-šú 12. A -šú (dittography) šá ^lba-ni-ia ki-i ú-kal-li-man-nu rev. 13. ina a-mat DUMU.LUGAL ki-i a-bu-ku a-na 14. ^{ld}ba-ú-SUR ap-te-qí-id

The three cattle which are in the fold of the Lady of Uruk (and) which are under the responsibility of Bāniya, son of Marduk-ēriba, as Ba'u-ēţer, son of Bāniya, showed (them) to me, (and) as I took (them) away at the order of the son of the king, I have entrusted (them) to Ba'u-ēţer.

In addition to these dated records, six letters from Uruk, sent either by Bel-

32. YOS VI: 11, obv. 7. ^dNÀ-I LUGAL TIN.TIR^{ki} LUGAL EN-*šú-nu* 8. *im-gur-šú-nu-ti-ma* "Nabonidus, king of Babylon, the king their lord, hearkened to them and (granted the privilege)." YOS VI: 150, obv. 6. ^{ld}EN-LUGAL-URÌ DUMU.LUGAL EN-*šú iš-me-šú-ma* "Belshazzar, the son of the king, his lord, listened to him and (granted the privilege)."

shazzar or by officials referring to orders given by him, attest to the fact that he acted as the supreme administrative authority regarding the affairs of the Eanna (section 3.1.2.3).

The evidence from Sippar is less abundant. Apart from texts where Belshazzar is involved in the selection of royal offerings (nīgē šarri and nīgē mār *šarri*), only letters from the archive of the Ebabbar shed any light on his position in the kingdom, and only one of these can securely be assigned to the period of his regency: CT 22: 68. In this letter, Belshazzar requests from the šangu of Sippar, Mušēzib-Marduk, that the thresholds of the temple of Bunene at Sippar be purified: according to the correlation proposed earlier (see section 1.2.2.1.2) between this letter and inscription 8 commemorating the restoration of that temple, one may conclude that Belshazzar was performing in this case a purely royal duty, since inscription 8 ascribes the purification of the temple to the king himself. Other letters from Sippar, which cannot be dated, but which probably belong to the period of Belshazzar's regency, contain interesting information. In CT 22: 62, the sender, one Bēl-zēr-ibni, threatens to denounce the addressee. one Šamaš-bāni, to the son of the king if he does not release people whom he is holding in fetters (rev. 19. a-na hidumu.lugal 20. a-na muh-hi-ka 21. aqa-bu-ú I will speak to the son of the king concerning you). Letters CT 22: 150 and 235 contain similar admonitions. In CT 22: 150 Nabû-zēr-ukīn, a man of the palace (awēl ekalli), asks the šangu of Sippar (unnamed) why he is holding back the rations of one Nergal-šum-ibni, a scribe. If he does not execute the orders sent to him, he will be responsible before the son of the king (rev. 19. a-na DUMU.LUGAL a-na muḥ-ḥi-šú 20. a-qab-bi I will speak concerning him (the scribe) to the son of the king). In CT 22: 235, addressed again to the šangu of Sippar (unnamed), the sartennu, the high officials and the judges³³ threaten to refer his case to the son of the king if he lets a man who is waiting in prison for judgment escape (rev. 14. lu-ú ti-i-de 15. ki-i ih-te-el-qu 16. DUMU.LUGAL a-na muh-hi 17. i-šem-mi You must know that if he escapes, the son of the king will hear about it). Finally, in CT 22: 245, an official whose name is lost writes to the šangu of Sippar (unnamed) concerning an order given by the son of the king, which he is to execute.

33. The *sartennu* was an officer in charge of the judicial affairs of the kingdom, since he is always mentioned together with judges and "royal judges" in documents recording court decisions: see *CAD* S, s.v. *sartennu*. He was probably president of the royal court of justice. In this case, it shows that Belshazzar was the highest judicial authority in the kingdom during Nabonidus' absence, since important legal matters appear to have been his responsibility.

Belshazzar's Administration

The scope of each administrative decision made by Belshazzar cannot be fully evaluated, but there is enough evidence to conclude that he was the highest administrative authority in Babylonia during Nabonidus' absence, and that in most cases he was acting with full regal power. However, the following texts show that there may have been some limitations on the extent of his administrative power.

YOS VI: 71, a text discussed earlier (see p. 119), alludes to such limitations. It records that Belshazzar sent a message to Nabû-šar-uşur, the bēl piqitti of the Eanna, asking why two sacred garments which should have been given to the Lady of Uruk and Nanaya had been held back. Nabû-šar-uşur inquired of the collegium of the Eanna about the matter, which responded that the garments had been held back by royal decree at the time of Nebuchadnezzar and Neriglissar, and that this decision was reconfirmed by Nabonidus when he visited Larsa in his first regnal year. The text does not record how the matter was eventually settled, but it shows that an administrative decision made by the king before his departure for Teima was still considered stronger than contrary orders given by Belshazzar during his regency. This text was discussed by Dougherty (1929: 125-29). He concluded that in this case, Belshazzar "was accorded the obedience due to royal command." The text rather suggests the contrary: Belshazzar's orders were indeed pre-eminent during Nabonidus' absence, but royal orders were still considered higher and could not be cancelled by him. This is shown also by the following text, YOS VI: 103, which suggests that in spite of Belshazzar's exalted position in Babylonia, orders given by the king himself still had to be reckoned with. In this text, Belshazzar proceeds to a division of fields "at the command of the king:"

obv. 1. še.numun šá ^den šá ina ^{iti}bará mu-7-kám ^dnà-ní.tuk 2. lugal tin.tir^{ki ld}en-lugal-urì dumu.lugal 3. ina a-mat lugal a-na ^{lú}gal.meš ^{giš}bar.meš ú-za-a'-i-zu

The arable land of Bēl which, in the month Nisanu, the seventh year of Nabonidus, king of Babylon, Belshazzar, the son of the king, at the order of the king, divided among the *rāb sūtu* officials.

This text proves that, if Nabonidus did not intervene directly in the affairs of Babylonia during the period of his sojourn in Teima, he nevertheless maintained a correspondence with Belshazzar and occasionally made administrative decisions which were implemented by him. This matter may also have been referred by Belshazzar to his father, and, after the latter's approval, he may have proceeded to divide the fields.

Finally, it should be pointed out that the wording of the commands given by Belshazzar use a different formulary than those sent by Nabonidus and other kings of the period. The five known letters of Belshazzar are all addressed as follows: im ^{1d}en-lugal-urì *a-na* PN dingir.meš *šu-lum-ka liq-bu-ú* "Letter of Belshazzar to PN. May the gods decree your well-being." These texts are TCL IX: 136 and 137, NCBT 21 and 42 (YOS XIX: 103 and 104), and CT 22: 68. They are all addressed to Nabû-šar-uşur, except the last one, addressed to Mušēzib-Marduk, the šangu of Sippar. They show an important difference from royal letters, normally addressed as follows: amāt šarri ana PN šulum iâši libbaka lū tābka "Order of the king to PN. I am well! May you be pleased." There are exceptions to this rule, but Nabonidus' letters all conform to this pattern, with the possible exception of letter *Moore* 67. This shows that although Belshazzar replaced his father as acting ruler for all practical purposes, his commands were not considered as powerful as were those of the king himself. The word amātu "order," which generally refers to orders issued by gods and kings (see CAD A, s.v. amātu), appears only once in a command issued by Belshazzar (YOS VI: 131). It appears in every command issued by the king.

3.3.2 History of the Period

The events which took place during Belshazzar's regency are little known. The main source is the chronicle, which resumes at the end of the sixth year and is preserved until the eleventh year, when it breaks off again. According to this text, Cyrus' victory over Astyages took place in the sixth year (550–549 B.C.), two years after Nabonidus took up residence in Teima. The entry for the seventh year reports that the king was in Teima while the crown prince was in Babylonia, and that the New Year's festival was cancelled. The entry for the eighth year merely consists of a blank space. The entry for the ninth year is more informative; after the usual statement about the absence of the king and the cancellation of the festival, the text reads as follows (Grayson 1975a: 107–08):

Col. II, 13. itibará U_4 -5-kám ama.lugal ina bàd-ka-ra-šú šá gú $^{\rm fd}$ Ud.kib.nun $^{\rm ki}$ e-la-nu sip-par $^{\rm ki}$ 14. im-tu-ut dumu.lugal u erín.meš-šú 3 u_4 -mu šu-du-ru ér gar-at ina $^{\rm iti}$ Sig $_4$ ina $^{\rm kur}$ Uri $^{\rm ki}$ 15. bi-ki-tú ina ugu ama.lugal gar-at ina $^{\rm iti}$ Bará $^{\rm lk}$ u-raš lugal $^{\rm kur}$ par-su erín-šú id-ke-e-ma 16. šap-la-an $^{\rm uru}$ ar-ba-'i-il $^{\rm fd}$ Idigna i-bir-ma ina $^{\rm iti}$ Gu $_4$ ana $^{\rm kur}$ [x] [x-x il-li]k 17. lugal-šú gaz bu-šá-a-šú il-qé šu-lit šá ram-ni-šú $(\langle$ Aš \rangle) lu ú-še-li [...] 18. egir šu-lit-su ù šar-ri ina šà gál-ši

(The ninth year), in the month Nisanu, on the fifth day, the king's

mother died at Dūr-karāšu, which (is on) the bank of the Euphrates upstream from Sippar. The son of the king and his army were in mourning for three days, (and) there was an (official) mourning period. In the month Simānu, there was an (official) mourning period in Akkad for the king's mother. In the month Nisanu, Cyrus, king of Persia, mustered his army and crossed the Tigris below Arbela. In the month Ayyaru, he m[arched] to the country x[xx].³⁴ He slew its king, took his possessions, (and) stationed his own garrison [there]. Afterwards, his garrison and the king remained there.

The death of Adad-guppi, which took place right at the beginning of the ninth year (April 6, 547), is also reported in her inscription (Col. III, 5. ina MU-9-KÁM ^{1d}NÀ-I 6. LUGAL TIN.TIR^{ki} ši-im-tu 7. ra-man-ni-šú ú-bil-šu-ma In the ninth year of Nabonidus, king of Babylon, her own fate carried her). The mourning period established for her is described at length in a poorly preserved passage (Col. III, 5-25): Nabonidus buried her in a secret place (šalmātsu iškunu ina niṣirti), and summoned kings and governors from all regions to a mourning period which lasted for seven days. The place of her death deserves notice: Dūr-karāšu literally means "fortified military camp," indicating that it may have been a fortified outpost, possibly one serving as a military base for the defense of northern Babylonia. It may have been part of the fortifications built by Nebuchadnezzar II in that region and known as the "Median Wall." 36

One may wonder what the queen mother was doing in a military camp. E. von Voigtlander suggested that disturbances in the capital may have compelled her to follow Belshazzar and the army to Dūr-karāšu (von Voigtlander 1963: 194–95). However, there is no evidence for any kind of disturbances in Babylon at that time. More important historically is the presence of Belshazzar and the army at Dūr-karāšu in the beginning of the ninth year, since the chronicle tells us that in the first month of that year Cyrus crossed the Tigris to march to a country whose name is lost. It was thought for a long time that Lydia (*lu-ud-du*) should be read or restored in that line, but recent collations have cast serious doubts on that assumption. Nevertheless, it is quite certain according to Greek sources that

Lydia fell into Cyrus' hands in 546 B.C., that is, in the ninth year of Nabonidus (Radet 1893: 242–59; Olmstead 1948: 38–40; and Hinz 1980: 401–02). Therefore, Cyrus' crossing of the Tigris in April 546 most likely had something to do with his war against Croesus.

The Babylonians probably expected Cyrus to march against Lydia at that time, since Belshazzar and the army were already stationed at Dūr-karāšu when the Persian forces crossed the Tigris. Cyrus possibly traversed part of the Babylonian territory on his march to Sardis, and Belshazzar may have feared a sudden Persian attack. It appears that neither he nor Nabonidus came to Croesus' help with their forces, in spite of the alliance they had made with him (according to Herodotus), but it is possible that Belshazzar had campaigned on the Lydian side the year before. What points in that direction is that the entry of the chronicle for the eighth year was left blank. One possibility is that the data for that year could not be found by the scribe at the time he compiled his sources. There are other instances where ancient scribes seem to have been confronted with a similar problem (see Grayson 1975a: 72–73, notes to chronicle 1, i 25 and 28, and 107, note to chronicle 7, ii 9). Possibly the documents failed to record the notable events of that year. Chronicle 1 contains an example of data which were simply unavailable in the reign of Nabonassar (Col. I, 6-8: "In the time of Nabonassar Borsippa committed hostile acts against Babylon (but) the battle which Nabonassar waged against Borsippa is not recorded"; see Grayson 1975a: 71). E. von Voigtlander has suggested that the entry for the eighth year was left blank on purpose: "the fact that nothing whatsoever is recorded under the heading 'eighth year' leads to the conclusion that the original data from which the chronicle was compiled may here have furnished information, later suppressed, on Babylonian affairs at this point" (von Voigtlander 1963: 194). According to Grayson, the Babylonian Chronicle Series are "impartial documents," but this seems to be a mere assumption (Grayson 1975a: 11). As pointed out by von Voigtlander, these copies of the Neo-Babylonian Chronicle Series seem to come from the reign of Darius I, and it is possible that material unfavorable to the Persians was removed when they were compiled (von Voigtlander 1963: 204, n. 45). Her suggestion merits consideration if the entry of the chronicle for that year reported on a military defeat of the Persians at the hands of the Babylonians. Belshazzar does not appear in any archival text dated to the eighth year. This could be purely coincidental, but since he is quite well documented in texts dated to the other years of his regency, one may surmise that he was away from Babylonia in the eighth year, either campaigning against the Persians on Croesus' side, or simply stationed in northern Mesopotamia or Syria in case of a Persian attack on the empire. If we

^{34.} Smith suggested to read kurlu-ud-du, having Lydia in mind. Successive collations of the tablet by Lambert, Sachs, and Grayson showed that the broken sign after kur is almost certainly zu (see Grayson 1975a: 282, addenda to chronicle 7, ii 16).

^{35.} See CAD K, s.v. karāšu a) and b).

^{36.} For a survey of such fortifications built by Mesopotamian rulers, see Barnett 1963.

Belshazzar's Administration

are to believe Herodotus' statement that the Lydians and the Babylonians were bound by a defensive alliance against the Persians, this scenario becomes all the more plausible (Herodotus Book I: 77).

Be that as it may, it is certain that Belshazzar stayed in the vicinity of Dūr-karāšu and Sippar while Cyrus was marching to Anatolia, since he appears in documents from the archive of the Ebabbar of Sippar dated to the second month of the ninth year. The first one is *Nbn* 332 (see Dougherty 1929: 88):

obv. 1. 2 gu₄ šuk-lu-lu 4-i 33 udu.nitá 2. sizkur.meš šá dumu.lugal u₄-11-kám 3. šá $^{\text{iti}}$ Gu₄ ina ká.gal-i šá é.babbar.ra 4. ip-ru-us-su udu.nitá a-na é [ú-ru-ú] 5. it-tal-ka ina šu.min $^{\text{Id}}$ en-lugal-bul-liţ šá pa[d.hi.a lu]gal 6. a-na é.gal šu-bu-ul gu₄ ina é.babbar.r[a] 7. ina igi $^{\text{Id}}$ utu-su $^{\text{iti}}$ Gu₄ \langle u₄ \rangle -12-kám 8. mu-9-kám $^{\text{Id}}$ nà-i lugal e^{ki} 9. ina lìb-bi 10 udu.nitá gal-ú-tu 10. ina é ú-ru-ú ina igi $^{\text{Iz}}$ zalág- $^{\text{Iz}}$ 30

Two ungelded oxen, four years old, 33 male sheep, the offerings (of the son of the king), which the son of the king, on the eleventh day of the month Ayyaru, has selected at the gate of the Ebabbar. The sheep went to the st[ables] (and) were brought to the palace by Bēl-šar-bullit, the man in charge of the kin[g's pro]visions. The ox(en) are in the Ebabbar, under the responsibility of Šamaš-ēriba. Month Ayyaru - Day 12 - Ninth year of Nabonidus, king of Babylon. Ten large sheep from it are in the stables, under the responsibility of Nūr-Sîn.

This text has many parallels which have already been discussed (see pp. 188–90). The day before (May 12, 547), Belshazzar made a votive offering to Šamaš, which is recorded in text *Nbn* 331 (see Dougherty 1929: 89):

obv. 1. 1-it li-šá-nu kù.gi 2. 1 ma.na ki.lá-šú 3. u₄-11-kám šá $^{iti}\mathrm{GU}_4$ 4. dumu.lugal a-na $^{d}\mathrm{UTU}$ 5. it-ta-din ina haš-da 1.e. 6. [......] dul šá-kin rev. 7. $^{iti}\mathrm{GU}_4$ u₄-11-kám 8. mu-9-kám $^{1d}\mathrm{N}$ à-i 9. lugal tin. tir ki

One blade³⁷ of gold, weighing one mina, (which) the son of the king

37. Dougherty translates *lišānu* by "tongue." According to *CAD* L, s.v. *lišānu* 6. d), the word should be translated here by "ingot." However, see ibid., 6. b) for *lišānu* meaning "blade of a dagger, arrow, ax, etc...," with examples listed of such "blades" given as votive gifts. Therefore, the blade presented by Belshazzar may well have been one of the inscribed votive daggers of which many examples from the Post-Kassite period are known. They are called *paṭru*, *lišānu* designating the blade. The practice of dedicat-

has offered to Šamaš on the eleventh day of the month Ayyaru. It has been established for the festival?³⁸ of [......] x. Month Ayyaru - Day 11 - Ninth year of Nabonidus, king of Babylon.

It seems probable that Belshazzar and Nabonidus witnessed the fall of their Lydian ally making no serious effort to intervene. The Neo-Babylonian empire was now virtually encircled by a powerful kingdom whose resources were almost unlimited, and which threatened its viability as an independent political entity. From that time on, hostilities must have been permanent between Persia and Babylonia, as suggested by this broken passage of the entry of the chronicle for the tenth year (Grayson 1975a: 108):

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Col. II, 21. ina itisIG<sub>4</sub> U<sub>4</sub>-21-K[ÁM . . . . . . . . ] 22. šá ^{\text{kur}}e-lam-mi-ia ina ^{\text{kur}}URI^{\text{ki}} iš?-[. . . . ] ^{\text{ló}}GAR.KUR ina UNUG^{\text{ki}} [. . . . . . . . ]
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(The tenth year), in the month Simānu, on the twenty-first day [........................] of the country Elammiya, in Akkad [..............] the provincial governor? at Uruk [.........................]

The identification of Elammiya still poses problems. It seems incorrect to follow von Voigtlander's suggestion that Elammiya is Elam and that the chronicle refers here to an incursion of the "Elamites," i.e. the Persians, in southern Babylonia (von Voigtlander 1963: 195–96). Grayson prefers to connect Elammiya with a city Elammu, located on the west bank of the Euphrates, a little south of Carchemish (Grayson 1975a: 254). If so, the presence of Persian troops in northern Syria at that time might explain why the Ehulhul was not rebuilt until late in the reign. There may have been sporadic armed encounters between the two kingdoms, perhaps even Persian incursions into Babylonian territory. Disturbances at Uruk in the tenth year, however, are unrecorded in archival texts.

Another blow to Babylonian power in those years may have been the defection of Gobryas (Ugbaru/Gubaru), if we are to give credence to Xenophon's account (*Cyropaedia* IV, vi). He was probably the governor of Gutium and an appointee of Nabonidus over that transtigridian province (see pp. 226–30). If

ing daggers was still current in the Neo-Babylonian period, as shown by inscription F of Nabonidus, a bead inscribed as follows: GÍR hi-šíh-ti d EN.ZU EN DINGIR šá ina MÁŠ.GE $_6$ 1d NÀ-I MAN TIN.TIR ki i-ri-šú "A dagger, a request of Sîn, the lord of the god(s), for which he asked Nabonidus, king of Babylon, in a dream." The bead must originally have been inlaid in the dagger.

^{38.} Possibly to be understood as *ḫašdu*, "religious festival." See *CAD* H, s.v. *hašdu*.

this reconstruction is correct, it would provide one more example of the steady erosion of Babylonian positions after the conquest of Lydia in the ninth year.

The last preserved entry of the chronicle before it resumes at the end of the sixteenth year is that for the eleventh year. However, it is incomplete, and the legible portions merely report, like all entries for the period of Belshazzar's regency, on the absence of the king and the ensuing cancellation of the New Year's festival. The only other piece of information for the eleventh year comes from an archival text from Uruk, YOS VI: 154. In this text, a widow, one Bānât-Innina, addresses the officials and the collegium of the Eanna as follows:

obv. 5. ^{1d}Nà-Numun-du 6. ¹⁶Dam-a a-na šim-tum it-ta-lak su-un-qa 7. ina ma-a-ta šá-kin-ma ^{1d}UTU-su ù ^{1d}UTU-da 8. dumu.meš şa-har-ú-tu kak-kab-ti áš-mit-[m]a 9. a-na ^{1d}Gašan šá unug^{ki} ad-din bul-liṭ-a-[m]a 10. lu-ú ¹⁶Ši-ra-ku šá ^{1d}Gašan šá unug^{ki} šu-nu 11. ^{1d}Nà-Lugal-urì ¹⁶qí-i-pi ¹⁶Šà.tam ¹⁶En pi-qit.meš 12. šá é.an.na qa-bu-ú šá ¹ba-na-at-¹innin-na dumu.sal-su šá ^{1d}u.gur-mu 13. iš-mu-ú-ma pad.hī.a ultu é.an.na a-na ^{1d}utu-su 14. u ^{1d}utu-da id-di-nu ^{1d}utu-su u ^{1d}utu-da ¹⁶Ši-ra-ku 15. šá ¹Gašan šá unug^{ki} šú-nu

"Nabû-zēr-ukīn, my husband, has died. (As) famine is established in the country, I marked (my two) small sons, Šamaš-ēriba and Šamaš-lē'û, with the star, and gave them to the Lady of Uruk. Provide (them) with food³⁹ and they shall be *širku* of the Lady of Uruk." Nabû-šar-uṣur, the $q\bar{\imath}pu$, the *šatammu* and the administrators of the Eanna heard the speech of Bānât-Innina, the daughter of Nergal-iddina, and gave to Šamaš-ēriba and Šamaš-lē'û provisions from the Eanna. They shall be *širku* of the Lady of Uruk.

Bānât-Innina had lost her husband and, unable to provide for her two sons because of the famine, she gave them as oblates to the Eanna in order that they might at least survive. The extent of this famine is unknown: it may have been limited to the region of Uruk and caused by the disturbances in the region the year before reported in the chronicle. But there is reason to believe that it lasted for a long time and was prevalent all over Babylonia: in inscriptions 13 and 14, written after Nabonidus' return, reference is made to the reestablishment of economic prosperity in Babylonia after years of hardship. Inscription 14 consists

of statements concerning the amount of commodities which could be obtained for one shekel of silver after the return of prosperity to the country, which purportedly coincided with Nabonidus' return to Babylon and the rebuilding of the Eḥulhul. Röllig pointed out that a comparison of prices given in inscription 14 with prices known from contemporary economic texts shows very little discrepancy between the two sources (Röllig 1964a: 247–49). Therefore the price list of this inscription does not seem to be blatant propaganda.

3.4 THE LAST YEARS OF THE REIGN

Nabonidus returned to Babylon in Tašrītu of his thirteenth regnal year. It is hard to determine why he left Teima. Perhaps he feared the growing might of Cyrus and realized that his presence in the capital would be required in case of a Persian attack. It is also possible that serious disagreements arose with Belshazzar and that he decided to assume full responsibilities of government again. Such factors as a famine in Babylonia in the last years of Belshazzar's regency, though alluded to by only one archival text, may also have compelled him to leave his Arabian capital in order to secure his rule in Babylonia. After his return, Nabonidus overtly proclaimed his religious beliefs and tried to implement reforms which aimed at promoting Sîn to the head of the Babylonian pantheon. It is possible that the king, who was an aged man by the time of his return, realizing that he only had a few more years to live, felt that the time had come to institute his grandiose religious scheme in Babylonia proper. Accepting that Nabonidus' departure for Teima was the result of a conflict between him and Belshazzar's party, who feared the political consequences of the king's religious convictions, one might expect that his return to Babylon provoked a significant shift of power away from that group to whatever supporters Nabonidus could claim in the capital. The general turnover of officials at Uruk which coincided with Nabonidus' return is probably a reflection of the administrative changes which took place in Babylon.

Belshazzar is attested after Nabonidus' return in two types of sources: in the prayers appended to inscriptions 16 and 17 (see pp. 64), and in the three archival texts dated to the end of the fourteenth year. One of these documents, *AnOr* 8: 33, has already been discussed (see section 2.2.2.1). The other two are discussed below. The mention of Belshazzar in inscriptions 16 and 17 can hardly be taken as evidence that he still enjoyed a high administrative position in the kingdom. Nebuchadnezzar is mentioned in an inscription of Nabopolassar (see *VAB* IV, Nabopolassar No. 1, Col. II, 71), and perhaps Nabonidus was only

^{39.} On this meaning, see *CAD* B, s.v. *balāţu* 7, and Oppenheim 1955, who discusses this text and compares it with other examples of famines recorded in archival texts.

The Last Years of the Reign

following a custom of aging rulers to include references to their eldest son and heir to the throne in their last inscriptions in order to ensure their succession. Two of the three archival texts yield more information as to the role of Belshazzar after Nabonidus' return, CT 56: 429 and Nbn 824, from Sippar, mention the son of the king in interesting contexts. Both are lists of travel equipment such as garments, shoes, and foodstuffs allotted to various individuals who are dispatched to the son of the king. The beginning of CT 56: 429 reads as follows:

obv. 1. [şi-di-tum] šá a-na \[^1\dan-nu-^du.gur\] 2. [u\[^{1d}\text{Hu}]_R-dù\[^3\text{sá sel-lu}\] tab-ni-ti\[^3\text{.} [a-n]a\[^1\text{IGI}\] dumu.lugal\[^1\text{iš-šu-ú}\] sum-na\[^4\text{.}\[^1\text{ii}]_{ZIZ}\[^1\text{U}_4-15-Kám\] Mu-14-kám\[^d\text{NÀ-I}\] [LUGAL\[^2\text{E}^i\]

[Travel provisions]⁴⁰ which have been given to Dannu-Nergal [and Amur]ru-ibni,⁴¹ who took a "well-arranged basket"⁴² [t]o the son of the king. Month Šabāṭu - Day 15 - Fourteenth year of Nabonidus, [king] of Babylon.

The beginning of Nbn 824 reads as follows:

obv. 1. şi-di-tum šá a-na [...........] 2. u $^{\text{Id}}$ UTU-BA-šá šá PAD.ḤI.A [...........] 3. a-na igi dumu.lugal iš?-šu?-[..... sum-na $^{\text{it}}$ x] 4. $_{\text{U}_4\text{-}26\text{-}K\acute{\text{A}}M}$ MU-14-Kám $^{\text{Id}}$ NÀ-I lugal E $^{\text{k}}$ i

Travel provisions which [have been given] to [..........] and Šamašiqīša, who took? provisions [..........] to the son of the king. [Month x] - Day 26 - Fourteenth year of Nabonidus, king of Babylon.

It is unfortunate that these texts do not record where Belshazzar was stationed when these provisions were sent to him. A likely place would be Dūr-karāšu,

- 40. This restoration is based on the fact that the rest of the text lists pieces of travel equipment which are normally designated as *şidītu* in other texts of this kind.
- 41. The name is restored on the basis of its recurrence in line 13: rev. 12. a-na 1dan -nu- dU .GUR 13. u 1d HUR-DÙ SUM-in. "(Travel equipment) given to Dannu-Nergal and Amurru-ibni."
- 42. For this meaning see *CAD* S, s.v. sellu 2. b). One should not disregard the possibility that these sellu tabnītus contained remains of sacrificial meals (rēḥātu), since they were often sent to the king himself, in which case it would be proof that Belshazzar still enjoyed this privilege after Nabonidus' return. However, it seems more likely that they contained those provisions called kurummatu, sent by temples to the king and other important persons on a regular basis.

where he was based at the beginning of the ninth year, when Cyrus crossed the Tigris to march to Anatolia. But the mention of "travel provisions" suggests that Belshazzar was a significant distance from Sippar, and since he never appears in any archival text after the middle of the thirteenth year, one may even venture that he was permanently stationed outside Babylonia. This may indicate that he was put in charge of the defense of the kingdom by Nabonidus, and that he was moving with the army along the eastern and northern borders of Mesopotamia and Syria. Another possibility, but highly speculative, is that Belshazzar was sent away to Teima by Nabonidus, a suggestion not really supported by the evidence. In any case, Belshazzar does not appear in archival texts for the period under consideration which suggests that he was released from his official responsibilities as regent and perhaps stationed in a place outside Babylonia.

The archival evidence is rather poor for this period, and the chronicle is broken until the end of the sixteenth year; monumental inscriptions make virtually no allusion to historical events, and no narrative source such as the Royal Chronicle gives a chronological account of the period. Therefore, this period is quite obscure, and one has to rely on the Verse Account, a few archival texts, and the data from monumental inscriptions to reconstruct the history. These sources bear almost exclusively on Nabonidus' religious reforms and the rebuilding of the Ehulhul.

3.4.1 The Rebuilding of the Ehulhul

It was believed for a long time that the Ehulhul was rebuilt by Nabonidus at the beginning of his reign, until Tadmor convincingly demonstrated that it was in fact rebuilt after the king's return from Teima, possibly in the fifteenth or the sixteenth year (Tadmor 1965: 351–58). His main argument is that, according to inscription 13, which gives a short account of Nabonidus' reign in apparent chronological order, the king proceeded to rebuild the Ehulhul only after his return to Babylon: the rebuilding of the Ehulhul is described in Col. III, 18-35, right after the section reporting on the king's return to Babylon (Col. III, 1-17). It should also be noted that inscription 7, which contains a list of the building works of Nabonidus up to the restoration of the temple of Lugal-Marada at Marad, makes no mention of any work on the Ehulhul, a further indication that the rebuilding of this temple did not take place in the early part of the reign (see section 1.3.7).

Yet contradictory statements are found in the Verse Account, the inscription of Adad-guppi, and inscription 15, which imply that the Ehulhul was rebuilt in the beginning of the reign. Tadmor argued at length that such time indications as

ina rēš šarrūtīya and ina šalulti šatti, which occur in these sources in connection with the restoration of the Ehulhul, are not to be taken literally, but rather to be understood as literary devices: the use of ina rēš šarrūtīya in inscription 15 could be compared to Neo-Assyrian royal inscriptions that ascribe the most important deeds of a ruler to the beginning of his reign, regardless of when they actually took place, and ina šalulti šatti should be understood as an expression embodying the final concretization of a long expected event (Tadmor 1965: 351–54). As pointed out earlier, there is no need to follow Tadmor's argument to solve the chronological problem involved here, since inscription 15 says only that Nabonidus had a dream concerning the rebuilding of the Ehulhul in his accession year, and that its fulfillment became possible after the third year, when Cyrus' revolt removed Median forces from the region of Harran (see pp. 107–09). Nevertheless, it is necessary to reconsider the data furnished by the sources to understand the precise meaning of the accounts of the rebuilding of the Ehulhul. The Verse Account reads as follows:

Col. II, 4. lu-ub-ni é-su lu-ub-šim-ma šu-bat-su 5. lu-up-ti-iq li-ib-na-as-su lu-šar-ši-du te-me-en-šú 6. a-na é.kur [a]p-tú ù si-kur lu-me-šil 7. é.húl.húl lu-um-bi zi-kir-šú ana ṣa-a-tú 8. e-nu-ma uš-tak-li-l[u] šá dù-ú a-na-ku 9. lu-uṣ-bat šu.min-su l[u-k]i-i[n]-šú ina šub-ti 10. a-di a-gam-ma-ru an-na-am-ma a-[k]à-šá-du ta-zi-im-tú 11. lu-zi-ib i-sin-nu zag.muk lu-šá-ab-ţi-il 12. ib-ta-ni li-ib-na-as-su ib-ta-šim ú-ṣur-tú 13. te-me-en-šú iš-te-ţí ú-zaq-qí-ru re-šá-a-šú 14. ina IM.BABBAR u ESIR ú-šá-an-bi-ţu zi-mu-šú 15. re-e-mu ek-du ki-ma é.sag.íl ú-šá-aṣ-bi-i[t] IGI-šú 16. iš-tu ni-iz-mat-su ik-šu-du šip-ri sur-r[a]-tú 17. dù-ú ik-ki-bi šip-ri la me-e-su šá-lul-ti mu ina k[a]-šá-d[u] 18. ka-ra-áš ip-ta-qid ana reš-tu-ú bu-kúr-šú

(Nabonidus says:) "I will build his (Sîn's) temple, I will lay out its location. I will form its brickwork (and) secure its foundation. I will make the window and locks similar to Ekur⁴³ (and) I will call its name 'Ehulhul' forever. When I have completed what I (shall) build, I will take his (Sîn's) hand, and esta[blish] him in (his) dwelling. Until I have achieved this and I have attained (my) desire, ⁴⁴ I will neglect the festival,

I will cancel the New Year's festival." He fashioned its brickwork, he formed its plan. He enlarged⁴⁵ its foundation (and) made its top high. With gypsum and bitumen he made its appearance glow. He set up in front of it a fierce bull like (the ones of) the Esagil. After he attained his desire, a work of falsehood, (after he) built an abomination, a work of unholiness, in the beginning of the third year, he entrusted the military camp to his first born.

The Verse Account is a piece of propaganda. One can therefore expect that it portrays the deeds and policies of Nabonidus in a negative and even satirical way. In the case of the passage quoted above, one can easily determine what the author of the Verse Account focused on: he undoubtedly had inscription 15 in mind, more precisely that part of it which reports on the rebuilding of the Ehulhul. The main argument for assuming this is that the expression *šalulti šatti* ina kašādi is not found in any Assyrian or Babylonian text except the Verse Account and inscription 15, in the first case in connection with Nabonidus' departure for Teima, in the other with the beginning of Cyrus' revolt against Astyages. Taking this as a starting point, one may suggest that the use of *šalulti* šatti ina kašādi was meant as sarcasm directed against Nabonidus' own account of the rebuilding of the Ehulhul in inscription 15. This inscription does not really state that the Ehulhul was rebuilt in the first years of the reign, and yet one feels that it does aim at producing the impression that this was the case. The remarks made by Tadmor on the tendency of Neo-Assyrian royal inscriptions to squeeze the major achievements of a king into the beginning of his reign are noteworthy in this respect. It is known that the rebuilding of the Ehulhul was one of the earliest projects of Nabonidus, since it is already mentioned in inscription 1, but that, for reasons which escape us, he was unable to carry it out until late in his reign. Being aware that this long delay could undermine his credibility among his Babylonian subjects, especially as this particular project had been publicized by him already in his first regnal year, Nabonidus would have given a somewhat distorted account of the rebuilding of the Ehulhul in inscription 15, which was intended for Babylonia, while inscription 13, intended for Harran, fully ackowledges that the rebuilding of the Ehulhul took place after the return from Teima.

Accepting this as a reasonable hypothesis, the report in the Verse Account becomes more understandable. Its author first reproduces an imaginary speech

45. Possibly the verb *sêţu* "to spread out": see *AHw* s.v. *sêţu* II. Enlarging the foundations of a temple was certainly an impious act, since temples had to be rebuilt according to the original plan (*temennu*). Perhaps we are dealing here with sarcasm.

^{43.} See collation of this line by Lambert in *CAD* M, s.v. *mašālu* 4 a). The previous reading, as suggested by Landsberger in *ZA* 37 (1927), p. 90, n. 5, was *a-na* £.KUR-*ma!* tam-ši-lu £.KUR lu-me-šil "I will make a replica even to the temple Ekur."

^{44.} Here tazimtu is to be taken as a variant of nizmātu "wish, desire," which occurs in 1. 16. See AHw s.v. tazzimtu 6) and CAD N, s.v. nizmātu, lex. section, where nizmātu is equated with tazimtu.

of Nabonidus, which ridicules the king's propaganda about the rebuilding of the Ehulhul early in his reign. The last sentence of this speech contains a decisive chronological indication which has often been overlooked: "Until I have achieved this and I have attained (my) desire, I will neglect the festival, I will cancel the New Year's festival." This makes it clear that the Ehulhul was rebuilt after resumption of the New Year's festival, when Nabonidus had returned to Babylon in his thirteenth year. But the text contains a contradiction, describing the rebuilding as completed before the beginning of the third year, probably intended as such by the author, who sarcastically refers to Nabonidus' own contradictions and contrivances in his reports on the rebuilding of the Ehulhul. Presenting the temple as already rebuilt before the departure for Teima "at the beginning of the third year," he ridicules Nabonidus' hope to have done so, while stressing that the king did leave for Arabia and stayed there for a long period instead of going to Harran, the logical consequence of the king's report in inscription 15. By the same token, he was pointing out the military incompetence of Nabonidus, who avoided an open confrontation with either the Medes or the Persians and led his armies to a region where less mighty opponents had to be faced.

Therefore, the Verse Account does not provide evidence that the Eḥulḥul was rebuilt in the first years of the reign, but mocks Nabonidus' pretension and his incapacity to do so before his return from Teima. This agrees with inscription 13. However, another source, the inscription of Adad-guppi, contains divergent data on the chronology. It reports that Sîn spoke to Adad-guppi in a dream and predicted that her son would rebuild the Eḥulḥul and restore the city of Ḥarran (Col. II, 5-11), after which the text goes on as follows:

Col. II, 11. a-mat ^d30 12. Lugal dingir.meš iq-ba-a at-ta-'i-id-ma a-mur a-na-ku 13. ^{Id}PA-ní.tuk dumu e-du şi-it lìb-bi-iá par-şi 14. ma-šu-ti šá ^d30 ^dnin-gal ^dnusku ù 15. ^dsa-dàr-nun-na ú-šak-lil é.ħúl.ħúl 16. eš-šiš i-pu-uš-ma ú-šak-lil ši-pir-šú ^{uru}kaskal e-li 17. šá ma-ħar ú-šak-lil-ma a-na áš-ri-šú ú-ter qa-ti 18. ^d30 ^dnin-gal ^dnusku u ^dsa-dàr-nun-na ul-tu 19. šu.an.na uru lugal-ú-ti-šú iş-bat-ma ina qé-reb ^{uru}kaskal 20. ina é.ħúl.ħúl šu-bat ṭu-ub lìb-bi-šú-nu ina ḥi-da-a-tú 21. u re-šá-a-tú ú-še-šib

I revered the order (which) Sîn, the king of the gods, had spoken to me, and I saw (its fulfillment). Nabonidus, (my) only son, my offspring, reestablished the forgotten rites of Sîn, Ningal, Nusku and Sadarnunna. He built anew the Eḥulhul and completed its structure. He rebuilt Ḥarran better than (it was) before and restored it. He took the hands of Sîn,

Ningal, Nusku, and Sadarnunna from Babylon, his royal city, and made them dwell at Ḥarran, in the Eḥulhul, their favorite dwelling, in joy and happiness.

This passage implies that, before her death in the ninth year of Nabonidus, Adad-guppi witnessed the restoration of the Ehulhul and the return of the gods of Harran to their abode. There seems to be a flagrant contradiction between inscription 13 and the stela of Adad-guppi, which is all the more surprising since they are twin monuments. To solve this difficulty, Tadmor suggested that *atta'idma āmur* should be understood as a hendiadys and translated "I honored attentively" instead of "I honored and I myself saw it fulfilled" (Tadmor 1965: 357, n. 36). This argument is not very convincing, as the verb *amāru* never means "to pay attention, to heed." 46

There are other reasons not to take the statement of Adad-guppi's inscription literally. This stell has connections with $nar\hat{u}$ literature, or pseudo-autobiographies; it ends with a mannu attā formula, which is often true of that wisdom genre. T. Longman, who assessed this literary genre and discussed its fifteen known examples, characterizes the stela of Adad-guppi as a "fictional Akkadian royal autobiography with a didactic ending." The best known example of this category is the so-called Cuthaean legend of Narām-Sîn (Longman 1983). Adad-guppi's statement that she witnessed the rebuilding of the Ehulhul would then be an apocryphal declaration of piety. Her influence on Nabonidus' religious thought was decisive, and it is understandable that she was reported on her stela to have witnessed the rebuilding of the Ehulhul, the central preoccupation of her life. Such fictional reports are known in other monumental inscriptions of the period: as seen earlier, in the inscriptions written during Belshazzar's regency, Nabonidus is depicted leading excavations and restorations of temples personally, although he was hundreds of miles away from Babylonia. Thus, one should not accept at face value the statement that Adadguppi witnessed the rebuilding of the Ehulhul.

3.4.2 The Inscriptions of the Last Years

Table 12 is a comparative list of the late inscriptions and building works of Nabonidus.

As already seen, inscription 17 (cylinder) and inscriptions 18 and 19 (bricks)

46. See CAD A, s.v. amāru.

Table 12: Late Building Works

TEMPLE	AG	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
Eḫulḫul	х	х	x?	x				
Ebabbar of Sippar				х	x			
Ebabbar of Larsa					х			
Eulmaš of Agade					x		,	
Elumaš of Sippar- Anunītum				x	х			
Ziggurat of Ur						х	х	
Enunmaḫ								х

form a single group commemorating the restoration of the ziggurat and the Enunmah at Ur (see sections 1.3.17 to 1.3.19). They were written at the same time and are to be placed chronologically after inscription 16, exemplars of which were found in the ruins of the ziggurat of Ur (see section 1.3.16). Therefore, the restoration of the Eulmaš of Sippar-Anunītum, which is recorded in inscription 16, preceded the building works at Ur.

Another group, inscriptions 13-15 and the stela of Adad-guppi, contains accounts of the rebuilding of the Ehulhul. The preserved portion of inscription 14 does not mention the Ehulhul, but it shares so many features with inscription 13 that one can safely assume that it also reported on the building works at Harran (see section 1.3.14). The inscription of Adad-guppi and inscription 13 are twin monuments found at Harran, where they were set up inside or outside the Ehulhul upon its dedication. Inscription 14 is also a stela, but its find-spot is unrecorded. Finally, all exemplars of inscription 15 were apparently found at Sippar, except for one discovered in the "Museum" in Babylon (see section 1.3.15); since more than 15 copies are from Sippar, it fulfilled the function of a building inscription there or at one of its dependent cities. Two other building works are mentioned in it: the Ebabbar of Sippar and the Eulmas of Sippar-Anunītum. As the Ebbabar was restored in the second year, the only possibility left is that the restoration of the Eulmas, the temple of Anunītum, is the main object of inscription 15. Indeed, the mannu attā formula appended to the inscription seems to imply that the cylinder was intended as its foundation deposit.

Col. III, 43. man-nu at-ta šá d30 ù dutu a-na Lugal-ú-tu i-nam-bu-šu-ma

44. i-na pa-le-e-šú É šu-a-tim in-na-hu-ma eš-šiš ip-pu-šu 45. mu-sa-ru-ú ši-ţir šu-mi-ia li-mur-ma la ú-nak-ka-ar 46. ì.Giš lip-šu-uš udu. SIZKUR li-iq-qí 47. it-ti mu-sa-ru-ú ši-ţir šu-mi-šú liš-kun-ma lu-ter áš-ru-uš-šu 48. dutu ù da-nu-ni-tum su-pu-ú-šu li-iš-mu-ú 49. li-im-gu-ra qí-bit-su i-da-a-šú lil-li-ku 50. li-šá-am-qí-ta ga-ri-šú u₄-mi-šam-ma a-na den.zu 51. a-bi ba-ni-šu-un da-mi-iq-ta-šú li-iq-bu-ú

Whoever you are, whom Sîn and Šamaš will call to kingship, and in whose reign this temple will fall into disrepair and (who) will build it anew, may he find my own inscription and not change it. May he anoint (it) with oil and make a sheep offering. May he place (it) with his own inscription and return (it) to its (original) place. May Šamaš and Anunītum hear his supplication, receive his utterance, and march at his side. May they annihilate his enemies and daily speak good recommendations on his behalf to Sîn, the father their creator.

This clearly refers to the temple of Anunītum at Sippar-Anunītum, since Šamaš and this goddess are asked to intercede with Sîn on behalf of future kings. Interceding gods in prayers appended to building inscriptions of the period are normally those whose temple is the object of a restoration. Moreover, the formula immediately follows the report on the rebuilding of the temple. Therefore, it is quite certain that the main subject of inscription 15 was the restoration of the temple of Anunītum.

If this is correct, the sections on the Eḫulḫul and the Ebabbar would be recapitulatory reports, the first on the latest major undertaking of the reign, the other on the main building work of the reign at Sippar: the Eḫulḫul was certainly considered by Nabonidus as the major achievement of his reign, and inscriptions commemorating restorations of temples in Sippar all contain recapitulatory sections on the Ebabbar, namely inscriptions 7 (tiara of Šamaš), 8 (temple of Bunene) and 10 (ziggurat of Sippar).

Accepting this hypothesis, the following conclusions can be drawn: inscription 15 was not intended for Ḥarran, and is not the cylinder which was deposited in the Eḥulhul at the time of its rebuilding. That inscription, which has not yet been found, possibly constitutes the *Vorlage* for the accounts of the building works at Ḥarran contained in inscriptions 13 and 15 as postulated by Moran (1959). It is quite possible that future excavations at Ḥarran will uncover the cylinder which was deposited in the foundations of the Eḥulhul, and that it will prove to be the *Vorlage* of inscriptions 13, 14, 15, and of the stela of Adad-guppi (see Appendix 2). The second conclusion is that the work on the Ehulhul preceded that on the Eulmaš, so that the chronology of all the late building works and inscriptions of Nabonidus depends on this dating. As already seen,

archival evidence from Sippar alludes to important building activities there in the sixteenth year, and it is possible that they involved the restoration of the Eulmaš (see section 1.2.2.1.3). If so, inscription 15 would date to that year, and the rebuilding of the Ehulhul to the fourteenth or the fifteenth year.

Another inscription, no. 16, is contemporaneous with or slightly later than inscription 15, as the restoration of the Eulmaš is mentioned in it. This is the inscription which contains copies of stelas (asumittu) erected at Sippar, Larsa, and Agade with new versions of earlier building inscriptions revised in reference to the exalted position of Sîn. All these versions may have been composed at the time of the rebuilding of the Eulmaš of Sippar-Anunītum, and similar stelas may have been erected in all Babylonian cities, as indicated by the letter of Nabonidus to Kurbanni-Marduk, the šatammu of the Eanna in the last years of the reign, where the king orders him to set up such stelas in Uruk (section 1.2.2.2.2). The restoration of the ziggurat of Ur, to be dated shortly after the erection of those stelas and the rebuilding of the Eulmaš of Sippar-Anunītum, would have taken place at the end of the sixteenth year or the beginning of the seventeenth year, constituting the last building work of Nabonidus.

Some common features of these inscriptions have already been discussed at length, particularly the fact that in all of them Sîn is portrayed as the supreme god of the Babylonian pantheon and Marduk virtually ignored (see section 1.4.3). In addition, they display other characteristics: the recurrence of the phrase epišti Sîn "the deed of Sîn," the mannu $att\bar{a}$ formula, the prayer on behalf of Belshazzar, the title šar kiššati, now borne by Nabonidus, and the frequent references to the "fault" against Sîn ($h\bar{t}tu$). Table 13 shows their distribution in the late inscriptions.

The references to the "deed of Sîn" confirm the chronological framework proposed earlier. At the beginning of inscription 13, Nabonidus charges mankind with having seen the "deed of Sîn," but having neglected to record it on tablets (see p. 59). In inscription 16, the king claims to have written down this deed "for the people to hear (it) in the future" (see 1.2.2.2.2). What is meant by *epišti Sîn* is hard to determine exactly: in specific passages of inscriptions 13 and 14, it refers to the re-establishment of economic prosperity in Babylonia but elsewhere in these inscriptions, and particularly in no. 16, the use of the expression is rather vague and seems to refer to all heavenly and earthly deeds, which agrees with the new position of Sîn at the head of the pantheon.

Nabonidus' endeavour to publicize the "deed of Sîn" in this period has a didactic and even prophetic tone that borders on fanaticism. The didactic aspect of the late inscriptions is further shown by the frequent use of the *mannu attā* formula. In inscription 13 and the stela of Adad-guppi these formulas are badly

Table 13: Features of the Late Inscriptions

FEATURE	AG	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
epišti Sīn		х	x		х			
mannu attā	х	х		х				
prayer for Belshazzar					х	х		
šar kiššati				х				х
ḫīţu ana Sīn	х	х			х	х		

preserved, but from what can be read it appears that they consisted of exhortations addressed to future kings to worship Sîn in order that their rules be propitious. The formula in inscription 13 reads as follows:

Col. III, 35. man-nu at-ta 36. šá ^d30 a-na LUGAL-u-ti i-nam-bu-ka-ma 37. DUMU-ú-iá-a-ma i-qab-bu-ka aš-rat ^d30 38. a-šib šá-ma-me šá? q[í-bit-su la in-ne]n-nu-ú 39. u a-mat-su la ta-[qab-bu]-u MIN-šú

Whoever you are, whom Sîn will call to kingship and say to you: "(You are) my son," the sanctuary of Sîn, who dwells in heaven, whose? c[ommand cannot be chan]ged, and whose order is not sp[oke]n twice.

The remaining lines have only a few signs preserved. The corresponding formula in the inscription of Adad-guppi has several disconnected words preserved. It consists of an exhortation to worship Sîn, Šamaš, Adad, and Ištar, and is not addressed to future rulers, as in inscriptions 13 and 15, but to "kings" and "princes" in general. The *mannu attā* formula appended to inscription 15, which is entirely legible, does contain such an exhortation (see p. 211). Such formulas are normally found at the end of pseudo-autobiographies, and generally aimed at teaching wisdom (Longman 1983: 231ff.). This also seems to have been one of Nabonidus' goals in his late inscriptions, insofar as "wisdom" could be acquired through awareness of the "deed of Sîn."

Another characteristic is the constant reference to the "fault" ($\hbar \bar{t} t u$) against Sîn. This was not a new concept; the word frequently appears in cultic warnings, e.g. inscription 2 (Reiner 1985: 16, n. 23). But during the last years of Nabonidus it is used exclusively in reference to Sîn, and much more frequently and with greater emphasis than before. The prayers appended to inscriptions 16

and 17, where the people and Belshazzar are urged not to commit any fault against Sîn, show the didactic preoccupations of Nabonidus in his attempt to reform Babylonian religion and to propagate the cult of the moon god, especially considered in conjunction with the use of the *mannu attā* formula and the endeavour to record and publicize the "deed of Sîn."

Two other features of the late inscriptions of Nabonidus should be mentioned. In the Ehulhul section of inscription 15, the king assumes the Neo-Assyrian royal titulary, unusual for a Neo-Babylonian ruler. Nabonidus' new titles in inscription 15 are as follows:

Col. I, 1. a-na-ku ^dna-bi-um-na-'i-id lugal ra-bu-ú lugal dan-nu 2. lugal kiš-šá-ti lugal tin.tir^{ki} lugal kib-ra-a-ti er-bet-ti

I am Nabonidus, the great king, the strong king, king of the universe, king of Babylon, king of the four quarters.

The adoption of the Assyrian titulary and the *anāku* RN formula was presumably influenced by the discovery of the building inscriptions of Aššurbanipal at Harran during the excavations of the Ehulhul. It is therefore not surprising that it is found at the beginning of inscription 15, which ultimately goes back to an as yet undiscovered inscription of Nabonidus from Harran. More significant is the recurrence of one of these titles, *šar kiššati*, in inscription 19 from Ur:

1. dnà-na-'i-id lugal šár 2. lugal ká.dingir.ra^{ki} 3. šá é.nun. mah é hi-il-şi 4. qé-reb é.giš.nu.gál 5. a-na dnin-gal gašan-šu i-pú-šu

Nabonidus, king of the universe, king of Babylon, who (re)built the Enunmah, the *bīt hilṣi*, in the midst of the Egišnugal, for Ningal his lady.

It shows that Nabonidus introduced the Assyrian titulary into Babylonia proper, in an inscription intended solely for Ur. It also proves that, in the last years of his reign, he still claimed the Assyrian heritage, which had been a consistent policy since his accession.

3.4.3 The Last Years of the Reign

Apart from the monumental inscriptions just discussed, the fifth column of the Verse Account is the only important source on the last years of the reign of Nabonidus:

Col. V, 2. ta-n[it]-ti en en.e[n ù kur.meš] 3. šá la ik-šu-

du ina ugu il-ta-ţar š[á] 4. ¹ku-ra-áš lugal kiš-šat šá-li-i[ţ šá] 5. LUGAL.MEŠ gi-mir KUR.KUR i-šá-ad-da-d[u ni-rišú] 6. ina zána.Rú.[A.ME]š-šú iš-ta-ţar ana GìR.MIN-ia [.......] 7. KUR.KUR-šú šu.MIN-a ta[k]-ta-šad bu-šá-a-šú al-te-qu ana [KUR-ia] 8. DU-zu ina UKKIN ú-šar-ra-hu ra-[ma-ni-šú] 9. en-qé-ek mu-da-a-ka ata-mar ka-[tim-ta] 10. mi-hi-iş qán tup-pu ul i-di a-ta-mar ni-[şir-ti] 11. ú-šab-ra-an ^dil-te-ri kul-lat ú-ta-[ad-du-ni] 12.U₄.SAKAR-^da-numden-líl-lá šá ik-su-ru a-da-p[à] 13. UGU-šú šu-tu-qa-ak kal né-me-qu [....] 14. i-bal-lal par-si i-dal-la-ah te-re-e-ti [.....] 15. a-na pel-lude-e şi-ru-ti i-qab-bi-ma şi-[in-ni] 16. ú-şu-rat é.SAG.íL gishur.hur šá ib-ši-mu ^dIDIM-mu-um-mu 17. i-dag-gal ú-şu-ra-a-ti i-ta-mi ma-ag-riti 18. U4. SAKAR É. SAG. ÍL iţ-ţul-ma i-šal-lal šu. MIN-šú 19. ú-pah-hi-ir DUMU.MEŠ um-ma-nu i-ta-mi it-ti-šú-un 20. é e-pu-uš a-na man-nu annu-ú ši-mi-is-su 21. lu-ú šá den šu-ú mar-ri še-mi-it-ma 22. d30 U₄.SAKAR-šú il-te-mi-it É-su 23. ¹NUMUN-ia ^{1ú}šà-tam-mu ka-mi-is mahar-šú 24. ¹ri-mut ¹úza-zak-ki ú-šu-uz ki-šú 25. ú-kan-nu pu-ú lugal uš-za-az-zu a-mat-su 26. i-paţ-ţa-ru sag.du-su-nu i-zak-ka-ru ma-mit 27. ki-i šá LUGAL iq-bu-ú a-di en-na ni-du-ú

47. This series has not come down to us. It is mentioned however in the "catalogue of texts and authors" published by Lambert, where its authorship is ascribed to ${}^{1}u_{4}$ -an-na a-da-pà, that is, "Oannes Adapa" (Lambert 1962: 64, ll. 4-7). Therefore Adapa was equated with the first antediluvian sage: see van Dijk 1964: 44–45, for an Uruk text from the Seleucid period which lists the seven antediluvian sages and associates them with antediluvian kings. The first pair is ${}^{1}a$ -a-lu LUGAL and ${}^{1}U_{4}$ -dAN ABGAL. See also Hallo 1963: 174–76, and Mayer and van Dijk 1980: 20, no. 90.

e[vil]. (Even) the plan of the Esagil, the plan which Ea-Mummu (himself) had laid out. He would look at the plans and utter invectives. (Once, when) he saw the crescent-(symbol) of the Esagil, he his hands. ⁴⁸ He summoned the scholars and spoke with them: "Whom is (this) temple built for? This is its symbol. If it were Bēl's (temple), it would be marked with the spade. (Therefore), Sîn has (indeed) marked his temple with the crescent-(symbol)." (And) Zēriya, the *šatammu*, crouching in front of him, (and) Rīmūt, the *zazakku*, standing by him, would confirm the king's utterance, they would approve of his order. They would (even) bare their heads and declare, (as if under) oath: (Ah!) now (only) do we understand (the matter), since the king has explained (it).

There are several reasons to believe that this section of the Verse Account deals with the last years of the reign of Nabonidus, when he tried to elevate Sîn to the head of the Babylonian pantheon. An argument in favor of this suggestion is that the section quoted above precedes the one describing Cyrus' first deeds after the conquest of Babylon, and follows the middle section dealing with the stay in Teima and the origins of the conflict between Nabonidus and Cyrus. However, this argument stands only if the Verse Account depicts events in chronological order, which is probable, but not certain. A more conclusive argument can be advanced on the basis of archival evidence: Rīmūt, the zazakku, who is described here as a flatterer attending Nabonidus, appears in one archival text dated to the seventeenth year which records the delivery of maššartu (Nbn 1055, ll. 10-11, ¹ri-mut ^{1ú}za-zak-ku). His predecessor, Bēl-uballit, is attested until the eleventh year only: he appears in YOS VI: 238, 17 (ninth year), AnOr 8: 25, 1 (tenth year), and Nbn 558, 8 (eleventh year). He is also mentioned in two letters of Belshazzar to Nabû-šar-uşur: TCL IX: 136 and NCBT 42 (YOS XIX: 104). There is also a letter, YOS III: 73, sent by Bel-uballit to Nabû-šar-uşur. One can therefore surmise that Rīmūt was nominated upon Nabonidus' return from Teima, and that he belonged to the new teams of officials whom the king may have chosen for their compliance with his religious schemes. The other official mentioned in the Verse Account, the šatammu Zēriya, is not recorded in archival texts. One Zēriya was šatammu of the Eanna during Belshazzar's regency, but it is unlikely that he is meant here: the šatammu of the Esagil should appear in the text, since the narrative focuses on Nabonidus' endeavor to

transform that temple into a sanctuary of Sîn. However in TCL XII: 120, a document from the $B\bar{\imath}t$ $\check{s}ar$ $B\bar{a}bili$ dated to the seventeenth year, one Zēriya appears in his capacity of $q\bar{\imath}pu$ of the Esagil (l. 18). Perhaps the author of the Verse Account erroneously gave him the title of $\check{s}atammu$. Thus it seems reasonable to assume that the above quoted section of the Verse Account reports on the last years of Nabonidus, after his return from Teima.

Nabonidus' claim of conquests never made, described in lines 2 to 7, possibly alludes to such passages as that in inscription 13, where the king claims that the Medes came to him as vassals after he conquered northern Arabia (Col. I, 42; quoted, pp. 172–73). They might also be satirical references to his adoption of the Assyrian royal titulary and in particular of such epithets as *šar kiššati*, which would have appeared normal in earlier times, but which sounded empty now that Mesopotamia was seriously threatened by a kingdom which also laid claim to the Assyrian heritage. However, there is no evidence that Nabonidus ever claimed to have conquered Cyrus' kingdom.

The next lines (8-15) satirize his claim to wisdom and knowledge: "He would stand up in the assembly (and) praise himself." The assembly is undoubtedly the "assembly of scholars" (puhur mārē ummānī), whom the king often gathered before starting restorations of sacred buildings (see section 1.2.2.1.1). Some of these discussions may have turned into long arguments between the scholars and Nabonidus, who probably often tried to impose his own views on religious matters: the conflict which may have arisen upon the consecration of Ennigaldi-Nanna would be a good example of such quarrels (see section 2.3.3.1). But the substance of the Verse Account's criticism is not only that the king laid claim to a superior knowledge of Babylonian science and lore: other rulers, such as Šulgi and Aššurbanipal, claimed to have attained such knowledge and praised themselves for their achievements, 49 yet the literary tradition never charged them with laying inappropriate claims to science. What enrages the author of the Verse Account is that Nabonidus' science and knowledge were alien to Babylonian culture. He is charged with not knowing the art of writing, that is, the art of cuneiform writing, 50 although he himself claimed the contrary in inscription 7 (see p. 79). He pretended to have been aware of "secret and

^{48.} The verb is obviously $\dot{s}al\bar{a}lu$, but in the present context its meaning totally escapes us. It seems to be a rare idiom, unless one takes $q\bar{a}t\bar{u}$ (plural!) as the subject of $i\dot{s}allal$ (singular!): "his hands plundered."

^{49.} The case of Aššurbanipal is well known. On Šulgi, see Hallo and Simpson 1971: 83, and Klein 1981: 14–17 (on hymn Šulgi B).

^{50.} The word $q\bar{a}n$ tuppu specifically refers to cuneiform writing. The expression mihis $q\bar{a}n$ tuppu refers to the art of impressing clay tablets with a reed stylus, in its literal meaning. See CAD Q, s.v. $q\bar{a}n$ tuppu.

hidden things," revealed to him in dreams by the god Ilteri, a Syrian lunar deity. Nabonidus is indeed the only Neo-Babylonian ruler who reports dreams in his inscriptions and who claims to have made important decisions based on their ominous content. What is unacceptable to the author of the Verse Account is that, according to the king, this secret wisdom communicated to him was superior even to the writings of Adapa. Antediluvian knowledge was considered in first millennium Mesopotamia to be the highest form of science: in the catalogue of texts and authors reconstructed by Lambert, the writings ascribed to Ea and Adapa appear at the top of the list, including the now lost series referred to in the Verse Account, and this undoubtedly reflects the high esteem in which they were held in Late Assyro-Babylonian culture (Foster 1974 and Picchioni 1981: 32–56). Yet, it was a commonplace in Assyria to ascribe to the king a wisdom superior to that of Adapa, particularly in state letters sent to the Assyrian court: in ABL 923, Aššurbanipal is described as the offspring of "Umun-Adapa" (see Hallo 1963: n. 83); in ABL 1388, the wisdom of Esarhaddon's mother is said to be worth that of Adapa; in K 13194, the deeds of the king are equated with those of Adapa. Also in their inscriptions, Esarhaddon and Aššurbanipal praise themselves for being as wise as Adapa (Picchioni 1981: 82–90). Again, the real charge brought against Nabonidus is to have introduced foreign cultural elements into Babylonia: in the first portions of the Verse Account, the statue of the moon god worshipped by the king is said to be one "[whose form] not (even) Ea-Mummu could have formed, not (even) the learned Adapa knows his name" (Col. II, 1. [......] 2. la ib-ti-qu dé-a mu-um-mu 3. ul i-di zi-kir-šú u_4 -ma-da-num a-da-pà). This deity was one "that nobody had (ever) seen in the country" (Col. I, 21. [......]-ma ina KUR la i-mu-ru-uš man-ma-an). In short, the author of the Verse Account accuses Nabonidus of having imposed a "knowledge" and "wisdom" alien to Babylonian culture, and of having claimed that they were superior to the oldest and most sacred writings of Mesopotamia. These criticisms are directed against policies mostly reflected in the late inscriptions of Nabonidus. The superior knowledge claimed by the king is undoubtedly his awareness of the *epišti Sîn*, the "deed of Sîn," publicized in inscriptions 13, 14, and 16. It is quite likely that Nabonidus pretended to a wisdom greater than the series u_4 -sakar-danu-denlil, as the Verse Account reports. Moreover, his endeavour to teach this new wisdom, shown by the didactic character of his late inscriptions, in particular the mannu attā formula

directly borrowed from wisdom literature, certainly led to serious confrontations with Babylonian priests and scholars, who would hardly have accepted the supremacy of Ilteri or Sîn of Harran.

The following lines (14–22) confirm that this section of the Verse Account reflects Nabonidus' policy in the last years of his reign. They describe an argument which the king allegedly had with the priesthood of the Esagil: since the temple was marked with a crescent-shaped symbol, it must have belonged to Sîn originally, the symbol, the *uskāru*, representing the crescent of the moon. The usurpation of Marduk's temple by Sîn was one of the projects contemplated by Nabonidus: in his latest inscriptions (nos. 16 and 17), the Esagil is called "the dwelling of Sîn," as in fact were all the major temples of Babylonia (see pp. 57 and 61). It is quite possible that the argument attributed to Nabonidus in the Verse Account for ascribing the Esagil to Sîn reflects an actual discussion he had with the priesthood of the Esagil.

The Verse Account is a biased source, but since it is corroborated in these instances by Nabonidus' own inscriptions, one could lend some credence to its narrative. The major problem is that archival texts do not corroborate other sources on these points. A survey of texts from the archives of the Eanna of Uruk and the Ebabbar of Sippar dated to the last four years of Nabonidus shows that no major reform of the cult or of the system of offerings was made, and that no form of worship of Sîn was imposed in these two temples. Therefore, one must conclude either that Nabonidus' reform was intended to be only a superficial one, or that he met such opposition in provincial cult centers that he did not carry out major changes in cultic practices. Another possibility is that he focused his endeavors solely on the Esagil in Babylon, as the Verse Account seems to suggest. So far the archive of that temple is represented by only a handful of documents and the features of its cult cannot be reconstructed at all.

3.5 THE END OF THE REIGN (539 B.C.)

The few preserved words at the end of the entry of the chronicle for the sixteenth year suggest that encounters between the Babylonian and Persian armies may already have occurred in the winter of 540–539, in the region of Uruk:

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1. [.......] GAZ? <sup>id</sup>x [........] 2. [.......]-še <sup>d</sup>INNIN UNUG<sup>ki</sup> [...........] 3. [.... erí]n?.meš šá <sup>kur</sup>pa[r-su? .......] 4. [........] meš ni [........]
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^{51.} The form u_4 -ma- 4 a-num is certainly a playful orthography of ummānu "scholar, learned," and the form from which "Oannes" is derived: see Borger 1974: 186.

The End of the Reign

221

Further disturbances in Uruk at the end of that year are alluded to by the archival evidence. One text, TCL XII: 117, dated Kislīmu (tenth month) - Day 21 - Year 16, records that someone attempted to murder the bēl piqitti of the Eanna, Ilīrēmanni, who survived, since he was still in charge in the last month of the sixteenth year. Shortly after, however, he was dismissed together with Kurbanni-Marduk, the šatammu. The new incumbents, Nabû-aḥa-iddina and Nabû-mukīn-zēri, are first attested in their new capacities in the fourth month of the seventeenth year (see section 3.1.2.2). The reason for this partial turnover of officials is unclear; perhaps the two dismissed incumbents had recently shown some opposition to Nabonidus' religious policy. There may also have been conflicting parties at Uruk at the end of the reign, and their rivalry may have been stirred up if there were Persian incursions into southern Babylonia in the sixteenth year. But the lack of evidence does not permit any certain reconstruction of events.

The events connected with the downfall of the empire in the seventeenth year are better known, since the entry of the chronicle for this year is almost entirely preserved. The New Year's festival was celebrated, and offerings given to all the temples of the kingdom. The next event reported is the gathering of the divine statues of the sanctuaries of Babylonia in the capital:

8. ina iti [......] 9. [dingir.m]eš šá amar.da ki dza-ba $_4$ -ba $_4$ u dingir.meš šá kiš ki dnin-líl [u dingir.meš] 10. [šá μ]ur.sag.kalam.ma ana tin.tir ki ku $_4$.meš-ni en til iti kin dingir.meš šá kur uri ki [....] 11. šá ugu im u ki.ta im ana e ki ku $_4$.meš-ni dingir.meš šá bar-sip ki gú.du $_8$.a[ki ] 12. u sip-par ki nu.ku $_4$.meš-ni

In the month [....... and the god]s of Marad, Zababa and the gods of Kish, Ninlil, [and the gods of H]ursagkalamma entered Babylon. Until the end of the month Ulūlu, the gods of Akkad [.....] who are above the . . . and below the . . . entered Babylon. The gods of Borsippa, Kutha [.....], and Sippar did not enter (Babylon).

This passage of the chronicle is corroborated by several archival texts from Uruk. The first one, YOS III: 145, is a letter:

obv. 1. im ¹ri-[mut] 2. a-na ¹dnà-[du-numun] 3. lúšà.tam é.[an.na] 4. u ¹dnà-šeš-m[u] 5. lúen pi-qit-tum [é.an.na] 6. šeš.meš-e-a dnà 7. u damar.ud a-na šeš.meš-e-a 8. lik-ru-bu 1-en 9. kušku-tu-um-mu 10. 5 kušdu-šu-ú 11. a-na gišmá 12. ugu dga[šan] é.an.na 13. ina šu.min lúerín.meš 14. šá giška-an-da-ra rev. 15. i-na-áš-šu-nu 16. šu-bi-la-a-ni 17. dgašan é.an.na 18. ina ſdpu-rat 19. a-na tin. tir_{i} 20. il-lak

Letter of Rī[mūt] to Nabû-[mukīn-zēri], *šatammu* of the E[anna], and Nabû-aḥa-id[dina], *bēl piqitti* [of the Eanna], my brothers. May Nabû and Marduk bless my brothers! Send me one leather mat and five (inflated) goatskins for the boat concerning the La[dy] of the Eanna via the soldiers who will bring the boat parts⁵³ to me, (so that) the Lady of the Eanna may go to Babylon on the Euphrates.

The addressees of this letter are the new šatammu and bēl piqitti of the Eanna, appointed in the beginning of the seventeenth year. The sender, if my restoration is correct, is probably Rīmūt, the zazakku official of Nabonidus in the last years of the reign, whom the Verse Account describes as a mere tool of the king's religious policy. The matter of the letter is clear: the two administrators of the Eanna are to make arrangements and provide facilities for carrying the statue of the Lady of Uruk to Babylon. Rīmūt, as the overseer of cultic matters for the kingdom, was in charge of the transporting of divine statues to the capital.

The departure of Ištar for Babylon must have created significant disruptions in the offering system of the Eanna. Presumably, the authorities of the temple still had to provide for the care of the statue, and its offerings of food and drink were probably carried from Uruk to the capital at regular intervals to prevent interruptions of the cult. There may be documents alluding to these circumstances in the Eanna archive. A new text, NCBT 535 (YOS XIX: 94), contains such information:

obv. 1. ^{lú}DUMU.Dù-i.MEŠ šá ina pa-ni-šú-nu ^lNUMUN-ia 2. A-šú šá ^lìR-ia iq-bu-ú um-ma ^lba-zu-zu 3. A-šú šá ^lDù-^dINNIN A ^lŠU-^dna-na-a ul-tu TIN.TIR^{ki giš}MÁ a-[na.....] 4. a-na i-di-šú i-ta-bak um-ma ŠE.BAR a-na 5. gi-né-e šá ^dGAŠAN šá UNUG^{ki} a-na TIN.TIR^{ki} 6. ú-še-él-li

^{52.} On the reading kurpar-su instead of the earlier kurtam-tim, see Grayson 1975a: 282, addenda to chronicle 7. iii. 3.

^{53.} The word *kandurû* means "small container, pot stand" (see *CAD* K, s.v. *kandurû*), which does not really fit the context. Perhaps we have here a form of *iskarû/giškarû*, a Neo-Babylonian designation of a part a boat (see *CAD* I, s.v. *iskarû*).

The noblemen in whose presence Zēriya, son of Ardiya, has thus spoken: Bazuzu, son of Ibni-Ištar, descendant of Gimil-Nanāya, has brought a boat from Babylon to lease it fo[r the sum of] and he said thus: I will take the barley for the regular offerings of the Lady of Uruk to Babylon.

The rest of the tablet is badly damaged. Fortunately, the date is preserved on the edge:

rev. 21. uru kar- d na-na-a l.e. 22. ši-i-hu šá d Gašan šá unug ki iti NE 23. $[U_4]$ -5-kám Mu-17-kám d Nà-i 24. Lugal tin.tir ki

City of the quay of Nanāya, domain of the Lady of Uruk: Month Abu - Day 5 - Seventeenth year of Nabonidus, king of Babylon.

Other documents may allude to the same type of operation. On six separate occasions between Dûzu 28 and Ulūlu 6 of that year, the Eanna temple rented boats from private contractors. The documents in question are PTS 2301, YOS VI: 195 and 215, and TCL XII: 121 (see Frame 1986: 38), to which can now be added NBC 6183 and NCBT 1139 (YOS XIX: 11 and 12). These boats were leased for a period of one month, high officials of the Eanna witnessed most of the transactions, and one document, YOS VI: 195, specifies that the boat was to be used for carrying barley. So the purpose of leasing the boats was for the temple to meet the needs of Ištar in the capital, a contention further supported by the fact that such a high frequency of boat rentals is unparalleled in the Eanna archive.

These documents also provide valuable chronological information. The chronicle divides the statues into three groups: the gods of Marad, Kish, and Hursagkalamma, who entered Babylon first (month broken); the gods of Akkad, who entered Babylon until the end of Ulūlu; and finally the gods who did not arrive in Babylon (Borsippa, Kutha, and Sippar). According to NCBT 535, arrangements were made to send the regular offerings to the statue of the Lady of Uruk in Babylon in the beginning of the month Abu (fifth month). Boat leases are attested as early as Dûzu 28. One can thus infer that the statue was carried to the capital at the latest in the last week of Dûzu (fourth month), as part of the general gathering of the gods of Akkad (second group). Assuming that the chronicle depicts events in strict chronological order, which is usually the case, one can conclude that the gods of the first group (Marad, Kish, and Hursagkalamma) had entered Babylon earlier, in the beginning of Dûzu or at the end of Simānu (third month). If this reconstruction is correct, it would mean that Nabonidus expected a Persian invasion and was making preparations accordingly several months before the clash of arms at Opis.

Clearly Nabonidus wanted to prevent the statues from falling into the hands of the enemy. Carrying off divine images was a common punishment imposed on vanquished peoples in the ancient Near East (see Cogan 1974), and it seems reasonable to assume that Nabonidus was trying to ensure the loyalty of all Babylonian cities by sheltering their main gods in the capital, which could endure a long siege. There are three known instances in Babylonia of such gatherings of gods as preparation for war: in two instances Merodach-Baladan II brought the gods of Babylonia to Dūr-Yakīn in order to keep them from being captured by the Assyrians, and in 626 B.C. some Babylonian cities sent their gods to the capital during the advance of the Assyrian army led by Sîn-šar-iškun (Cogan 1974: 30–32). Therefore, Nabonidus was following a well-established Babylonian tradition.

It has been suggested that the king was only using the Persian attack as a pretext for centralizing the cult in Babylon (Weinfeld 1964). This view was rejected by Cogan and Hallo (Cogan 1974: 33, n. 67; and Hallo 1983: 14–15). Perhaps Nabonidus had some ulterior motives, but it seems rather unlikely. Probably his most immediate concern was the defense of his realm and not a new cultic reform.

The question remains: why did the gods of Sippar, Kutha, and Borsippa not enter the capital? The usual explanation is that the priesthoods of these cities had become so disgusted by Nabonidus' religious policy that they opposed his order to transfer their gods to Babylon. This suggestion goes back to S. Smith, who published the Nabonidus Chronicle (S. Smith 1924: 103–04). How Borsippa, which lay so close to Babylon, could oppose a royal order, when such an outlying city as Uruk promptly made arrangements to send its cultic statues to the capital poses a problem. S. Smith later modified his argument, suggesting that Sippar, Kutha, and Borsippa were considered to belong to the Babylonian state proper and, with the capital, lay within a large system of fortifications, the northern end of which was the "Median wall" of Nebuchadnezzar. So there would be no need to bring the gods to Babylon since they were protected by a common system of defense (see S. Smith 1944: 45–47). This is equally speculative, as there is no evidence for the existence of such fortifications.⁵⁴

54. However, there might be some evidence for it in 1. 11 of the entry of the chronicle for the seventeenth year (see quotation of this passage, p. 220). Indeed, if one takes the sign IM, which I left untranslated, as an abbreviation for IM.DÛ.A *pitiqtu* "brick wall," then ll. 10-11 could be translated as follows: "Until the end of the month Ulūlu, the gods of Akkad...who are above the wall and below the wall entered Babylon." This "wall" would be the defensive system suggested by Smith, and therefore only cities outside of it would have sent their gods to Babylon.

Moreover, one may ask why the gods of Kish and Ḥursagkalamma entered Babylon, since these cities also were very close to the capital and would have been included in this common system of defense. There is some evidence that Sippar, Kutha, and Borsippa formed a single unit with Babylon on a purely political level. This was suggested by Weinfeld, who advocated that, since these cities were an integral part of Babylon's defensive system, they could not break away and consequently were not ordered to transfer their gods to Babylon (see Weinfeld 1964: 205). One event compromising this theory is that when Babylonia was threatened by the Assyrian army in 626 B.C., Sippar was one of the cities which sent its gods to Babylon (Cogan 1974: 32).

Be that as it may, these preparations did not protect Nabonidus from defeat. Shortly after the last gods of Akkad entered Babylon, the Persian army was penetrating northern Babylonia, and, according to the chronicle, the end of the kingdom seems to have happened swiftly:

12. ina itidu6 lku-raš sal-tum ina upeki ina ugu [gú šá] 13. idl-diq-lat ana šà erín-ni kururiki ki dù-šú (erasure) un.meš kururiki 14. bala.ki sar sar un.meš gaz u4-l4 ud.kib.nunki ba-la sal-tum ṣa-bit 15. ldnà-i ha.a u4-l6 lu[g]-ba-ru lúnam kurgu-ti-um u erín.meš lku-raš ba-la sal-tum 16. ana eki ku4 egir ldnà-i ki lal-sa ina eki ṣa-bit en til iti kuštukšu.me 17. šá kurgu-ti-um ká.meš šá é.sag.gíl nigin baṭ-la šá mim-ma ina é.sag. gíl u é.kur.meš diš 18. ul iš-šá-kin ù si-ma-nu ul dib-iq liiapin u4-3-kám lku-raš ana eki ku4 19. ha-ri-né-e ina igi-šú diri.meš šu-lum ana uru šá-kin lku-raš šu-lum ana tin.tirki 20. gab-bi-šú qi-bi lgu-ba-ru lúnam šú lúnam.meš ina eki ip-te-qid 21. ta liigan en liiše dingir.meš šá kururiki šá ldnà-i ana eki ú-se-ri-du-[ni] 22. a-na ma-[h]a-zi-šú-nu gur.me liiapin ge6 u4-11-kám lug-ba-ru ug6

In the month Tašrītu, when Cyrus did battle at Opis on the [bank of] the Tigris against the army of Akkad, the people of Akkad retreated. He carried off the plunder (and) slaughtered the people. On the fourteenth day (of Tašrītu), Sippar was captured without a battle. Nabonidus fled. On the sixteenth day (of Tašrītu), Ugbaru, governor of Gutium, and the army of Cyrus entered Babylon without a battle. Afterwards, after Nabonidus retreated, he was captured in Babylon. Until the end of the month (of Tašrītu), the shield-(bearers) of Gutium surrounded the gates of the Esagil. There was no interruption of whatever (rites) in the Esagil and the (other) temples, and no (ritual) date was missed. On the third day

of the month Araḥsamnu, Cyrus entered Babylon. The drinking tubes?⁵⁵ were filled in his presence. There was peace in the city when Cyrus spoke greetings to all of Babylon. He (Cyrus), appointed Gubaru governor of all the governors⁵⁶ in Babylon. From the month Kislīmu to the month Addaru, the gods of Akkad that Nabonidus had brought to Babylon returned to their cult places. On the night of the eleventh day of the month Araḥsamnu, Ugbaru died.

The Cyrus cylinder, which also contains an account of Cyrus' march to Babylon, corroborates the evidence from the chronicle that the capital was taken without a battle:

14. damar.ud en gal ta-ru-ú un.meš-šú ep-še-e-ti-ša dam-qa-a-ta ù lìb-ba-šu i-ša-ra ḥa-di-iš ip-pa-li-[is] 15. a-na uru-šu ká.dingir.meš ki a-la-ak-šu iq-bi ú-ša-aş-bi-it-su-ma ḥar-ra-nu tin.tir ki ki-ma ib-ri ù tap-pe-e it-tal-la-ka i-da-a-šu 16. um-ma-ni-šu rap-ša-a-tim ša ki-ma me-e íd la ú-ta-ad-du-ú ni-ba-šu-un gištukul.meš-šu-nu şa-an-du-ma i-ša-ad-di-ḥa i-da-a-šu 17. ba-lu qab-li ù ta-ḥa-zi ú-še-ri-ba-áš qé-reb šu.an.na ki uru-šu ká.dingir.meš ki i-țe-er i-na šap-ša-qí ldnà-ní.tuk lugal la pa-li-ḥi-šu ú-ma-al-la-a qa-tu-uš-šú

Marduk, the great lord, the protector of his people, joyfully looked at his (Cyrus') good deeds and at his righteous heart. He ordered him to march to his city Babylon. He made him take the road to Babylon and marched at his side like a friend and companion. His large troops whose number, like the waters of a river, could not be established, paraded at his side, their weapons girded on. Without combat or battle, he caused him to enter Babylon, his city. He saved Babylon from oppression. He delivered into his hands Nabonidus, the king who did not worship him.

Other accounts of the capture of Babylon, preserved in the Greek and Jewish traditions, agree with the cuneiform evidence: it was fast and relatively easy for the Persian armies. According to Herodotus (Book I: 188–91), Cyrus marched

^{55.} This word is a hapax (see Grayson 1975a: 110, note to iii, 19). I follow here von Soden's suggestion, *AHw*, pp. 325–26 s.v. *harinnu*, *ein Schlauch* ("tube, hose"). The word might refer to tubes for drinking beer from large containers.

^{56.} Another possible interpretation, which is the one adopted by Grayson 1975a: 110, note on iii, 20, is "Gubaru, his district officer, appointed the district officers in Babylon," taking $\delta \hat{u}$ as the 3rd pers. masc. sing. suffixed pronoun.

along the Diyāla, overcame the army of Nabonidus near Babylon, and then laid siege to the capital. He drained off the Euphrates to let his soldiers penetrate the city through the weakest parts of its fortifications, those along the bank of the river. Xenophon (*Cyropaedia* VII, v) also points out that the end of the Neo-Babylonian empire was swift. His account is similar to Herodotus', though more elaborate; he reports that Cyrus diverted the Euphrates in order to capture Babylon. Another tradition preserved by Herodotus (Book I: 191), Xenophon (*Cyropaedia* VII, v), and the Bible (*Daniel* V), recalls that the city was taken by surprise while the inhabitants were rejoicing during festivities.

These stories can hardly be harmonized with cuneiform evidence, which insists that the city was taken without a battle, but they may constitute an aggregate of various folk tales and legends which came to be associated with the fall of Babylon. This is certain for the siege story. The tradition of the festivities might reflect historical fact. According to the chronicle, Babylon was taken on the sixteenth of Tašrītu. Accepting that Nabonidus imposed new features of the cult of Sîn in the capital after his return from Teima, it is conceivable that festivals linked with the cult of Sîn at Ḥarran were transplanted to Babylon, perhaps even the akītu festival. This festival started on the seventeenth of Tašrītu (see p. 152). As Babylon was captured on the eve of the seventeenth, the festivities mentioned by Herodotus and the Book of Daniel may have been those of the Ḥarran akītu festival, as celebrated in the capital by the supporters of Nabonidus.

There is one further tradition, preserved in Xenophon's account, which seems to go back to the sixth century: the story of Gobryas. According to Xenophon, Gobryas was a servant of an unnamed Babylonian king, who had appointed him to a local governorship. Many years after, the son and successor of this king murdered Gobryas' son out of jealousy during a royal hunt. This compelled Gobryas to flee to Cyrus in order to seek revenge: he offered him the resources of his province and promised to help him in his march on Babylon (*Cyropaedia* IV, vi, 1–10). Subsequently, Gobryas became one of the main generals of Cyrus and played a major role in the capture of Babylon: he was the first to enter the city, accompanied by Cyrus' soldiers, and killed the Babylonian king, thus accomplishing his revenge (*Cyropaedia* VII, v, 20–30).

The story about Gobryas may contain a kernel of historical truth, since Persian high officials named Gubaru are referred to in documents from the reigns of Cyrus and Cambyses, in addition to the mentions of Gubaru and Ugbaru in the Nabonidus chronicle (see Röllig 1957: 671–72). According to the chronicle, one Ugbaru, governor of Gutium, was the vanguard of the Persian army during the war of conquest. It was also he who first entered Babylon with

the soldiers of Cyrus, three weeks before the official entrance of the Persian king into the capital. He died eight days later. Now the matter is complicated by the mention in the chronicle of another Persian official, one Gubaru, who was appointed by Cyrus to a kind of general governorship over the newly conquered kingdom. This Gubaru may be identical with his namesake who often appears in archival texts from Uruk from the fourth year of Cyrus to the fifth year of Cambyses (535–525 B.C.), in his capacity as lipāhāt/bēl pīhāti bābiliki ū ebēr nāri "governor of Babylonia and Transeuphratene." However, there is a consensus that these two Gubarus are different, and that the Ugbaru and Gubaru of the chronicle are one and the same person, who died shortly after Cyrus' entrance into Babylon. Thus, the Gubaru of the Uruk documents would be another individual, appointed in the fourth year of Cyrus as governor of the provinces which had formerly made up the Neo-Babylonian empire (Röllig 1957: 671). San Nicolo agrees (1941: 54-64). Whether or not Ugbaru and Gubaru of the chronicle are identical, it remains true that the account of Ugbaru's role in the conquest of Babylonia bears a striking resemblance to the story of Gobryas as reported by Xenophon. Both Ugbaru and Gobryas are described as local governor, Cyrus' main troop leader, and the first soldier to enter Babylon. Therefore there is little doubt that Xenophon's account is based, at least to a certain extent, on historical fact. Two reconstructions are possible. Ugbaru/Gobryas might have been Nabonidus' appointee as governor of Gutium. who subsequently betrayed him and joined Cyrus in his march to Babylon, in which case the story of Gobryas' feud with the Babylonian king in Cyropaedia IV would contain a kernel of historical truth, as advocated by Hallo (Hallo 1957: 717–18). Otherwise Ugbaru/Gobryas was Cyrus' appointee over Gutium, who accompanied him during his campaign, and the account in Cyropaedia IV would be pure invention on Xenophon's part. This has recently been proposed by Zadok, who points out that it is very unlikely that Nabonidus would have appointed a Persian (Ugbaru and Gubaru would stand for Persian *Gaubaruva) as governor of a district bordering on Media. Ugbaru was, according to him, governor of an Achaemenian province Gutium which bordered on Babylonia, and, as such, it is only natural that he was the first official to follow his master, Cyrus, in the march on Babylon (Zadok 1981: 138, n. 65).

The problem can be solved only if we can determine the political status of Gutium in the Neo-Babylonian period. There are only three references to this region in sixth century texts: one in inscription 1 of Nabonidus, and two in the Cyrus Cylinder. In inscription 1, Nabonidus refers to the Gutians as the destroyers of the sanctuary of Anunītum at Sippar-Anunītum:

Col. IV, 14. da-nu-ni-tum 15. a-ši-bat ud.kib.nun^{ki} 16. da-nu-ni-tum 17. ša i-na pa-ni lukúr 18. šu-bat-sú a-na qé-reb 19. ar-ra-ap-ha^{ki} 20. ú-na-ak-ki-ru-ma 21. gu-tu-um^{ki} 22. ú-šá-al-pi-tu 23. me-e-si-šu

(As for) Anunītum, who dwells at Sippar-Anunītum, whose dwelling an enemy (Sennacherib) had previously removed to Arrapḥa, and whose cult the Gutians (lit. "Gutium") had destroyed.

As this misdeed is ascribed to Sennacherib in inscription 16 (Col. III, 26-29) and as the events described took place in the seventh century, little reliable information can be obtained from this passage, not to mention that the Gutians are probably referred to here as archetypical barbarians and enemies of Babylonia, and not as the actual inhabitants of the region known as Gutium. The references in the Cyrus cylinder are more informative:

11. kul-lat ma-ta-a-ta ka-li-ši-na i-ḫi-iţ ib-re-e-m[a!] 12. iš-te-'e-e-ma ma-al-ki i-šá-ru bi-bil lìb-bi-ša it-ta-ma-aḫ qa-tu-uš-šu 'ku-ra-áš LUGAL uruan-ša-an it-ta-bi ni-bi-it-su a-na ma-li-ku-tim kul-la-ta nap-ḥar iz-zak-ra šu-u[m!-š]u 13. kurqu-ti-i gi-mir um-man-man-da ú-ka-an-ni-ša a-na še-pi-šu un.meš ṣal-mat sag.du ša ú-ša-ak-ši-du qa-ta-a-šú 14. i-na ki-it-tim ù mé-šá-ru iš-te-né-'e-e-ši-na-a-tim

He (Marduk) searched carefully through all the countries, he looked for a righteous king, who would fulfill his wish. He took Cyrus, the king of Anšan, in his hand, (and) pronounced his name. He called h[is na]me for ruling over the totality of (countries). He caused Gutium and all the Ummān-manda to bow down at his feet. The Black-Headed people whom he caused his (Cyrus') hand to conquer, he (Cyrus) cared for them with justice and righteousness.

This passage refers to Cyrus' conquests prior to the capture of Babylon. The following reports on Cyrus' first deeds after it:

30. iš-tu [uruni-nu]-aki! uruaš-šurki ù mùš.erinki 31. a-ga-dèki kurèš.nu. nak uruza-am-ba-an urume-túr-nu bàd.dingirki a-di pa-aţ kurqu-ti-i maha-z[a e-be]r-ti ididingna ša iš-tu pa!-na-ma na-du-ú šu-bat-su-un 32.

dingir.meš a-ši-ib lìb-bi-šú-nu a-na áš-ri-šu-nu ú-ter-ma ú-šar-ma-a šu-bat da.rí.a.ta kul-lat un.meš-šú-nu ú-pa-aḥ-hi-ra-am-ma ú-te-er da-ád-mišú-un 33. ù dingir.meš kuršu-me-ri ù urìki ša ldnà-ní.tuk a-na ugga-tim en dingir.meš ú-še-ri-bi a-na qé-reb šu.an.naki i-na qí-bi-ti damar.ud en gal i-na ša-li-im-tim 34. i-na maš-ta-ki-šu-nu ú-še-ši-ib šu-ba-at tu-ub lìb-bi

From [Ninev]eh, Aššur and Susa, Agade, Ešnunna, Zamban, Meturnu

(and) Dēr, until the border of Gutium, the cult cen[ters acr]oss the Tigris, whose (divine) dwellings had lain in ruins for a long time, I returned to their places the gods who dwelt in them and established (for them) an everlasting dwelling. I gathered all their inhabitants and returned (them) to their habitations. And (as for) the gods of Sumer and Akkad, whom Nabonidus had caused to enter Babylon to the wrath of the lord of the gods, at the command of Marduk, the great lord, I made (them) dwell in peace in their cellas, (their) favorite dwellings.

Cyrus claims in this passage to have taken care of a series of cult places which all lay in the easternmost regions of the Neo-Babylonian empire. This is pure propaganda, but the geographical data are conclusive: the expression adi pāt gutium "until the border of Gutium," is to be understood as meaning that the regions referred to extended as far east as the beginning of the territory called Gutium, which therefore marked the border between the Babylonian and Persian realms before the conquest of Babylon. Zadok has collected a convincing amount of data which proves that the expression adi pāt gutium is exclusive. Moreover, he points out that, unlike the temple cities mentioned before Gutium, we are not told of any sanctuary in Gutium itself (Zadok 1981: 138, n. 65). This indicates that, at the end of Nabonidus' reign, Gutium was part of the Persian empire. The first passage of the cylinder quoted above in which Cyrus claims to have caused both Gutium and the Ummān-manda to submit to his rule, offers further evidence that this reconstruction is correct. Komoróczy has shown that, in texts from the Neo-Babylonian and Achaemenid periods, the word Ummān-manda always refers to the Medes (Komoróczy 1977: 47). This passage of the cylinder must therefore refer to previous conquests by Cyrus, that of the Median kingdom and that of Gutium. Since Gutium is listed separately, one can infer that it was conquered by Cyrus, but that it had not been part of the Median kingdom. Therefore, either it had remained independent, or, more likely, it had been subject to the Neo-Babylonian kings until its conquest by Cyrus, which then would have taken place several years before the fall of Babylon. The loss of Gutium may even have been one of the factors which prompted Nabonidus to return to the capital in his thirteenth year.

In the light of this reconstruction, the story of Gobryas as reported by Xenophon agrees with cuneiform evidence. Ugbaru/Gobryas would have been the appointee of Neo-Babylonian rulers over Gutium.⁵⁷ At some point in the

57. Mention should be made here of Scheil 1914. Scheil published a Neo-Babylo-

The End of the Reign

middle of the reign of Nabonidus, he would have revolted against his ruler and accepted the overlordship of Cyrus. The proximity of his province to Babylonia and his familiarity with this region made it all the more natural that he become Cyrus' main troop leader for the march on Babylon.

According to the chronicle, only one large scale battle was fought between the armies of Nabonidus and Cyrus, near Opis, and it seems to have been decisive, since the chronicle tells us that Nabonidus "fled." This is corroborated by Berossus (Burstein 1978: 170):

On learning of the invasion, Nabonnedos met him (Cyrus) with an army and opposed him in battle. After being defeated, he fled with a small retinue and took refuge within the city of the Borsippians.

A few days later, on Tašrītu 14 (October 10, 539), the Persian army entered Sippar without a battle. It is impossible to determine why Sippar surrendered so readily to Cyrus: either the city was so opposed to Nabonidus that it would welcome even a foreign invader, or perhaps the defeat of the Babylonian army near Opis was so total that there was no further hope of resisting the invader. Even after Sippar surrendered, there still appears to have been some uncertainty as to the final outcome of the war, since a recently published document from Sippar, *CT* 56: 55, is dated to Nabonidus' reign the day after, Tašrītu 15 (October 11, 539). But the following day (October 12, 539), Ugbaru and the Persian army entered Babylon, encountering no resistance. A tablet from Uruk, *GCCI* I: 390, was still dated to Nabonidus' reign on Tašrītu 17 (October 13), and this date must mark the official end of his reign. ⁵⁸ Two days later, on Tašrītu 19 (October 15), a

nian letter dealing with one Gubaru who had to do with military matters. Furthermore, reference is made in this letter to military records of the time of Nebuchadnezzar and Neriglissar. On this basis, Scheil dated the tablet to the reign of Nabonidus and assumed that the Gubaru mentioned in it was the Gobryas of Xenophon, before he betrayed the Babylonian king and went over to Cyrus. His theory falls when one attempts to date the letter on prosopographic evidence. The sender is one Anu-šar-uṣur, and the addressees are one Nabû-mukīn-apli and one Nabû-aḥa-iddina. The first is to be identified as the $q\bar{t}pu$ of the Eanna under Cyrus, the second as the satammu of the Eanna under Cyrus and Cambyses, and the third as the $b\bar{e}l$ piqitti of the Eanna from the seventeenth year of Nabonidus until the fourth year of Cambyses (see Kümmel 1979: 141–44). Therefore the letter is to be dated to the reign of Cyrus or Cambyses and the Gubaru mentioned in it is undoubtedly the governor of Babylonia and Syria of the Uruk documents.

58. Another tablet, *Nbn* 1054, has the date Araḥsamnu - Day 10 - Seventeenth year of Nabonidus (November 5, 539), but the month sign is shaded on Strassmaier's copy and I will follow Parker and Dubberstein who assume an error either of the scribe or of the copyist (Parker and Dubberstein 1956: 13).

Sippar tablet, recently published as CT 57: 717, was dated to the accession year of Cyrus.

The later tradition is divided on the subsequent fate of Nabonidus. According to Xenophon, the king of Babylon was killed by Gobryas upon capture of the city (*Cyropaedia* VII, v, 29–30), but Berossus maintains that he was spared and exiled by Cyrus to Carmania, where he may have been appointed governor: "Dealing with him (Nabonidus) in a gracious manner, Cyrus granted him Carmania as his residence and sent him out of Babylonia." If we are to believe in the authenticity of the gloss to Berossus' text which states that "King Darius, however, took away a part of his province for himself," it would mean that Nabonidus outlived Cyrus and Cambyses. In view of the exceptional longevity of his mother, it is by no means impossible that he also died a centenarian (see Burstein 1978: 170 and Lewy 1946: 408). According to the chronicle, Nabonidus was captured in Babylon after he retreated, but this text makes no statement as to his subsequent fate. This evidence is at variance with Berossus, who tells us that Nabonidus surrendered after Cyrus had laid siege to Borsippa:

Cyrus then marched on Borsippa (after the capture of Babylon) to lay siege to Nabonnedos. Nabonnedos, however, did not await the siege but surrendered himself first.

Whether he was captured there or in Babylon is not particularly relevant, but the Dynastic Prophecy provides conclusive evidence as to his fate:

Col. II, 17. Lugal $^{\text{kur}}$ Num.ma $^{\text{ki}}$ i-te-eb- $\langle \text{bi} \rangle$ $^{\text{gis}}$ Pa x x [...] 18. ina aš.te-šú i-de-ek-ke-e-šu-ma [...] 19. aš.te dib u lugal šá $\langle \text{ina} \rangle$ aš.te zi-ú? [....] 20. lugal $^{\text{kur}}$ Num.ma $^{\text{ki}}$ a-šar-šú ú-nak-k[a-ar-ma] 21. ina kur šá-nam-ma ú-še-šib-šú

A king of Elam will arise, the sceptre x x [he will take?] He will remove him (the preceding king) from his throne and [....] He will take the throne and the king whom he will have removed? \langle from \rangle the throne [...], the king of Elam will cha[nge] his place and settle him in another land.

This passage of the Dynastic Prophecy undoubtedly refers to Cyrus (see Grayson 1975b: 25). The king who was removed from his throne is Nabonidus, whose reign is described in the preceding six lines of the text. The Dynastic Prophecy confirms Berossus' statement that Nabonidus was not killed, but exiled to a remote province of the Persian empire. Therefore, it is possible that the king slain by Gobryas in the *Cyropaedia* was not Nabonidus, but his son Belshazzar. Xenophon would agree on this point with the Book of Daniel.

One of the first deeds of Cyrus after the fall of Babylon was to return the statues which Nabonidus had brought to the capital to their respective cities. This is described in the chronicle and in the Cyrus cylinder. A letter from the archive of the Eanna of Uruk corroborates these sources: it refers to the arrangements made by the collegium of the Esagil to return the statues of Nanāya and of the Lady of Uruk to their city (YOS III: 86). The letter cannot be dated at all, even upon prosopographical evidence, but its historical setting is probably to be sought in the return of divine statues to their abodes ordered by Cyrus at the end of his accession year as king of Babylon.

The conquest of Babylon and the deposing of its last native king do not seem to have aroused particular disturbances in Babylonia, which does not mean that Persian overlordship was accepted smoothly. The verbal excesses of such compositions as the Verse Account and the Cyrus cylinder show that Nabonidus still had many supporters and that an important part of the population was not ready to accept foreign rulers. Had it been otherwise, Cyrus would have had no need to commission such blatant pieces of propaganda. Indeed, when the Persian empire underwent its first major political crisis after the death of Cambyses two usurpers arose, each taking the programmatic name of Nebuchadnezzar and claiming to be sons of Nabonidus, thus showing that the last king of Babylon was still remembered as a major figure in Babylonia.⁵⁹

AFTERWORD

The events of 539 B.C. involved more than a turnover of dynasties. Never before had Babylonia come under the sway of foreign invaders who did not assimilate into its culture. Although Achaemenid rulers adopted Akkadian as one of the official languages of their empire, they made few other concessions to native Babylonian civilization. Mesopotamia was now destined to be a mere province of a far-flung multi-national empire whose political center lay outside its historic zone of influence. Deprived of the active support of the state, threatened by the constant expansion of Aramaic as a vernacular and as the language of administration, Akkadian language and culture seemed doomed to linger in ever more restricted areas of public and private life. Nevertheless, it survived and flourished until well into the Parthian period, several centuries after the loss of Babylonian political independence. Thus, the empire conquered by Cyrus in 539 was no moribund political entity. Indeed, the last decades of Babylon's existence as an independent state rank as the most brilliant in its history: never had such a vast territorial expanse come under Babylonian control; despite some temporary setbacks, economic growth seems to have been steady throughout the history of the dynasty; and Babylonian civilization and culture enjoyed a period of revival that places the Neo-Babylonian empire among the great political entities of the ancient world.

Unfortunately, research on the Neo-Babylonian period is often hampered by the aridity of the sources. Building inscriptions of the Neo-Babylonian rulers seem opaque and lifeless when compared to Neo-Assyrian royal inscriptions and annals, which, despite their partiality and the need to use them cautiously, provide a chronological sequence of events and a wealth of information on Neo-Assyrian political and military history. Research on the Neo-Assyrian period is further enhanced by the partial survival of the state archives of Kalhu and Nineveh, invaluable sources for the political structure of the Sargonid empire. The lack of equivalent source material for the Neo-Babylonian period—only a handful of documents have been discovered in the remains of the royal palace at Babylon—means that the political history of the Neo-Babylonian empire remains an enigma to historians. Nevertheless, a few areas for future research likely to produce outstanding results can be delineated.

^{59.} See von Voigtlander 1978: 52–62. These two usurpers are often referred to in the inscription, but see especially p. 55, section 15, Il. 31-32: "There was a certain man, Nidintu-Bēl, the son of Kīn-zēr, the *zazakku*. He arose in Babylonia, lying to the people thus: 'I am Nebuchadnezzar, the son of Nabû-nā'id, king of Babylon.' The people of Babylonia went over to that Nidintu-Bēl. Babylonia revolted. He took possession of the kingship in Babylonia." This inscription refers to the other usurper, one Arakhu, in almost the same terms. On the chronology of these two brief reigns, see the introduction to *YOS* XVII. They are usually referred to as Nebuchadnezzar III and IV.

Afterword

Archival texts of the Neo-Babylonian period are among the most complete for any period in ancient Near Eastern history: the Ebabbar of Sippar has yielded more than thirty thousand tablets and fragments from the reign of Nabopolassar to that of Darius the Great (Leichty 1986), and the Eanna of Uruk has yielded several thousand well-preserved documents covering a comparable period. Many of these documents are as yet unpublished, and study of the published material is still in its early stages. Reconstruction of the archives will provide important information about the social and economic history of the period; in fact, these records may compensate to some extent for the lack of central archives for the reconstruction of the political history. A study of the interaction between palace and local administrations often reveals the existence of political developments in the capital not otherwise documented, e.g. royal interference with temple affairs often indicates a major shift in policy at court. In this connection, two approaches seem most promising. One concerns the rise of the group led by Neriglissar and his family in the latter part of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar and their successful bid for political power after his death. Their blatant manipulation of local offices at Uruk and Sippar and their open links with such prominent business houses as the Egibi family of Babylon suggest that the intrusion of the group into politics increased both their economic power and their control of local institutions. The reign of Nabonidus represents a continuation along the same lines, but under the auspices of a new faction within the group. The nature and scope of the group's intervention calls for a more thorough assessment, in which prosopography may be helpful. The patterns of promotion within the local administrations need to be studied to establish the existence or lack of a cursus honorum and to delineate the careers of individuals, the local families or groups to which they belonged, and the links they entertained with the oligarchy. Another approach concerns the great territorial clans of Babylonia, such as the Puqudu, Gambulu, or Bīt Amukkanu. They are mentioned in several documents from the Eanna of Uruk, and reconstruction of the archive might prove useful in establishing the role they played in the structure of the empire. Neriglissar was of the clan of Puqudu and his connection with the Eanna temple is illustrated by several documents. Some of the clans, the Bit Yakin in particular, were in the vanguard of Babylonian resistance to the gradual takeover of the country by the Assyrians in the eighth and seventh centuries. Doubtless they had a major say in shaping the policies of the Neo-Babylonian state.

One major research source offering promise of new information consists of the thousands of documents from Babylon in museum drawers all over the world, the majority of which are in the British Museum. Their publication will supplement what we already know of archives, such as those of the Egibi house. It may be that more documents from the archive of the Esagil, new portions of the Neo-Babylonian Chronicle series, and literary compositions of historical relevance will turn up in museums or excavations, but the more realistic and immediate hope for increasing our knowledge of this period lies in the painstaking reconstruction of the vast archives already at hand.

APPENDIX 1

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APPENDIX 2

NEW INSCRIPTIONS OF NABONIDUS

The flow of new cuneiform texts is continuous. Every year hundreds, sometimes thousands of documents are brought to the knowledge of Assyriologists. During recent excavations at Larsa and Harran, fragments of three previously unknown inscriptions of Nabonidus were discovered. Fragment 1, found in a room of the Ebabbar temple at Larsa during the 1983 French expedition, consists of the upper portion of a stela severely mutilated in antiquity (Huot 1985). Fragments 2 and 3, a poorly preserved brick inscription and a small piece of a clay cylinder, were found at Harran during the 1985 Turkish excavations (Donbaz 1987). One piece of a cylinder, fragment 4, related to the rebuilding of the Eulmas in Agade, was not included in my catalogue of the inscriptions. This fragment, mentioned on page 141, was brought to my attention by Grant Frame.

Fragment 1, still unpublished, has been summarily described by Arnaud (Huot 1985: 18). Although the stela is poorly preserved, enough of the inscription remains to warrant comparison with inscriptions 13 and 14. Arnaud has characterized fragment 1 as a local version of these monuments and suggested that the inscription was adapted to the local situation: the phrase [... a]- $\dot{s}i$ -ibÉ.BABBAR indicates that the stela may have described the Ebabbar as a temple of Sîn. The usurpation of Babylonian temples by the moon god was a part of Nabonidus' religious reform after his return to Babylon. The usurpation of the Ebabbar of Larsa by Sîn is mentioned in inscription 16, a copy of a stela at Larsa which belonged to a series of similar monuments intended for Babylonian cult centers. These stelas were most likely fashioned toward the end of the sixteenth year, at the time of the rebuilding of the temple of Anunītum at Sippar-Anunītum. Fragment 1, however, is not one of these stelas. It belongs, together with inscription 14, to a slightly earlier series of monuments, inspired by the Harran inscriptions (inscription 13 and the stela of Adad-guppi) and set up in the cult centers of Babylonia at the dedication of the Ehulhul between the thirteenth and the sixteenth year.

Fragments 2 and 3 have been published by Donbaz, with copies, transliterations, and translations (Donbaz 1987). The inscription on fragment 2 is badly damaged: line 1 contains remnants of the king's name; line 2 mentions [...] É

Appendix 2

^dNUSKU; and in line 3 the god Sîn appears in a broken context. Since the Ehulhul was the temple of Sîn and also of Ningal, Nusku, and Sadarnunna, fragment 2 may have been one of the brick inscriptions commissioned to commemorate its rebuilding. Fragment 3 had the same purpose. It belongs to a much more elaborate building inscription recorded on a clay cylinder, most likely one deposited in the foundation of the Ehulhul at the time of its rebuilding. This is borne out by the fact that the preserved portions of fragment 3 anticipate, with striking correspondences of vocabulary and subject matter, the section of inscription 15 relating to the restoration of the Ehulhul. Fragment 3 might even be a *Vorlage* to all the Ehulhul inscriptions and related material (the funerary stela of Adad-guppi, inscriptions 13 and 14, fragment 1 and inscription 15a).

One feature of fragment 3 raises new questions concerning the chronology of the rebuilding of the Ehulhul (section 3.4.2). Among the monumental inscriptions of Nabonidus, only those written during Belshazzar's regency fully acknowledge Marduk as supreme god with a befitting array of titles and epithets, while relegating Sîn to a subordinate position (section 1.4.2). Fragment 3 belongs to an earlier version of the account of the rebuilding of the Ehulhul in inscription 15: the few broken lines that are preserved correspond to the dream section of inscription 15 in which Sîn and Marduk, standing together, order Nabonidus to rebuild the Ehulhul and promise that the Medes and their King, Astyages, will be removed from the city of Harran (section 2.3.1.1). Too little of fragment 3 is preserved to assess how much it differs from inscription 15, though one feature of the fragment is striking: Sîn is absent from the dream report, and the epithets of Marduk are quite elaborate. For instance, both inscription 15 and fragment 3 give Marduk the epithet enlil ilāni "leader of the gods," but fragment 3 goes one step further and calls him [bēl] bēlē rēmēnû "compassionate lord of lords." Moreover, while Marduk appears in inscription 15 only in the dream sequence, fragment 3 portrays him playing an active role in the rebuilding of the temple: one broken line has the phrase ina qībit Marduk "at the command of Marduk." This consistent praise of Marduk makes it improbable that the inscription was commissioned by Nabonidus after his return to Babylon or even before his departure for Arabia. In fact, the position of Marduk in fragment 3 is compatible only with the "orthodox inscriptions" written under Belshazzar's auspices during his father's stay in Teima.

The assignment of fragment 3 to Belshazzar's regency may clarify some aspects of the chronological problem related to the rebuilding of the Ehulhul. Accepting that the fragment belonged to the cylinder originally intended as a foundation deposit, two scenarios are plausible: rebuilding of the temple was entirely Belshazzar's responsibility and was completed while the king was still

in Teima, or it was initiated by Belshazzar but completed by Nabonidus after his return to Babylon. The second alternative has the advantage of harmonizing the contradictory data of the Ehulhul inscriptions in that it explains how Nabonidus could claim in inscription 13 to have restored the Ehulhul after he left Teima, while at the same time the funerary stela of Adad-guppi could insist that she witnessed the rebuilding before her death in the middle of Belshazzar's regency.

These data suggest the following as the most plausible sequence of events. At the very outset of his reign Nabonidus proclaimed his intention to rebuild the Ehulhul (inscription 1). Yet, the presence of the Medes in that region put his project in jeopardy. In order to do away with the Medes, the king encouraged uprisings among their vassals (inscription 15 and fragment 3). Cyrus' revolt, a consequence of that policy, broke out in the third year and ended successfully in the sixth year with the capture of Astyages, king of the Medes (inscription 15 and the chronicle). Belshazzar then proceeded to clear the debris of the Ehulhul, to make excavations, and to lay the foundations of the new temple. This would have taken place in the seventh or eighth year, allowing Adad-guppi to see at least part of the rebuilding before her death at the beginning of the ninth year (inscription of Adad-guppi). Belshazzar was probably absent from Babylonia for most of the eighth year (section 3.3.2); perhaps he spent some time in Harran supervising the rebuilding. The inscription he then commissioned as a foundation deposit for the Ehulhul (fragment 3), like all monumental texts of his regency, proclaimed an official return to orthodoxy. Completion of the rebuilding may have been postponed until the king returned from Teima. Maybe the region of Harran was threatened again, this time by the Persians, who, according to the chronicle, crossed Babylonian territory in the ninth year on their march to Anatolia. Nabonidus, having left Teima, would have been able to secure Babylonian rule again in the region of Harran, then complete the rebuilding of the Ehulhul and commission revised versions of the building cylinder composed under Belshazzar's auspices to make them compatible with his reform projects.

The contradictions apparent in the source material relating to the Ehulhul would then reflect the complicated circumstances of the rebuilding of the temple, such as false claims, changes of plans, postponements, and unfulfilled hopes. These conclusions are based, however, on evidence from a very small fragment, the assignment of which remains tentative. The only argument in favor of the proposed chronology is the relative position of Marduk and Sîn in the inscription.

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263

Seux.	M	1
ocux.	IVI.	J

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INDEX OF SOURCES

MONUMENTAL INSCRIPTIONS	CT 9, 3b: 142
	CT 22, 68: 11–12
Inscription 1: 74, 88, 89, 106–07, 110–11, 145,	CT 22, 185: 83
228	CT 55, 51: 10
Inscription 2: 23, 24, 127, 130, 131–32	CT 56, 359: 102
Inscription 3: 24	CT 56, 420: 132–33
Inscription 5: 7, 133, 134, 144–45	CT 56, 429: 204
Inscription 6: 9–11, 145	CT 56, 442: 136
Inscription 7: 26	CT 57, 312: 135–36
Inscription 8: 11, 134–35	GCCI I, 294: 153
Inscription 9: 28–29	GCCI I, 405: 158
Inscription 10: 29	Moore 1939, no. 67: 185
Inscription 11: 7, 30–31	Nbn 2: 115
Inscription 13: 33, 67, 146, 150–52, 172–73,	Nbn 56: 8
213	Nbn 331: 200-01
Inscription 14: 33	Nbn 332: 200
Inscription 15: 107-08, 210-11, 214	Nbn 824: 204
Inscription 16: 17–18	NCBT 203 (YNER 10: 1): 94
Inscription 17: 35–37	PTS 2097: 120-21
Inscription 19: 214	Strassmaier 1893, 5: 100
Inscription F: 201 n. 37	YOS I, 39: 192
Inscription Z: 99–100	YOS III, 2: 118
Inscription of Adad-Guppi: 68–70, 72–73, 75,	YOS III, 4: 18
78, 208–09	YOS III, 115: 162–63
Cyrus Cylinder: 38, 225, 228-29	YOS III, 145: 221
	YOS III, 194: 192
	YOS VI, 10: 119
LITERARY TEXTS	YOS VI, 71: 120
	YOS VI, 103: 196
Dynastic Prophecy: 101, 231	YOS VI, 131: 194
Enūma Anu Enlil: 128	YOS VI, 134: 154
Nabonidus Chronicle: 70, 150, 166, 197–98,	YOS VI, 154: 202
201, 219–20, 224–25	YOS VI, 155: 194
Royal Chronicle: 128–30, 134, 166–68	YOS XIX, 94: 221–22
Verse Account: 38, 150, 171–72, 206–07,	YOS XIX, 254: 122
214–16	YOS XIX, 256: 157
214-10	
ARCHIVAL TEXTS	CLASSICAL AND BIBLICAL SOURCES
AnOr 8, 33: 93–94	Berossus, Babyloniaca: 39, 88-89, 97, 230,
Cl 1012 - 141 42	221

231

Clay 1912a: 141-42

General Index

Diodorus of Sicily, *Library of History*: 181–82 Herodotus, *Histories*: 80 Strabo, *Geography*: 180–82 Book of Daniel: 129

GENERAL INDEX

Adad-guppi, career, 68–79; death and burial, 70, 197–98; stela, 71 and 78–79 (as funerary inscription); 139–40, 208–09 (as wisdom literature)

Adapa (or Oannes-Adapa), 215, 218

Adapa (or Oannes-Adapa), 215, 218
Agade, building works at, 35, 55, 141;
excavations at, 141–42

antiquarian interest, 130-31, 138-43

Arabia, campaign to, 109, 150, 166–69; plans for campaign to, 109, 127, 143–47; wealth and trade, 181–83

army, 190-91

Assyria, imperial continuity with, 101, 103, 110, 139–40, 142–43, 180, 214; involvement in Arabia, 178–80; see also Nabopolassar

astrological omens, 23, 127–29; in dreams, 111–13, 192; see also *enūma Anu Enlil asumittu* (stela), 17–18, 176 Awēl-Marduk, 78, 97, 110–11, 124, 140

Babylon, building works at, 38–41, 113–14; topography of, see *Bīt šar Bābili*

Belshazzar, 11–12, 63–65, 90–98, and passim in chapter 3; feast of, 226

Bēl-šum-iškun (father of Neriglissar), 68, 85 bīt redûtu, 155–57

Bīt šar Bābili, 41, 96, 98-104

Bīt Sîn-māgir, 85

Borsippa, building works at, 116-17

building inscriptions, purpose, 19; structure, 46, 50–51

building rituals, for the *sippu*, 11–12; for the rebuilding, 133–34

Chronicles, mode of compilation, 199 Cilicia, campaigns to, 22, 117, 127 Cyrus the Great, 38–39, 108–09, 215, 224–32

Cyrus Cylinder, 143

daggers, as votive gifts, 40, 200–01

dreams, 60, 108–09, 111–13, 151–52, 192, 201 n. 37, 215, 218

Dūrum, building works at, 28–30, 53 Dynastic Prophecy (literary composition), 4

Egibi family, 84, 90–94, 96, 99, 102–03 Ehulhul, rebuilding of, 32, 34, 58–61, 63, 68 n. 1, 75–76, 105–15, 201, 205–11, Appendix 2

En-nigaldi-Nanna (Nabonidus' daughter), 4, 23, 26, 71–72, 121–22, 127–31

enūma Anu Enlil (collection of astrological omens), 128

Esagil, turned into temple of Sîn, 61-62, 216, 219

famine, 202-03

Gobryas (Gubaru), 201, 226–30 Gutium, 201, 227–30

Harran, building works at, see Ehulhul; destruction in 610, 58, 75, 106; religious calendar of, 152–53, 226 hepatoscopy, 48, 52, 114, 133

Ilteri/Teri (deity), 76, 184, 218, 219

Kaššaya (daughter of Nebuchadnezzar II and wife of Neriglissar), 121–22

Kish, building works at, 26, 41, 117 Kutha, building works at, 26, 117

Lābâši-Marduk, 78, 86–88 (chronology of reign), 92–93, 95, 97, 110–11, 140 Labynetus, 80–81 Larsa, administrative changes at, 94–95;

building works at, 17, 27–28, 32, 34, 51–53, 55–56

letters, formulary of, 197 letter orders, 7–11

Ludlul bēl nēmeqi (literary composition), 112, 152 n. 2

Lydia, conquest by Cyrus, 80, 197-201

Marad, building works at, 26, 50–51 Medes, 108–15; see also Ḥarran Median Wall of Nebuchadnezzar II, 198, 223–24

mourning rituals, for destroyed temples, 74–75

Nabonidus, daughters of, 136–37, see also En-nigaldi-Nanna; knowledge of writing and literature, 79, 215–19; health problems, 113, 166; passim for other subjects

Nabopolassar, declaration of war on Assyria, 115

Nabû-balāṭsu-iqbi (father of Nabonidus), 68, 77-78

Nebuchadnezzar King of Justice (literary composition), 4–5

Nebuchadnezzar II, 4-5, 21, 38, 41, 106, 111-12, 119-24

Nebuchadnezzar III/IV, 232

Neriglissar, 21, 84–87, 91–95, 97, 106, 110–11, 123–25

New Year's festival, cancellation of, 150, 153, 186–87, 208

nomads, 174, 178–80; ideological representation of, 183

Oannes, see Adapa oaths, 190-91

Prayer of Nabonidus (literary text from Qumran), 153 Puqūdu, 68, 94–95 rēḥātu (remains of sacrificial meals), 157–59, 188
 Rīmūt (zazakku official), 216, 221
 Royal Chronicle (literary composition), 4:

166–69 (structure) royal iconography, 112

royal offerings, see temples

Şalm (deity), 176–78, 184 Sargon of Akkad, statue of, 133–36, 141 Sennacherib, destruction of Babylon by, 105,

Sîn, cult of, 2-3, 43-65, 132, 137-38, 152-53, 212-14, 218-19; see also Ilteri, Salm, and En-nigaldi-Nanna

Sippar, administrative changes at, 87 n. 17, 115-16, 187-88; building works at, 4-15, 25-27, 30-31, 34, 47-48, 55, 132-34, 210-11; cultic reforms at, 135-37, 219

Sippar-Anunītum, building works at, 14, 34, 35, 55–57, 210–12; history of cult at, 21, 106

statues of gods, 9-11; 220-24 and 232 (in times of war); of rulers, 133-36, 176-77

Teima, archaeology of, 174–75; early attestations of, 153–54, 178–79; letter sent from, 185; reasons for sojourn in, 178–85 Tell al-Lahm, 28

temples, increased control by monarchy of, 103–04, 124–25; rebuilding of, *see* under each city; royal offerings in, 132–33, 159, 160, 188–90, 200

u₄-sakar-anu-enlil (literary composition), 215 n. 47, 218

Ubaşşi, building works at, 26, 117

ummānū (scholars), 7–11, 134, 142, 215–19

Ur, building works at, 4, 23–26, 35–38, 61, 209–10, 212; cultic reforms at, 131–32, see also En-nigaldi-Nanna

Uruk, administrative changes and reforms at, 117–18, 124–26, 160–63, 220; building works at, 14–17, 32; cultic reforms at, 119–24, 219; history of cult at, 21, 106, 220–22, 232

Uruk Prophecy (literary composition), 21

The Reign of Nabonidus

270

Verse account of Nabonidus (literary composition), 4

zazakku (title of official), 216, 221, 232 n. 59; see also Rīmūt

writing boards, 130 n. 26