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**THE FALL OF ASSYRIA  
AND  
MEDIAN-BABYLONIAN RELATIONS  
IN LIGHT OF  
THE NABOPOLASSAR CHRONICLE**

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## CHAPTER II

### THE QUESTION OF CHRONOLOGY: ASSYRIA DURING HER LAST QUARTER CENTURY (7th Cent. B.C.)

Due to the limited number of documents that have survived Assyria's last quarter century, the task of a historical reconstruction has proven to be formidable. Especially striking is an almost complete absence of sources from the central part of Assyria. The Annals of Ashurbanipal discontinued in 639, [1] and the last business document dated during his reign comes from 631. [2] The Annals of his successors, Aššur-etel-ilāni and Sin-šar-iškun, are also missing, and the limmu list, an important document in the reconstruction of chronology and political history breaks off at 648. [3] As a result, we have at our disposal only a few letters [4] and documents of donations performed by Aššur-etel-ilāni for the benefit of Sin-šum-Ilšir. [5] Also worth mentioning are two pieces of evidence: a document testifying that Aššur-etel-ilāni ceded to the Dakkureans the ashes of their leader Šamaš-ibni, executed by the Assyrians in 678, so that they could be deposited in a mausoleum, [6] and a fragment of an agreement between Sin-šum-[Ilšir] and another claimant, who also was Ashurbanipal's son.

- [1] For dating of the editions of the Annals of Ashurbanipal - see A. K. Grayson, o.c., p. 245.
- [2] CCK, p. 92 (20.III.38 from Nippur). All months represented by Roman numerals refer to the Babylonian calendar.
- [3] See RLA II, s.v. Eponymen and M. Falkner, o.c., p. 100-120.
- [4] ABL 469 and ABL 1444 - cf S. Parpola, *Letters from Assyrian Scholars to the Kings Esarhaddon and Ashurbanipal*, Part II: *Commentary and Appendices*, AOAT Bd 5/2, Neukirchen-Vluyn 1983, pp. 90 ff. J. Oates, *Assyrian Chronology 631-612 B.C.*, Iraq, Vol.27/1965, p. 155 does not rule out that two other letters, ABL 815 and 1387, can date back to the period after Ashurbanipal's death. For dating of these letters, see also M. Dietrich, o.c., pp. 89-94 and J. A. Brinkman, *Notes on Aramaeans...*, p. 311 and p. 321, No 44.
- [5] ADD 649, 650 = ARU 20, 21; J. N. Postgate, *Neo-Assyrian Grants...*, No 13-14.
- [6] A. T. Clay, *Miscellaneous Inscriptions in the Yale Babylonian Collection*. YOS 1, New Haven 1915, No 43.

[7] Of great importance to us is the Synchronistic King List from Aššur, [8] written during the reign of Aššur-etel-ilāni or soon after his death, where his name immediately follows that of Ashurbanipal. Date formulae of business documents [9] can also be very useful in establishing the chronology.

None of the above mentioned sources provides us with conclusive information concerning the duration of Ashurbanipal's rule nor those of his successors. All scholars who dealt with this problem before the publication of new texts by Wiseman and Gadd, [10] drew special attention to the data from ancient sources. And so in Eusebius they found a fragment of work by Alexander Polyhistor, who records after Berossus that after a reign of 21 years by Sammuges, alias Šamaš-šum-ukin, Sardanapallus, alias Ashurbanipal, ruled over the Chaldeans for another 21 years. [11] According to the Ptolemaic Canon, Saosdouchinos' reign of 20 years in Babylonia was succeeded by Kineladanos' reign of 22 years. [12] Correspondingly, the Babylonian King List A corroborates a Šamaš-šum-ukin - Kandalanu succession. [13] This discrepancy between Eusebius on one hand and the Ptolemaic Canon on the other has given rise to a hypothesis according to which Ashurbanipal, after the example of Tiglath-Pileser III and Shalmaneser V, who appear on the aforementioned Babylonian King List A as Pulu and Ululai respectively, [14] started to use the name of Kandalanu in Babylonia (Nippur excluded) after he had defeated Šamaš-šum-ukin. Another argument in favour of the identification of Kandalanu as Ashurbanipal is that they both died in the same year.

- [7] A. T. Clay, *Epics, Hymns, Omens and other Texts*, BRM IV, New Haven 1923, No 50. See HKL I, p. 57 and HKL II, p. 34 and the discussion below.
- [8] KAV 182 IV:5-7. Cf A. K. Grayson, RLA VI, p. 125.
- [9] Collected now by J. A. Brinkman, D. A. Kennedy, *Documentary Evidence for the Economic Base of Early Neo-Babylonian Society: A Survey of Dated Babylonian Economic Texts, 721-626 B.C.*, JCS Vol.35/1983, pp. 1-90. One more document dating back to the times of Aššur-etel-ilāni can be added to this survey - E. Leichty, *An Inscription of Aššur-etel-ilāni*, JAOS Vol.103/1983, pp. 217-220 (dated for 11.VI.3).
- [10] C. J. Gadd, *The Harran Inscriptions of Nabonidus*, An. St. 8/1958, pp. 35-92.
- [11] Eusebius, *Chronicles, Book I*, 29, 14-19. Cf FGr H 680 F 7; P. Schnabel, *Berossos und die babylonisch-hellenistische Literatur*, Leipzig-Berlin 1923, pp. 269-270, Nos 43, 47. The work by S. M. Burstein, *The Babyloniaca of Berossus*, Malibu 1978 is not accessible to us.
- [12] E. Bickerman, *Chronology of the Ancient World*, Ithaca, New York 1980<sup>2</sup>, p. 110.
- [13] A. K. Grayson, *Königslisten und Chroniken*, RLA VI/1980, p. 93, col. IV:22.
- [14] See PKB, pp. 61-62; idem *Prelude to Empire*, p. 106.

The absence of any documents dated from the last years of Ashurbanipal's reign (assuming that it lasted 42 years) and the fact that, in light of the Ptolemaic Canon and Eusebius, his reign could be with equal facility counted at 43 years [15] have made many reputable scholars reject both the identification and the count of Ashurbanipal's years as king. [16] And thus, P. Schnabel [17] believes that Ashurbanipal ruled until 638/7 (for 31 years), W. H. Dubberstein [18] - until 633, F. H. Weissbach [19] - until 631 at the latest, and A. Poebel [20] and S. Smith [21] - no longer than up until 628. By the same token, these scholars have dismissed the view of Ashurbanipal as being identical with Kandalanu, Šamaš-šum-ukin's Babylonian successor. According to their calculations, Kandalanu, who died in 627, had outlived Ashurbanipal by several years.

More light was shed on the issue by the Harran Inscription H 1 B published in 1958. From it we learn that Adda-guppi', the mother of Nabonidus, was born in the twentieth year of Ashurbanipal and lived

till the 42th year of this king  
 till the 3rd year of Aššur-etel-ilāni  
 till the 21st year of Nabopolassar  
 till the 43rd year of Nebuchadnezzar  
 till the 2nd year of Amēl-Marduk  
 till the 4th year of Neriglissar,

that is in total for 95 years (till her son Nabonidus came to the throne). [22]

- [15] Since Ashurbanipal began his reign a year before Šamaš-šum-ukin, the 21st year of Šamaš-šum-ukin corresponds to the 22nd year of Ashurbanipal. Totalling 22 years of Ashurbanipal and 21 years of Sardanapallus after Šamaš-šum-ukin's death results in the count of 43 years. Similarly, since the 20th year of Saosdouchinos coincided with the 21st year of Ashurbanipal, to add 22 years of Kineladenos (assuming that Ashurbanipal and Kandalanu were the same person) results in 43 years of Ashurbanipal's reign. An explanation of the errors committed - see below pp. 57.
- [16]. The summing up of the first round of discussion of this issue is contained in the work by A. T. Clay, *Babylonian Expedition of the University of Pennsylvania*, Ser.A: *Cuneiform Texts* Vol.VIII, Part I, Philadelphia 1908, pp. 6-11; M. Streck, *Assurbanipal und die letzten assyrischen Könige bis zum Untergange Niniveh's*, VAB 7, I. Teil, Leipzig 1919, pp. CLVIII-CLX. See also works from notes 17-21, and for the recent discussion of the issue see the latter part of the chapter.
- [17] P. Schnabel in a review of the work by Gadd, *The Fall of Nineveh*, in ZA Bd 36/1924, p. 82 and idem Kandalanu nicht Assurbanipal, OLZ Bd 28/1925, pp. 345-349.
- [18] W. H. Dubberstein, *Assyrian-Babylonian Chronology (669-612 B.C.)*, JNES Vol.3/1944, pp. 38-42.

Further on, Adda-guppi' is said to have lived till the ninth year of her son, which comes to 104 years. [23] As Gadd promptly observed, there is a 93, not 95, year difference between the twentieth year of Ashurbanipal and the 4th year of Neriglissar; similarly the difference between the twentieth year of Ashurbanipal and the ninth year of Nabonidus is 102, not 104 years. [24]

If on the Harran evidence one accepts Ashurbanipal's reign as covering 42 years, then, considering that his first year started in 668, one has to date the 42nd year, his last, in 627. But the Inscription places before the first year of Nabopolassar (625), a three year reign of Aššur-etel-ilāni. What is more, according to the documents found in Nippur, the reign of this king was to last not 3 but 4 years. [25]

Our knowledge of the final stages of Assyrian history has been complicated even more by the Uruk King List, which states that Nabopolassar's reign was preceded by a year-long rule of Sin-šum-Išir and Sin-šar-iškun. [26] Lastly, the Chronicle of the early years of Nabopolassar states at the beginning that right up to his accession "there was no king in the land for one year". [27] The Inscription from Harran does not mention Sin-šar-iškun, who appears at the very beginning of the Chronicle of Nabopolassar's early years. [28] Attested dates for Sin-šar-iškun can also be found on documents from a few other Babylonian cities, which allows us to claim that he must have been in power in at least part of Babylonia until his 7th year. [29] Still, apart from the Uruk King List, other texts from Babylonia also confirm Sin-šum-Išir's short reign. [30]

The sources which are now available on the issue of late Assyrian chronology are complimentary and conflicting at the same time. While bringing to light some new chronicles, D. J. Wiseman tried to explain some of those inconsistencies, [31] but the first full-fledged attempt to reconcile the conflicting

[19] F. H. Weissbach, *Aššurbanapli*, RLA I/1932, p. 204.

[20] A. Poebel, *The Assyrian King List from Khorsabad*, JNES Vol.2/1943, pp. 88-90.

[21] S. Smith, *Dating by Ashurbanipal and Kandalanu*, JRAS 1928, pp. 622-626.

[22] C. J. Gadd, *The Harran Inscriptions...*, p. 46, col.I:29-33.

[23] *Ibid.*, p. 48; col.II:26-28.

[24] *Ibid.*, p. 71.

[25] J. A. Brinkman, D. A. Kennedy, o.c., p. 52-53.

[26] Published by J. van Dijk, UVB Bd 18/1962, p. 53 and Pl. 28a. Cf A. K. Grayson, RLA VI, pp. 97-98.

[27] CCK, p. 50:14; ABC, p. 88:14.

[28] CCK, p. 50:3; ABC, p. 88:3.

[29] J. A. Brinkman, D. A. Kennedy, o.c., pp. 54-59.

[30] *Ibid.*, pp. 53-54.

[31] CCK, pp. 89-94.

sources was undertaken by W. von Soden. [32] He believes that the last years of Ashurbanipal witnessed a struggle between him and two sons, Aššur-etel-ilāni and Sin-šar-iškun, who ruled together fighting each other at the same time. Von Soden adopts Wiseman's proposition that the fragment of the Chronicle BM 25127:1-17 in its entirety records events of 626. From the Chronicle he also derives the information of a siege of Nippur and links it to several documents written in Nippur during the siege and dated to the 3rd year of Sin-šar-iškun, [33] thus concluding that the year 626 was the third year of this king. His assumption to the throne would then have fallen in 629 and his seventh year from which a few texts from Babylonia are dated - in 622. Since the Synchronistic King List from Aššur names Aššur-etel-ilāni as the first successor after Ashurbanipal, von Soden deduces that his reign must have started before that of Sin-šar-iškun. Extrapolating from the fact that the last document dated by Ashurbanipal's name comes from 5.VI.631 (the 38th year of his reign), von Soden dated Aššur-etel-ilāni's accession in the same year, 631. Since, in accordance with the documents from Nippur, Aššur-etel-ilāni ruled for four years, then there must have been a two year overlap with either Ashurbanipal or Sin-šar-iškun. Von Soden accepts the latter possibility, as Sin-šar-iškun's earliest attested date in the Nippur evidence comes from 14.XII.2nd year of his reign. [34] As a result the following chronology arises:

Ashurbanipal 669-631 (till at least July)

Aššur-etel-ilāni 631 (from July at the earliest till at least October 627)

Sin-šar-iškun 629 (from September at the latest till August 612)

(Sin-šum-Ilšir, presumably ruled for a very short time, the year unknown).

After C. J. Gadd published the text from Harran, von Soden revised [35] and later modified and expanded [36] his hypothesis in the course of a debate with R. Borger. This new data required von Soden to retain only the years of Sin-šar-iškun from the original version of his hypothesis. He accepts now that TMH 2/3, No 35 [37] comes from Nippur, but drawing on a collation by J. Oelsner, he claims that the name of a king from line 7, whose third year of reign coincided with the accession year (*reš šarruti*) of Sin-šar-iškun does not read

[32] In a review of CCK, published in WZKM Bd 53/1957, pp. 316-322.

[33] J. A. Brinkman, D. A. Kennedy, o.c., pp. 56-57.

[34] In fact the earliest known date for Sin-šar-iškun comes from 17.V.2 or maybe even from his *reš šarruti* - cf J. A. Brinkman, D. A. Kennedy, o.c., pp. 54-55 under O.13 and O.7.

[35] W. von Soden, *Der Nahe Osten im Altertum, Propyläen Weltgeschichte*, Bd 2, Berlin 1962, pp. 122-124.

[36] W. von Soden, *Aššuretililāni, Sinšariškun, Sinšum(u)lšer und die Ereignisse im Assyrienreich nach 635 v. Chr.*, ZA Bd 58/1967, pp. 241-255.

Aššur-etel-ilāni, but Sin-šum-lišir. The year 629 was then the third year of Sin-šum-lišir and the accession year of Sin-šar-iškun. But according to ARU 20/21, Aššur-etel-ilāni had become king before Sin-šum-lišir and, since the latter's accession is believed to have occurred in 632, Aššur-etel-ilāni would have had to come to the throne earlier the same year or the preceding year. Von Soden eventually accepted 633 as a beginning of Aššur-etel-ilāni's reign, that is, the 36th year of Ashurbanipal and the 15th year of Kandalanu. Consequently, he proposes the following chronology of kings, starting from 633: [38]

633	Asb 36	= Kand.15	=	Aei 0			
632	Asb 37	= Kand.16	=	Aei 1	= Sšl 0		
631	Asb 38	= Kand.17	=	Aei 2	= Sšl 1		
630	Asb 39	= Kand.18	=	Aei 3	= Sšl 2		
629	Asb 40	= Kand.19	=	Aei 4	= Sšl 3	= Sši 0	
628	Asb 41	= Kand.20			= Sšl 4	= Sši 1	
627	Asb 42	= Kand.21="21"			= Sšl 5	= Sši 2	
626		= Kand."22"			= Sšl 6	= Sši 3	= Nbp 0
625						= Sši 4	= Nbp 1

[37] O. Krückmann, *Neubabylonische Rechts- und Verwaltungstexte. Texte und Materialien der Frau Prof. Hilprecht Sammlung in Eigentum der Friedrich-Schiller, Universität Jena*, Bd 2/3, Leipzig 1933 (= TMH 2/3). Cf the transliteration and translation by M. San Nicolò, *Babylonische Rechtsurkunden des ausgehenden 8. und 7. Jahrhunderts v. Chr.*, ABAW N.F. Heft 34, München 1951, Nr. 63.

[38] Abbreviations used: Asb = Ashurbanipal; Kand. = Kandalanu; Aei = Aššur-etel-ilāni; Sšl = Sin-šum-lišir; Sši = Sin-šar-iškun; Nbp = Nabopolassar.

As to other controversial issues, the identification of Ashurbanipal as Kandalanu, the subject of many heated discussions, should be no longer questioned. The identity is borne out by comparing the Babylonian King List A and the Ptolemaic Canon, which mention Kandalanu/Kineladenos as the successor of Šamaš-šum-ukin/Saosdouchinos, with the fragment from Berossus, which specifies Sardanapallus=Ashurbanipal as the successor of Šamaš-šum-ukin/Sammuges. It is commonly known that Ashurbanipal had ascended to the throne of Assyria a year before Šamaš-šum-ukin became the king of Babylonia, and that the 20th year of Šamaš-šum-ukin was the 21st year of Ashurbanipal. Berossus, ascribing a reign of 21 years to Sammuges, mistakenly assumed that Šamaš-šum-ukin's rule started the same year as Ashurbanipal's. Conscious of this error, one could tally up 21 years for Sammuges' (actually Ashurbanipal's) reign and 21 years for his successor Sardanapallus to end up with the sum total of 42 years for Ashurbanipal's rule. The Ptolemaic Canon, in turn, correctly determines Saosdouchinos' reign at 20 years; as we indicated earlier, his 20th year is concurrent with Ashurbanipal's 21st year in Assyria. The Ptolemaic Canon credits Ashurbanipal's successor Kineladanos with 22 years of rule, which means that it includes "his" 22nd year - the year of *arki Kandalanu*, "after (the death of) Kandalanu". Since these two sources name Kandalanu the successor of Šamaš-šum-ukin, while the third one mentions Sardanapallus=Ashurbanipal in this capacity, and since Sardanapallus/Ashurbanipal and Kineladanos/Kandalanu must have begun their reign over Babylonia in the same year and died in the same year, the identity of the two seems to be indisputable. All three sources, if interpreted correctly, ascribe 42 years of reign to Ashurbanipal. And so does the Harran Inscription. Hence, Babylonian texts and ancient accounts are in complete agreement in this respect.

Currently the main argument against this identification is based on dates of some business documents. Let us give a list of these dates to make clearer our further discussion of this issue: [121]

[121] The list is compiled on the basis the frequently cited J. A. Brinkman, D. A. Kennedy, *Documentary Evidence...* The left column specifies the signature of a given document in this catalogue, where a complete bibliography can be found.



Jn.	8	20.	I.	<Asb> [122]	22	Uruk
J.	18	9.	II.	Asb	22	Borsippa
J.	19	18.	II.	Asb	22	Uruk
J.	20	12.	IV.	Asb	22	Uruk
J.	21	29.	IV.	Asb	22	Borsippa
J.	22	18.	IX.	Asb	22	Borsippa
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L.	1	6.	X.	Kand.	1	Babylon
J.	23	8.	XII.	Asb	22	Nippur
L.	2	10.	XII.	Kand.	1	- (probably Sippar)
L.	3	16.	-	Kand.	1	- (probably Sippar)
J.	24	29.	I.	Asb.	23	Dilbat

Except for the last document, from the beginning of the month of Tebet, texts were dated by the name of Kandalanu in all cities and settlements save Nippur, where Ashurbanipal's name was used for this purpose, with his reign reckoned to have begun in 668.

According to Brinkman, who proposes the interpretation accepted by other Assyriologists as well, Kandalanu was a dependent monarch appointed by Ashurbanipal a year after crushing Šamaš-šum-ukin's revolt. [123] The above list of dates testifies, in Brinkman's opinion that the transfer of rule was gradual since in Borsippa during Kislev 647 and in Dilbat during Nisan 646 documents were still dated by Ashurbanipal's name. Brinkman's argument against the identification of Kandalanu with Ashurbanipal can be summed up in the claim that it is impossible to justify "why texts would be dated at Nippur under one name (and reckoning the beginning of the reign at 668) and in the other cities under another name (with the beginning of the reign in 647)". [124]

In our opinion, Brinkman's argument at least in its part concerning Ashurbanipal dates from Nippur, can be easily checked. One will note that from the first decade after the accession of Ashurbanipal (669) and of Šamaš-šum-ukin (668), there are only two documents dated 29. V. Asb 5 (664) and 19. I. Ššu 8 (660) respectively. [125] It appears from the two documents that Ashurbanipal transferred Nippur to Šamaš-šum-ukin sometime between the

[122] The text does not specify the name of the king but, in view of reference to Kudurru, governor of Uruk (see below note 133), and the title of *šar matati*, cf. W. H. S. Shea, *An Unrecognized Vassal King of Babylon in the Early Achaemenid Period*, I, AUSS Vol.9/1971, p. 60 (with some minor inaccuracies), the identification is certain.

[123] J. A. Brinkman, *Kandalanu*, RLA V/1980, pp. 368-369 and *Prelude to Empire*, pp. 105 f.

[124] RLA V, p. 368 and similarly in *Prelude to Empire*, p. 106.

[125] Cf. J. A. Brinkman, D. A. Kennedy, o.c., p. 21 under J. 5 and p. 27 under K. 26.

second part of 664 and the beginning of 660. After the outbreak of Šamaš-šum-ukin's revolt, at the end of 651, the city again came under Ashurbanipal's control [126] and from then until 631, the year of the last Ashurbanipal date, documents were again dated by his name. Consequently, regardless of whether we accept the identity of Ashurbanipal and Kandalanu or not, the dates clearly indicate that Nippur was not under Babylonian control but directly under Assyrian administration. This situation prevailed later also: Aššur-etel-ilāni dates on business documents come exclusively from Nippur. Lastly, Nippur remained for the longest (along with Uruk and Kar-Aššur) in the hands of the last Assyrian king, Sin-šar-iškun. This has led scholars to conjecture that Nippur could have been the site of a powerful Assyrian garrison established there with the aim of wielding control over central Babylonia. Thus, during the period from Ashurbanipal's assumption (with an intermission of 660-651) until the end of Assyrian presence in Babylonia, Nippur was considered to be almost integral part of Assyria. Therefore, the fact that documents there were dated under Ashurbanipal's name cannot stand in the way of identifying him as Kandalanu.

From the year 648 (Asb 21 and in theory Kand 0) there are only two documents from Nippur both dated to Asb 21. [127] The absence of documents from other cities, one has to positively reject the notion of the year 648 as being identical with Kand 0, however. Several documents known to date from Borsippa, Uruk and probably Sippar from 647 (see, table above) contain the dating formula of Asb 22. What follows then is that the preceding year of 648 must have been described as Asb 21 (and not Kand 0) in those cities. Only the absence of documents from Babylon alone from the years 648-647 could substantiate the hypothesis of Kandalanu assuming control over the city after Ashurbanipal as early as 648 (Kand 0) or at the very beginning of 647, and this could possibly account for the lack of Kand 0 dates. [128] There is no reason whatsoever, though, why documents in the capital should have been dated with the reference to Kandalanu's reign while the rest of the country was still using Ashurbanipal dates.

[126] The last document from Nippur dated under the name of Šamaš-šum-ukin comes from 3+x.IX. year 17 (651) and the first one dated again by Ashurbanipal's name from 18.XI. year 18 (651) - cf J. A. Brinkman, D. A. Kennedy, o.c., p. 34, under K.116 and p. 21, under J.8.

[127] Ibid., p. 22 under J. 16 and J. 17 (duplicate of J.16).

[128] Possibly, such a situation is reflected later in the documents dated to the "1st year of Cambyses, king of Babylon (and) Cyrus, King of Lands" or to the "1st year of Cambyses, King of Babylon" - see M. San Nicolò, *Beiträge zu einer Prosopographie....*, p. 52 and S. Zawadzki, *Gubarū: a Governor or a Vassal King of Babylonia*, Eos, vol.75/1987, p. 71, Note 14 and 15.

Let us again refer to the table. It is assumed that in 647 Ashurbanipal began to transfer power to Kandalanu. From the table it appears that the process started towards the end of that year, though no earlier than at the end of the month of Kislev. [129] If the 22nd year of Ashurbanipal was the year of the transfer, [130] and the change over had started only at the end of the year, then, according to the time-honored tradition, the documents from that year should have been dated *reš šarrûti*, "the accession year", and not "year 1" of Kandalanu! The actual "year 1" of Kandalanu would have then fallen in 646, or considering the document from Dilbat, even in 645! However, the table makes certain that it was in 647 that the name of Ashurbanipal was substantiated with that of Kandalanu. If the 22nd year of Ashurbanipal was then replaced by the 1st year of Kandalanu, it is not possible to find any documents dated to Kandalanu's *reš šarrûti* because he had no accession year! The absence of *reš šarrûti* dates for Kandalanu would be unaccountable, however, had Kandalanu and Ashurbanipal been two different persons; it becomes justifiable only on the condition of their identity, that is, if one assumes that in 647 Ashurbanipal decided to use the name of Kandalanu in Babylonian business documents. This notion explains both the replacement of Ashurbanipal 22 by Kandalanu 1, and the absence of his *reš šarrûti* dates. After all *reš šarrûti* encompasses the period of time from ascending to the throne until the beginning of the new year, when the new king for the first time presided over the ceremony of *akitu* festival. This time, the king, who had had his "accession year" in the past, was alive, and only his name had changed. These could have been the reasons why there are no "year 0" dates for Kandalanu, and his existing dates start with year 1.

An argument against identifying Ashurbanipal as Kandalanu can be found in the Synchronistic King List from Aššur, where the name of Ashurbanipal appears twice vis-a-vis the names of Šamaš-šum-ukin and Kandalanu. This format of the text, however, does not prove that Ashurbanipal was not identified as Kandalanu. The two of them being identical (with the name of Kandalanu in Babylonia) or not, the list would have still looked the same. Thus, the Synchronistic King List from Aššur does not provide arguments either for or against such an identification.

[129] J. A. Brinkman in RLA V, p. 368 mentioned a document from Elul 647 and this reference cited also W. H. S. Shea, o.c., p. 61. There is no such documents in the "*Documentary Evidence*". The author explained that anomaly in his *Prelude to Empire*, p. 106, note 534, where he explicitly stated that the information in RLA about the text from "VI-648 (RLA: 647) is incorrect".

[130] This view was already expressed earlier - cf W. H. Dubberstein, *Assyrian-Babylonian Chronology*, JNES Vol.3/1944, p. 40.

The fact that Kandalanu name appears only in chronological texts (king lists, chronicles) and in date formula is also an argument in favour of the identification hypothesis, not against it. There is not one official Kandalanu document concerning the construction or restoration of a temple, which in Babylonia was considered a particular duty, indeed a privilege, of the sovereign. All such undertakings were ascribed to Ashurbanipal. It is easy, however, to imagine that even though Ashurbanipal wanted business documents to be dated by the name of Kandalanu, he still chose that his activities as a benefactor be associated with his supremacy over the whole Empire, not only Babylonia.

The identification of Kandalanu as Ashurbanipal is also sustained by the fact that there is no date formula which would be similar to that used in Babylonia in 538: "the 1st year of Cyrus, King of Lands and of Cambyses, King of Babylon". A weighty, however much overlooked, argument for the identification is provided by references to Šamaš-daninanni, a limmu from Ashurbanipal's times. Three copies [131] of Cylinder A of the Annals of Ashurbanipal bear Šamaš-daninanni dates and the following title for him:

- (a) lúšá-kin Akkadiki (or lúšākin māti Akkadiki)
- (b) lúpāhātu (NAM) Babiliki.

The same limmu, with the title of *lúšā-kin Akkadiki* also appears in text BIN II 132:10, [132] which concerns an extended dispute over a few dozen Puqudeans, who were presented as širku to the goddess Ištar and Nana of Uruk by Sargon II and Sennacherib. That the said group of people were to stay in the temple had been decided through a *hursānu*-ordeal already under Esarhaddon, but the dispute had not been settled then. It was revived 20 years after Esarhaddon's death, and the governor of Uruk, Kudurru [133] was to arbitrate in it; Šamaš-daninanni was also involved in the proceedings. The last information is of foremost importance to us as it helps to explain the ambiguous term Akkad, which could designate all of Babylonia, or only its northern part. The text makes it clear that Šamaš-daninanni administrated over all of Babylonia from

- [131] K. L. Tallquist, *Assyrian Personal Names*, Helsingfors 1914, p. 210; M. Falkner, o.c., p. 106; M. Streck, VAB 7, T.II, p. 90. According to M. Streck, VAB 7, T.I, p. CDLV he was limmu not earlier than 637/6; E. Peiser, MVAG Bd 6/1901, p. 131 - possibly year 636; similarly M. Falkner, o.c., p. 118.
- [132] For the fragmentary transliteration and translation (now outdated) of the text - see R. P. Dougherty, *The Širkutu of Babylonian Deities*, YOSR 19, New Haven 1923, pp. 20-21. The name of Šamaš-daninanni was reconstructed by D. A. Kennedy-cf G. Frame, *Another Babylonian Eponym*, RA 76/1982, p. 159, note 6.

the border with Assyria to the Persian Gulf. In both texts the titles used to describe his office are of equal weight; they differ only in that one employs an archaic term of Akkad to denote Babylonia, while the other uses a more modern term in this capacity.

The office held by Šamaš-daninanni in Babylonia is comparable to that of Gubaru/Ugbaru, who was appointed governor of all Babylonia after Cyrus' conquest. [134] The fact that Šamaš-daninanni fulfilled the duties of his position over all of Babylonia could not possibly be fitted with the opinion of Kandalanu and Ashurbanipal being two different people. If Kandalanu - a person distinct from Ashurbanipal - had been nominated by Ashurbanipal king of Babylon and obediently executed his orders, then, Šamaš-daninanni would have nothing more but duplicated Kandalanu's powers of jurisdiction. But when we assume the identity of Ashurbanipal as Kandalanu, the high office and broad range of authority of Šamaš-daninanni become fully understandable.

Lastly, the identification is also borne out by the fragment of the Annals of Ashurbanipal in which he states that, having crushed Šamaš-šum-ukin's rebellion, he appointed governors and officials for the inhabitants of Babylonia, but does not make any reference to the nomination of Kandalanu as the king of Babylonia. [135]

So, there are no convincing arguments to disprove the validity of Ashurbanipal's reign of 42 years, and his identification as Kandalanu. It is very probable that a struggle for sovereignty over Babylonia between the several contestants to the succession after Ashurbanipal = Kandalanu assumed full proportions only after the death of the old king in 627. On the evidence of the Harran Inscription, the contest had actually begun a few years earlier, still in Ashurbanipal's lifetime. The fact that the last Ashurbanipal document from Nippur is dated to 631 could be read as indicating that it was about that time when the struggle for succession began. Characteristically, the last Kandalanu documents from Uruk are dated to the same year. These documents show

[133] Cf line 8. For this governor, see M. Dietrich, o.c., p. 98 and J. A. Brinkman, *Notes on Aramaeans...*, p. 311. Both authors disregarded this text. Kudurru was in office probably until 631, from which year his successor is known - cf H. Hunger, o.c., No. 6 (15.V. Kand. 13) and No.2 (7. VI. Kand. 13). Even though a precise date of BIN II 132 cannot be established, there is no doubt, that it was composed during Ashurbanipal's reign, after Šamaš-šum-ukin's revolt had been quelled (contra R. Borger, HKL I, p. 216).

[134] ABC, p. 110:20, but with the transliteration and translation proposed by Grayson in a commentary to this line.

[135] M. Streck, VAB 7, T.II, p. 40:103-105, recalled by J. A. Brinkman, *Prelude to Empire*, p. 107, but without drawing conclusions from it.

that Ashurbanipal entrusted high posts in the state and temple administration to those people who had already proved their loyalty to him. It stands to reason that his motive in choosing only these people was a form of preparation for the impending conflict. Later Sin-šar-iškun also appealed to that same circle of faithful followers, which leads one to conjecture that Sin-šar-iškun must have been considered by them the legal successor. It was indeed this son who had originally been intended as the heir; his tell-tale name, containing a theophoric element Sin referring to the protective deity of the dynasty, testifies to this: "The god Sin made (=gave) King". Normally, it was the intended heir apparent who was in a special way entrusted to the dynastic god's care. Among all contestants, Sin-šar-iškun was the most popular in Babylonia, and for some time he was recognized by all important cities, Babylon, Sippar, Nippur and Uruk included. In contrast, Aššur-etel-ilāni enjoyed little popularity in Babylonia, which was made evident by his efforts to gain allies among onetime enemies of Assyria. Such a state of relations between Sin-šar-iškun's garrison in Babylon and his presence in Uruk and Sippar could have been tacitly approved of by the worn-out and very old king.

The discussion thus presented shows that none of the current reconstructions of this elusive period in Assyrian history can be deemed to be fully correct. Even though, in light of thorough research, much is now known about the intentions of Babylonian writers of the texts under investigation, some of their motives still remain hidden. Consequently, many of the anomalies occurring across the texts cannot be adequately clarified at present. One also has to allow for a certain degree of inconsistency in dating of business documents. It could have easily happened, for example, that a follower of Assyria (or Nabopolassar) in any given city anticipated the course of events and, at the news of an army approaching, started to date documents under the name of his candidate, even though his wishful thinking would never materialize. The most valuable sources at our disposal come from Babylonia, which results in that the view of Assyrian history presented in them is only fragmentary and biased. It therefore appears that the present difficulties should hold for as long as no comparable Assyrian documents are available. Any sound chronology must be based on a number of concrete facts, whose interpretation is unequivocal. Unfortunately, there are still too few such facts documented especially in texts from the territory of Assyria.