

The Mace Head of Libūr-zānin-Aššur in the Louvre

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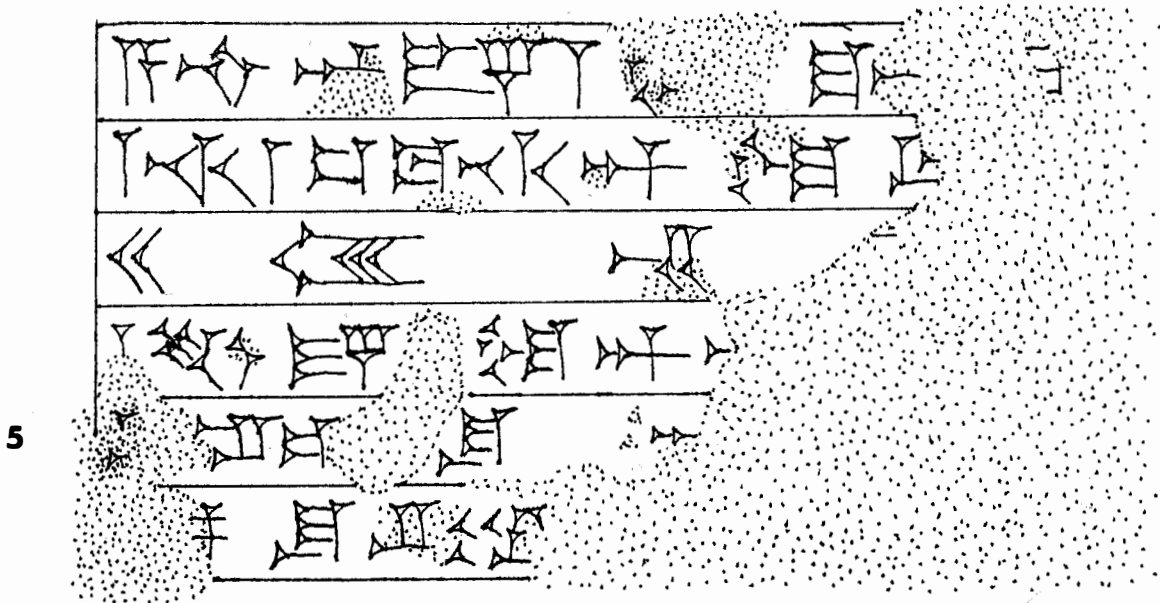
According to E. Pottier, the limestone mace head AO 2152 was acquired by the Louvre Museum in the last century from a foreign consul resident at Mosul;¹ thus its ancient provenance is not known. It is pierced vertically in order to accommodate a wooden arm and measures 7.6 cm in height and 6.6 cm in diameter. The inscription was edited as *RIMA* 1 p. 299 no. A.O.78.2001,² but no copy has hitherto been published. Since the inscription is damaged and the reading of a number of signs is not certain, it was thought advisable to present a copy of the text here. My thanks must be expressed to Mme B. André for permission to copy the text and for her hospitality during my visit to Paris in 1988.

TRANSLITERATION:

- 1) *a-na* ^dINANNA(?) N[IN] GAL (X) [...]
- 2) *ana* TI ^mGIŠ.tukul-ti-^dnin-ur[ta (...)]
- 3) MAN KIŠ EN-[šū (...)]
- 4) ^mli-bur-[za]-nin-^da[š-šur (...)]
- 5) š[a(?)] SA[G] ṚLUGAL(?!)Ṛ [x (...)]
- 6) [ana T]i(?!)-šū ik-ru-[ub x (...)]

TRANSLATION:

- 1) To the goddess *Ištar*, the great lady:
- 2-3) For the life of Tukulti-Ninurta, king of the universe, [his] lord,
- 4-6) Libūr-[zā]nin-A[ššur], *eunuch of the king*, [...] dedicated (this) [for] his *life*.



AO 2152

¹ *Antiquités assyriennes* pp. 116-17 no. 108.

² The inscription has also been edited by H. Galter in *ARRIM* 5 (1987) p. 18 no. 4. The object was erroneously referred to as an eye-stone in *RIMA* 1 p. 299.

COMMENTARY:

1) The reading of the divine name is uncertain. In view of the row of horizontal wedges at the beginning of the sign one might think of *tišpak*, but the traces immediately following the sign, while indistinct, would fit NIN, thus excluding a male divinity.

There are traces of what might be a sign after GAL, but it seems more likely that they represent scratches. The vertical line, however, might well be part of the border surrounding the inscription since it is located where one would expect to see it based upon the expected restoration of the various lines. Since the right end of the inscription is damaged, it is not impossible that more should be restored at the end of each line than has been proposed.

2) The *ana balāt*-formula in Assyrian votive inscriptions has been studied by K. Deller in *OrAnt* 22 (1983) pp. 13–24. Note also Galter, *ARRIM* 5 (1987) p. 15.

4–5) Several Middle Assyrian economic documents are dated by the eponymy of one Libūr-zānin-Aššur. In two of these (as well as in a few other documents) a like-named individual appears in the body of the text with the title *ša rēš šarri* (*ša* SAG LUGAL). Saporetti determined that the eponymy should come from the time of Shalmaneser I (1273–1244 BC) or Tukultī-Ninurta I (1243–1207 BC) and thought it was possible that the eponym should be identified with the *ša rēš šarri* (see Saporetti, *Eponimi* pp. 105–106). This has prompted both the identification of the Tukultī-Ninurta in line 2 with the first king by that name and the reading of line 5. While the reading š[a] (or even L[ú]) for the first sign in line 5 is possible, SA[G] appears to be followed by šU x [x (...)]. Is it possible that we should read instead š[a] SA[G]-šU x [x (...)] ('his eunuch ...')?

There is some uncertainty about the accuracy of the translation 'eunuch' for *ša rēši*. On this matter, see most recently Brinkman and Dalley, *ZA* 78 (1988) pp. 85–86.