

Assyria and Babylonia¹

A. Kirk GRAYSON

Jacob Joci Finkelstein
In Memoriam

The printed version of this paper is dedicated to the memory of Jack Finkelstein, a distinguished Assyriologist and innovative thinker, with whom I was fortunate enough to be able to discuss many subjects over the years and from whom I have learned much. It is a tragic irony that the one area in which we had some disagreement, but always along objective and cordial lines, should be included in this paper which was presented orally barely a month before his sudden death. Jack had been aware of my views for many years and was prepared to respond in the true spirit of scholarly discussion; I wish I could present here Jack's side with his acumen and vigour but this is obviously impossible. Nor, after some reflection, have I altered the wording of the relevant portions of the paper for Jack, I am sure, would not want that.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Part A. General Considerations	142
Part B. Former Studies	143
Part C. Historiographical Texts	149
<u>Royal Inscriptions</u>	
Assyria:	
I. Commemorative Inscriptions	150
A. Annalistic Texts	
1. Annalistic Accounts of One Campaign	
2. Collections of Annalistic Accounts	
B. Display Texts	152
1. Without Military Conquests	
2. With Military Conquests	

¹ I am indebted to various people who attended the seminar and offered criticism and advice on this paper. In particular I am grateful to Professor Hoffner who, through formal exchange and private conversation, inspired me to pursue avenues which otherwise would have remained unexplored. It was a most fruitful interchange of ideas. I also wish especially to thank Professor Van Seters and Miss W. de Filippi for their astute observations.

Assyria and Babylonia	141
C. Commemorative Labels	155
II. Labels	156
III. Dedicatory Inscriptions	157
IV. Letters to the God	159
Babylonia:	160
I. Commemorative Inscriptions	161
II. Labels	162
III. Dedicatory Inscriptions	164
Compilation of Royal Inscriptions	170
Reliability of Royal Inscriptions	171
<u>Chronographic Texts</u>	172
Category A	
King Lists of Category A	
The Babylonian Chronicle Series	
Other Chronicles of Category A	
Eponym Lists	177
Category B	
Sumerian King List	
Dynastic Chronicle	
King List of the Hellenistic Period	
Babylonian King List B	
Ptolemaic Canon	
Assyrian King List	179
Category C	
Weidner Chronicle	
Chronicle of Early Kings	181
Category D	
Synchronistic History	
Synchronistic King List	182
Miscellaneous Chronographic Texts	182
Historical-Literary Texts	183
Prophecies	184
Historical Epics	
Early Historical Epics	
Assyrian Historical Epics	
Babylonian Historical Epics	187
Pseudo-Autobiographies	188
Part D. Ideas of the Past	

Part A General Considerations

The first matter that requires some consideration is that of the cultural predecessors of the Assyrians and the Babylonians, the Sumerians², for the cultural continuity from Sumer to Babylonia and Assyria is a fact of prime importance. Although there were some differences between the earlier and later cultures as a result of ethnic and linguistic change, in many respects Assyrian and Babylonian ideas and institutions are Sumerian ideas and institutions in new garb, the new garb being a different language, Akkadian. Ideas about the past in Assyria and Babylonia were inherited from the Sumerians and, despite some alteration, their essential Sumerian character continued to be recognizable. In the discussion of historiographical genres we shall find only a few innovations in Assyrian and Babylonian times.

A corollary to the Sumerian axiom is the close similarity between Assyria and Babylonia. Since the Assyrians and Babylonians were common heirs of Sumerian culture and since the dominant ethnic strain in each was the same in the early period, they were really sister civilizations. They even shared the same language, Akkadian, albeit in two different dialects.

On the other hand there were differences between Assyrian and Babylonian civilization. Many of these differences were conditioned by ecological factors peculiar to their respective geographical positions. The effect of these factors was to make each civilization distinct from the other in certain aspects of their political, economic, and social organization. There were also changes and new developments within each culture during the course of their histories. Babylonia and Assyria endured for approximately fifteen hundred years and during this long period each experienced various fortunes and misfortunes that inevitably had some effect on their particular outlook. In our consideration of ideas of the past we must watch for basic assump-

² The term "Sumerian" in this paper is used to designate: a) the language; b) the people and civilization of Mesopotamia in the third millennium. The second usage is for convenience only and does not properly reflect the complex ethnic composition of Mesopotamia in the third millennium. On this subject see in particular: B. Landsberger, "Three Essays on the Sumerians" translated and introduced by M. de J. Ellis in *Monographs on the Ancient Near East* 1/2 (Udenna Publications, Malibu, 1974); T. Jacobsen, "The Assumed Conflict Between Sumerians and Semites in Early Mesopotamian History" in *JAOS* 59 (1939), 485-495; I. J. Gelb, in the proceedings of the IX^e Rencontre Assyriologique published in *Genève* 8 (1960) 258-271; R. D. Biggs, "Semitic Names in the Fara Period" in *Or* 36 (1967) 55-66; F. R. Kraus, *Sumerer und Akkader in Mesopotamien*, *der Koninklijke Nederlandse Akademie van Wetenschappen, Afd. Letterkunde, N.R.* 33/8 (1970) 319-415; J. S. Cooper, "Sumerian and Akkadian in Sumer and Akkad" in *Or* 42 (1973) 233-246.

tions shared by the two civilizations and for features peculiar to one or the other.

Part B Former Studies

During the century or more since Assyriology was born, surprisingly little has been done in the area of historiography. There have been a few general surveys of "historical texts" such as that presented by Weber in 1907³. But detailed studies by competent scholars have been few and far between. The first to do serious research in this field was Olmstead who, in 1916, published a valuable article entitled "Assyrian Historiography"⁴. In this paper Olmstead established the principle that the earliest record of an Assyrian campaign was more reliable than any later recension. It is an obvious principle but this was the first time it had been explicitly stated and documented. Significant as this contribution is, however, it is concerned with the practical problem of the manner in which an historian should use his source material and has nothing to say about the attitude towards the past on the part of the authors of the Assyrian royal inscriptions.

In 1923 Mowinckel published his "Die vorderasiatischen Königs- und Fürsteninschriften: Eine stilistische Studie"⁵. This study was largely concerned with the style of the royal inscriptions and a comparison with biblical material⁶. At the same time Mowinckel made some important form critical observations⁷. Despite these major contributions, Mowinckel's article left much to be desired and in 1924 Baumgartner drew attention to some fundamental faults⁸. Nowhere had Mowinckel even mentioned Olmstead's work although it had appeared some years earlier. Moreover, the Norwegian scholar used a very limited corpus of royal inscriptions and failed to recognize the wide variety of forms in the genre. This led him to serious misconceptions, viz. his views on the origin of royal inscriptions⁹ and the development of the temporal clause¹⁰. In his short critique

³ O. Weber, *Die Literatur der Babylonier und Assyrier* (Leipzig 1907) 198-241.

⁴ A. T. E. Olmstead, "Assyrian Historiography", *The University of Missouri Studies, Social Science Series* 111/1 (Columbia, Missouri; May 1916).

⁵ S. Mowinckel in *Eucharisterion Gunkel*, pp. 278-322.

⁶ See especially *ibid.* pp. 291-297.

⁷ He observed that Sumerian, Babylonian, and Assyrian royal inscriptions belonged to one literary genre (p. 281). His discussion of the "Ichform" (pp. 297-99) is of considerable merit and his remarks on the purpose of the royal inscriptions are still useful (see below n. 117).

⁸ *OLZ* 27 (1924) 313-318.

⁹ Mowinckel, *op. cit.*, pp. 313-316. He traced the origin to "votive" inscriptions. See below n. 80.

¹⁰ *Op. cit.*, pp. 282-284. See W. Baumgartner, *OLZ* 27 (1924) 313-318 for a detailed critique.

of Mowinckel, Baumgartner made some important observations of his own. Specifically his treatment of the origin of reports of military conquest in Assyrian royal inscriptions is still valid¹¹.

Thus far our survey of former research has been concerned with work on royal inscriptions and it is fitting to mention notable editions and studies of specific groups of such texts^{11a}. In the area of Assyrian royal inscriptions^{11b} there is Streck's edition and study of Ashurbanipal inscriptions¹² and Tadmor's work on the texts of Sargon II¹³, Tiglath-pileser III¹⁴, and Adad-nerari III¹⁵. Also of importance are the studies of Borger¹⁶ and Schramm¹⁷ and the relevant comments in my translation of Assyrian royal inscriptions¹⁸. For Neo-Babylonian royal inscriptions there is the study and text edition of Langdon¹⁹ which is now being replaced by Berger²⁰. The royal inscriptions of Nabonidus have been the subject of a special article by Tadmor²¹. Although Sumerian royal inscriptions are not within the purview of my paper it is worth noting two recent analyses by Hallo²² and Sollberger and Kupper²³.

The nature of some of the objects upon which royal inscriptions are inscribed has received some attention in the past. In 1947 Kraus²⁴ published

¹¹ Ibid. 316. See below n. 69. Baumgartner's conclusion that most forms of Assyrian royal inscriptions are internal developments must now be considerably revised. See below.

^{11a} Since the conclusion of the seminar at which this paper was presented a thorough typological study of Kassite royal inscriptions has been published by J. A. Brinkman, *Materials and Studies for Kassite History I* (Chicago 1976), pp. 52-70. Brinkman's categories are rather different from my own, an inevitable situation given the subjective nature of this kind of research, but the difference is largely a matter of terminology (especially the term "votive" — see n. 80 below) rather than substance and I see no need to change or revise my own analysis which appears later in this paper. This should in no way be interpreted as disagreement with Brinkman's divisions which are equally valid and have similarly led to significant results.

^{11b} See now H. Tadmor in M. Ellis (Ed.), *Essays on the Ancient Near East in Memory of Jacob Joel Finkelstein* (*Memoirs of the Connecticut Academy of Arts and Sciences* 19 [1977]; henceforth cited as *Essays Finkelstein*) 209-213.

¹² M. Streck, VAB 7 (1916).

¹³ H. Tadmor, *JCS* 12 (1958) 22-40 and 77-100.

¹⁴ "Introductory Remarks to a New Edition of the Annals of Tiglath-pileser III", *Proceedings of the Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities* II/9 (1967) 168-187.

¹⁵ *Iraq* 35 (1973) 141-150.

¹⁶ *EAK* 1 (1961). Cf. C. Wilcke, *ZA* 67 (1977) 188-191.

¹⁷ *EAK* 2 (1973).

¹⁸ A. K. Grayson, *Assyrian Royal Inscriptions I* (Wiesbaden 1972), 2 (1976), henceforth cited as *ARI*.

¹⁹ VAB 4 (1912).

²⁰ *NBK* (1973).

²¹ *Studies Landsberger* (1965) pp. 351-363.

²² "The Royal Inscriptions of Ur: A Typology", *HUCA* 33 (1962) 1-43. Cf. G. Van Driel, *Symbolae Biblicae et Mesopotamicae F. M. Th. Bohl Dedicatae*, ed. M. A. Beek et al. (Leiden 1973) 99-106.

²³ *IRSA* pp. 24-36. Cf. G. Van Driel, *Symbolae* ... (op. cit. n. 22).

²⁴ P. R. Kraus, "Altnesopotamische Tonnaegel mit Keilschriften",

a study of the "clay cone" in ancient Mesopotamia²⁵. The form of these objects had been briefly discussed earlier by Andrae²⁶, but Kraus dealt with all the relevant cones, inscribed and uninscribed, and traced the origin of this phenomenon back to procedures accompanying sales of property. More recently Ellis²⁷ has presented a study of all foundation deposits, inscribed and uninscribed. His analysis of the variety of forms of inscribed foundation deposits and his treatment of their origin, purpose, and development, is invaluable for a study of royal inscriptions. Finally, Levine's work on the form of inscribed Assyrian steles has filled a major lacuna in this area²⁸.

Moving from royal inscriptions to chronographic texts a work that stands out is Jacobsen's edition of the Sumerian King List²⁹ which is a model of careful philological research and historiographical enquiry. Jacobsen presented not only a complete edition of the text, based on numerous copies, but also a thorough enquiry into the meaning and assumptions of the Sumerian King List and its compiler. Jacobsen was able to show and document that the ancient author's guiding principle was the linear continuity of kingship in Mesopotamia. According to this assumption, at any given period in history there had been only one king in ancient Sumer; there had never been two contemporary kings on the thrones of two different city states. The principle is nonsense but the recognition of its existence by Jacobsen provides an important insight into ideas about the past in ancient Mesopotamian society. Historiographical research on the Sumerian King List continued after the publication of Jacobsen's book and

Türk Tarih Kurumu Yayınlarından, VII Seri No. 5 (Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1947), Halil Edhem Hatıra Kitabı pp. 71-113.

²⁵ I use "(clay) cone" to translate the Assyrian *sikkatu*. This is an oblong conical object of clay. It is tapered almost to a point at one end and at the other there is a large semi-spherical head. The same inscription usually appears on both the shaft and head. The shaft was commonly inserted in the upper portions of walls with the head, which was painted a bright colour, protruding. See C. J. Gadd, *Teachers and Students in the Oldest Schools* (London 1956) p. 45 and W. G. Lambert and A. R. Millard, *Catalogue of the Cuneiform Tablets in the Kouyunjik Collection of the British Museum*, Second Supplement (London 1968), p. x. I also use "(clay) cone" to describe a similar object known from Sumer and Babylonia. For a full study see R. S. Ellis, *Foundation Deposits in Ancient Mesopotamia* (Yale Near Eastern Researches 2; New Haven/London 1968): Chapters 3 and 5. Further discussion will appear in an edition of clay cones from Ashur being prepared by V. Donbaz and A. K. Grayson.

²⁶ W. Andrae, *Coloured Ceramics from Ashur* (London 1925) pp. 63-76 and Fig. 38; and *Das Gotteshaus und die Urformen des Bauens im alten Orient* (Berlin 1930) pp. 78-86.

²⁷ *Foundation Deposits* (1968).

²⁸ "Two Neo-Assyrian Stelae from Iran", *Royal Ontario Museum, Art and Archaeology, Occasional Paper* 23 (Toronto 1972) pp. 51-58.

²⁹ T. Jacobsen, *The Sumerian King List* (Assyriological Studies (AS) 11; Chicago 1939). The reason for including the "Sumerian" King List in a study of Assyrian and Babylonian ideas of the past will be given in Part C.

particularly worthy of mention are studies by Kraus, Finkelstein, Hallo, Sollberger and Westenholz³⁰.

Poebel conducted research similar to that of Jacobsen on the later Assyrian and Babylonian king lists. Although he never lived to see his work completed, the results he did publish³¹ provided important conclusions about the origin, purpose, and development of these texts. More recently Röllig has presented a form-critical analysis of the Assyrian and Babylonian king lists and in his work he has concentrated on the Assyrian King List³². There have been several special studies of the Assyrian King List (and related fragments) and among the more notable of these are the publications of Weidner, Gelb, Landsberger, Kraus, Finkelstein, and Brinkman³³.

Some work has been done on historiographical questions with regard to Babylonian Chronicles in publications of various texts by King, Gadd, Smith, Wiseman, and Millard³⁴. In my book *Assyrian and Babylonian Chronicles* I have presented an analysis of all chronographic texts, as well as text editions of the chronicles, and the comments on chronographic texts in Part C (below) are based on this analysis³⁵.

An eminent position among earlier studies of ancient Mesopotamian historiography is occupied by Güterbock's lengthy article on the historical

³⁰ F. R. Kraus, "Zur Liste der älteren Könige von Babylonien", *ZA* 50 (1952) 29-60. J. Finkelstein, "The Antediluvian Kings", *JCS* 17 (1963) 39-51. W. W. Hallo, "Beginning and End of the Sumerian King List in the Nippur Recension", *JCS* 17 (1963) 52-57. E. Sollberger, "The Rulers of Lagash", *JCS* 21 (1967) 279-291. A. Westenholz, "Early Nippur Year Dates and the Sumerian King List", *JCS* 26 (1974) 154-156.

³¹ A. Poebel, "The Assyrian King List from Khorsabad", *JNES* 1 (1942) 247-306 and 460-492, 2 (1943) 56-90. *The Second Dynasty of Isin According to a New King-list Tablet AS 15*; Chicago 1955).

³² W. Röllig, "Zur Typologie und Entstehung der babylonischen und assyrischen Königslisten", in M. Dietrich and W. Röllig (eds.), *Isān mithurti. Festschrift W. von Soden* (AOAT 1; Neukirchen-Vluyn 1969) 265-277. Röllig's approach to the subject differs from the one I took in *Assyrian and Babylonian Chronicles* (TCS 5; Glückstadt/Locust Valley 1975; henceforth cited as *ABC*) and our conclusions sometimes differ. For details see *ABC* p. 5 and Addenda.

³³ E. F. Weidner, "Die Könige von Assyrien", *MVAG* 26/2 (1921). I. J. Gelb, "Two Assyrian King Lists", *JNES* 13 (1954) 209-230. B. Landsberger, "Assyrische Königsliste und 'dunkels Zeitalter'", *JCS* 8 (1954) 31-45, 47-73, 106-133. F. R. Kraus, "Könige die in Zelten Wohnen", *Mededelingen der koninklijke Nederlandse Akademie van Wetenschappen, Afd. Letterkunde, N.R.* 28/2 (1965) 123-142. J. Finkelstein, "The Genealogy of the Hammurapi Dynasty", *JCS* 20 (1966) 95-118. J. A. Brinkman, "Comments on the Nassouhi Kinglist and the Assyrian Kinglist Tradition", *Or* 42 (1973) 306-319.

³⁴ L. W. King, *Chronicles Concerning Early Babylonian Kings*, 2 vols. (London 1907); C. J. Gadd, *The Fall of Nineveh* (London 1923); S. Smith, *Babylonian Historical Texts* (London 1924); D. J. Wiseman, *Chronicles of Chaldean Kings* (London 1956); A. R. Millard, "Another Babylonian Chronicle Text", *Iraq* 26 (1964) 14-35.

³⁵ Grayson *ABC* (1975). Also note "Assyrian and Babylonian King Lists: Collations and Comments", *Isān mithurti*, pp. 105-118. For editions of the king lists see D. O. Edzard and A. K. Grayson, "Königslisten" in *RLA* 5 (in press).

tradition of the Babylonians and Hittites³⁶. In this article Güterbock was concerned first with a proper categorization according to genre of various ancient texts which were historical in nature and his basic categories are still used today. He also grappled with larger issues raised by these texts, such as the excessive popularity of a few individuals in the third millennium (e.g. Sargon of Akkad); the question of the historicity of some of them (e.g. Gilgamesh); and the development of this literature both in later Babylonia and Assyria and among the Hittites. It was a monumental essay to which any subsequent work in this area must owe a great debt.

Of the three genres of Historical-Literary texts that will concern us in Part C, only one has received much attention since Güterbock's time. This is the group of texts called "prophecies". Weidner, Böhl, Labat, Gadd, Grayson and Lambert, Hallo, Biggs, and Borger³⁷ have all concerned themselves with these texts and there has been some debate on the nature of the genre and its setting in ancient Near Eastern literature. The recent publication of significant new text material by Borger has resolved one of the basic issues, the alleged connection between the prophecies and omen literature. It is now established that there is no substantive relation between the genre and prognostic texts. Another crucial question involves apocalyptic literature. That the prophecies represent a kind of early apocalyptic literature has now been confirmed by the publication of the Dynastic Prophecy in my book *Babylonian Historical-Literary Texts*³⁸. In this same book I have discussed not only the prophecies but also the other genres of Historical-Literary texts and this study forms the basis of my comments in Part C (below).

All of the research mentioned so far is basic to any enquiry into Assyrian and Babylonian ideas about the past. But no study concentrating on that central issue has yet been mentioned. There are very few³⁹. There is an essay by Speiser on "Ancient Mesopotamia" in a volume entitled *The Idea of History in the Ancient Near East*⁴⁰. Here for the first time we have a study which is concerned with basic ideas about the past in

³⁶ H. G. Güterbock, "Die historische Tradition und ihre literarische Gestaltung bei Babyloniern und Hethitern bis 1200", *ZA* 42 (1934) 1-91 and 44 (1938) 45-149.

³⁷ E. F. Weidner, *Afo* 13 (1939-41) 234-237. T. L. Böhl *JEOL* 7 (1940) 415-417 and the Addenda to *JEOL* 6-8 (1939-42) 766. R. Labat, *Le Caractère religieux de la royauté* (Paris 1939) p. 297, n. 101. C. J. Gadd, *Ideas of Divine Rule in the Ancient East* (Schweich Lectures, London 1948) pp. 68-71. A. K. Grayson and W. G. Lambert, *JCS* 18 (1964) 7-30. W. W. Hallo, *IEJ* 16 (1966) 231-242. R. D. Biggs, *Iraq* 29 (1967) 117-132. R. Borger, *BiOr* 28 (1971) 3-24.

³⁸ *BHLT* (1975).

³⁹ For a survey of Sumerian texts see S. N. Kramer, "Sumerian Historiography", *IEJ* 3 (1953) 217-232.

⁴⁰ E. A. Speiser, *Idea of History*. Also see his article "Geschichtswissenschaft" in *RLA* 3, pp. 216-220.

Sumerian, Assyrian, and Babylonian civilization. Speiser took as his thesis that the elementary concepts, including ideas about the past, established in Sumerian times remained constant with only minor changes throughout Assyrian and Babylonian history. The core of Speiser's principle is sound but, as I have stated above (Part A), Assyrian and Babylonian ideas are distinctive enough to merit special study. Nevertheless, Speiser's portrayal of ideas about the past current at the beginning of Assyrian and Babylonian civilization is invaluable as a background to our enquiry^{40a}.

In 1963 Finkelstein published a paper entitled "Mesopotamian Historiography"⁴¹. The author followed the thesis of Johan Huizinga: "History is the intellectual form in which a civilization renders account to itself of the past". Finkelstein selected omen literature and more specifically historical omens as the intellectual form in ancient Mesopotamia that answers most closely to Huizinga's description. The author dismissed such texts as king lists and royal inscriptions as "not directly relevant to the subject of the historiography of Mesopotamia" and devoted most of his paper to a discussion of historical omens and chronicles. I cannot agree with Finkelstein on the relationship between historical omens and chronicles (see Part D). Neither can I accept a total exclusion of king lists and royal inscriptions from any comprehensive study of ancient Mesopotamian historiography for they are certainly relevant to ideas about the past in this ancient society. But these areas of disagreement must not overshadow a major contribution of this study which is Finkelstein's authoritative treatment of the historicity of historical omens (see below p. 190 and n. 219).

Finally, W. G. Lambert has briefly touched on the question of the idea of history in ancient Mesopotamia in two articles⁴². Here he was concerned with the fundamental philosophy and theology of the ancient Mesopotamians and a comparison with ancient Israelite thought. Lambert expressed a very negative opinion, viz. that no ancient Mesopotamian text can be called "historical"⁴³.

It should now be apparent from this survey that little has been done in the way of historiographical analyses of individual texts about the past and even less has been said about the ideas of the past inherent in these documents⁴⁴.

^{40a} A thoroughly new study has been presented by J. Krecher in *Saeculum* 26 (1975) 13-30.

⁴¹ J. J. Finkelstein in *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 107 (1963) 461-472.

⁴² Or 39 (1970) 170-177 and *OTS* 17 (1972) 65-72.

⁴³ *Ibid.* p. 70f. But see now J. J. M. Roberts, *CBQ* 38 (1976) 1-13.

⁴⁴ For a popularized version of my ideas in this area see chapter 7 of A. K. Grayson and D. B. Reiford, *Myths and Tablets* (Englewood Cliffs 1973).

Part C Historiographical Texts

The documents with which we are concerned in this section form part of what Oppenheim has called the "stream of tradition"⁴⁵. This term applies to texts which are "literary" in the broad sense. Documents not in the stream of tradition were the legal, administrative, and epistolary texts of everyday life and these are excluded from this study. Although these latter are vital for the modern historian attempting to reconstruct ancient history, in general they do not shed any light on the attitude of the Mesopotamian to his past.

Oral tradition is an area that need hardly concern us at all for among the written works to be discussed there is rarely any link with an oral background⁴⁶. The appearance in later sources — Greek, Latin, Aramaic, and Arabic — of stories about Assyrian and Babylonian figures such as Semiramis and Ahikar suggests the existence of an oral tradition (and possibly also written version) in Aramaic which never found its way into the Assyrian and Babylonian literary stream⁴⁷. The fact that these tales survived into later times and were given literary expression in various foreign languages is significant for our topic (see Part D).

While on the subject of late historiographical material in a language other than Akkadian let us consider Berossos. Berossos was a Babylonian priest of the third century B.C. who wrote a history of Babylonia in Greek⁴⁸. His book has not survived and the work is known only from isolated quotations which have been passed down by many different pens and through various languages. We have, then, no conception of the overall nature of the work and its sources. Nonetheless, the fact that such a composition did exist is significant as will be shown in Part D.

The historiographical texts will be discussed under the headings: Royal Inscriptions; Chronographic Texts; Historical-Literary Texts.

⁴⁵ See A. L. Oppenheim, *Ancient Mesopotamia* (Chicago/London 1964) 13.

⁴⁶ It is possible that the first section of the Assyrian King List stems from an oral tradition. The various literary works about Sargon and Naram-Sin doubtless contain elements from oral transmission. See the discussion of Historical-Literary Texts (below).

⁴⁷ For the Semiramis legend see W. Eilers "Semiramis" in *Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Phil.-Hist. Klasse, Sitzungsberichte*, 274/2 (Wien 1971) and the literature cited there. For Ahikar see L. Rost, *MIO* 15 (1969) 308-311. It is possible that Akkadian versions of these stories existed. Note that Ahikar (*A-hu-u-qa-a-ri*) appears in the list of sages found at Uruk and published by J. J. A. van Dijk, *UVB* 18 (1962) 44-52 and pls. 20a-c, 27. Further see Komoróczy, *Altorientalische Forschungen* I (1974) 153-164.

⁴⁸ See P. Schubert, *Berosos* (Leipzig/Berlin 1923) and F. Jacoby, *Die Fragmente der Griechischen Historiker* 3. Teil, C (Leiden 1958); G. Komoróczy, *AcAn* 21 (1973) 125-152.

Royal Inscriptions

There has never been a comprehensive analysis of Assyrian and Babylonian royal inscriptions. This section, therefore, is much longer and more fully documented than the sections on Chronographic Texts and Historical-Literary Texts⁴⁹.

Assyria⁵⁰

I Commemorative Inscriptions

Commemorative inscriptions were composed to commemorate the deeds of the king and, in the case of Assyria, this meant particularly building activity, military action, or both. This large group of documents may be divided into Annalistic Texts and Display Texts.

A. Annalistic Texts

Annalistic texts contain narration of military campaigns arranged in chronological order and they are primarily in first person (in contrast to chronicles which are in third person)⁵¹. Annalistic texts are unknown among Sumerian or Babylonian royal inscriptions; they are, apparently, an Assyrian innovation which first appears in the later Middle Assyrian period⁵². In Display texts, if military endeavours are included at all, the description is not arranged along chronological lines. There are two categories of annalistic texts, those that contain the narration of one campaign and those that are collections of two or more campaign narrations.

⁴⁹ In the present analysis of Assyrian and Babylonian royal inscriptions I have concentrated on Assyrian texts from the beginning down to the early Neo-Assyrian period (including the reign of Ashur-nasir-apli II); these are the inscriptions I know best from my work on ARI I and II. I have perforce included the later Assyrian and all the Babylonian material but my analysis is not as complete.

⁵⁰ In this discussion Assyrian history has been divided into the following time periods: Early Old Assyrian = Beginning to Erishum II (c. 1814 B.C.); Late Old Assyrian = Shamshi-Adad I to Eriba-Adad I (c. 1813-1364 B.C.); Early Middle Assyrian = Ashur-uballit I to Mutakkil-Nusku (c. 1363-1133 B.C.); Late Middle Assyrian = Ashur-resha-ishi I to Tiglath-pileser II (c. 1132-935 B.C.); Early Neo-Assyrian = Ashur-dan II to Ashur-nerari V (c. 934-745 B.C.); Late Neo-Assyrian ("Sargonid") = Tiglath-pileser III to Ashur-uballit II (c. 744-609 B.C.); normally only one or two examples from each period of a particular form will be quoted. I have omitted royal edicts — see E. Ebeling, *Stiftungen und Vorschriften für assyrische Tempel* (Berlin 1954); E. F. Weidner, *AJO 17* (1954-56) 257-293; and J. N. Postgate, *Neo-Assyrian Royal Grants and Decrees* (Studia Pohl: Series Major 1; Rome 1969).

⁵¹ For a valuable discussion of the "Ichform" see S. Mowinkel, *Eucharisticion Gunkel*, pp. 297-299.

^{52a} See now H. Tadmor, *Essays Finkelstein*, pp. 209-213.

1 Annalistic Accounts of One Campaign

Inscriptions with accounts of only one campaign are attested only in the Neo-Assyrian period although they must have existed earlier, since collections of annalistic accounts are known from the later Middle Assyrian period. Texts narrating one campaign were engraved on prominent rock surfaces in the region of the respective campaign or on steles purposefully erected in that area. Each was intended as a visible monument commemorating a successful expedition. A relief of the king's figure and divine symbols commonly accompanied the inscription. In form (IA1) such a text begins with an invocation of the gods; this is followed by the subject (royal name and epithets)⁵³, and an annalistic narration of the campaign. The text might conclude with a description of the erection of the stele and curse formulae⁵⁴. An invocatory introduction is also known for one type of annalistic collection (see IA2b below) and is unique to Assyrian annalistic accounts; it is unknown in Sumerian and Babylonian royal inscriptions.

2 Collections of Annalistic Accounts

Collections of Annalistic Accounts of campaigns are known from the later Middle Assyrian through the Neo-Assyrian periods. They were inscribed on a variety of objects of clay (tablets, cylinders, and prisms)⁵⁵ and stone (slabs and steles). Some of the objects, particularly those of stone, were placed in prominent positions in temples and palaces where they could be seen and read. Others were deposited in foundations and other structural parts of a building where only the gods and a future prince doing renovation would see them.

These collections display two main forms. One (IA2a) is an obvious type. It begins with the subject (royal name and epithets) followed by the annalistic narration, description of building activities, and blessings. In addition a statement regarding the king's commission by the gods might be inserted after the subject and curses and a date might be added after the blessings⁵⁶.

The other form (IA2b) has in this order, an invocation of the gods, the subject (royal name and epithets), and annalistic narration. Optional extras are a statement regarding the king's commission inserted after the subject and,

⁵² The invocation and subject may, at the same time, be descriptions of the reliefs.

⁵³ Examples of this form are: Early Neo-Assyrian, *ARI 2*, CI, 11 (Asn. II); Late Neo-Assyrian, *ARAB 2*, §§ 293-298 (Senn.) and §§ 574-581 = Borger, *Asarb.* § 65. An exception among annalistic accounts of one campaign is a text of Sennacherib (*ARAB 2*, §§ 255-267 and 362-371). This is a narration of Sennacherib's first campaign inscribed on a clay cylinder. The form is subject, annalistic narration, description of building, and a blessing.

⁵⁴ I follow the formal distinction between "cylinders" and "prisms" propounded by Ellis, *Foundation Deposits*, pp. 108f. which is that the inscription on cylinders runs parallel to the axis while on prisms it runs perpendicular to the axis. Royal inscriptions were inscribed on prisms only in Assyria, never in Sumer or Babylonia.

⁵⁵ Examples of this form are: Late Middle Assyrian, *ARI 2*, LXXXIX, 1 (Ashur-bel-kala); Early Neo-Assyrian, *ARI 2*, XCIX, 1 (Adn. II); Late Neo-Assyrian, *ARAB 2*, §§ 232-254 and 423-428 (Senn.) and *ARAB 2*, §§ 763-840 (Asb.).

after the annalistic narration, a description of building activities, a prayer, blessings and curses, and a date⁵⁶. This form is the same as that for accounts of one campaign and, as I have already pointed out, seems to be an Assyrian innovation.

A third form (IA2c) is very rare. It begins with a dedication to a deity and this is followed by the subject (royal name and epithets) and annalistic narration. To this might be added a description of building activities, blessings and curses⁵⁷. The dedicatory form (cf. III Dedicatory Inscriptions below) also appears in Assyrian Display Inscriptions (IB1b and IB2d) and is well known from Sumerian and Babylonian (IB below) royal inscriptions.

Different collections of annalistic narrations of campaigns were made at various times and in various cities during a given reign⁵⁸. The later in time the collection was compiled the more the campaigns that could be included. The tendency in these compilations was to abbreviate the narrations of early campaigns while later campaigns would be described in more detail. Such a trend is best illustrated by the annalistic texts of Sennacherib⁵⁹.

B Display Texts

The texts included under this title are commemorative inscriptions without annalistic narration; if military campaigns are mentioned they are not normally described in chronological order but, most commonly, they are grouped according to geography. The name "Display" is inaccurate since, like the annals, while some of these texts were intended for display others were buried in the foundation or other parts of a building. But the term has gained popularity and, *faute de mieux*, will be used in this analysis⁶⁰. Display texts were inscribed on a wide variety of objects of clay (tablets, cylinders, cones, bricks), stone (slabs, blocks, and steles), and rock faces *in situ* and precious metals. The inscriptions divide naturally into two groups, those that include military conquests and those that do not⁶¹.

⁵⁶ Examples of this form are: Early Neo-Assyrian, *ARAB* 1, §§ 553-593, 594-611, *WVO* 1 (1947-52) 454-475 and *WVO* 2 (1954-59) 27-45 (all Shalm. III); Late Neo-Assyrian, *Afo* 20 (1963) 83-96 (Senn.). Some texts of Ashur-nasir-apli II (*ARI* 2, CI, 4-9) have an elaborate introduction but essentially follow this form. On the annals of Tiglath-pileser I which also has this basic form, see below.

⁵⁷ There are only two examples: Early Neo-Assyrian, *ARAB* 1, §§ 713-726 (Shamshi-Adad V); Late Neo-Assyrian, *ARAB* 2, §§ 922-928 (Asb.).

⁵⁸ For example in the reign of Adad-nerari II there are two different versions from Ashur and one from Nineveh — *ARI* 2, XCIX, 1-3.

⁵⁹ The arrangement of Sennacherib's texts by D. D. Luckenbill, who wisely followed this pattern in his edition of Sennacherib's inscriptions in *OIP* 2 (Chicago 1924) as well as in *ARAB* 2, demonstrates this very well. Further see now H. Tadmor, *Essays Finkelstein*, p. 210.

⁶⁰ The name "Display Inscription", "Prunkschrift" in German, seems to have been first used by Schrader and later taken up by Olmstead — see Tadmor, *Iraq* 35 (1973) 141. Tadmor prefers the label "Summary Inscription" which he has traced back to Schrader's original term "Übersichtsschrift".

⁶¹ There are a few texts that fall neither into one category nor another. They have a form common to both types and describe military conquests but only in very general terms. E.g. *ARI* 2, CI, 37 (Asn. II).

1 Display Texts Without Military Conquests

The most common form (IB1a) is the obvious one: subject (royal name and epithets) followed by a description of building activities. A number of optional elements are also known: a temporal clause (content varies) may follow the subject; a statement of purpose ("for my life" etc.) may be included in the building description; and the text may conclude with any one of a combination of elements, viz. prayer, exhortation, blessings, curses, and date. This form is attested in all periods⁶².

A second form (IB1b) is attested mainly in the Sargonid period. It begins with a dedication (to a deity) and this is followed by the subject (royal name and epithets) and a description of building activities. Additional optional elements are a prayer, blessings, and curses. Regarding the dedicatory form see the discussion of IA2c (above)⁶³.

2 Display Texts With Military Conquests

Several forms are attested among texts of this group. The simplest pattern (IB2a) is the royal name followed by epithets including epithets describing military achievements. Additional optional elements are a building description, blessings, curses, and a date. This form is attested from early Middle Assyrian to Late Neo-Assyrian times⁶⁴.

A second form (IB2b) is an expansion on this basic type. It begins with the subject (royal name and epithets including conquests) and this is followed by a narration of military activities. In texts of this kind there is not always a clear demarcation between the military epithets and the military narration. To this basic form might be added a building description, a prayer, blessings,

⁶² Examples of this form are: Early Old Assyrian, *ARI* 1, XXXI,1 (Shalim-ahum), XXXIII,7 (Erishum I); Late Old Assyrian, *ARI* 1, LXI,3 (Puzur-Ashur III), LXX,1 (Ashur-rim-nisheshu); Early Middle Assyrian, *ARI* 1, LXXIII,1 (Ashur-uballit I), LXXIX,1 (Ashur-nadin-apli); Late Middle Assyrian, *ARI* 1, LXXXVI,2 (Ashur-resha-ishi I), *ARI* 2, XCI,1 (Shamshi-Adad IV); Early Neo-Assyrian, *ARI* 2, XCVIII,2 (Ashur-dan II), *WVO* 1 (1947-52) 216 (Shalm. III); Late Neo-Assyrian, *ARAB* 2, §§ 106-109 (Sg. II), §§ 953-955 (Asb.). A brief statement regarding the treatment of conquered peoples (Akkadians) is added to two texts of this type from Ilu-shuma — *ARI* 1, XXXII 1 and 2. Two texts of Esarhaddon follow the basic form of IB1a; but one — Borger, *Asarh.* § 2 — adds a narration of portents after the subject and the second — *ibid.* § 11 — in addition adds a description of the evil in Babylonia.

⁶³ One example from the early Neo-Assyrian period is *ARI* 2, CI,16 (Asn. II). A very short and broken text from the early Old Assyrian period, *ARI* 1, XXXIII,15, may be of this type. Otherwise the form is attested only in the late Neo-Assyrian period: e.g. *YOS* 1, No. 38 (Sg. II), Borger, *Asarh.* § 47. A unique form of display text without military conquests is *ARI* 1, LXXV,2 (Arik-din-ili) which consists of the subject (royal name and epithets), epithet regarding building, and a curse. Except for the curse this is the same as the form of commemorative labels (IC). One commemorative inscription of Esarhaddon — Borger, *Asarh.* § 53 — has a form identical with one type of Babylonian commemorative form (IC). The form is otherwise unattested in Assyrian.

⁶⁴ Examples of this form are: Early Middle Assyrian, *ARI* 1, LXXVI,1-2, 7,8,10,13,15,19 — see § 380 (Adn. I), LXXVIII,3 (Tn. I); Late Middle Assyrian, *ARI* 2, LXXXVII,17 (Tigl. I); Late Neo-Assyrian, *ARAB* 2, §§ 116-123 and 136-138 (both Sg. II). No example from the early Neo-Assyrian period is yet known.

courses, and a date. Texts of this type are attested throughout the Middle Assyrian and Neo-Assyrian periods⁶⁵.

A third form (IB2c) is: subject (royal name and epithets), temporal clause (king's commission), narration of conquests, and a description of building activities. To this might be added a prayer, blessings, curses, and a date. This kind of text is attested mainly on stone slabs, presumably intended for public view, from the early Middle Assyrian period and the early Neo-Assyrian period⁶⁶.

A form (IB2d) attested only on stone objects from the early Neo-Assyrian period is: dedication (to a deity), subject (royal name and epithets), and narration of conquests. Optional additions to this are: building description, blessings, and curses. These inscriptions were intended for public display⁶⁷.

A study of the Assyrian commemorative inscriptions reveals considerable experimentation by the scribes, down through the years, with the view to include more and more details about the military enterprises of the king. This was a distinctively Assyrian feature for the Sumerian and Babylonian royal inscriptions rarely mentioned military matters. The first major step in this direction in Assyria is attested in the reign of Adad-narari I (1306-1274 B.C.)⁶⁸. In inscriptions of this king the royal scribes

⁶⁵ Examples of this form are: Early Middle Assyrian, *ARI* 1, LXXVI,3 (Adn. I), LXXVIII,5 (Tn. I); Late Middle Assyrian, *ARI* 2, LXXXVII,3 (Tigl. I); Early Neo-Assyrian, *ARI* 2, CI,18 (Asn. II), *ARAB* 1, §§ 684-686 (Shalm. III); Late Neo-Assyrian, *ARAB* 1, 780-785 (Tigl. III), Borger, *Asarh.* § 21. A unique text of Asn. II — *ARI* 2, CI,17 "Banquet Stele" — adds after the building section a narration of hunting and a menu of the banquet. Another unusual inscription, this time from the reign of Shalmaneser III — *ARAB* 1, §§ 673-678 — adds after a blessing a list of names of walls and gates.

⁶⁶ Two examples from the early Middle Assyrian period — *ARI* 1, LXXVIII, 1 and 2 (Tn. I) — omit the temporal clause while one example — *ARI* 1, LXXXVII,1 (Shalm. I) — has it. Examples from the early Neo-Assyrian period are *ARI* 2, CI,13 and 14 (Asn. II).

⁶⁷ Examples of this form are: *ARI* 2, CI,15 (Asn. II) and *ARAB* 1, §§ 687-688 (Shalm. III). Texts beginning with an invocation are rarely attested among the display inscriptions which include military conquests (cf. IA1 and IA2b). Only two examples have come to my attention: *ARAB* 2, §§ 179-189 (Sg. II) and §§ 331-343 (Senn.). A unique text is *ARI* 1, XXXIX,1 (Shamshi-Adad I). This inscription includes reference to the receipt of tribute and the erection of steles within a temporal clause. This text also shows Babylonian influence — see below. Another unusual inscription, *ARI* 1, §§ 173-177 (Puzur-Sin) begins with a temporal clause in which conquest of a usurper is narrated. One of the inscriptions left by Tiglath-pileser I at the head-waters of the Tigris, *ARI* 2, LXXXVII,16, begins "With the aid of DN". An inscription of Esarhad-don, Borger, *Asarh.* § 27, in which the king's suppression of a rebellion and his accession to the throne are narrated, has a complex and unique form.

⁶⁸ An early text from Ashur of a certain Ititi, *ARI* 1, §§ 12-14, labels the inscribed object as "booty". Ilu-shuma speaks euphemistically of having established "the freedom of the Akkadians" — see *ARI* 1, XXXII, 1 and 2 and cf. n. 62 above. Only with Shamshi-Adad I is there a straightforward statement of the receipt of tribute and the erection of steles — see *ARI* 1, § 128, cf. § 140, and see XXXIX,8. Puzur-Sin (*ARI* 1, §§ 173-177) boasts of defeating a descendant of Shamshi-Adad I. Further cf. n. 67. There is no further reference to military enterprises in Assyrian royal inscriptions, with the possible exception of *ARI* 1, LXXIV,2 which cannot be dated with certainty, until the reign of Adad-narari I.

included, after the subject, a relatively lengthy and detailed narrative of the war against Hanigalbat⁶⁹. The experiment proved successful and evolved into a form (IB2b) in which military narration was placed immediately after the subject⁷⁰.

In the reign of Shalmaneser I (1273-1244 B.C.) a less fortunate innovation appeared. The scribes inserted a temporal clause with details of military achievements into the subject (the form is basically that of IB2c)⁷¹. After a relatively long description of campaigns the subject was resumed but the thread of thought had been interrupted and, to the modern reader at least, the result is confusion. Unhappily this clumsy arrangement continued to be used for a time and is attested in some inscriptions of Tukulti-Ninurta I (1243-1207 B.C.)⁷².

A third experiment, which seems to be related to the unsuccessful one just described, is represented by the first true annalistic text, the Annals of Tiglath-pileser I (1114-1076 B.C.)⁷³. Basically the text follows the pattern of IA2b. The annalistic narration is divided by horizontal lines into a number of sections, each section covering one campaign, and the subject (royal name and epithets) is repeated (the epithets are different each time) in a special paragraph between the end of the narrative of one campaign and the beginning of the next. At the end of the entire narration the king's genealogy appears. This is basically the same format as that used by the scribes of Shalmaneser I; the military narration has been inserted into the midst of the subject. But the scribes have eliminated confusion by not including the narration in the temporal clause; by the regular repetition of the subject; and by the systematic use of paragraph divisions (horizontal lines). Annalistic texts of subsequent reigns do not have precisely this format but they do exhibit the essential feature, the chronological narration of military events⁷⁴.

C Commemorative Labels

Commemorative Labels are the same as Labels (see II below) in so far as they are short texts denoting ownership. In addition, the commemorative

⁶⁹ *ARI* 1, LXXVI,3 and 4 (cf. 5 and 6). Even before these texts were published Baumgartner noted that the epithets of Adad-narari I included greater detail about military enterprises than had appeared before — see *OLZ* 27 (1924) 316. The belief that annals began with Arik-din-ili — see Olmstead, op. cit. (n. 4) pp. 3f. — was founded on a misunderstanding of *ARI* 1, LXXV,3*. This text is really a chronicle as R. Borger, *EAK* 1, p. 31 has shown.

⁷⁰ The next datable texts of this type of are Tukulti-Ninurta I, viz. *ARI* 1, LXXVIII,5 and 17 — see *ibid.* §§ 379 and 687. Thereafter they are common.

⁷¹ *ARI* 1, LXXVII, 1 and see § 524.

⁷² *ARI* 1, LXXVIII,1, 16, 22 and cf. 2. See *ibid.* § 687.

⁷³ *ARI* 2, LXXXVII,1. See now H. Tadmor, *Essays Finkelstein*, pp. 209f.

⁷⁴ There are some isolated examples of royal inscriptions which are a combination of annalistic and display material. These include the "Annals"

morative labels add a brief statement regarding construction. The form of such a text is simple: royal name followed by epithets and one of these epithets records building activity ("builder of...")⁷⁶. Before the royal name might appear "Palace of" or "belonging to". Commemorative labels are found on a variety of objects, all of which were structural parts or furnishings of a building. The most common object is bricks. The text type is well known in Sumer and, since it first appears in Assyria in the reign of Shamshi-Adad I (1813-1781 B.C.), it was probably imported from the south at that time⁷⁸.

II Labels

Labels are short inscriptions which indicate ownership. These can consist of nothing more than the royal name⁷⁷ although usually one or more epithets are added. In addition "Palace of" or "property of" might precede the royal name. The text type is an obvious one, known both in Sumer and Babylonia, and it appears in all periods of Assyrian history. It can be inscribed on any royal property, such as the royal seal and royal weapons, and it is particularly common on vases and bricks⁷⁸. Beginning with the early Middle Assyrian period it was not uncommon to add the name of the particular construction to which structural objects belonged (e.g. "paving slab of the courtyard")⁷⁹.

III Dedictory Inscriptions

These are texts on objects dedicated by the king to a deity⁸⁰. The objects are of a cultic nature, such as ornamental mace heads or eyes of

of Ashur-nasir-apli II (*ARI* 2, CI,1 — see *BiOr* 33 [1976] 138f.) as well as *ARI* 2, CI,2 and 3 (*Asn.* II) and cf. XCIX,2 (*Adn.* II).

⁷⁶ Examples of this form are: Late Old Assyrian, *ARI* 1, XXXIX,2 (Shamshi-Adad I), LX,1 (Ashur-nerari I); Early Middle Assyrian, *ARI* 1, LXXVII,32 (Shalm. I); Late Middle Assyrian, *ARI* 1, LXXXVI,6 (Ashur-resha-ishli I); Early Neo-Assyrian, *ARI* 2, CI,51 (*Asn.* II); Late Neo-Assyrian, Borger, *Asarh.* § 7. The short display inscriptions of the simplest type (IB1a) are basically commemorative labels. But formally they are distinct from the texts under discussion.

⁷⁷ Cf. J. Lewy, *HUCA* 19 (1945-46) 474, n. 343.

⁷⁸ E.g. *ARI* 1, LXL,2 (Puzur-Ashur II).

⁷⁹ Examples of this form are: Early Old Assyrian, *ARI* 1, XXXIII,16 (Erishum I), XXXV,1 (Sg. I); Late Old Assyrian, *ARI* 1, XXXIX,7 (Shamshi-Adad I), LXXI,1 (Ashur-nadin-ahhe II); Early Middle Assyrian, *ARI* 1, LXXIII,6 (Ashur-uballit I), LXXVIII,30 (Tn. I); Late Middle Assyrian, *ARI* 2, LXXXVII,24 (Tigl. I); Early Neo-Assyrian, *ARI* 2, CI,63 (*Asn.* II); Late Neo-Assyrian, *ARAB* 2, § 128 (Sg. II). An unusual form appears on a seal from the very early Old Assyrian period — *ARI* 1, XXVII,1 (Silulu).

⁸⁰ Examples of this form are: Early Middle Assyrian, *ARI* 1, LXXVI,28-34 (*Adn.* I), LXXVIII,32 (Tn. I); Late Middle Assyrian, *ARI* 1, LXXXVI,10 (Ashur-resha-ishli I), *ARI* 2, LXXXVII,22 (Tigl. I); Early Neo-Assyrian, *ARI* 2, CI, 46-47 (*Asn.* II). Some texts have instead "booty of ..." — e.g. *ARI* 1, LXXVI 40, LXXVIII,29 and cf. Borger, *Asarh.* § 5.

⁸¹ The term "votive" has been applied by many Assyriologists to texts

precious stone, or they can be structural parts, such as bricks or door sockets, of a temple. The inscriptions could be read by any who had the ability and access to the objects. Only two such texts are known from the old Assyrian period. Each begins with the royal name and concludes with a verb of dedication; in between appears the dedication to the deity and the name or description of the object dedicated⁸¹. This form disappears and in the Middle Assyrian period a pattern well known from Sumerian and Babylonian dedicatory inscriptions appears. Obviously the change has been brought about by influence from the south. The basic form of these later texts is: dedication, subject (royal name and epithets), and verb of dedication⁸².

IV Letters to the God

The Assyrian inscriptions called "Letters to the God" are an extremely interesting group of texts. The best known example is the letter of Sargon II (721-705 B.C.)⁸³. The text is inscribed on a particularly large and well-preserved clay tablet and is a report of the king on his eighth campaign which is addressed to the god Ashur, to the deities of the city Ashur (who are not named), to the city of Ashur and to its population. It is, then, more than just a letter to "the god". This point has been well established by Oppenheim who has, in addition, noted the features of the text which indicate it was read out orally in the city Ashur during a ceremony held to celebrate the successful conclusion of the campaign⁸⁴. At the end of the inscription a list of the campaign's casualties (a total of six men!) is provided, evidence that their corpses were being honoured in the ceremony. Thus this "letter" appears to be primarily a ceremonial docu-

of this type but in *JAOS* 90 (1970) 529 I pointed out that the etymology of the word "votive" implies a vow and, since no vow is involved in the ancient Mesopotamian texts under discussion, the term is incorrect. They are certainly not "votive" or "ex voto" inscriptions in the ancient Roman sense where a vow preceded the dedication. G. Van Driel, *JAOS* 93 (1973) 68 has concurred with my view but J. A. Brinkman, *Materials and Studies for Kassite History* 1 (Chicago 1976), p. 56, n. 179, has argued that "votive" in English usage has a wider connotation which includes a wish (for future benefits) and therefore aptly describes this genre. While recognizing the validity of this argument, I still think it is best to avoid the terms "votive" and "ex voto" for fear of confusion with a quite different phenomenon in Classical times.

⁸¹ *ARI* 1, § 14 and XXXIV,2.

⁸² Examples of this form are: Early Middle Assyrian, *ARI* 1, LXXVII,23 (Shalm. I); Early Neo-Assyrian, *ARI* 2, XCVIII,3 (Ashur-dan II), *ARAB* 1, § 728 (Shamshi-Adad V); Late Neo-Assyrian, Borger, *Asarh.* § 12.

⁸³ *ARAB* 2, §§ 139-178.

⁸⁴ See A. L. Oppenheim, *JNES* 19 (1960) 133-147 and especially pp. 143-147. For other discussions see A. Ungnad, *OZ* 21 (1918) 72-75; T. Bauer, *ZA* 40 (1931) 250; E. A. Speiser, *Idea of History*, pp. 63-67 and *RLA* 3, p. 219; and R. Borger, *RLA* 3, pp. 575f.

ment composed for oral presentation to a live audience upon a great state occasion, the completion of a major and profitable campaign. Presumably it was deposited in an honoured and secure place once that occasion was past.

A document which is similar to the Sargon Letter is known from Esarhaddon's reign⁸⁵. The beginning of the text is broken but the conclusion contains a list of casualties verbally identical with the list in the Sargon Letter and the general tone of the composition is similar to Sargon's text. There is also a fragment in the British Museum on which is preserved the beginning and end of a text very much like that of the beginning and end of the Sargon letter⁸⁶. From the reign of Ashurbanipal there is an inscription⁸⁷ addressed to the god Ashur in which the king reports on military activities in various parts of the empire⁸⁸.

The practice of kings and private persons writing letters to their personal gods is well attested in Sumer and Babylonia⁸⁹ and this provides the general background to the Assyrian Letters to the God. Also of possible relevance is a letter from Mari in the Old Babylonian period which was written by Yasmah-Adad, son of Shamshi-Adad I⁹⁰. The name of the addressee is missing but it is clearly a deity and probably the god Dagan. In this letter Yasmah-Adad tries to exonerate himself and his family from any blame for sinful conduct and to place all responsibility for misbehaviour on the former dynasty at Mari which was defeated by Yasmah-

⁸⁵ ARAB 2, §§ 592-612 = Borger, *Asarh.* § 68.

⁸⁶ S. Langdon, *Babylonian Liturgies* (Paris 1913) No. 169 edited by A. Ungnad, *OLZ* 21 (1918) 73. See W. Schramm *EAK* 2, p. 120, who dates it to the reign of Shalmaneser IV. H. Tadmor, *JCS* 12 (1958) 80-84 pointed out that the style of the fragment 82-3-23,131 (correct number!) was reminiscent of the Sargon letter; subsequently N. Na'aman, *BASOR* 214 (1974) 25-39, joined to this K 6205 and agreed that the style was like a letter to the god but made a good case for ascribing the document to Sennacherib.

⁸⁷ See M. Weippert, *WO* 7 (1973) 74-85 and note the reference in T. Bauer, *Das Inschriftenwerk Assurbanipals* 2 (Leipzig 1933), p. 80 r. 28f., to a god, speaking in the first person, talking about "a tablet/letter of good news, joy and peace" which the king sent to the deity. Another text from Ashurbanipal's reign, CT 35, 44f. edited by Bauer, op. cit. pp. 83f., is called a "letter (*šipirtu*) of Ashurbanipal" but is actually hymnic in character. Note "Hear my prayers, receive my petitions!" in r. 19. Ashurbanipal is praying to the god to help him against his enemies. This is, then, not the same kind of text as those under discussion. Rather it should be associated with royal hymns and prayers such as E. Ebeling, "Keilschrifttexte aus Assur religiösen Inhalts", *WDOG* 28 (Leipzig 1915-19), Nos. 128, 129 (both Tn. I), and 130.

⁸⁸ E. F. Weidner suggested that VAT 9268 and possibly also the fragment K 14676 were letters from the god to the king in reply to the letters to the God — see *Afo* 9 (1933-34) 101-104. However, J. Nougayrol, in *RA* 36 (1939) 33, n. 4, noted that these were more probably written by diviners. Cf. A. L. Oppenheim, *JNES* 19 (1960) 145, n. 22. J. Nougayrol, *RA* 36, pp. 33f. proposed, however, that a third fragment, K 2764, was such a reply by the deity.

⁸⁹ See the convenient summary by R. Borger, *RLA* 3, pp. 575f. To his list of texts add the Old Babylonian letter published by F. R. Kraus, *RA* 65 (1971) 27-36. Further, see now W. W. Hallo, *AOAT* 25, pp. 209-213.

⁹⁰ *ARI* 1, XXXIX, 10*

Adad's grandfather. Only the military accomplishments of his grandfather are narrated⁹¹. The document has only a general similarity, then, to the Assyrian Letters to the God⁹².

Basically this is all that is known about Assyrian Letters to the God and their possible antecedents. There is simply not enough material yet to allow firm conclusions on these texts. Their fragmentary state, with the exception of the Sargon letter, precludes a form critical analysis and their origin and purpose remain to be established when more complete texts are available⁹³.

Babylonia

Babylonian royal inscriptions are similar to Sumerian royal inscriptions⁹⁴. At the beginning of the Old Babylonian period royal inscriptions in Babylonia could be written in either Sumerian or Akkadian or both (as bilinguals) but as the centuries passed the number of royal inscriptions in Sumerian gradually waned. In the later Old Babylonian⁹⁵ and in the Middle Babylonian periods⁹⁶ there are still a significant number in Sumerian but in the Neo-Babylonian era they are not so common⁹⁷. Nonetheless

⁹¹ There is also a Sumerian inscription, of Sin-iddinam, in which the achievements of the father are narrated in detail but no mention is made of the ruling king's accomplishments. The text is published by J. J. A. van Dijk, *JCS* 19 (1965) 1-25. Further see *ARI* 1, p. 27 and n. 81.

⁹² The letter mentioned by C. F. Jean, *Revue des études sémitiques* (1939) 66f. sounds similar to the Yasmah-Adad letter — cf. B. Landsberger, *JCS* 8 (1954) 34. During the reign of Zimri-Lim at Mari reports to the god by the king on his own activities are referred to in correspondence but none of these reports has, apparently, survived. See G. Dossin, *Syria* 19 (1938) 126 which is a letter accompanying a gold cup sent to the god. In this epistle Zimri-Lim says he has already sent his report to the god. Also see G. Dossin, *RA* 42 (1948) 129-31, a letter in which the god is said to have demanded a report. For translations of and literature on both texts see W. Moran, *ANET*³ pp. 623 and 627 respectively. Also cf. J. M. Munn-Rankin, *Iraq* 18 (1956) 71 and A. Pinet, *La Voix de l'Opposition en Mesopotamie* (Brussels 1973) p. 6, n. 22.

⁹³ E. F. Weidner has suggested in *Afo* 12 (1937-39) 148 that only outstanding campaigns were used for such letters.

⁹⁴ In this discussion Babylonian history has been divided into the following time periods: Early Old Babylonian = Isin-Larsa (c. 2000-1763 B.C.); Late Old Babylonian = Babylon I (c. 1894-1595 B.C.); Middle Babylonian = Kassite (c. 1595-1155 B.C.); Early Neo-Babylonian = (c. 1157-732 B.C.); Late Neo-Babylonian = Chaldaean (c. 731-539 B.C.). For the early Neo-Babylonian period very few royal inscriptions are known. For a detailed analysis of the Chaldaean royal inscriptions see Berger, *NBK* pp. 9-97. Achaemenid royal inscriptions are quite different in form, language (although frequently there is an Akkadian version), and content and they are not considered here. Only one Seleucid royal inscription in Akkadian is known — see F. H. Weissbach, *VAB* 3, pp. 132-135 and cf. n. 103 below.

⁹⁵ Examples are: Sollberger and Kupper, *IRSA* IVC6d, IVC6i, and IVC6k, (all Hamunurapi).

⁹⁶ Examples are: *I R* 4, No. XIV, 1-3 (Kurigalzu) and *IV R* 36, No. 3 (Karaindash).

⁹⁷ Examples from the early Neo-Babylonian period are: *I R* 5, No. XXII and C. J. Gadd, *StOr* 1 (1925) 27f. (both Adad-apla-iddina). Examples from

even as late as the Chaldaean period scribes continued to write some royal inscriptions in the Sumerian language and even in Akkadian texts it was not uncommon for them to use an archaic script⁹⁸. Bilingual royal inscriptions are attested for all but the latest periods⁹⁹. Narration of military achievements or even allusion to them is rare in Babylonian royal inscriptions, as it is in their Sumerian prototypes, and even when this kind of material appears it is not arranged chronologically.

I Commemorative Inscriptions

These texts, like their Assyrian counterparts, were composed to commemorate royal deeds. They were inscribed on a variety of objects of clay (tablets, cones, cylinders)¹⁰⁰, and bricks and stone (tablets, steles, and statues). Some were buried in foundations or other structural parts of a building while some were put on display. They exhibit various forms.

An obvious type (IA) is: subject (royal name and epithets)¹⁰¹ followed by a description of building activities¹⁰². This form is well known from Sumerian royal inscriptions and is also common in Assyrian royal inscriptions (IB1a). In Babylonian texts an optional insertion after the subject is a temporal clause; this usually describes the king's commission although in some texts a narration of military conquests appears. A prayer might appear at the end of the text. Inscriptions of this type are common in all periods¹⁰³.

Another form (IB) is also familiar from Sumerian and reappears in Assyria (IB1b): dedication (to a deity), subject (royal name and epithets), and build-

the late Neo-Babylonian period are numerous bricks of Merodach-baladan II inscribed in Sumerian — see the bibliography in J. A. Brinkman, *Studies Presented to A. Leo Oppenheim* (Chicago 1964) p. 42, 44.2.2.

⁹⁸ Cf. Berger, *NBK* pp. 3f.

⁹⁹ Examples of bilinguals are: Late Old Babylonian, Sollberger and Kupper, *IRSA* IVC6b (Hammurapi) and IVC7d (Samsu-iluna); Middle Babylonian, *IV R* 12 (Kadashman-Enlil); Early Neo-Babylonian, T. L. Böhl, *BiOr* 7 (1950) 42-46 (Nbk. I).

¹⁰⁰ See n. 54 above. In addition to the study by Ellis cited there, for the Chaldaean cylinders see Berger, *NBK* p. 2 and pp. 99f.

¹⁰¹ In some inscriptions of the Late Old Babylonian period, e.g. *IRSA* IVC7e, (Samsu-iluna) some of the epithets describe military conquests.

¹⁰² The building description might mention the purpose of the work; "(I built) for DN" is common in all periods.

¹⁰³ Examples of this form are: Early Old Babylonian, *IRSA* IV A5b (Lipit-Ishtar) and IVB13j (Kudur-Mabuk); Late Old Babylonian, *IRSA* IVC6j (Hammurapi) and IVF7b (Zimri-Lim); Middle Babylonian, *I R* 4, No. XIV, 2 (Kurigalzu, in Sumerian); Late Neo-Babylonian, VAB 4, Npl. 2, Nbk. 4, Nrgl. 1, and Nbn. 2. The royal inscription of Antiochus I, VAB 3, pp. 132-135, also has this form. In three texts, two from the late Old Babylonian period — *IRSA* IVC7d (Samsu-iluna) and IVF6a (Yahdun-Lim) — and one from the late Neo-Babylonian period — VAB 4, Nbk. 15 —, narration of military conquests appears between the subject and the building description. One inscription of Nabonidus, VAB 4, Nbn. 1, has a particularly complex form since it combines two different building accounts together with a narration of the circumstances which led up to the reconstruction of one of the temples, Rhullul at Harran.

ing description. As in IA a temporal clause might be inserted after the subject and this clause usually described the king's commission although on occasion it narrated the history of the object being restored. A prayer sometimes appears at the end. The form is attested in all periods¹⁰⁴.

A third type (IC) of commemorative inscription begins with a temporal clause¹⁰⁵ which is followed by narration of the king's commission and then the main statement. Optional additions are prayer, blessings, and curses. The form, which is attested from the late Old Babylonian through the Neo-Babylonian periods, is distinctively Babylonian¹⁰⁶. There is no comparable pattern in Sumerian or Assyrian¹⁰⁷.

II Labels¹⁰⁸

The Babylonian labels, like their Sumerian forerunners and Assyrian contemporaries, are short ownership labels and consist basically of the royal name, which may or may not be followed by epithets. An optional addition before the royal name is "Palace of" or "Belonging to". Such texts appear in all periods and may be inscribed on any suitable object, such as royal seals or weapons, and particularly on bricks¹⁰⁹.

¹⁰⁴ Examples of this form are: Early Old Babylonian, *IRSA* IVA10b (Enlil-bani) and IVB14a (Rim-Sin I) (both in Sumerian); Late Old Babylonian, *IRSA* IVC6b (bilingual) and IVC6d (Sumerian) (both Hammurapi); Middle Babylonian, *IV R* 36, No. 3 (Karaindash, in Sumerian) and O. Messerschmidt and A. Ungnad, *Vorderasiatische Schriftdenkmäler der Königlichen Museen zu Berlin* (Leipzig 1907), No. 34 (Merodach-baladan I); Early Neo-Babylonian, A. Goetze, *JCS* 19 (1965) 121-135 (Simbar-shipak); Late Neo-Babylonian, VAB 4, Npl. 1. The cylinder of Merodach-baladan II published by C. J. Gadd, *Iraq* 15 (1953) 123-134, has basically this form but is more complex in arrangement. A text of Yahdun-Lim from Mari, *IRSA* IVF6b, also has this basic form but a narration of military conquests has been inserted in between the subject and the building description.

¹⁰⁵ The central theme of this temporal clause is that the god(s) looked with favour upon the king.

¹⁰⁶ Examples of this form are: Late Old Babylonian, *IRSA* IVC6f (Hammurapi bilingual), and IVC7b (Samsu-iluna bilingual); Middle Babylonian, BM 36042 published by H. Winckler, "Sumer und Akkad" in *Mitteilungen des Akademisch-Orientalistischen Vereins zu Berlin* I (1887) p. 19 No. 6 (Adad-shuma-usur); Late Neo-Babylonian, YOS 1, 45 (Nbn.). The Code of Hammurapi also has this same basic form.

¹⁰⁷ The only exception in Assyria is one text of Esarhaddon — Borger, *Asarh.* § 53 (see n. 63 above). This is evidence of Babylonian influence in this particular text.

¹⁰⁸ Commemorative labels, which are well attested in Sumer and in Assyria beginning with Shamshi-Adad I, are rare in Babylonia. One example from Hammurapi is *IRSA* IVC6c.

¹⁰⁹ Examples of this form are: Early Old Babylonian, *IRSA* IVA6a (Ur-Ninurta) and IVA7a (Bur-Sin) (both in Sumerian); Late Old Babylonian, *IRSA* IVF7c and d (Zimri-Lim); Middle Babylonian, *ARI* 1, LXXXVIII, 29 (Shagarakti-Shuriash); Early Neo-Babylonian, H. Winckler, *Untersuchungen zur altorientalischen Geschichte* (Leipzig, 1889) p. 46 (Nabu-shumu-libur); Late Neo-Babylonian, VAB 4, Nbk. 39 and Nbn. 12. Some labels add "I" (*anāku*) at the end — e.g. VAB 4, Nbn. 10. A text of this type from Cyrus, VAB 3, p. 8, is also known.

III Dedicatory Inscriptions

The form of these texts, well known from Sumerian royal inscriptions and also attested in Assyrian (III), is straightforward: dedication (to a deity), subject (royal name and epithets), and verb of dedication. Two optional extras are the insertion of a purpose clause ("for his life" etc.) after the subject, and the inclusion of the name of the dedicated object before the verb. This type of inscription is attested in all periods and was inscribed on valuable objects, such as eyes of precious stone, dedicated to a deity. The texts could be read by any who had the ability and access to the object ¹¹⁰.

To sum up this discussion of the types of Assyrian and Babylonian royal inscriptions the following conclusions can be drawn. There is some influence evident of Babylonian forms on Assyrian forms, a phenomenon which is typical of the relations between the two cultures in general. The first evidence of Babylonian influence appears in the reign of Shamshi-Adad I when features characteristic of Babylonian royal inscriptions appear in that king's texts. Shamshi-Adad is said to have spent some time in Babylonia which provides a suitable explanation of the phenomenon ¹¹¹. Sometime during the Middle Assyrian period the dedicatory inscription, in a form typical of Sumer and Babylonia, first appears in Assyria and replaces an older Assyrian type (see III above). From the time of Shamshi-Adad I through the Middle Assyrian period there is evidence of Babylonian influence on the phraseology and particularly on the royal epithets found in Assyrian royal inscriptions ¹¹². Another period in which Babylonian elements appear in Assyrian royal texts is the reign of Esarhaddon ¹¹³. Esarhaddon followed a policy of appeasement towards Babylonia which involved considerable building activity there and it was only natural that relevant inscriptions should follow Babylonian forms.

Looking beyond the confines of Assyrian and Babylonian civilization one seeks in vain, I think, for significant influence from foreign cultures

¹¹⁰ Examples of this form are: Early Old Babylonian, *IRSA* IVA4d (Ishme-Dagan) and IVA7b (Bur-Sin) (both in Sumerian); Late Old Babylonian, *IRSA* IVC8b (Abi-eshuh); Middle Babylonian, *MDOG* 21 (1904) 38 (Kurigalzu, in Sumerian) and G. Buccellati and R. D. Biggs, *Cuneiform Texts from Nippur*, AS 17 (Chicago 1969) pp. 15f. No. 55 (Nazi-maruttash); Late Neo-Babylonian, VAB 4, Nbk. 38.

¹¹¹ See the discussion of Assyrian Commemorative Labels (IC). Also see *ARI* 1, XXXIX, 1 and cf. n. 67 above.

¹¹² See B. Reiner, *BiOr* 19 (1962) 158f. and A. K. Grayson, *Ugarit-Forschungen* 3 (1971) 311-319. Cf. B. Landsberger and K. Balkan, *Belliten* 14 (1950) 220.

¹¹³ Borger, *Asarh.* § 53 has a distinctive Babylonian form — cf. nn. 63 and 107 above. There is even a text of Esarhaddon written in Sumerian, Borger, *Asarh.* § 18.

on the royal inscriptions. It has been suggested ¹¹⁴ that Assyrian annalistic narration owes much to earlier Hittite models. But there are no clear points of contact and it seems to me that it is quite possible that the Assyrian annals were an independent indigenous development ¹¹⁵.

Some of the forms which appear in Assyria and Babylonia are Sumerian in origin while others are unique. Babylonian royal inscriptions are much closer to their Sumerian prototypes in form, content, and even language (since many are written in Sumerian). This fact is another example of a well-known phenomenon: the greater strength of the Sumerian cultural tradition in Babylonia. In Assyria developments independent of Sumerian prototypes are attested and, in content, a major innovation is the gradual development of narration of military achievements and particularly annalistic narration. This never appears in Babylonian royal inscriptions.

Royal inscriptions of Assyria, Babylonia, and Sumer had one of three main functions: to commemorate the king's deeds, to record his dedication of an object to a god, or to indicate ownership. The king was the focal point throughout these texts and behind each and every inscription was his compulsion to boast, although pious overtones are very strong. Some

¹¹⁴ See A. Goetze, *Hethiter, Churriter und Assyrier* (Oslo, Paris, etc. 1936) pp. 181f. and *Kleinasiens* (Munich 1957) pp. 174f. Further see H. G. Güterbock, *ZA* 44 (1938) 98.

¹¹⁵ Everything else we know about relations between the two cultures indicates influence going the other way — the cuneiform script, Mesopotamian literary works found at Boghazköi in both Akkadian and Hittite, Hittites using Akkadian in international correspondence, etc. Despite some expression of opinion to the contrary, there is no evidence of Hittite influence on Assyrian royal epithets — see my article "The Early Development of Assyrian Monarchy" in *Ugarit-Forschungen* 3 (1971), especially p. 315, n. 30. Goetze in his *Hethiter, Churriter und Assyrier*, p. 180 has attributed to Hittite influence the practice of using vassal states by the Assyrians to control their empire; but is this any more than a general similarity? Perhaps an exception is methods of controlling conquered peoples, viz. deportation (cf. W. von Soden, *Iraq* 25 [1963] 137f.) and the sowing of salt (see Grayson, *ARI* 1, p. 60, n. 119).

On the other hand, the appearance of military narration in Assyria in the reign of Adn. I, or possibly earlier, is simultaneous with the increase in military might of the state. As Assyria's power mounts in subsequent reigns, so does the interest in recording these events. It is obvious that the circumstances of the age compelled Assyrians to record their great deeds. Now they did not choose, at this point, one literary form (and certainly not a Hittite form), and maintain it. Rather they experimented. Their experiments did not result in a successful stylistic vehicle, with the exception of that used in texts of Adn. I (*ARI* 1, LXXVI, 3), until the time of Tigl. I (1114-1076 B.C.).

Speiser, *Idea of History* p. 65, n. 79, also objected to the suggestion of Hittite influence but he did so while putting forth the idea that Assyrian annals may have developed from letters to the God and, as I have stated earlier, this theory is implausible.

The onus of proof lies, to my mind, on those who would prove Hittite influence on the Assyrian texts. Given the cultural and political circumstances there is no reason to reject the idea that the Assyrian military report was an indigenous innovation. Further, see now H. Tadmor, *Essays Finkelstein*, p. 209 and n. 2.

inscriptions were so placed that they could be read by any literate person who had the necessary access¹¹⁶; others were deposited in the foundation or other parts of a building where, apart from the gods, only a later prince who renovated that structure would see them¹¹⁷.

Compilation of Royal Inscriptions

The manner in which Assyrian royal inscriptions were composed is an area full of questions but lacking in answers¹¹⁸. There are no ancient treatises on the subject and what information we have is based upon incidental evidence and reasonable surmise. In the case of source material available to the authors of royal inscriptions it is apparent that they had and used Assyrian Chronicles, at least in the late Middle Assyrian period. Enough fragments of such chronicles are now known to recognize their style and identify at least one long passage with a similar style in the Broken Obelisk¹¹⁹. It is also known that they had booty or tribute lists¹²⁰ and obviously these were used as source material for the lists which appear in the royal inscriptions¹²¹.

A more difficult problem arises with the assumption that detailed "diaries" of the king's campaigns existed and were used in composing royal inscriptions¹²². The existence of such diaries has not, as yet, been

¹¹⁶ Copies of some inscriptions were actually kept in a special kind of archive. At Babylon a significant number of copies of ancient royal inscriptions was discovered in one location and led to the conclusion that this was a "Schlossmuseum" — see E. Unger, *Babylon* (Berlin 1970) 224-228 and cf. Berger, *NBK* p. 93 and n. 150. At Sippar copies of some very significant royal texts from various periods were found together — see E. Sollberger, *JEOL* 20 (1968) pp. 52f. and cf. Ellis, *Foundation Deposits*, p. 105. These last named documents were concerned with temple endowments by royalty which is certainly why they were preserved. Another reason for preserving copies of royal inscriptions as well as copies of royal correspondence — see *ARI* 1, § 888 — would be for use as models in scribal schools.

¹¹⁷ Cf. R. Borger, *JAOS* 90 (1970) 329 and Sollberger and Kupper, *IRSA* pp. 28f. The discussion by S. Mowinckel, *Eucharisterion Gunkel*, pp. 304-313 of the purpose of royal inscriptions is still useful although obviously dated.

¹¹⁸ It has already been observed (n. 49 above) that this study is based primarily on Assyrian material. This is particularly the case in the discussion of compilation for there is very little useful information on this subject for the Babylonian royal inscriptions.

¹¹⁹ *ARI* 2, I,XXXIX,2, col. iii. See my introduction to that text and cf. H. Tadmor, *Iraq* 35 (1973) 142 and n. 6, and *Essays Finkelstein*, pp. 209-213.

¹²⁰ Examples: E. Ebeling, *Kritisch-textuelle Ausg. assyrischer Inschriften*, (H'IDOG 50; Leipzig 1927), No. 314 and E. F. Weidner, *Afo* 10 (1935-36) 9-52. Cf. W. J. Martin, *StOr* 8 (1936) 21-25. Further, see now Postgate, *Studia Pohl*, Series Maior 3 (Rome 1974), pp. 111-130; M. Cogan, *Imperialism and Religion* (Missoula 1974) p. 118.

¹²¹ Cf. H. Tadmor, *Iraq* 35 (1973), p. 144.

¹²² See H. Tadmor, *Iraq* 35 (1973), pp. 141f. and cf. Cogan, *JCS* 29 (1977) 102, n. 22. Royal diaries did exist in Egypt; they were records of each day's activities during a campaign and were dictated personally by the king. See

established but two phenomena might suggest they did exist. One phenomenon is a type of text called "Neo-Assyrian Itineraries", the other has to do with a fluctuation of person in royal inscriptions.

Let us first consider the "itineraries". Two Neo-Assyrian documents are known in which is described in itinerary style an expedition with distances between stopping points noted¹²³. Neither the beginning nor end of either text is preserved and the purpose and occasion of each composition is unknown. If such records of campaigns were regularly made they may have been used as a source for the composition of royal inscriptions. But if we can judge from the fragments preserved, stylistically they are virtually unique and the information they contain is not the kind normally found in royal inscriptions. The closest parallel is a few itinerary-like passages found in some royal inscriptions and in particular in the narration of a special kind of campaign from the reigns of Adad-nerari II, Tukulti-Ninurta II, and Ashur-nasir-apli II¹²⁴. The narration in these passages consists of monotonous and repetitive descriptions of travel from one place to another with the tribute from each place duly noted. The phraseology is different from that used in the "itineraries"¹²⁵ and where these latter texts note distances and, occasionally, such details as water supply, the royal inscriptions list booty. If such texts as the two "itineraries" were commonly available they may have been used as a source for the compilation of royal inscriptions and in particular in close conjunction with booty lists but it is not obvious that they did exist in such quantity nor that they were used in such a manner. The two "itineraries" do not really provide any evidence for the existence of "diaries".

Another phenomenon that requires discussion with regard to "diaries" is the incongruous fluctuation between first and third person in a few passages in Assyrian royal inscriptions¹²⁶. In some cases this fluctuation appears to be the result of a conflation of different sources¹²⁷. Thus in the Rimah stele

H. Grapow, "Studien zu den Annalen Thutmosis des Dritten und zu ihnen verwandten historischen Berichten des neuen Reiches", *Abhandlungen der Deutschen Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Berlin*, Phil.-Hist. Klasse 1947/2, pp. 50-54.

¹²³ *ARI* 2, XCIX,6* and *ADD* 1096. There is no evidence that the latter describes a royal expedition. Note that *ARI* 2, XCIX,7* is not an itinerary.

¹²⁴ *ARI* 2, XCIX, 2 §§ 433f.; C,1 §§ 469-76; CI,1 §§ 568, 577, 584f. and CI,11 §§ 634-36. The use of the verb *namāšu* ("to move") for departure from the last stopping point reflects a dialectical change in royal inscriptions. It is first attested in the inscriptions of Adad-nerari II. It is not a technical term distinctive of itineraries. Apart from these itinerary-like passages it is used in descriptions of military movements in the royal inscriptions of Adad-nerari II, Tukulti-Ninurta II, Ashur-nasir-apli II, Shalmaneser III, and Sargon II — see W. von Soden, *Akkadisches Handwörterbuch* (Wiesbaden, 1959—), p. 726 for references. The same verb is of course used in the "itinerary" *ARI* 2, XCIX,6*. Cf. *ARI* 2, § 411 and n. 336. Further, see *BiOr* 33 (1976) 136.

¹²⁵ The use of the verb *namāšu* in both kinds of texts is not evidence of any substantive relationship. See n. 124.

¹²⁶ Such a fluctuation is attested in some of the oldest Assyrian royal inscriptions. Examples: *ARI* 1, XXXII,2; XXXIII,6,7,10. These texts begin in the third person but then shift to the first person. Cf. R. Borger, *EAK* 1, p. 8.

¹²⁷ Cf. H. Tadmor, *Iraq* 35 (1973) 142.

of Adad-nerari III the entire text is in first person except one verb which always occurs in third person (*imhur* "he received (tribute)"). The scribe was apparently using booty lists and incorporated the whole phrase each time without making the necessary grammatical change¹²⁸.

The reason for the fluctuation of person in other itinerary passages in royal inscriptions seems to be rather different. In the account of Shalmaneser III's campaigns on the Black Obelisk the narration is in first person until the thirty and thirty-first year¹²⁹. At this point an officer of the king, Dayan-Ashur, began to lead the army in the field and the narrative naturally shifts to third person. But almost immediately it shifts back to first person and then an incongruous fluctuation between third and first person continues through the remainder of the narrative. Now it seems obvious to me that the royal scribe, accustomed to writing such texts in the first person, had difficulty remembering that this passage was in third person since the subject was an officer of the king, not the king himself. Perhaps the same explanation lies behind the complete confusion of persons in the Annals of Tukulti-Ninurta II¹³⁰. In this text the person changes even within the account of one stage of the journey, a fact which surely excludes the possibility of careless conflation of sources¹³¹.

Yet another instance of fluctuation between first and third person, this time in an inscription of Adad-nerari II, is known¹³². The passage must come originally from an independent inscription commemorating work on a palace at Apqu. There are some grammatical curiosities in addition to the fluctuation of person. These curiosities may derive from the author's inexperience in abbreviating longer passages and it is possible he was also trying to conflate several sources¹³³. The same phenomenon is apparent in the Broken Obelisk¹³⁴. The author of this text has taken accounts from various sources with little or no effort to blend them together. The narration in columns i to iv is in third person but the building descriptions in column v are in first person. Moreover, it was noted above that column iii seems to contain abbreviated entries from a chronicle.

From this discussion of the incongruous fluctuation of person in certain passages in Assyrian royal inscriptions it has become apparent that it would be an over-simplification to think of the peculiarity as arising in each case

¹²⁸ The same kind of error appears in the Synchronistic History (*ABC Chron.* 21) iv 12 where the scribe has copied *amhur* "I received" from a royal inscription of Shamshi-Adad V without changing the form to third person to suit his chronicle style.

¹²⁹ E. Michel, *HO* 2 (1954-59) 226-233.

¹³⁰ *ARI* 2, C.1. Cf. K. H. Deller, *Or* n.s. 26 (1957) 269, n. 1 and H. Tadmor, *Iraq* 35 (1973) 142. Also note a similar fluctuation in an itinerary passage in *Assn.*, *ARI* 2, § 556.

¹³¹ It also rules out the possibility of a source in which daily entries were made by a scribe who was careless about grammatical sequence.

¹³² *ARI* 2, XCIX, 2 §§ 419-23.

¹³³ In lines 33 and 35 infinitives are used as finite forms (see J. Aro, *StOr* 26 [1961] p. 73) and possibly *šd-ak-ni* in line 28 is also an infinitive (error for *šakāni* — see *ABC* Appendix B sub Adad-nerari II). The main verb seems to have been omitted in line 35. The shift to third person in line 30 and then, in line 32, back to first person, is awkward — cf. Seidmann, *MAOG* 9/3 (1935), p. 44 and W. von Soden, *Or* 19 (1950) 395, n. 2.

¹³⁴ *ARI* 2, LXXXIX, 2.

from the conflation of two sources, one in first person and one in third. There could be several sources of a variety of types behind a given royal inscription.

To return to our original question, whether or not there were "diaries" of campaigns, the answer must be ambiguous. It is possible that such texts were written but to date none has been found and there is no clear evidence pointing to their existence.

In seeking possible sources for the royal inscriptions the Letters to the God must be considered. The text type is poorly attested but two documents, at least, were certainly reports to the god of individual campaigns. These are the letters of Sargon and Esarhaddon which were composed for oral presentation in a state ceremony. Now the rhetorical features of these texts, which were designed to please and impress a live audience, exclude them as probable sources for royal inscriptions¹³⁵. Rather it seems to me the scribes would use the same sources for the Letters to the God as for other royal inscriptions and arrange and edit the source material to suit the style of the particular composition¹³⁶. But a good deal more material on the Letters to the God must be available before definitive statements can be made.

It is manifest that some royal inscriptions were compiled from earlier texts of the same king. The later annalistic texts of Sennacherib, for example, contain abbreviated versions of the earlier campaigns. Sometimes scribes would use inscriptions of preceding monarchs as models. This was particularly the case when a foundation inscription of an earlier king had been discovered during renovation¹³⁷.

An interesting phenomenon occurs in the use of earlier royal inscriptions as a source for later compositions in the same reign. Time and again it can be shown that the figures for such items as booty, conquered cities, and troops were increased in subsequent recensions of the same narrative during the reign¹³⁸. Another interesting phenomenon, recently noted by

¹³⁵ E. A. Speiser, *Idea of History*, pp. 65f. thought there was a direct link between annalistic accounts and the Letters to the God.

¹³⁶ A. L. Oppenheim, *JNES* 19 (1960) 135 has questioned whether the narrative of Sargon's expedition in the Letter to the God is strictly arranged according to chronological and geographical sequence.

¹³⁷ For example, when Shalmaneser I restored the Assyrian Ishtar temple at Ashur his scribes used the foundation inscriptions of Adad-nerari I as a model. Tukulti-Ninurta I found these and redeposited them. See *ARI* 1, § 444. For examples in the Chaldean period see Berger, *NBK* pp. 92-97.

¹³⁸ In Ashur-nasir-apli II's Kurkh Monolith (*ARI* 2, CI, 11, § 639) "40 cities" and "40 soldiers" change in a later text (CI, 1, § 572) to "50 cities" and "50 soldiers". In Shalmaneser III's Kurkh Monolith (*ARAB* 1, § 611) "14,000" is the number given for the warriors slain at the Battle of Qarqar; in a later text (*ARAB* 1, § 647) this becomes "25,000". In Sargon's Letter to the God (*ARAB* 2, § 172) the booty from Musasir includes "1,235" sheep but in a later text (*ARAB* 2, § 22) this increases to "100,225". For further comment see

Levine, is that the use of royal inscriptions as a source for later royal texts of the same reign need not be a simple case of borrowing or condensation of one earlier source at a time¹³⁰. The process might involve conflation of two or more texts and could be as complex as that already suggested for the composition of original royal inscriptions.

Turning to the mechanics of composition, a few facts can be established but there are still large lacunae in our knowledge. Text prototypes were prepared, presumably by a master scribe, with the description of building activities omitted. These were to be used by the corps of scribes in preparing texts for specific structures¹⁴⁰. It is also possible that some of the known texts on clay tablets which include descriptions of building activities are actually prototypes for multiple production. Although it cannot be proven, it seems to me unlikely that a scribe read aloud from a master copy while others reproduced it. Given the difficulties of the cuneiform script this seems implausible¹⁴¹. Drafts of texts to be inscribed on dedicated objects, such as furniture and weapons, were prepared on clay tablets and some of these drafts have survived^{141a}. Similarly a group of captions intended for stone reliefs of Ashurbanipal has been preserved in draft form on clay^{141b}.

Olmstead, op. cit. (n. 4) *Historiography* pp. 71; *History of Assyria* (Chicago/London 1923) 136, 242, and 648; and H. Tadmor, *Iraq* 35 (1973) 144. There are also scribal errors involved with some changes of figures and certainly this is the case where numbers are actually reduced. Cf. Ashur-nasir-apli II's Kurkh Monolith (*ARI* 2, CI.11, § 641) where 200 talents of bronze and 1000 bronze casseroles later (CI.1, § 574) become 100 talents of bronze and 100 bronze casseroles. Scribal error may also be involved when numbers are completely omitted. Cf. the same king's Kurkh Monolith (CI.11, § 641) where "40 harnessed chariots" later (CI.1, § 574) becomes merely "harnessed chariots".
¹³⁰ L. D. Levine, *JNES* 32 (1973) 312-317.

¹⁴⁰ Such a prototype, on an alabaster tablet, is known for Adad-narari I — *ARI* 1, LXXVI.4. Two exemplars on clay tablets of a Tiglath-pileser I inscription — *ARI* 2, LXXXVII.4 and n. 110 — have no building section. It would be a rash generalization, however, to say that all commemorative inscriptions on clay and stone tablets which lack building descriptions were merely prototypes. A Sennacherib text on a clay tablet — *ARAB* 2, §§ 443-447 = OIP 2 (Chicago 1924) 139-42 and cf. H. Tadmor, *JCS* 12 (1958) 82 — was a prototype for an inscribed door. A curiosity is *ARI* 1, LXXV.1 which is an inscription on an alabaster tablet. There are six blank lines after a statement that the foundation was laid. See *ARI* 1, § 348.

¹⁴¹ An abundance of "Hörfehler" would disprove this. But I have not observed any. Berger, *NBK* p. 6 has noted one error in a Nabonidus text which he calls an "akustischer Fehler".

^{141a} M. Streck, VAB 7, p. LI; T. Bauer, *Das Inschriftenwerk Assurbanipals* (Leipzig 1933) pp. 38-55; S. Langdon, *Babylonian Penitential Psalms* (Oxford Editions of Cuneiform Texts 6; Paris 1927), pp. 70-72; C. H. W. Johns, *Assyrian Deeds and Documents* 1 (Cambridge 1924), No. 645.

^{141b} E. F. Weidner, *Afo* 8 (1932-33), pp. 175-203. Also note the sculptor's clay model for a stone relief published by R. D. Barnett, *Sculptures from the North Palace of Ashurbanipal* (London 1976) pl. 1 and p. 35, BM 93011.

Stone engraving presented peculiar problems and required specialized techniques. There is an ancient pictorial representation of a stele being sculptured and inscribed¹⁴² but little is known of the actual process. Tadmor has recently suggested that occasionally scribes working in stone used stock phrases as "space fillers"¹⁴³. For some reason there was a predilection for the use of Babylonian sign forms by Assyrian engravers¹⁴⁴. The biggest problem with stone was the correction of an error. Occasionally the scribe would chisel out the mistake but frequently he simply left it, hoping no doubt that no one would ever notice.

Two important questions that remain largely unanswered are who these scribes were and where they worked. Oppenheim has attempted to reconstruct a picture of the financial and social status of astrologers during Neo-Assyrian times and this picture may be approximately valid for an Assyrian or Babylonian royal scribe working on royal inscriptions¹⁴⁵. Such a scribe was provided by the king with a house, a field and the labourers required to work it. In addition he expected special favours from the king or, at least, felt compelled to request them. There is also some indication that scribes in at least one Assyrian city had feudal obligations. The scribe's place of work must have been somewhere in the palace of one of the major cities. Here the prototypes for provincial inscriptions were composed on clay tablets and sent to the relevant cities to be copied out on the actual objects to be placed in the buildings under construction. This was the most practical procedure since it eliminated the need to transport large amounts of texts, a particularly onerous task in the case of inscriptions on stone. Copies of the "exported" texts were kept in the central palace¹⁴⁶. That texts were copied at the actual location is not just surmise for in a letter of the Sargonid period the writer asks the king to have prepared and sent to Der a text which can be copied and deposited in the walls of the temple^{146a}. It is possible that on occasion, for special reasons, the normal procedure was reversed and final exemplars prepared in the central scribal quarters. Thus in a letter from the Chaldaean period the king instructs his official in Uruk to deposit the inscribed stelae he is sending in the temples^{146b}. No details are available with regard to the

¹⁴² L. W. King, *Bronze Reliefs from the Gates of Shalmaneser* (London 1915) I.X. Cf. J. Reade, *Iraq* 34 (1972) 96.

¹⁴³ *Iraq* 35 (1973) 144.

¹⁴⁴ See A. K. Grayson, *Afo* 20 (1963) 88f. and *Iranica Antiqua* 11 (1975) 32.

¹⁴⁵ A. L. Oppenheim, *Centaurus* 14 (1969) 115f.

¹⁴⁶ Example: *ARI* 1, LXXVI.4. This text, found at Ashur, was composed for inscriptions at the city Taidu.

^{146a} A. L. Oppenheim, *Letters From Mesopotamia* (Chicago/London, 1967) p. 159 = R. F. Harper, *Assyrian and Babylonian Letters* (London/Chicago, 1892-1914) No. 157.

^{146b} A. T. Clay, *YOS* 3, No. 4; cf. H. Tadmor, *Studies Landsberger*, pp. 361f.

training of an Assyrian scribe. The existence of later copies of royal inscriptions suggests they were used as models in scribal education¹⁴⁷.

Reliability of Royal Inscriptions

One matter that remains for consideration is the reliability of Assyrian and Babylonian royal inscriptions as source material for the modern historian. Babylonian royal inscriptions are primarily records of building activity and on the whole seem to be reliable. The extensive construction at Babylon claimed by Nebuchadnezzar II in his inscriptions is borne out, at least in general scope, by the number and size of structures from his period found by the German expedition to Babylon¹⁴⁸. On the few occasions when military enterprises are mentioned in Babylonian royal inscriptions the terms are usually so general as to be virtually useless to the modern historian. The Babylonian royal inscriptions provide an official view of the state religion but it is necessary to have a critical eye when using them as a source on this subject¹⁴⁹.

Assyrian royal inscriptions contain reasonably accurate records of building activities, a fact which is again supported by archaeological excavation. They are also a major source of information about official religious cults. The record of military achievements in the Assyrian texts require special comment since there are fundamental features of which any modern historian of Assyria must be aware before attempting to use them as a source. The difference between annalistic and display texts should be constantly observed for it is obviously essential that the modern scholar know whether the military narration in a given passage is arranged chronologically or not. The matter of recension is another vital question. In the later eras there are frequently several different recensions of the same campaign and Olmstead's rule that the earliest edition is to be considered the most accurate must be observed¹⁵⁰. This is not to say that the earliest account should be accepted at face value. Even the first recension is the result of editing, selecting, and conflating various sources.

C. J. Gadd, *Iraq* 15 (1953) 130, and 16 (1954) 198f., believed this was normal practice, basing his view mainly on a note at the end of an inscribed cylinder (recording the restoration of the temple at Uruk by Sargon II) which says: "Copy of an inscription, sent from the palace of Assyria. Copied and collated". (*gabari musari šubilti ekal māi Aššur ša'imma harī*). He interpreted this to mean the "copy" was sent but the passage is ambiguous and could mean either the copy (*gabari*) or the original (*musari*) was sent.

¹⁴⁷ See n. 116 above.

¹⁴⁸ Details of dimensions, location, and passage of years since the previous renovation may not be accurate. See P. R. Berger, *NBK* pp. 99 and 111f.

¹⁴⁹ Cf. P. R. Berger, *NBK* p. 99.

¹⁵⁰ A. T. E. Olmstead, *Historiography* (op. cit. n. 4) passim.

A careful critical approach to all military narrations in Assyrian royal inscriptions is *de rigueur*. One danger to watch for is omission. Sometimes the omission is merely the result of condensation. Thus in itinerary passages certain stages of an expedition may not be mentioned and the unwary modern reader, interested in historical geography, may be badly misled¹⁵¹. But condensation was not the only reason for omissions.

It is a well known fact that in Assyrian royal inscriptions a serious military set-back is never openly admitted. This cardinal principle was engrained in the Assyrian scribes' thought and prevailed in all his work. A simple method of dealing with a set-back was to omit it but, in so far as one can tell (and by its nature this is difficult to control), this method was not commonly used. Another method was to garble the narration in such a way as to confuse the reader and hide the ignominious truth. This device was used by scribes of Sargon II in their treatment of the Assyrian set-back at the hands of Merodachbaladan II in 720 B.C. In a collection of annalistic accounts this first humiliating encounter has been woven into an account of a later battle (710 B.C.) in which the Assyrians were successful¹⁵².

Yet another method was blatant falsehood and when the Assyrian scribes played this theme they pulled out all the stops. There is the famous case of the Battle of Halule (691 B.C.). The most reliable account is a brief statement in the Babylonian Chronicle that the Assyrians, under Sennacherib, suffered a defeat and withdrew. But in the account of this same encounter in the Annals of Sennacherib, the scribes admit no such thing. On the contrary, they describe Sennacherib's victory and bloodthirsty vengeance on the defeated troops in the longest battle description preserved in Assyrian records!¹⁵³

These, then, are the basic considerations one must bear in mind when using royal inscriptions as an historical source.

Chronographic Texts

The Chronographic Texts have been discussed in detail in my book on Assyrian and Babylonian Chronicles and the following is essentially a condensed version of that study¹⁵⁴. The term "chronographic" covers texts that have traditionally been called "king lists" or "chronicles". In

¹⁵¹ See E. Gordon, *JCS* 21 (1967) 86.

¹⁵² See A. K. Grayson, *Studies Landsberger*, pp. 341f.

¹⁵³ *Ibid.* p. 342.

¹⁵⁴ *ABC* Part I and Appendix A. For the king lists see Edzard and Grayson, "Königslisten" in *RLA* 5 (in press). Inevitably the passage of time since completion of the manuscript of *ABC* (1967) has allowed further development of my ideas; this is reflected in the present paper.

ancient Mesopotamian studies it is essential to have one term for both since it is not always possible to categorize a given text as one or the other. This is the case, for example, with the document usually called the Assyrian King List. The beginning of this composition merely lists one ruler after another and could be called a king list; but later on there are some narrative sections which are really short chronicles. There are some chronographic texts, on the other hand, which have the characteristics of only a "king list" or a "chronicle". These terms require definition: a "king list" is a list of royal names with the possible addition of regnal years and filiation; a "chronicle" is a prose narration, normally in the third person, of events arranged in chronological order.

Ancient Mesopotamian chronographic texts fall naturally into four main categories. These categories are distinguished by certain literary patterns or formulae and, in addition, it can be shown in most instances that the texts in any given category have other tangible connections with one another.

Category A

Two formulae are characteristic of Category A: "The year when..." and "N (were/are) the years of the king". A large number of chronographic texts have one or both of these formulae and within this group many texts are associated with one another for other reasons. The earliest texts are the date lists and these require a word of explanation. In ancient Mesopotamia documents were dated according to year names; each year was given a name which commemorated an important event. From time to time it was necessary to compile a chronological list of these names in order to keep their order straight. With these lists of year names, which are called date lists, there evolved a basic typology. Each entry in the list began "Year when..." and at the end of each reign there was a summary, "N (were/are) the years of the king".

King Lists of Category A

At an early period extracts were made from the summary formulae of the date lists and thus evolved king lists. A transitional stage is represented by some date lists in which all the summaries of reigns appear together in a list at the end of the text; these are the first king lists of Category A¹⁵⁵. The earliest independent king lists of category A are the Larsa King

¹⁵⁵ A list appears in a date list of the first dynasty of Babylon known from two duplicates: L. W. King, *The Letters and Inscriptions of Hammurabi*, 3 vols. (London 1898-1900), No. 102 and L. W. King, *Chronicles Concerning Early Babylonian Kings* 2 (London 1907), pp. 97-109, 181-191. Another list appears in a date list of the Larsa Dynasty published by F. Thureau-Dangin, *RA* 15 (1918) 1-57. See ABC Appendix A and nn. 9 and 10.

List and the Ur-Isin King List¹⁵⁶. The largest text is Babylonian King List A¹⁵⁷. The preserved portion of this badly broken text covers the period from the first dynasty of Babylon down to the late seventh century B.C. Another list, Babylonian King List C, is a short document which lists only the first seven kings of the second dynasty of Isin (c. 1157-1069 B.C.)¹⁵⁸. The Uruk King List, in its preserved portion, covers the period from the late seventh century B.C. down through the third century B.C.¹⁵⁹.

The king lists of category A are so succinct and generally so badly preserved that it is difficult to find any answers to historiographical questions. The text type has its origins in date lists and like them the king lists had practical value for chronological reckoning. It would appear, although it cannot be proven, that the king lists eventually became running lists, a new entry being made at the end of each reign. This would not be true of the early portions of Babylonian King List A, however, where the dynasty of the Sealand is listed after the first dynasty of Babylon although it is known that the two were partly contemporary.

As to the reliability of the king lists, there seem to be no errors in the sequence of names but the numbers given, at least in the early portion of Babylonian King List A, should be regarded with some scepticism. Considering the number of times some of these texts must have been copied it is not surprising that the figures are not always accurate.

The Babylonian Chronicle Series

The Babylonian Chronicle Series also belongs in category A and probably has its origin in date lists. Texts in this series have the two basic formulae in common with date lists and the two kinds of texts are really not dissimilar. Indeed, one would assume that the date lists were chronicles if one did not know better¹⁶⁰.

¹⁵⁶ The major publication of each is YOS 1, No. 32 and JCS 8 (1954) 135f. respectively. Further see King Lists 1 and 2 sub "Königslisten" in *RLA* 5 (in press).

¹⁵⁷ C. J. Gadd, CT 36, 24f. See now King List 3 sub "Königslisten" in *RLA* 5 (in press).

¹⁵⁸ A. Poebel, AS 15 (1955) and see King List 4 sub "Königslisten" in *RLA* 5 (in press).

¹⁵⁹ J. J. A. van Dijk, *UVB* 18, pp. 53-60 and pl. 28a. See now King List 5 sub "Königslisten" in *RLA* 5 (in press).

¹⁶⁰ The main problem with assuming a connection is the long chronological gap between the end of the period in which year formulae and date lists were regularly used (c. 1595 B.C.) and the beginning of the Babylonian Chronicle Series (747 B.C.). In the interval there are texts, nevertheless, of a similar type such as the Religious Chronicle and the latter portion of the Chronicle of Market Prices (further see ABC Appendix A and n. 16). Of special interest is the text usually called "Date List A" (CT 6, 9f., etc. — see Ungnad, *RLA* 2, pp. 165-168) which is a compilation of the year names from the first year of Sumu-abum to the last year of Samsu-iluna. The extant copy is dated in the beginning

The Babylonian Chronicle Series, when complete, began in 747 B.C.¹⁶¹ and continued down at least as far as the third century B.C. It was inscribed on a series of tablets of which only fourteen and one fragment have been preserved¹⁶². The series may be subdivided into the Neo-Babylonian Chronicle Series and the Late Babylonian Chronicle Series. The dividing point is the Persian capture of Babylon in 539 B.C. After this time there are some stylistic changes in the series which make the later portion distinctive.

Each text consists of one or more entries, each entry covering one regnal year. The events recorded revolve around the Babylonian king and are almost exclusively of a military or political nature. Religious phenomena are rarely mentioned. In terms of content, then, these are the Babylonian equivalent of the Assyrian annals.

The source of information seems to have been a detailed running account of Babylonian history contained within astronomical diaries. An astronomical diary records the events of half a specified year and is divided into sections, each section covering events of one month. Most of the phenomena noted are of an astronomical or meteorological nature but at the end of each monthly section there are statements about market prices, the height of the river, and political and military matters. These entries are obviously based on regular day-by-day observation and recording. There are a number of factors — phraseology, typology, content, and chronology — which indicate that the Babylonian Chronicle Series is a collection of extracts from the relevant portions of the astronomical diaries¹⁶³.

There are now some questions. Who compiled the astronomical diaries and why did they do so? Who extracted information from them to compose the Babylonian Chronicle Series and why did they do this? The question of who these scribes were and what their social and financial position was is difficult to answer for the very good reason that there is little information in our source material. As noted earlier, Oppenheim has recently attempted to reconstruct from the meagre evidence a picture of astrologers during Neo-Assyrian times and this picture may be generally valid for the

of the reign of Anni-saduqa, sixty-five years after the last entry. Surely there was no practical purpose for a list of years, the latest of which was sixty-five years earlier. Rather than a date list, is this text not a history of the rise of the first dynasty of Babylon?

¹⁶¹ This is the beginning of the reign of Nabu-nasir (747-734 B.C.). There is evidence outside of these chronicles that detailed chronological records began to be kept in Babylonia in his reign. On this so-called "Nabu-nasir Era" see *ABC* pp. 13f.

¹⁶² *ABC* Chronicles 1-13b.

¹⁶³ See *ABC* pp. 13f.

authors of both the astronomical diaries and the Babylonian Chronicle Series¹⁶⁴. Such a scholar was provided by the king with a house, a field and the labourers necessary to work it. In addition he would request special favours from the king from time to time. These scribes lived in various cities in the empire although the vast majority of texts in the Babylonian Chronicle Series which have been preserved come from Babylon¹⁶⁵. Their place of work — palace, temple or "university" — is unknown.

The purpose of the astronomical diaries was, of course, to provide accurate observation both for calendrical use and for prediction of the future by astrology. Just how the last section in these texts on market prices, river height, political and military affairs, fits in with these reasons is not entirely clear. There is no evidence that details from these sections were actually used as apoduses of omens. But it is possible that at least originally the motive behind their inclusion was eventually to use them for prognostic material.

The extraction of material to form the Babylonian Chronicle Series must have had different motivation¹⁶⁶, although this motivation is difficult to define. There is no clear propagandistic flavour to the chronicles. Unlike the Assyrian scribes the Babylonians neither fail to mention Babylonian defeats nor do they attempt to change them into victories. The chronicles contain a reasonably reliable and representative record of important events in the period with which they are concerned¹⁶⁷. Can we then conclude that these documents are the product of a sincere desire to keep a brief and accurate record of Babylonian history for its own sake? It is at least possible¹⁶⁸.

Other Chronicles of Category A

Apart from the fourteen texts of the Babylonian Chronicle Series there are four chronicles remaining in category A, the Esarhaddon, Shamash-shuma-ukin, Akitu, and Religious Chronicles¹⁶⁹. Of these, the Esarhaddon

¹⁶⁴ See A. L. Oppenheim, *Centaurus* 14 (1969) 115f.

¹⁶⁵ See A. K. Grayson, *Actes de la XVII^e Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale* (Bruxelles 1969) pp. 163f.

¹⁶⁶ It is important to recognize this distinction. If the motive behind each was the same — cf. W. G. Lambert, *OTS* 17 (1972) 71 — then there was no need to extract the material to form the Babylonian Chronicle Series.

¹⁶⁷ In cases where other sources have a different version of events the account in the Babylonian Chronicle Series should be regarded as closest to the truth. This is particularly the case when the conflicting testimony is found in Assyrian records. See A. K. Grayson in *Studies Landsberger*, pp. 340-342.

¹⁶⁸ If a direct line with date lists could be established (see n. 160 above) it would shed an interesting light on this problem. It would mean the scribes had come to recognize that the date lists had value other than as chronological reference works.

¹⁶⁹ *ABC* Chronicles 14-17 respectively.

and Akitu Chronicles have derived their information entirely from the running account of Babylonian history contained in the astronomical diaries. The author of each had a specific purpose. The Esarhaddon Chronicle is a rewriting of Babylonian history intended to show Esarhaddon, an Assyrian king who occupied the Babylonian throne simultaneously, and Babylonia in a better light by omitting or altering disgraceful facts. The author of the Akitu Chronicle was interested in only one thing, occasions when there was an interruption of the chief festival of the Babylonian year, the Akitu, and the background to these interruptions.

The Shamash-shuma-ukin Chronicle contains a collection of extracts from various reigns. Most concern the king after which the text has been named and these entries were taken from the running account of Babylonian history. But other entries come from an entirely different and unknown source. The eclectic nature of the contents and the small size of the tablet indicate it was intended for private use but I have been unable to determine what that use was.

The Religious Chronicle typologically belongs to category A but the date of its content (eleventh and tenth centuries B.C.) is much earlier than that of the Babylonian Chronicle Series. The events noted in this text are of a rather curious nature. They include the appearance of wild animals in the city, the reported movement of statues, and interruptions of the Akitu. Although at first glance these phenomena may appear to be significant for prognostication, there is no evidence that omen apodoses were ever compiled from these records. This text may be simply a record of events that seemed important to the author and the fact that the events do not strike us as momentous as those recorded in the Babylonian Chronicle Series is a subjective and modern view.

Eponym Lists

While the early Mesopotamians named their years after important events, the Assyrians named each of theirs after an eponym or *limu*. The *limu* was a title assumed by a different high official each year, the officials following one another according to a definite order. The Assyrians composed lists of these eponyms in chronological order for the purpose of dating¹⁷⁰. In some of these lists a cursory note on a military event — e.g. "(campaign) against Damascus" — would be added. The source of these notes and their rationale are unknown. There is no evidence of whether the idea of using eponyms for dating is indigenous to the Assyrians or whether it was inspired by the early Mesopotamian year names. The eponym lists have formulae

¹⁷⁰ For a more detailed discussion of the eponym lists see ABC Appendix A.

similar to that typical of category A but this could be pure coincidence and there is no evidence to associate them with other texts in category A.

Category B

The formula typical of texts in category B is an obvious one — "The king ruled for N years". Most of the texts which share this phraseology exhibit other connections with one another.

Sumerian King List

The Sumerian King List must be included in our discussion not only because the latter portion of the text touches on the early second millennium but also because it is the prototype of other documents in category B¹⁷¹. The text is a list of rulers with the number of years they reigned and other bits of information about them. The kings are arranged according to dynasties¹⁷². The source material used by the author varied but included year formulae and literary texts. The kings and dynasties are arranged sequentially and no indication is given of any synchronisms although it is known from other sources that many kings and dynasties were contemporaneous. The author of the text was working on the principle that kingship descended in one line and could only reside in one city-state at one time. This view seems to be attested in other sources from the early Old Babylonian period¹⁷³.

Dynastic Chronicle

Two texts which are closely related to the Sumerian King List are the Dynastic Chronicle and the King List of the Hellenistic Period. The Dynastic Chronicle¹⁷⁴ is really a late version of the Sumerian King List for it has exactly the same form and style including whole sentences in Sumerian. The content of the text is curious for, in addition to the usual list of rulers and regnal years, it includes a description of the flood (it was merely noted in the Sumerian King List) and, in a much later portion,

¹⁷¹ The *editio princeps* of the Sumerian King List is by T. Jacobsen, AS 11 (1939). For further bibliography see n. 30 above and ABC Appendix D.

¹⁷² The word "dynasty" is not used in Assyriology in its usual sense of "ruling family" but to translate Sumerian *bala* and Akkadian *palû*. This is a term for the total number (even if only one) of kings, regardless of descent, of one area at one given period of time. See F. R. Kraus, ZA 50 (1952) 30, n. 2. For a discussion of *bala* see W. W. Hallo, JCS 14 (1960) 89-96 and J. J. Finkelstein, JCS 20 (1966) 103-106. For *palû* see H. Tadmor, JCS 12 (1958) 26-33.

¹⁷³ See W. W. Hallo, JCS 14 (1960) 88-114 and JCS 17 (1963) 112-118.

¹⁷⁴ ABC Chronicle 18. A new piece of this chronicle has been published by W. G. Lambert in *Symbolae Biblicae et Mesopotamicae*, F. M. Th. de L. Böhle Dedicatae, ed. M. A. Beek, et al. (Leiden 1973) 271-275.

records the burial place of several kings. These features may provide clues to the author's purpose and the *Sitz im Leben* of the document but I have been unable to determine what these might be.

King List of the Hellenistic Period

The King List of the Hellenistic Period is a list of kings of Babylonia from the time of Alexander the Great to the Arsacid period (second century B.C.)¹⁷⁵. In it is recorded the name of each king, the number of years he ruled, and the date of his death. The author of the document used the same basic formula characteristic of the Sumerian King List and, in fact, consciously modelled his text after that early document¹⁷⁶. Thus this text appears to be more than merely a chronological aid; it seems to represent an attempt to incorporate these foreign rulers into the native idea of a linear descent of kingship.

Babylonian King List B

Little can be said about this list of the kings of the first dynasty of Babylon and the dynasty of the Sealand¹⁷⁷. It has a literary pattern similar to that characteristic of documents in category B but otherwise there is no reason to associate it with these texts.

Ptolemaic Canon

The list of ancient Mesopotamian kings compiled in Greek by Ptolemy in the second century A.D. no doubt goes back to a Babylonian source¹⁷⁸. This assertion cannot be proven but is at least supported by the fact that Ptolemy's list begins with Nabu-nasir (747-734 B.C.) for it is known that a major development in chronological recording took place in that reign¹⁷⁹. The fact that the canon has a literary pattern similar to that of texts in category B could be pure coincidence, particularly since entirely different languages are involved.

¹⁷⁵ A. J. Sachs and D. J. Wiseman, *Iraq* 16 (1954) 202-212. See King List 6 sub "Königslisten" in *RLA* 5 (in press).

¹⁷⁶ This is revealed, as Sachs and Wiseman observed, by the use of the Sumerian phrase *mu N in.ag* "he exercised (sovereignty) for N years", the phrase regularly used in the Sumerian King List, rather than the Akkadian equivalent. Moreover, even the form of the sign AG is archaic; it is not the form found in late Babylonian documents.

¹⁷⁷ Principal publication: P. Rost *MVAG* 2 (1897) 240. See King List 7 sub "Königslisten" in *RLA* 5 (in press).

¹⁷⁸ See King List 8 sub "Königslisten" in *RLA* 5 (in press).

¹⁷⁹ On the "Nabu-nasir Era" see above n. 161.

Assyrian King List

The Assyrian King List is a list of kings of Assyria beginning in earliest times and coming down as far as the reign of Shalmaneser V (726-722 B.C.)¹⁸⁰. The list is divided into sections. In each of the early sections are listed the names of several kings but thereafter each section includes only one king, his filiation and length of reign. In a few cases a short chronicle notice appears and each of these concerns a violent seizure of the throne.

The question of source material for the early portions of the list is complex. Relevant is a text published by Finkelstein which contains a genealogical list for the first dynasty of Babylon¹⁸¹. Several names in the earliest portion are identical with or similar to names in the earliest section of the Assyrian King List. On the other hand names that appear later on in the early portion of the Assyrian King List can be identified from contemporary inscriptions found at Ashur as ancient rulers of that city-state. It seems reasonably clear now, as Landsberger suggested before publication of the Babylonian genealogical list¹⁸², that the earliest portions of the Assyrian King List represent a conflation of two main sources, a list of ancient indigenous rulers of Ashur and an Amorite genealogical list. The period when this conflation took place would be the time of Shamshi-Adad I. Later the scribes began to make regular entries in the list at the death of each king¹⁸³. Thus it appears that originally the document was intended to justify Shamshi-Adad's claim to the throne. The impetus to compile the list in later periods could have at least two causes: the document was a useful chronological aid and it supported the belief that kingship in Assyria descended in a continuous line with virtually no disruptions¹⁸⁴.

Category C

The formula of the texts in Category C (royal name followed by narrative) is an even more obvious one than that of category B and if it were

¹⁸⁰ King List 9 sub "Königslisten" in *RLA* 5 (in press). The longest of the five versions comes down this far. The others stop earlier and, therefore, have an earlier date. There are also fragments of other types of king lists. See King Lists 11 and 12 sub "Königslisten" in *RLA* 5.

¹⁸¹ *JCS* 20 (1966) 95-118. Cf. W. G. Lambert, *JCS* 22 (1968) 11.

¹⁸² *JCS* 8 (1954) 35-37.

¹⁸³ Recently J. A. Brinkman, *Or* 42 (1973) 315f. has suggested that the last significant recension took place in Middle Assyrian times or very early Neo-Assyrian times.

¹⁸⁴ Thus as late as the seventh century B.C. Esarhaddon speaks of himself as "offspring of Bel-bani, son of Adasi" (*Eorger, Asarh.* § 23:5 etc.), two rulers who lived sometime early in the second millennium. The list is a useful chronological aid for the modern historian who must, however, be aware that there are a number of errors and omissions — see B. Landsberger, *JCS* 8 (1954) 31-45 and J. A. Brinkman, *Or* 42 (1973) 306-319.

not for the fact that the three texts in the group all come from the early period and two of them have passages in common, this would be no reason to associate them. One of the three texts, the Tummal Chronicle, is a chronological record of kings who restored the Tummal shrine at Nippur. It is exclusively Sumerian and need not concern us further¹⁸⁵.

Weidner Chronicle

The Weidner Chronicle is a narration of events beginning at least as early as the Early Dynastic Period (first half of the third millennium B.C.) and coming down at least as far as the reign of Shulgi (2094-2047 B.C.)¹⁸⁶. It is unique among chronicles written in Akkadian both because of the early date of its content and because of the mythological introduction which is fragmentarily preserved. The text is exclusively concerned with the importance of the city Babylon and its patron deity, Marduk. In particular it is concerned with the provision of fish for Marduk's temple. The whole point of the narrative is to illustrate that those rulers who neglected or insulted Babylon, Marduk, and the fish cult had an unhappy end, while those who cared for these fared well. The text, then, is a blatant piece of propaganda written as an admonition to contemporary and future monarchs to pay heed to Babylon and its patron deity. The most likely date of composition seems to me to be early in the period of the second dynasty of Isin, a time when Babylon was once again the capital and Marduk was for the first time being officially recognized as chief of the pantheon. It is unknown what source material was generally used by the author although in one or two cases he may have used omens or omen collections¹⁸⁷. On the other hand, the Weidner Chronicle was a source used by the compiler of the Chronicle of Early Kings.

Chronicle of Early Kings

The Chronicle of Early Kings is a narration of events which occurred in Mesopotamia from the reign of Sargon of Akkad (c. 2334-2279 B.C.) to the reign of Agum III (c. 1450 B.C.)¹⁸⁸. Source material for the early part of this chronicle, which is about Sargon and Naram-Sin, was provided by omens¹⁸⁹ and the Weidner Chronicle. The majority of the omens used are found in an omen collection and the relevant portion of the chronicle

¹⁸⁵ Principal publication: Sollberger, *JCS* 16 (1962) 40-47.

¹⁸⁶ *ABC* Chronicle 19.

¹⁸⁷ For new omen material see E. Reiner, *Anatolian Studies Presented to H. G. Güterbock*, ed. K. Bittel et al. (Istanbul 1974) pp. 257-261.

¹⁸⁸ *ABC* Chronicle 20.

¹⁸⁹ For new omen material see Reiner, *op. cit.* (n 187).

is really a selected and edited version of these omen apodosises with the addition of some information from the Weidner Chronicle. Source material for the later portion of the chronicle is not so obvious but in at least one instance it may have been a year date.

The purpose of the Chronicle of Early Kings is not apparent. The early sections on Sargon and Naram-Sin are, presumably, the product of a scribe's interest in putting together omen apodosises in chronicle form. But why he should have done this and why he should have added the later reigns is not known.

Category D

Texts in category D are synchronistic texts from Assyria. In these documents the names of contemporary rulers of Assyria and Babylonia are juxtaposed.

Synchronistic History

The Synchronistic History is a concise narration of Assyro-Babylonian relations from the first half of the fifteenth century B.C. to the reign of Adad-nerari III (810-783 B.C.)¹⁹⁰. It is divided into a number of paragraphs, each paragraph covering the relations of one Assyrian king with his Babylonian contemporary or contemporaries. The document was composed toward the end of the reign of Adad-nerari III or shortly thereafter. It was a time when Assyria's power was in eclipse and Urartu's in the ascendant. Babylonia obviously took advantage of the situation and encroached upon Assyrian territory. The author wrote his document to castigate the Babylonians for their actions and he chose to do so by means of a legal fabrication. He claimed there was an ancient boundary between the two nations, to which they both had agreed, and described the history of alleged violations of that boundary by Babylonia. Each act of aggression resulted in defeat at the hands of the Assyrians. The obvious conclusion is that the Babylonians should desist from their current encroachments for they will assuredly be defeated once again¹⁹¹.

The author drew extensively upon Assyrian royal inscriptions for his source material and his bias and his propagandistic motivation led him to omit or distort important facts — all Assyrian humiliations^{191a}. In addition

¹⁹⁰ *ABC* Chronicle 21.

¹⁹¹ A Sumerian text, the famous Entemena cylinder, has a similar form and theme. See *ABC* pp. 53f.

^{191a} In *ABC* p. 54 I stated that the author of the Synchronistic History used royal inscriptions as a source but H. Tadmor, *Essays Finkelstein*, p. 211 and n. 28, believes that the Assyrian chronicles were a source used in common for both the Synchronistic History and royal inscriptions. This proposal has much to be said for it although a firm conclusion must await discovery of more extensive Assyrian chronicle material, a fact which I stressed in *ABC*.

tion, there are a number of errors in personal names in the text. On the whole, therefore, it is a very unreliable source for a modern historian.

Synchronistic King List

The Synchronistic King List is a list of Assyrian kings with the names of their Babylonian contemporaries juxtaposed¹⁹². In addition, the name of the Assyrian *ummānu* "vice chancellor" is frequently included. The list of rulers begins early in the second millennium and comes down to Ashurbanipal (668-627 B.C.). The origin and purpose of the list are unknown.

Miscellaneous Chronographic Texts

Chronicle P is a fragment of a Babylonian document which narrated events during the Kassite period¹⁹³. It is a curious text in that it includes a lengthy extract from a Babylonian historical epic. Not enough of the chronicle is preserved to determine its origin or intent.

The Chronicle of Market Prices contains entries of prices for certain goods during a few reigns scattered over a long period of time¹⁹⁴. There seems to be no relationship between the prices noted and actual prices attested in contemporary documents or idealized prices immortalized in contemporary royal inscriptions. The text is similar in style to relevant entries in astronomical diaries and may be closely related to those texts. But nothing definite is known of its origin or purpose.

The Eclectic Chronicle contains brief entries on a variety of subjects over a long period of time but there is no clear evidence of the rationale behind it¹⁹⁵.

Finally, the existence of Assyrian Chronicles must be acknowledged although little is known about them. Small fragments of five different chronicles from the Middle Assyrian period are preserved¹⁹⁶. There is evidence that Assyrian Chronicles were used as source material for royal inscriptions^{196a}.

Historical-Literary Texts

The term "Historical-Literary" covers a general group of texts which are literary in the narrow sense of that word and which are concerned

¹⁹² King List 12 sub "Königslisten" in *RLA* 5 (in press). More than one type of Synchronistic King List is known but types other than the one under discussion are very fragmentarily attested — see King Lists 13-17 sub "Königslisten" in *RLA* 5.

¹⁹³ *ABC* Chronicle 22.

¹⁹⁴ *ABC* Chronicle 23.

¹⁹⁵ *ABC* Chronicle 24.

¹⁹⁶ See the relevant portions of *ABC* and the Addenda.

^{196a} See now, H. Tadmor, *Essays Finkelstein*, pp. 209-213.

mainly with historical or natural events rather than with mythological or supernatural occurrences¹⁹⁷. Within this general category three basic genres can be discerned: Prophecy, Historical Epic, and Pseudo-Autobiography¹⁹⁸.

Prophecies

An Akkadian Prophecy is a prose composition consisting of a number of "predictions" of past events. It concludes with either a "prediction" of phenomena in the writer's day or with a genuine attempt to forecast future events. The author, in other words, uses *valicinia ex eventu* to establish his credibility and then proceeds to his real purpose which might be to justify a current idea or institution or to forecast future doom for a hated enemy. The predictions are divided according to reigns and often begin with some such phrase as "a prince will arise". Although the kings are never named it is sometimes possible to identify them on the basis of details provided in the "prophetic" description. The reigns are characterized as "good" or "bad" and the phraseology is borrowed from omen literature. There is some evidence that the genre has its roots in Sumerian literature. Comparative material is also known from Egypt in the form of the Admonitions of Ipu-Wer and the Prophecy of Neferti.

Five Akkadian prophecies are known: the Dynastic Prophecy¹⁹⁹, Text A²⁰⁰, the Uruk Prophecy²⁰¹, the Marduk Prophetic Speech, and the Shulgi Prophetic Speech²⁰². All of these works exhibit the basic characteristics already described. In addition, the documents may be subdivided with the Dynastic Prophecy, Text A, and the Uruk Prophecy in one group and the Marduk and Shulgi Prophetic Speeches in another, for the latter are in the form of an address in the first person while the former are in the third person.

The Marduk Prophetic Speech was written during the reign of Nebuchadnezzar I (c. 1125-1104 B.C.) and was part of the momentous religious

¹⁹⁷ This entire section is based on *BHLT*. The reader is referred to relevant portions of my book for fuller discussion and documentation.

¹⁹⁸ These classifications are modern terms. Ancient Mesopotamian authors produced compositions exhibiting distinctive features of one or another genre but, so far as one can tell, they did not explicitly recognize the distinctions and give names to each group. They did classify literary and scientific works according to series; this was essentially a practical device necessary for ease of reference and storage. Nevertheless, the kinds of texts grouped in a given series can shed light on the outlook of the ancient cataloguer. Among the Historical-Literary Texts one series, consisting of the Marduk and Shulgi Prophetic Speeches, is attested and it is possible that some of the Babylonian Historical Epics belonged to a series.

¹⁹⁹ *BHLT* Chapter 3.

²⁰⁰ See A. K. Grayson and W. G. Lambert, *JCS* 18 (1964) 12-16 for an edition and note the translation by R. D. Biggs, *ANET*³ pp. 606f.

²⁰¹ *UVE* 26/27, p. 87 and Tafel 25.

²⁰² R. Borger, *BiOr* 28 (1971) 3-24.

movement of the time, the elevation of the god Marduk to kingship over the gods. The author "predicts" the three occasions in the past when Marduk's statue had been carried off by a foreign invader. Then he "predicts" the return of the statue in his own time and the peace and prosperity in the land which ensued.

The purpose of the Shulgi Prophetic Speech is not so apparent since the text is badly broken, particularly towards the end. The Speech concludes about the time of the fall of the Kassite dynasty or possibly as late as Nebuchadnezzar I. The cities Nippur and Babylon with their inhabitants have a prominent role and one wonders if the text was intended to lend prophetic support to claims of these cities to privileged status in a period when these privileges were being challenged.

The Uruk Prophecy is concerned solely with the city Uruk and its welfare. It concludes with a prediction that the kings of Uruk will rule the world in a period of plenty. There is no clue to the date of this chauvinistic composition.

The Dynastic Prophecy contains a "prediction" of the Fall of Assyria and Rise of Babylonia, the Fall of Babylonia and Rise of Persia, and the Fall of Persia and Rise of Macedonia. The concluding portion of the document is poorly preserved but may have contained a prophecy of the Fall of Macedonia. If so, this real attempt at prediction could be an expression of anti-Seleucid sentiment in Babylonia. Of great assistance in identifying specific reigns in the Dynastic Prophecy is the inclusion of numbers of years the unnamed monarchs ruled.

Although the fifth Akkadian prophecy, Text A, also includes precise figures for length of reign, the tablet is poorly preserved and there is no certainty when to date the content nor what the purpose of the composition was.

Akkadian Prophecies are not similar to biblical prophecy but they are similar to a certain kind of Jewish Apocalyptic. In style, form, and rationale there is a striking resemblance to sections of the Book of Daniel (8:23-25 and 11:3-45). The anonymity of the rulers, the phrase "a prince will arise", and the use of *vaticinia ex eventu* are all features they have in common. Moreover, the concept of the Rise and Fall of Empires in the Dynastic Prophecy, an idea with its roots in the dynastic tradition of Mesopotamian chronography, is also found in the Book of Daniel. Thus there is a very close relationship and the Akkadian Prophecies seem to represent an early stage in the development of ancient Near Eastern Apocalyptic.

Historical Epics

Akkadian Historical Epics are lengthy poetic narratives about the activities of kings. In contrast to other Akkadian epics the events described

are essentially concerned with human rather than mythological figures. While the epic form is Sumerian in origin, the historical epic seems to have been an Akkadian phenomenon. In fact the genre is apparently not known in Hebrew, Egyptian, or Hittite. There are three main groups of historical epics: Early Historical Epics, Assyrian Historical Epics, and Babylonian Historical Epics.

Early Historical Epics

The best preserved text is the King of Battle Epic, a composition about Sargon of Akkad's alleged expedition to Anatolia²⁰³. Sargon is the hero of the tale and is portrayed as having conducted a most arduous and successful campaign. The existence of a merchant colony in Anatolia, which is assumed in the narrative, would appear to be anachronistic since there is no clear evidence that such a merchant colony existed before c. 2000 B.C. and this provides a tentative *terminus ab quo* for the recension of the tale. A *terminus ante quem* may be provided by the early Old Babylonian date of a similar story, which may be another version of this epic, from Tell Harmal²⁰⁴. The composition could be based on legendary material passed down from Sargon's time and could incorporate legendary material about other heroes. Copies of the epic or closely related compositions are known from Old Babylonian to Neo-Assyrian times and from sites both within and without Mesopotamia (Amarna and Boghazköi). There was even a version in Hittite.

The Naram-Sin Epic is poorly attested but enough is preserved to recognize that it was a poetic narrative of Naram-Sin's conquest of Apishal²⁰⁵. Nothing is known of its origin or date. A fragment of an epic in which the Fall of Ur (c. 2000 B.C.) was described was found at Uruk but nothing can be said about the text on the basis of the one small piece²⁰⁶.

Assyrian Historical Epics

Only two Assyrian Historical Epics are known, one of Adad-narari I

²⁰³ For bibliography see *ABC* p. 57, n. 60. For fragments of the Hittite version see the bibliography in E. Laroche, *Catalogue des Textes Hittites* (Paris 1971) p. 53, No. 310. See further H. Hoffner below 14.4 (p. 66). The text published by H. G. Güterbock in *ZA* 44 (1938) 101-145 is mythological in character. The discoveries now being made at Ebla may well revolutionize our understanding of the historical-literary texts concerned with Sargon and Naram-Sin.

²⁰⁴ See J. J. A. van Dijk, *Sumer* 13 (1957) 99-105.

²⁰⁵ The original of this text is missing but Pinches' copy of it was published in *AJO* 13 (1939-41), pls. I-II (opposite p. 48). It was edited by H. G. Güterbock, *AJO* 13, pp. 46-49.

²⁰⁶ A. Falkenstein, *Literarische Keilschrifttexte aus Uruk* (Berlin 1931) No. 43.

(c. 1306-1274 B.C.) and one of Tukulti-Ninurta I (c. 1243-1207 B.C.)²⁰⁷. Only the latter is sufficiently preserved to give some idea of its content. It concerns the war between Assyria and Babylonia which ended in the conquest of Babylonia and the defeat of its king, Kashtiliash. The theme throughout is the sinful perfidy of the Babylonian monarch and the righteous indignation of his Assyrian counterpart who, when finally compelled to do battle, fought with unsurpassed courage and skill. This is really a panegyric of the king, in poetic narrative style, probably written at the end of the war to celebrate its successful conclusion.

Babylonian Historical Epics

Several Babylonian Historical Epics are known but most are preserved only in a very fragmentary form. There are three epics about kings of the second millennium and three epics about the Chaldaean kings in the first millennium. In addition there is the Verse Account of Nabonidus which is rather special²⁰⁸.

The first of the epics about second millennium kings concerns Kuri-galzu and the preserved portion describes battles successfully fought by this king and his gifts of thanks to the god Marduk at the conclusion²⁰⁹. The second epic, about Adad-shuma-usur, seems to describe a successful rebellion by officers and nobles of Babylon against Adad-shuma-usur²¹⁰. The cause of the trouble appears to be neglect of Marduk and Babylon. After the conflict the penitent king confesses his sins to Marduk and restores his temple. The third epic concerned with the second millennium is of Nebuchadnezzar I.²¹¹ Only the beginning of the text is preserved and in it is narrated the king's lament over the absence of the god Marduk from Babylon. The epic must have gone on to describe Nebuchadnezzar's heroic campaign to Elam and his victorious return to Babylon with Marduk's statue, deeds which are known from other sources.

Only one of the three epics of Chaldaean kings is sufficiently preserved to allow discussion and even for this epic, which is about Nabopolassar,

²⁰⁷ For the Adad-narari I Epic see the bibliography in *ABC* p. 57, n. 65 to which add C. Wilcke, *ZA* 67 (1977) 187-191. For the Tukulti-Ninurta I Epic see the study and bibliography of W. G. Lambert, *AJO* 18 (1957-58) 38-51 and pls. I-IV. A new edition and study is being prepared by P. Machinist.
²⁰⁸ There is also a Babylonian epic fragment in which the siege of Uruk is described. It was published by R. C. Thompson, *The Epic of Gilgamesh* (Oxford 1930) pl. 59 and pp. 91f. For discussion and bibliography see *BHLLT* p. 42, n. 10.

²⁰⁹ The epic is known from portions quoted in Chronicle P. See *ABC* Chronicle 22. A fragment possibly from the same epic is published in *BHLLT* Chapter 5.

²¹⁰ *BHLLT* Chapter 6.

²¹¹ L. W. King, *CT* 13, 48 and cf. H. Winckler, *Altorientalische Forschungen* 1 (Leipzig 1893-97) 542f.

most of the text is still missing²¹². In the preserved portion the defeat of Assyria and the coronation of Nabopolassar is described and it is reasonable to assume that the entire epic was about Nabopolassar and the foundation of the Chaldaean Dynasty. The god Marduk is acknowledged throughout as the vital force behind these events.

The Verse Account of Nabonidus has the general form and style of a Babylonian historical epic but is unique in that it is essentially a religious-political tract²¹³. It was written in the interests of the Marduk priests at Babylon with the intention of discrediting and castigating Nabonidus for his alleged sacrilege towards their cult. In addition it was written to curry favour with the Persian conquerors who are said to have behaved properly towards Marduk.

The Babylonian historical epics are tendentious works. In each prevails the theme of the supremacy of Marduk over the gods and the ill fate that befalls a Babylonian king who neglects his worship²¹⁴. It is clear, then, that the authors of these epics were partisans and perhaps priests of the Marduk cult at Babylon. All the textual material is known from late copies, most of which came from one school or library. It is very difficult to establish dates for the original composition of the epics but the reign of Nebuchadnezzar I (c. 1125-1104 B.C.) is a likely possibility for the texts about the second millennium. The Chaldaean epics must obviously be dated later than the events they describe. The Nabonidus Verse Account was certainly written shortly after the fall of Babylon in 539 B.C. The fact that late copies of all these epics are extant is a clear reflection of the Babylonians' endeavour in the Persian and Seleucid periods to preserve their cultural heritage.

Pseudo-Autobiographies

Pseudo-autobiographies are narrations cast in the form of royal autobiographies. The phenomena described are mainly military in nature with legendary overtones. The literary form originates in the Sumerian period. No examples of such texts are known in Hebrew or Hittite but in Egyptian a composition about Djoser is similar in form. It must be admitted that there is not yet sufficient text material to establish firmly the existence

²¹² *BHLLT* Chapter 7. For the other two fragments see *ibid.* Chapters 8 and 9.

²¹³ S. Smith, *BHT* pp. 27-97 and pls. V-X. For bibliography see *ABC* p. 57, n. 62 (and Addenda) and R. Borger, *HKL* 1, p. 490.

²¹⁴ In the Kuri-galzu and Adad-shuma-usur Epics this theme is anachronistic. For further discussion see *BHLLT* Chapter 4.

of such a genre in Akkadian. There is really only one text, the Cuthaeen Legend of Naram-Sin, which is sufficiently preserved to allow analysis²¹⁵.

The Cuthaeen Legend of Naram-Sin is a story of how Naram-Sin failed time and again to defeat invading hordes²¹⁶. The reason for this, according to the text, was his refusal to heed the omens. The story concludes with an exhortation to a later prince to learn from this tale of woe and conduct himself accordingly. It is a didactic document, intended to convince contemporary and future monarchs of the power of the diviner²¹⁷.

Part D

Ideas of the Past

Any attempt to synthesize in a few pages the attitude of the Assyrians and Babylonians towards their past is fraught with difficulty. The major problems have become obvious by this time and I need only summarize them and briefly mention one or two more. There is the Sumerian background; there are the differences between Assyrians and Babylonians; there is a time span of almost two thousand years; there are local peculiarities such as differences one might find in the attitude at Babylon and Sippar; and there is the possibility of differences of attitude on the part of "schools" or even individuals. In the subsequent synthesis all of these basic considerations must be kept in mind.

²¹⁵ The Sargon Birth Legend seems to belong to this genre. The text begins with a tale of Sargon's birth and upbringing and then lists his conquests. The inscription breaks off at this point. Two other fragmentary texts — H. Tadmor, *JNES* 17 (1958) 137-139 and W. G. Lambert, *CT* 46, Nos. 49 and 50 — seem to be of a similar literary type; they both concern hostilities with Elam during the latter half of the second millennium. For bibliography of all this material and other possible fragments of this genre see *BHLL* p. 8, n. 11 to which add R. Labat, *Les Religions du Proche-Orient Asiatique* (Paris 1970) 307f. The recognition that the "Marduk Autobiography" was in fact part of the "Marduk Prophetic Speech" — see R. Borger, *BiOr* 28 (1971) 3-24 — eliminated one of the major texts from the group.

²¹⁶ For the late recension of this text see O. Gurney, *AnSt* 5 (1955) 93-113 and 6 (1956) 163f. and note R. Labat, *Religions* (op. cit. n. 215) pp. 309-315. An Old Babylonian version was published by J. J. Finkelstein, *JCS* 11 (1957) 83-88. For the Hittite version see H. G. Güterbock, *ZA* 44 (1938) 49-67; H. Hoffner, *JCS* 23 (1970) 17-22 and below 14, 2-3 (pp. 65f.). For further bibliography see *BHLL* p. 8, n. 10, to which add M. Astour, *JBL* 95 (1976) 572-579.

²¹⁷ The kind of divination practised is extispicy. A. L. Oppenheim has suggested in *Cetus* 14 (1969) 124f. that astrology was the common form of divination practised by late Assyrian kings and that extispicy had become a specialized technique "of restricted application". If this is so, perhaps one could regard this text as a protest written on behalf of the extispices. Relevant is the fact that the theme outlined is apparent only in the late recension (Sultantepe and Kouyunjik) of the Cuthaeen Legend. Earlier recension (Old Babylonian and texts in both Akkadian and Hittite from Boghazköi) are too fragmentary to ascertain their overall form and purpose. The reference in the Hittite text — *ZA* 44 (1938) 56f. — to incubation is an indication that an entirely different kind of divination was practised in that version.

The Assyrians and Babylonians were abundantly interested in the past and the reasons for this interest, which largely go back to Sumerian times, were multiple. A common motive was the use of the past for propagandistic or didactic purposes. Causes could be furthered and ideas disseminated by means of compositions about former times. The Synchronistic History, the Weidner Chronicle, the Nabonidus Verse Account, the Epic of Tukulti-Ninurta I, the Cuthaeen Legend of Naram-Sin, and the Prophetic Speeches of Marduk and Shulgi are each examples of the past being used to justify and further a specific doctrine or view. The Babylonian Historical Epics are certainly tendentious works and a reason for their composition, or at least for the recension of the versions that are preserved, may have been the championing and spread of the tenet of the supremacy of Marduk.

Chauvinism, a phenomenon closely related to propaganda, is a strong element in some of the texts just mentioned, particularly the Synchronistic History and the Epic of Tukulti-Ninurta I. The fact that most of the Babylonian Historical Epics are known from copies of the Persian or Seleucid period suggests the possibility that they represent an attempt to encourage national pride.

The Dynastic Prophecy may embody an even stronger sentiment — hatred of the Seleucid hegemony — if its concluding portion actually does forecast doom for the Macedonians. Berossos, on the other hand, in choosing to write in Greek shows a sincere interest in teaching the Macedonians about Babylonian history. Thus propagandistic and didactic reasons lie behind a large number of Assyrian and Babylonian compositions about the past.

Another motive evident from our study of the historiographical genres is found in the legendary figure, the "superhero". It is a well known phenomenon in both oral and literary tradition that on occasion special circumstances at a particular point in time and exceptional capabilities of a particular human being fuse to produce a hero who performs astounding deeds which become enshrined in legend. In Mesopotamia such a figure was Sargon of Akkad. By the same token Naram-Sin represents a kind of anti-hero in that he suffered incredible catastrophes. Each of these figures came to be enveloped in a complex legendary tradition that eventually, in its written form, was embodied in a variety of literary forms²¹⁸.

²¹⁸ For Naram-Sin there are no less than five different literary compositions attested and they represent three different genres. See A. K. Grayson and E. Sollberger, *RA* 70 (1976) 103-128. In content there are connections between the various texts but the narrative of each is distinct. In addition, Naram-Sin is an important figure in chronicles and historical omens and some of his royal inscriptions were preserved in scribal copies. Further see H. G.

A practical side to the interest in the past of the Assyrians and Babylonians, as well as of the Sumerians, is abundantly evident. This appears in the date lists, king lists, and Assyrian eponym lists, all of which were intended as calendrical or chronological aids. Another practical use of history was in the realm of divination. The diviners occasionally used "historical" references as omen apoduses. Thus an omen on the liver might be interpreted as "The omen of Sargon who marched to the West Land and conquered the West Land" or "The omen of Naram-Sin who marched against Apishal, breached the wall, and captured Rish-Adad the king of Apishal". The historical omens are often anecdotal and even bizarre: "The omen of Rimush whose servants killed him with their cylinder seals". This reminds one of popular historical reminiscences as found in school-boy's history ("King Alfred burnt the peasant's tarts") and nursery rhymes ("The grand old duke of York, he had ten thousand men"). The content of such sources is not very informative for the modern historian but the reliability of the facts can hardly be questioned, a point which Finkelstein has convincingly demonstrated. A Mesopotamian diviner living at other times in other lands might have written: "The omen of Absalom who was killed while hanging from the thick branches of a great oak"; "The omen of sultan Alp Arslan who died tripping over his beard"; or "The omen of King Edward VIII who was removed from his throne when he fell in love with an American divorcee"²¹⁹.

The astronomical diaries had both calendrical and astrological uses for it appears that they were used as a source of new omens by the astrologers. The extraction of the sections on political and military history from these astronomical diaries to form the Babylonian Chronicle Series had different motivation and²²⁰, as I have already suggested, this may have

Güterbock, *ZA* 42 (1934) 11-13. In the first millennium such figures as Semiramis and Ahigar seem to have sparked the same kind of legendary development.

²¹⁹ On historical omens see E. F. Weidner, *MAOG* 4 (1928-9) 226ff.; J. Nougayrol, *École Pratique des Hautes Études* 5^e section *Annuaire* 1944-45, pp. 1-41; A. Goetze, *JCS* 1 (1947) 253-265; and J. J. Finkelstein, *PAPS* 107 (1963) 461-472; E. Reiner, *Anatolian Studies Presented to H. G. Güterbock* (Istanbul 1974) pp. 257-261. The fact that the incidents are bizarre is no reason to question their historicity, a confusion which has appeared in recent, otherwise excellent, publications: P. Michalowski, *Or* 46 (1977) 220 and I. Starr, *JCS* 29 (1977) 162. In the latter publication there is an unfortunate misunderstanding in that Rm 2, 553:2f. is restored in such a way as to yield two conflicting versions of Amar-Suena's death and this is regarded as proof of the factual unreliability of historical omens. A restoration is inadequate evidence for such a bold assumption and in this case the natural reconstruction would be: "The omen of Amar-Suena, the king, who [was injured] by the goading of an ox (and) he died by the bite of a shoe".

²²⁰ A prognostic motivation has been proposed with regard to the Chronicle of Early Kings, the Weidner Chronicle, and the Religious Chronicle. As I have shown in *La Divination en Mésopotamie Ancienne*, XIV^e Rencontre

been recognition of intrinsic value in a concise and accurate record of Babylonian history.

Related to Assyrian and Babylonian ideas of the past is their concern that certain matters should be remembered in the future. It was this concern that prompted the writing of royal inscriptions, particularly the commemorative texts²²¹. A frequent theme in the commemorative inscriptions is that the recorded deeds surpass anything done by earlier monarchs. The royal inscriptions are really egotistical boasts, with pious overtones, to future peoples of the king's accomplishments.

Passing on from the reasons which inspired Assyrians and Babylonians to write about their past, there are features of this interest and of their view of the world in general which deserve our attention. In the ancient Mesopotamian *Weltanschauung* natural and supernatural matters were tightly interwoven. Any disruption among the gods had its immediate effect upon earth for the gods constantly moved in both celestial and mundane spheres. Each god had one or more specific areas of activity and these were delineated by *šimātu*, a term we usually translate as "fates" or "destinies". Within his designated area or areas any god could act freely. Thus the god Ea was responsible for clever deeds and was called upon whenever cunning was required. Shamash, the sun god and supreme judge, was invoked whenever justice was in question. All events on earth had their origin in and were controlled by heavenly powers. Causation, the bogey of modern historiographers, was no problem to the ancient Mesopotamian; all things were ordered by the gods.

To the ancient Assyrian and Babylonian, past, present, and future were all part of one continuous stream of events in heaven and earth. There was a beginning in the distant past, but there was no middle or end. Gods and men continued *ad infinitum*. There is no evidence in Babylonian thought of any eschatology nor is there any place for a cyclical view of history²²².

Assyriologique Internationale (Paris 1966) pp. 69-76 a link between these chronicles and divination is more apparent than real. The early section of the Chronicle of Early Kings is certainly extracted from omen collections but, as in the case of the Babylonian Chronicle Series, the motive surely must be unrelated to divination. Otherwise why would the protases be omitted?

²²¹ The Tukulti-Ninurta I Epic, the only Assyrian Historical Epic sufficiently preserved to allow study, seems also to be commemorative in nature since it was apparently written to celebrate the successful conclusion of the war with Babylonia. At the same time there is an element of self-justification inherent in the work. The Assyrian letters to the god seem to have their *raison d'être* in the king's sense of need to render an accounting to his god and subjects. It is possible that this motive was behind the royal inscriptions but it is not as apparent.

²²² See *BHLL* p. 21, n. 34.

The central position of the king and his relations with the gods are salient features of the historiographical texts. In particular the monarch's building activity is a predominant concern of the royal inscriptions throughout Assyrian and Babylonian history. In addition, in Assyria the military endeavours of the king very early attract interest while in Babylonia this becomes a feature only in the late period, in the chronicles. There is, of course, a correlation between the period when the interest in military activity appears and the period when each nation was an important military power.

Another characteristic worthy of notice is the attitude towards kingship displayed in these texts. The concept of dynasties appears very early, in the king lists, and is an idea peculiar to Babylonia (as opposed to Assyria). This dynastic view involved belief in the linear descent of kingship and is attested in Babylonia as late as the Hellenistic period. The concept of the "rise" and "fall" of empires, which appears in the late period in the Dynastic Prophecy, is an aspect of this dynastic theory. In Assyria the dynastic idea never appeared; the Assyrians viewed their monarchy as one continuous royal line.

There are other features of interest. The legal fiction embodied in the Synchronistic History reflects the importance of law in ancient Mesopotamian society. The portrayal of reigns as "good" or "bad" in the Prophecies is a concept from the realm of divination^{22a}. The accretion to central figures of legendary material from various sources is a universal phenomenon and not peculiar to Assyria and Babylonia. Finally, the custom of selecting "important events", all of which focus on the king, has its origin in the third millennium in date lists and is the principle still followed by the Babylonian chroniclers in the first millennium.

The question arises whether there are certain periods in Assyrian and Babylonian history when there is a pronounced interest in the past. This is the case in at least two instances. In Babylonia about the time of Nebuchadnezzar I (c. 1125-1104 B.C.) momentous religious developments were taking place^{22b} and a need was felt for historical justification for these which apparently resulted in the composition of some of the works discussed in Part C^{22c}. Another period was the Hellenistic Age when Babylonians, dominated by foreigners, attempted not only to preserve their dying culture but also, if my suggestion with regard to the late copies of the Baby-

^{22a} Cf. P. Michalowski, *Essays Finkelstein*, pp. 155-157.

^{22b} See W. G. Lambert, "The Reign of Nebuchadnezzar I: A Turning Point in the History of Ancient Mesopotamian Religion" in W. S. McCullough (ed.), *The Seed of Wisdom: Essays in Honour of T. J. Meek* (Toronto 1964) 3-13.

^{22c} The Marduk Prophetic Speech and the Historical Epics about Kurgalzu, Adad-shuma-usur, and Nebuchadnezzar I.

lonian Historical Epics is valid, to promote a sense of pride in themselves^{22d}. It should be remembered with regard to periods of particular interest in the past that in the mid-eighth century B.C. a decision was taken to record details of astronomical and mundane events in a systematic manner^{22e}.

A word must be said at this point about relations with foreign cultures. There is no evidence of foreign influence, if we exclude Sumerian civilization, on the Assyrian and Babylonian interest in the past or its mode of expression. On the other hand, there is some indication of an Assyrian and Babylonian impact on other cultures in this sphere. Urartian royal inscriptions are clearly modelled after, and frequently in the same language as, Assyrian royal inscriptions^{22f}. It would seem that Elamite royal inscriptions were also influenced by ancient Mesopotamian forms^{22g}. Copies of historical-literary texts about Sargon have been found in Egyptian (Amar-na) and Hittite (Boghazköi) territory and, in the latter case, similar works about Naram-Sin have also been discovered. There were even versions of these texts in the Hittite language found at Boghazköi. Finally, a link between the Akkadian Prophecies and ancient Near Eastern apocalyptic has been established.

A matter which requires discussion is the fact that there is no word in Akkadian, nor in Sumerian, for "history". But neither is there a word for "literature", "theology", "jurisprudence", "science", etc. This lack points to a basic difference in outlook between modern Western man and the ancient Assyrian and Babylonian. The learned lore of the ancient Mesopotamian certainly included all of the subjects just mentioned but his conceptualization and categorization of learning was different. An indication of his view may be found in the ancient lists.

The ancient Mesopotamian scribes compiled extensive lists of names — lists of plant names, lists of animal names, lists of professional names, lists of god names, even lists of personal names. These lists had practical value for the ancient scribe and were used much like a modern dictionary.

^{22d} Both Assyrian and Babylonian kings show in their royal inscriptions a great interest in finding earlier objects and foundation inscriptions when renovating a building. This interest is particularly apparent with the last of the Chaldean kings, Nabonidus. See Berger, *NBK* pp. 92-94.

^{22e} This is the beginning of the "Nabu-nasir Era" — see above n. 161. No one has yet offered a satisfactory explanation of this phenomenon. F. X. Kugler, *Sternkunde und Sterndienst in Babel* (Münster 1907-35) 362-371 attributed the motive to the singular astronomical phenomena which occurred in the first year of Nabu-nasir's reign.

^{22f} See G. A. Melikishvili, *Urartskii klinoobrazn'ie nadpisi* (Moscow 1960) for a full corpus of Urartian inscriptions. On the relation with Assyrian royal inscriptions cf. T. Beran in H. Schmökel (ed.), *Kulturgeschichte des Alten Orient* (Stuttgart 1961) p. 624.

^{22g} For a full corpus of Elamite royal inscriptions see F. W. König, *Die Elamischen Königsinschriften* (Afo Beiheft 16; Graz 1965).