

A Royal Inscription about Lullumu

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In his essay on Lullubum, H. Klengel quoted a Middle Assyrian inscription from the Nineveh collection of the British Museum which W.G. Lambert had communicated to him.¹ This is a royal inscription and so merits a place in the RIM project, despite uncertainty about its exact identification.

The text is the left half of a tablet of soft whitish clay now numbered BM 81-7-27,76. In his *Catalogue of the Kouyunjik Collection*, Carl Bezold described it as 'Part of an inscription of an Ass. king', adding that it mentions KUR.lu-ul-lu-ma-a.² The surviving portion of the tablet measures 7.85 × 7.3 cm., but its original width was probably almost twice as great as its height, giving it a shape that is not common for royal inscriptions which are usually written on tablets higher than they are wide. In this respect it is reminiscent of the foundation tablet of Zimri-Lim from Hana.³ Both faces of the tablet are also more convex than usual.

The faces of the tablet are damaged in such a way as to hinder interpretation, especially of the first two extant lines which contained proper names. Combining the traces of line 2' with those in line 8', W.G. Lambert proposed to read a personal name, ^mi-ri-iš-ti-e-en-ni.⁴ This is attractive, but has to remain uncertain, and, being an unknown name, does not help further identification of the text at present.

Lacuna of one (?) line.

- 1' [...] x x x [.....]
2' [^mi-ri]-iš-ti-e-en-ni [.....]
3' [ma-a]r-ma-ri ša ^mi-x [.....]
4' [le]-e-ep-le-e-pí ša [.....]
5' [^m(?)x]-ki LUGAL KUR.x [.....]
6' [ik-ki(?)]-ir BÀD ša UR[U]
7' [a]r/[r]i-mi-šū^l-ma ba-la-š[a(?)].....]
8' um-ma(?) ^mi-ri-iš-ti-š[e^l(?)]-en-ni.....]
9' i-na e-mu-qí da-an-na-t-[i.....]
10' i-na ka-ak-ki da-an-nu-t-[i.....]
(lower edge)
11' ḫa-li-ka-at pa-ni-[ia.....]
(reverse)

- 12' i-na KUR.lu-ul-lu-ma-a š[a(?)].....]
13' li-ib-bi-ia [.....]
14' ša ka-ša-di [.....]
15' ša ku-un-nu-ši [.....]
16' [x] ḫBÀD^l an-na-a [.....]
17' [x (x) BÀD(?) an-na-a [.....]
18' [...] x ḫSAG^l(?) it-t[i(?)].....]
19' [...] ú-tam-m[a(?)].....]
20' [šumī ša]-ḫa^l-ra [.....]
21' [... ik-r]i-bi-šu [išemmi/ú.....]
22' [... -]i-šu [.....]
23' missing
(upper edge)
Lacuna of two (?) lines
(left edge)
šu ^mšID.x [.....]

No connected translation can be offered with half of each line missing. The text begins with a titulary, the proper name in line 2' apparently belonging to the father of the king commemorated, who was grandson of Ir[i-X] (3'), and descendant of X (4'). A king whose name may have ended in *-ki*, but whose realm is unknown (5'), seems to have been involved in building (?) a city wall (6') and perhaps dwelling in the place for his lifetime (7'), or, it may be, dedicating a building. Line 8' introduces, on our understanding, a speech by Erišti-enni, which could continue to the end of the tablet. Its remains read, 'By mighty power', or 'With strong forces [.....], with strong weapons [.....], going ahead [of me ...]. In the land of the Lullumeans [...of] my heart [.....] for conquering [.....], for subjugating [.....]. This wall [.....] this [.....]'. Thereafter the traces are insufficient for certain restoration, but may indicate a standard formula of blessing and cursing.

On the left edge of the tablet the surviving signs are part of a scribe's signature, 'Hand of PN'.

Commentary

2' cf.8' If correctly read, this could be a Hurrian-Akkadian hybrid name, 'Desire of the gods'.

4' *līplippu* is not found elsewhere with this *plene* writing.

5' The sign following KUR does not resemble *lu* as W.G. Lambert suggested (see n.1).

12' KUR.lullumā with final *ā* is usually a gentilic, and it is possible the traces of the following sign might be read *ú* to give *lullumāyu*, the full form of the gen-

¹ MIO 11 (1965) 349-71, see p.361, n.68.

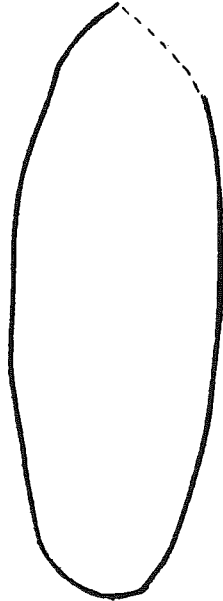
² Bezold, *Cat.4*, p.1801.

³ E. Herzfeld, *RA* 11 (1914) pp.131ff.

⁴ As cited by Klengel, loc. cit.

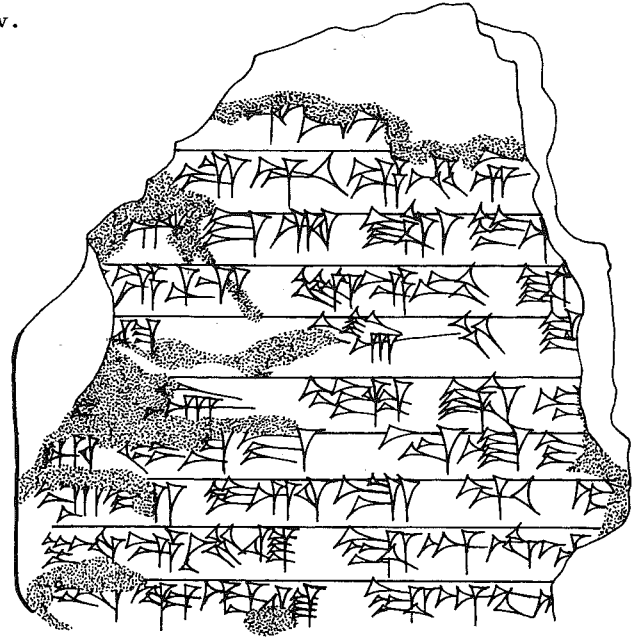
tilic.⁵

The country Lullubê or Lullumê, earlier Nullu or Lullu, occurs first in Assyrian inscriptions under Adad-narari I and Shalmaneser I, both of whom claimed to be its conquerors. The present piece could belong to that period, judging by its script. The note on the left edge indicates that it could be an archival copy of a royal foundation text, but the question of its origin remains open. Is it an inscription recording an Assyrian conquest and rebuilding, or is it a copy of a local Lullumean king's monument, brought as booty to Nineveh? The opening genealogy is unlikely to be any but the author's, and that would imply it is not Assyrian. The answers lie in the other half of the tablet, and that may be more easily recognised through the publication of this part.

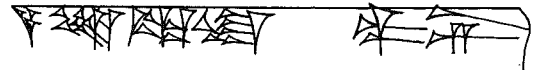


BM 81-7-27,76 profile

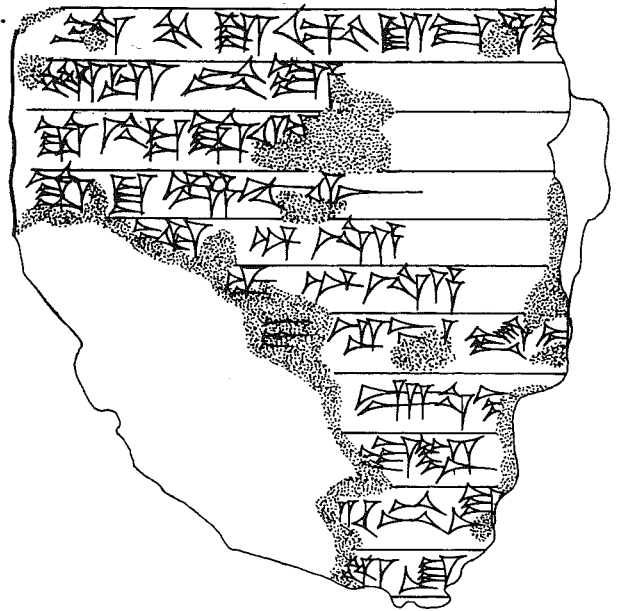
Obv.



Lower
edge



Rev.



Left
edge



BM 81-7-27,76

⁵ Cf. K. Nashef, *Rép.Géogr.* 5 pp.188f.