

# FROM THE UPPER SEA TO THE LOWER SEA

## STUDIES ON THE HISTORY OF ASSYRIA AND BABYLONIA IN HONOUR OF A.K. GRAYSON

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## THE NEW SARGON STELE FROM HAMA

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A piece of a new stele of Sargon II of Assyria shortly after its acquisition by the Borowski Collection was published in a preliminary note by W.G. Lambert in the catalogue of the collection *Ladders to Heaven*.<sup>1</sup> Lambert gave a translation of the text, but accompanied it with only minimal comment on the content of this interesting piece.

My own connection with the piece goes back rather further and is perhaps worth recording. In the early 1970s a photograph of the piece was sent to the British Museum, presumably by the Beirut antiquities dealer in whose hands it then was. The photograph was shown to me by the late Edmond Sollberger, and although it was not good, I was able to read and identify the text. Later a better photograph was sent, from which I was able to produce a traced copy of the text. In 1974 I was travelling and working in Syria, and with the encouragement of Sollberger I crossed to Beirut to inspect the piece and also a Hieroglyphic Luwian inscription owned by the same dealer, M. Fouad Alouf, who had sent photographs of this latter too to the British Museum. When I reached Beirut I found that M. Alouf had presented the Hieroglyphic Luwian stele (SHEIZAR, upper part) to the National Museum, Beirut, where I was able to work on it.<sup>2</sup> The Sargon stele was still in Alouf's house, where he allowed me to see it but asked me not to publish anything about it.

By 1983 the stele had been acquired by Borowski for his collection. In that year Kirk Grayson had kindly invited me to Toronto to lecture, and I took the opportunity to visit the Borowski Collection, then on travelling exhibition in Ottawa. There I saw the Sargon stele, and was able to make a tracing on acetate of the text, a revised version of which I publish below.

Some further notice of this stele has appeared in print,<sup>3</sup> but it seems an appropriate moment now to publish along with a cuneiform copy, a more detailed study of this text to draw attention to its numerous points of interest. It gives me great pleasure to dedicate this study to my old friend Kirk Grayson as a small token of esteem and gratitude for his outstanding contribution to the study of Mesopotamian, especially Assyrian, royal inscriptions.

### *Description*

The inscription as it survives is a thinnish flake of stone split from a tall, 4-sided monument originally inscribed on at least two of its four sides. The best preserved face (B) measuring a maximum of 0.77 m in height and 0.38 m in width, presents 19 lines almost complete and traces of one further where the surviving text breaks off. Above these lines, which are not the beginning of any text, is an unscribed space of some 0.30 m ascending to the missing top of the side. Round the corner to the left of side B, are the remains of part of another face (A), of which a

<sup>1</sup> Muscarella, *Ladders*, 125 with no. 83.

<sup>2</sup> J.D. Hawkins, "The Hieroglyphic Luwian Stelae of Meharde-Sheizar," in *Mélanges Laroche*, 145–56.

<sup>3</sup> J. Nougayrol, "Lettre de J. Nougayrol du 24 février 1973," in Finet, *Opposition*, 12–13 with n. 48, 207–8; cited by myself in *RLA* 5/3–4 (1986): 162a–b s.v. Irhuleni and 272b–73a s.v. Jau-bi'di; *CAH*<sup>2</sup> 3/1, 393 with n. 175, 417 with nn. 367, 368; *apud* Liverani, *NA Geography*, 97 with nn. 118–20. Cf. also Fuchs, *Khorsabad*, 387 with n. 633, where dating to the 15<sup>th</sup> *palû* is proposed on the basis of the Yadnana reference. Most recently K. Lawson Younger, Jr., "The Borowski Stela (2.118B)," in Hallo, *Scripture* 2, 294.

narrow strip of the right edge survives, bearing traces of the ends of 26 lines, and occupying the whole of the preserved surface from top to bottom, which measures some 0.62 m. From 1 to 5 signs of the end of each line survive. Enough remains of these to identify in them traces of more than one passage of known inscriptions of Sargon, as will be shown below. It would seem that this text must have been put together by the adaptation of an earlier text by excisions and more recent additions, to form a prologue to a principal historical report represented by the text of side B. What more may have been lost from side A above and below the surviving 26 lines is discussed below.

We may wonder whether this piece is a fragment of a usual Assyrian royal stele bearing on its front face a figure of the king. Side A as has been stated and will be shown, contained a prologue of conquest summaries, and side B a detailed historical report which must have begun on the lost lower part of side A. But an estimate of the number of signs per line required by the text as reconstructed for side A compared with the number of signs per line found on side B suggests that the former may have been up to twice as wide as the latter (see below, side A, Commentary). If side A and the lost side C were the wide sides of the monument, and side B and the lost side D the narrow sides, this has implications for the possibility of a figure: it would presumably have had to stand on a wide side, since the narrow sides would not have accommodated it. A figure on the lost side C would mean that the prologue on side A stood on the reverse of the stele, which would be unexpected, probably unparallelled. Yet if the figure had been on side A, the preserved inscribed strip on the right of the side would be the raised frame which always surrounds such figures, and the inscription would have been placed across the lower body of the figure running over on to the raised frame. Such an arrangement is not unparallelled, being seen most clearly on the Kurkh Monolith of Shalmaneser III and the Iran stele of Tiglath-pileser III. Yet the preserved strip down the right of side A does not look very like a possible raised frame of a sculptured figure, being at its widest wider than would be expected for such a part of the sculpture. Thus there are difficulties in supposing a royal figure on either side A or side C, though these are not perhaps sufficient to preclude the possibility entirely.

#### *Side A, reconstruction of text*

The surviving right edge of this face contains as noted the ends of 26 lines which suffice to permit the recognition of passages closely similar if not identical to parts of known Sargon inscriptions. In particular BOROWSKI (**B**) side A, ll. 8–18 preserves groups of signs clearly signalling a text closely parallel to that of the **Khorsabad cylinders (KC)**,<sup>4</sup> ll. 15–17 and 23–24, and indeed the surviving signs of the preceding lines **B** side A, ll. 2–7 certainly correspond, if less obviously, to **KC**, ll. 11–14 (see detailed discussion below). In the same way **B** side A, ll. 25–26 correspond to **KC**, l. 26. The omission of passages corresponding to **KC**, ll. 18–22 and 25 is also discussed below. In their place, **B** side A, ll. 19–24 has inserted passages corresponding, though not so closely, to **Display inscription of room XIV (DI XIV)**,<sup>5</sup> ll. 9–11, 17–18, and to the similar **Pavement Slab 4 (PS 4)**,<sup>6</sup> ll. 23–31, 40–45. The reason for this inclusion is also discussed below.

We may tabulate the correspondences of the lines:

<sup>4</sup> See Fuchs, *Khorsabad*, no. 1.1, 33–34 and 290–91 (= Luckenbill, *ARAB* 2, § 188).

<sup>5</sup> Fuchs, *Khorsabad*, no. 2.2, 76–77 and 308–9 (= Luckenbill, *ARAB* 2, §§79–80).

<sup>6</sup> Fuchs, *Khorsabad*, no. 2.5.4, 261–63, and 359–60 (= Luckenbill, *ARAB* 2, §99).



Fig. 1 Stele of Sargon II of Assyria (BLMJ 1115).  
(Photograph courtesy of the Bible Lands Museum Jerusalem)

<u>B side A</u>	<u>KC</u>	<u>DI XIV</u>	<u>PS 4</u>	<u>Conquest, date</u>
2-5	} 10-17			general exploits
5-13				conquest summaries
14-15				battle of Der (721 BC)
15-16	} 23-24			Ambaris of Tabal (713 BC)
17-18				Mita of Muski (715 BC)
19-20		9-10	23-27	Gunzinanu of Melid (?)
21-22		10-11	28-31	Tarhulara of Gurgum (711 BC)
22-23		11 ...	-	Yamani of Ashdod (711 BC)
24-25		17-18	40-45	7 Kings of Yadnana (707 BC)
25-26	26			Pisiri of Karkamiš (717 BC)

Restored transliteration (line nos. of KC in parentheses in the text)

1. [ ... ... ]
2. [ ... (10) *huršāni bēruṭi ša nēreb-šunu*] *áš-tu*
3. [*lā mīna iptū-ma ēmuru durug-šun* (11) *tūdāt lā 'āri pa-áš-q*] *a<sup>7</sup>-ti*
4. [*ša ašar-šina šugluddu ētattiqu-ma e-te-eb-b*] *i<sup>7</sup>-ru*
5. [*nagab berāti* (12) *ištu KUR rāši mišir KUR e-la*] *m<sup>7</sup>-ti*
6. [*puqudu* <sup>lú</sup>*damunu* <sup>uru</sup>*BĀD-kurigalzi* <sup>uru</sup>*ra-p*] *i<sup>7</sup>-qi*
7. [(13) *madbar DÛ.A.BI adi nahal KUR mušri KUR amurrē ra-pa-á*] *š-tu*
8. [*KUR hattī ana sihirti-ša ibēlu* (14) *ištu KUR ha-áš*] *-mar*
9. [*adi KUR šimaš patti KUR madāyya rūqūti ša šīt* <sup>dUT</sup>] *U-šī*
10. [*KUR namri KUR ellibi* (15) *KUR É-hamban KUR parsua KUR ma-an-na*] *-a-a*
11. [*KUR urarṭi KUR kasku KUR tabalum adi KUR muski ikšudu GAL-t*] *u ŠU-su*
12. [(16) <sup>lú</sup>*šūt-SAG* <sup>meš</sup>-*šu šaknūti UGU-šunu iš-tak-ka-n*] *u-ma*
13. [*biltu maddattu kī ša aššurī ēmid-su*] *-nu-ti*
14. [(17) *eṭlu qardu ša ina rebīt BĀD.AN* <sup>ki</sup> *itti* <sup>1</sup>*humanigaš LUGAL KUR elamti in*] *-nam-ru-ma*
15. [*iškunu tahtā-šu ...*(23) *munessi KUR É-purutaš ša* <sup>1</sup>*ambari*] *s ma-lik-šū-nu*
16. [*damiqti* <sup>1</sup>*šarru-kīn imšū-ma UGU LUGAL KUR urarṭi u KUR muski i*] *t-tak-lu*
17. [(24) *idān paglāte tārīd* <sup>1</sup>*mita LUGAL KUR mu*] *-us-ki*
18. [*muṭir hašī KUR que ekmūti murappišu pu-lu-u*] *n-gi-šū*
19. [*nāpi* <sup>7</sup> *KUR kammani ša* <sup>1</sup>*gunzinanu ultu qé-re*] *b<sup>71</sup> uru-me-lid*
20. [*URU LUGAL-ti-šu issuhu-ma ...*] *e-sír*
21. [*munakkir LUGAL-tu* <sup>1</sup>*tarhulara* <sup>lú,uru</sup>*marqasāyya ša paṭ gimir KUR*] *gúr-gu-um-me*
22. [*ana mišir KUR aššur* <sup>ki</sup> *utirru ...* <sup>1</sup>*yamani* <sup>uru</sup>*as-d*] *u-da-a-a*
23. [ ... ] *-bu-ku*
24. [*mušakniš* <sup>7</sup> *LUGAL* <sup>meš</sup>-*ni ša KUR ia* <sup>7</sup> *nagē ša KUR iadnana ša*] *ma-lak* <sup>7</sup> *u<sub>4</sub>-me*
25. [*ina MURUB tāmṭim šitkunat šubat-sun* (26) *nābi* <sup>7</sup> *KUR gargamiš KUR ha-at-te*] *-e lem-ni*
26. [*ša* <sup>1</sup>*pisiri dāgil pānī-šunu dābib šalipte ikšudu*] <sup>1</sup>*GAL-tum* <sup>1</sup> [*ŠU*] *-su*
27. [ ... ]

#### Translation

1. [ ... (the king who ...) ... ]
2. [ ... distant mountains, whose entry] was difficult

3. [without number he opened up, and saw their interior; paths inaccessible and] hard
4. [whose location caused dread he was traversing and was] crossing
5. [all sorts of swamps(?); (who) from Rasi, the border of] Elam,
6. [the Puqudu, the Damunu, Dur-Kurigalzu,] Rapiqu,
7. [every desert, to the Brook of Egypt, Amurru the] broad,
8. [Hatti in its entirety he dominated; (who) from] Hašmar
9. [to Šimaš, the border of distant Media of the rising of the] sun,
10. [Namri, Ellibi, Bit-Hamban, Parsua,] Mannea,
11. [Urartu, Kaska, Tabal, as far as Muski conquered] his great hand;
12. [(who) his eunuchs (as) governors over them he was] setting, and
13. [taxation (and) tribute like that of the Assyrians he imposed] on them;
14. [the strong man, who in the square of Der with Humbanigaš king of Elam] he encountered
15. [and established his defeat; deporter of Bit-Purutaš] whose king [Ambaris]
16. [forgot the favour of Sargon and in the king(s) of Urartu and Muski] he trusted;
17. ["Strong-Arms," the dispatcher of Mita king of] Muski,
18. [returner of the seized fortresses of Que, extender of] its territory;
19. [plunderer of Kammanu, who Gunzinanu from the midst] of Melid
20. [his royal city he plucked out, ... ] he shut up;
21. [abolisher of the kingship of Tarhulara the Marqasean, who the totality] of Gurgum
22. [to the boundary of Assyria he returned; (who) ... Yamani] the Ashdodite
23. [ ... ] ... ;
24. [subduer of 7 kings of Ya', the district of Yadnana, of whom] a 7-day journey
25. [into the midst of the sea their dwelling was located; plunderer of Karkamiš, the] evil Hittite,
26. [of whom Pisiri his(!) subject, a whisperer of treason,] his great hand [conquered;]
27. [ ... ] ...

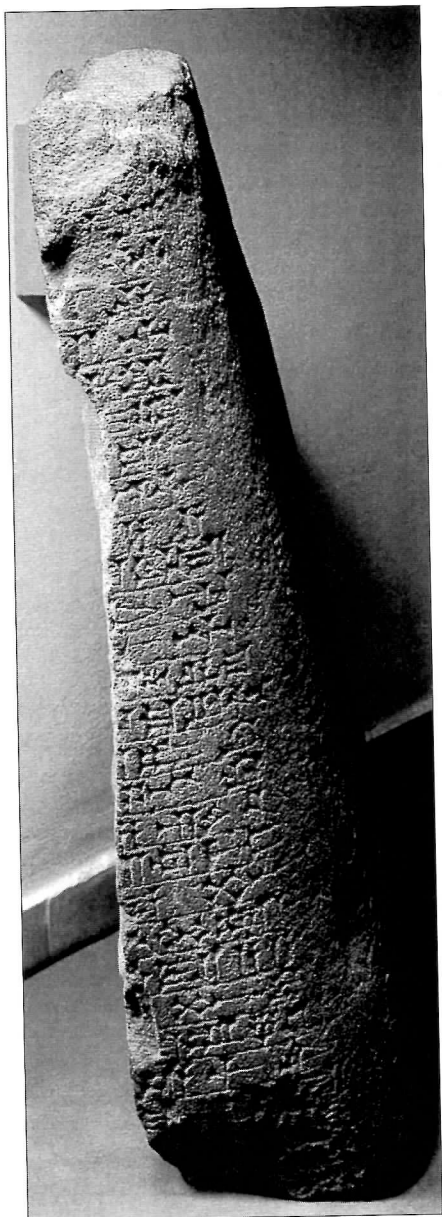
### Commentary

It will be seen that the text as reconstructed has quite long lines: estimating the number of signs per line required by the reconstruction, one comes up with an average of some 20 signs per line. This contrasts markedly with the fully preserved lines of side B, where we find an average of only 10 signs per line. The implication of this is that to accommodate the reconstruction proposed, side A would need to have been up to twice as wide as side B, which as noted above has implications for the original form of the stele.

l. 2. *ās-tu*, "was difficult": this finds its counterpart in **KC**, l. 10, and is thus extremely useful in anchoring the beginning of the **B** side A text to the corresponding point in that of **KC**. Its presence also serves to corroborate the less obvious correspondences of the following four lines of **B** side A (3–6) with **KC**, ll. 11–12.

ll. 3–5. Endings ...]x-ti, ...]x-ru, ...]x-ti: the traces of each penultimate sign of these lines, represented by x, fit well with the words identified as the correspondences in **KC**, namely ...-q]a-, ...-b]i-, and ...-la]m-. Alternative possible correspondences in **KC**, ll. 10–12 are *ēmuru* and *berāti*, but while the traces of the penultimate signs could also agree with signs fitting these words (...-m]u- and -a-), attempts to construct a text using these as the fixed points do not succeed, especially given the preceding fixed point *ās-tu*.

l. 6. [<sup>uru</sup>ra-p]i<sup>?</sup>-qi: **KC** has *ra-pi-qu*, but *-qi* is common enough in inscriptions of Shalmaneser III. The traces of the penultimate sign, though not in themselves recognizable as *pi*, are quite consistent with this sign, which is imposed by the context.



Side A



Side B

Fig. 2 Stele of Sargon II of Assyria  
(Photographs courtesy of the Bible Lands Museum, Jerusalem)

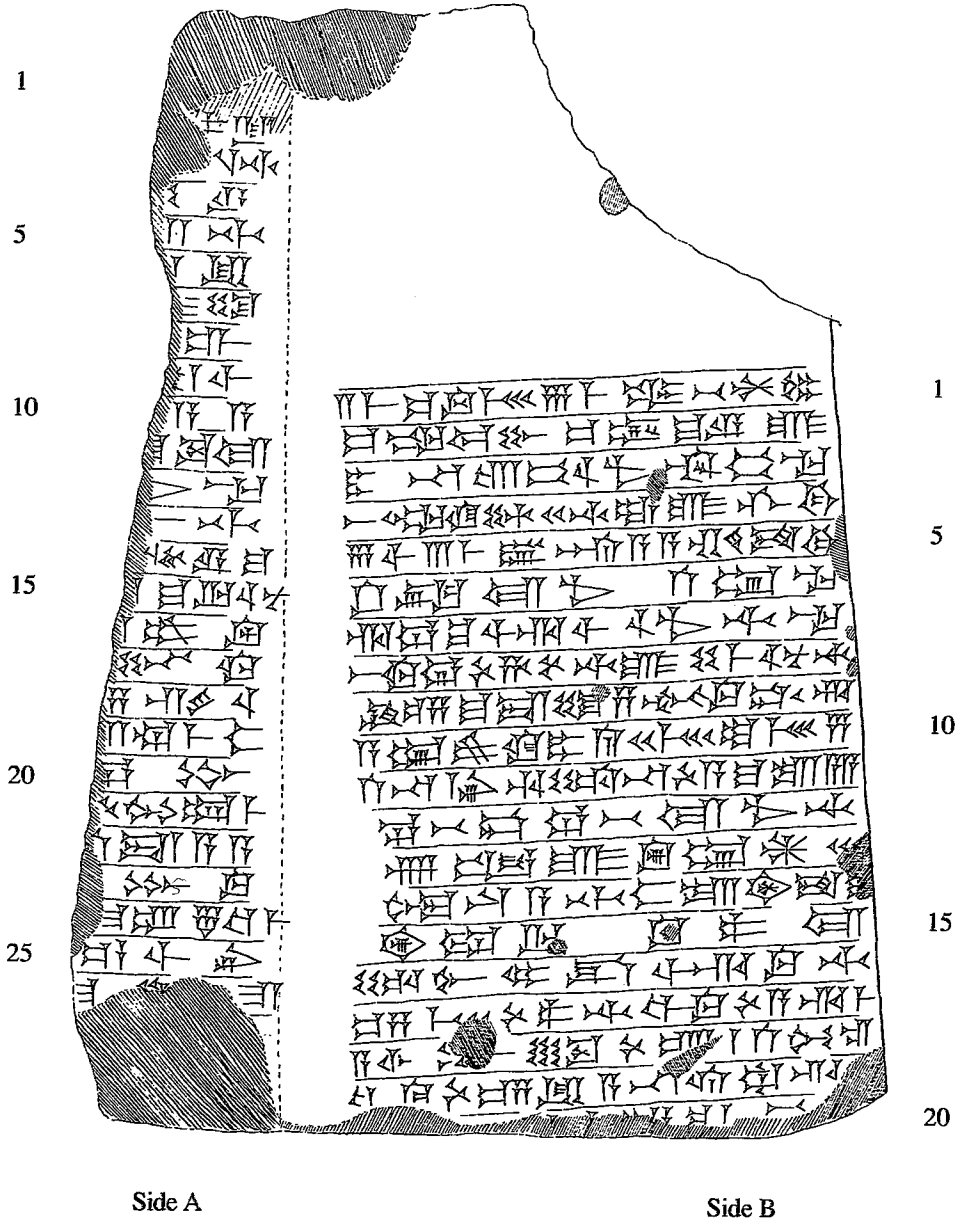


Fig. 3 Stele of Sargon II of Assyria.



l. 7. *ra-pa-á]š-tu* : **KC** has *DAGAL-tum*, Nimrud cylinders *DAGAL-ti*. Here *-á]š-tu* are sufficiently certain to guarantee a full phonetic writing.

ll. 8–15. The traces on **B** side A all find exact correspondences in words in **KC**, leaving no serious doubt that a text of closely similar type was represented in these, as in the preceding lines. Thus **B** side A, ll. 1–15 has been shown to correspond closely to **KC**, ll. 10–17, so we may note that each line of the former corresponds approximately to half a line of the latter. This is further observable with **B** side A, ll. 15–18 // **KC**, ll. 23–24 and ll. 25–26 // 26.

ll. 19–20. Restoration from **PS 4**, ll. 23–26. The similar text of **DI XIV**, ll. 9–10, would fit as well, reading:

*Ḫunzīnanu KUR kammanu ʾa ištu qereb uru melid[di] URU LUGAL-ti-šu assu[h-ma]*

These texts continue:

(**PS 4**, l. 26) UGU *gimir* KUR<sup>meš</sup>-šunu *ištakkanu* <sup>5</sup>*lúšaknūti*

(**DI XIV**, l. 10) [UGU *gimir*] KUR<sup>meš</sup> *šā[tina]* *aštakkana* <sup>5</sup>*lúšaknūti*

**B** side A, l. 20 ...] *e-sír*, “I/he shut up”: clearly does not correspond to these texts. The presence of *ēsir*, “I shut up,” may favour the restoration of the **DI XIV** text in the previous clause, since *assuh-ma*, “I deported,” would match *ēsir* better than *issuhu-ma*, “(who) deported.” On the other hand the general pattern of these passages, like those before them, seems to be: active participle–victim (accusative), who ... verb(s) (subjunctive — note [... *i]-bu-ku*, l. 23). For *ēsir* as subjunctive, cf. *ēmid* (l. 13), which also occurs inside a sequence of subjunctive verbs. Sargon gives no further information elsewhere on the fate of Gunzīnanu other than that he deported him (*nasāhu*; also *aṛudu kamātiš*, *Annals*, l. 206 [Lie, *Sargon / Fuchs, Khorsabad*]).

ll. 21–22. Restoration from **PS 4**, ll. 28–30. The slightly divergent phrasing of **DI XIV**, ll. 10–11 is a little longer, thus less likely here:

*unakkir LUGAL-ti ʾtarhulara uru marqasāyya paṭ gimir KUR gurgume DAGAL-tim ištēniš ana mišir KUR aššur<sup>ki</sup> utirra.*

ll. 22–23. [... *ʾyamani uru as-d]u-da-a-a* : in **DI XIV**, l. 11, this personage follows directly on to the notice about Tarhulara the Gurgumean, and it is worth noting that the ethnicon *Asdudāyya* is attested only here, apart from one occurrence in Sennacherib (*Annals*, ii 54, Oriental Institute cylinder). What is said about him there can by no means be fitted into the present context as a restoration nor reconciled even in part with the present [...]-*bu-ku* : “... he feared my weapons, left his wife, sons and daughters, fled to a district of Egypt of the border of Meluhha, and dwelt like a thief.” Other notices of Yamani too in Sargon’s inscriptions are also too detailed to be accommodated here (*Annals*, l. 264f. [Fuchs, *Khorsabad*]; Display Inscription, ll. 95–104 [Fuchs, *Khorsabad*]; Tang-i Var relief — G. Frame, “The Inscription of Sargon II at Tang-i Var,” *Orientalia* NS 68 (1999): 36 ll. 19–21).

[...]-*bu-ku* : most likely to represent a verb [x] *b/pk* (*ua*), 1/3 sing. pret. subj. Neither *šapāku* nor *tabāku* give such probable sense as *abāku*, thus restore [ ... *ša* ... *i]-bu-ku*, “[who ... de]ported.” A restoration of this sequence as “[capturer of Yamani the Ashdo]dite, [who de]ported [ ... ]” would have it conform to what has been noted as the general pattern of these entries.

ll. 24–25. Restoration from **PS 4**, ll. 40–45. The parallel passage of **DI XIV**, ll. 17–18 differ marginally: *ušakniš* for *mušakniš*; adds *erēb* <sup>d</sup>UTU-*ši* to *tamtim*. Being slightly longer, it is less likely to have been the version followed here.

ll. 25–26. The traces specifically fit with **KC**, l. 26. In particular the formulation *KUR hat-te-e lem-ni* is found in this context where elsewhere *hattû lemnu* or *lemnūti* are found.

It has thus been shown that the text of **B** side A has been put together from texts closely similar to the Khorsabad cylinders (**B** side A, ll. 2–18, 25–26), and to those of Display Inscription of room XIV and Pavement Slab 4 (**B** side A ll. 19–25). We may note that these are all Khorsabad texts.

This summary text must have been composed to serve as a prologue to the main text of the stele, which comprised a detailed narrative of Sargon's conquest of Hamath in 720 BC.

#### *The missing beginning*

If, as must be considered possible, this missing part of the text agreed completely with the **KC** text, since the first 10 lines of the latter are not represented, and approximately one of its lines corresponds to two lines of the former, then we must envisage the loss of some 20 lines or 50 cm by comparison with the preserved ll. 2–20. This looks as if it might be possible, though obviously a reexamination of this stele with this question in mind would be desirable. If it were thought that such an upward extension would be unlikely, then probably a shorter version of **KC**, ll. 1–10 introduced the stele.

#### *Omissions and additions by comparison with the KC text*

The **KC** text mentions no historical event later than the deportation of Ambaris of Tabal (l. 23, year 9 = 713 BC), and it presumably dates to shortly after that event — Khorsabad was being built since its foundation in year 5 = 717 BC. The lines corresponding to **KC**, ll. 18–22 and 25, which have been omitted, contained reference to the following conquests and dates:

- ll. 18. the Teseans and Tu'umuna (year 1 = 721 BC)
- 19. Bit-Humri, Egypt, Gaza (year 2 = 720 BC)
- 20. the Arabs (year 7 = 715 BC)
- 21. the Yamneans, relief of Que, Tyre (year 7 = 715 BC)
- 22. Kiakki of Sinuhtu (year 4 = 718 BC)
- 25. Yau-bi'di of Hamath (year 2 = 720 BC)

Between lines corresponding to **KC**, ll. 24 and 26, **B** side A has inserted (ll. 19–25) passages parallel to those of **DI XIV** and **PS 4**, relating to the conquests of Gunzinaanu of Melid, Tarhulara of Marqas, Yamani of Ashdod, and the 7 kings of Yadnana, dating to years before 10 = 712 BC, 11 = 711 BC, 10/11 = 712/711 BC, and 13/14 = 709/708 BC.

Comparison of the omission and insertion would suggest that reports on western conquests considered somewhat *passé* were excised in favour of more recent victories. We may note that the battle of Der (721 BC) and the conquest of Karkamiš (717 BC) were retained. An additional reason for the excision of the report of the conquest of Hamath, besides its outdated reference, could be that the detailed matter of the present inscription concerned just this topic.

#### *The missing lower part of the stele, B side A, ll. 27ff.*

We suppose that the remainder of **B** side A might have contained the following:

1. a final part of the prologue.
2. the beginning of the report of the conquest of Hamath, which ran over from the bottom of **B** side A to the preserved **B** side B.

1. The **KC** text, which **B** side A appears to have been following apart from the omissions and insertions noted, continues the notice of the conquest of Karkamiš (l. 26) with a long passage of Iranian affairs (ll. 2–33), which would have occupied some 14 lines of **B** side A. **KC** follows this in a longer version with a passage (omitted in a shorter version) ll. 34–43, praising Sargon as a bringer of agricultural prosperity. Both versions then proceed with an account of the building of Khorsabad. It seems most likely that none of this material appeared in the **B** side A text prologue.
2. **B** side B, ll. 1–8 corresponds line for line with the **CYPRUS** stele text, right side, ll. 57–61 (though this has nothing corresponding to ll. 6–7 of the former), and **B** side B, ll. 10–12 differ from **CYPRUS** stele right side, ll. 63–65, though conveying a similar message. **CYPRUS** stele right side ends at this point, an appropriate juncture. **B** side B, ll. 13–19 continues with a concluding blessing of the stele where it breaks off.

It seems likely that the first part of the Hamath report, preceding **B** side B, ll. 1ff., formed the bottom part of the text of **B** side A and coincided line for line with **CYPRUS** stele right side, ll. 51–56 (for which see side B, Commentary). From what has been said in the discussion above, it may be considered possible if not probable that minimally six lines corresponding to these were the sole loss from **B** side A following l. 26. Whether there were more, either of the prologue or of the historical report, cannot be known.

#### *Side B, transliteration*

1. 2 me <sup>giš</sup>GIGIR<sup>meš</sup> 6 me <sup>anše</sup>pít-hal-lum
2. <sup>giš</sup>ka-ba-bu <sup>giš</sup>as-ma-ru-ú
3. ina ŠĀ-bi-šú-nu ak-šur-ma
4. ina UGU ki-šir MAN-ti-ia ú-rad-di
5. 6 lim 3 me <sup>lú</sup>aš-šur-a-a EN hi-it-ti
6. gíl-la-su-nu a-miš-ma
7. ri-e-ma ar-ši-šú-nu-ti-ma
8. ina qí-rib KUR ha-mat-ti ú-še-šib-šú-nu-ti
9. GÚ.UN ma-da-tu za-bal ku-du-u-ri
10. a-lak KASKAL ki-i ša MAN<sup>meš</sup> AD<sup>meš</sup>-iá
11. a-na <sup>lir</sup>hu-li-na KUR a-ma-ta-a-a
12. e-mid-du e-mid-su-nu-ti
13. NUN EGIR-ú ip-šit AN.ŠAR
14. dam-qa-a-ti lit-ta-<sup>ri</sup>id-ma
15. ah-ra-taš pul-hat-su
16. li-šal-mi-da ar-ku-ti
17. UN<sup>meš</sup> KUR hat-ti ù KUR a-ri-me
18. a-ši-bu-tu KUR É <sup>l</sup>a-gu-si
19. ù KUR un-qi a-na paṭ gim-ri-[ša]
20. [ ... ]

#### *Translation*

(1) 200 chariots 600 cavalry (2) shield(-men), lance(-men) (3) I enrolled from among them (4), I added to my royal levy. (5) 6,300 Assyrians, the guilty ones, (6) their transgression I disregarded, (7) I had mercy on them, (8) I settled them in the land of Hamath. (9) Taxation, tribute, the bearing of the basket, (10) the going on campaign like that which the kings my fathers (11) on Irhuleni the Hamathite (12) had imposed I imposed on them.

(13) A future prince the fine deeds of Assur (14) let him ponder well, (15) hereafter fear of him (16) let him teach to posterity. (17) The people of Hatti and Aram, (18) the inhabitants of Bit-Agusi (19) and Unqi in its totality (20) [ ... ]

### Commentary

As noted, these lines constitute a continuation of the CYPRUS stele, right side ll. 51–56, overlapping with ll. 57–65, but amplifying this passage by the addition of ll. 6–7, and giving a somewhat different version of ll. 63–65 with ll. 9–12.

The beginning of the report on the CYPRUS stele reads:

51. KUR *a-ma-at-tu a-na paṭ g[im-ri-ša]*  
 52. *a-bu-biš as-p[u-un]*  
 53. <sup>l.D</sup>*ia-ú-bi-<sup>2</sup>di* LU[GAL]  
 54. *a-di kim-ti-šu<sup>lú</sup>mun-dah-ṣ[i-šu]*  
 55. *šal-lat KUR-šu ka-mu-us-[su]*  
 56. *a-na KUR aš-šur u[b-la]*

(51) The land of Hamath in its entirety (52) like the Deluge I flattened. (53) Yau-bi<sup>2</sup>di king of [Hamath] (54) together with his family, his warriors, (55) the booty of his land [I made come] out, (56) to the land of Assur [I brought them].

### BOROWSKI side B

ll. 1–4. Enrollment of Hamathites in the Assyrian army. Note that the parallel CYPRUS stele text reads 3 *me* <sup>giš</sup>GIGIR<sup>meš</sup> (right side l. 57), and *nāš* <sup>giš</sup>*kabābi* ... (l. 58).

l. 5. EN *hitti* : this phrase, providing the full reading for the damaged end of CYPRUS stele, right side, l. 61, has been noted by Lambert, Finet and Garelli, also Lawson Younger (above, footnotes 1, 3). Since this report belongs in the context of the events of 720 BC, though not appearing in any other inscription, the “guilty” Assyrians settled in Hamath are assumed to be those who opposed Sargon’s assumption of the throne in circumstances not clearly visible to us.

ll. 10–13. Irhuleni was Urhilina king of Hamath who joined with Damascus and other southern states including Israel to oppose Shalmaneser III in the years 853, 849, 848 and 845 BC. By 841 BC, Damascus faced Shalmaneser alone, which indicates that Hamath had somehow been detached from the alliance. The “kings my fathers” must refer solely to Shalmaneser III, who, significantly, never boasts of having subjected Irhuleni to tribute. See *RLA* 5/3–4 (1977): 162 s.v. Irhuleni.

l. 17. “Hatti and Aram”: the pairing of these two ethnic designations as an inclusive term covering the (Neo-) Hittite and Aramean states from Malatya to Damascus is found here for only the second time in Assyrian sources — cf. the Iran stele of Tiglath-pileser III (*Tadmor, Tiglath-pileser III*, 106 stele III A, l. 1).

It reflects an Old Testament usage: I *Kings* 10:29 = II *Chronicles* 1:17. Cf. my discussion in *RLA* 4/2–3 (1973): 152–59 s.v. Hatti: the 1<sup>st</sup> millennium BC. By the end of Sargon’s reign, following the deportations by Tiglath-pileser III and himself, the Neo-Hittite states had been almost completely wiped from the geo-political map, and the term “Hatti” survived as an increasingly anachronistic designation of the West.

ll. 18–19. KUR Bit-Agusi KUR Unqi: these states had technically ceased to exist in 740 and 738 BC, annexed by Tiglath-pileser III to become the Assyrian provinces of Arpad and Kullani, by

which names they were thereafter known. In fact Arpad seems to have preserved sufficient spirit to be found among those states joining the revolt led by Yau-bi'di of Hamath in 720 BC. But it is unclear why Sargon here revives these historic names more than thirty years after their disappearance. Perhaps because they were the first two states to fall to Tiglath-pileser's new policy of imperial annexation?

### *Provenance*

The title of the present article describes the BOROWSKI stele as being from Hama, which may call for some justification. The detailed historical report of the conquest of Hamath by Sargon in 720 BC which forms the main preserved part of the text is very suggestive in itself. Further the appearance of the stele in the hands of the antiquities dealer Fouad Alouf of Beirut at the same time as he was in possession of the upper part of the Hieroglyphic Luwian stele SHEIZAR must also be significant. (Sheizar is a castle controlling the crossing of the river Orontes by the Hama-Qal'at el Mudiq road; adjoining it is the village of Meharde (Maħrada), the source of another Hieroglyphic Luwian stele closely linked to that of Sheizar).

In my opinion a combination of the content of the stele and the fact of its appearance in Beirut in Alouf's possession at the relevant date creates a strong presumption of a provenance from the territory of ancient Hamath, where it would have been set up by Sargon in commemoration of his victory. The date and circumstances of its erection are considered further below. It would thus be a second example of such a victory stele alongside the ASHARNE stele.<sup>7</sup>

In fact it did occur to me that the two fragments might have been part of the same stele, but this idea cannot be supported. My inspection of the two pieces in 1974 in no way encouraged the supposition.<sup>8</sup> Also juxtaposition of the contexts as surviving on each piece produces no obvious continuity, indeed militates against the combination. Thus BOROWSKI would have to be the upper part: it is only some 0.38 m wide (side B, maximum width) as against ASHARNE's estimated 0.43 m,<sup>9</sup> and ASHARNE preserves a bottom of a column of writing (side B), while no inscribed area could easily be placed above BOROWSKI side B's unscripted upper part. But there is no way in which the surviving contexts as understood can be matched up. Thus:

<b>BOROWSKI</b>		
side A prologue adapted from texts written late in the reign	side B historical report (conquest of Hamath) blessing on stele	
<b>ASHARNE</b>		
side B historical report (conquest of Hamath) thanks to god Assur	side C report of setting up stele in Hamath blessings on stele	side D (little preserved, perhaps end of text)

The historical reports of the conquest of Hamath have a clear-cut end both on ASHARNE side B and BOROWSKI side B, to be followed by thanks to Assur (ASHARNE) and blessings to

<sup>7</sup> F. Thureau-Dangin, "La stele d'Asharné," *RA* 30 (1933): 53–56 with pl. I.

<sup>8</sup> Thureau-Dangin, *RA* 30 (1933): 53, stated that the Asharne stele was in Beirut Museum. It is now in Aleppo Museum, where I inspected it in 1974, before proceeding to Beirut to visit Alouf.

<sup>9</sup> As estimated by Thureau-Dangin, *RA* 30 (1933): 53.

stele (BOROWSKI) respectively. The blessings to the stele on either inscription appear to be mutually exclusive.

*Date and circumstances of erection*

It is thus probable that BOROWSKI represents another victory stele in addition to ASHARNE, set up in the territory of Hamath. There is no obvious indication in the text of ASHARNE that it was not set up at the time of Sargon's conquest of Hamath in 720 BC. Indeed the record on side C that several stelae were set up in the territory seems to support the view that this act followed closely on the conquest. BOROWSKI on the other hand, by its prologue incorporating material from the latest years of the reign (conquests of Gurgum and Ashdod, 711 BC, and particularly the submission of seven kings of Yadnana, 709/708 BC<sup>10</sup>) establishes itself among the latest texts of Sargon. This of course is somewhat surprising, and one may ask when and in what circumstances it was set up, especially since Sargon himself spent the years 710–706 BC in Babylonia against Marduk-apla-iddina, then at home inaugurating Dur-Šarruken. Only in 705 BC did he travel west again on his fatal campaign to Tabal.

The answer to this question seems to lie in the close connection apparent between the BOROWSKI and CYPRUS stelae, which shared as noted above, a closely similar report of the conquest of Hamath. The implication must surely be that the two stelae were written and set up at the same time. It is unclear why this piece of old history was inscribed on the CYPRUS stele as the only representative of Sargon's western conquests when there were many more recent exploits to record.<sup>11</sup> Its presence on the BOROWSKI stele has been taken as supporting evidence for a location in the territory of Hamath, though it also remains unclear why a new stele should have been set up here so late in the reign, some twelve years after the original conquest and erection of the ASHARNE and other stelae.

However this may be, both stelae record the submission of the seven kings of Yadnana, thus date to after this event, i.e. not before 709–708 BC, and it is of course likely that the CYPRUS stele was inscribed and sent to the island (or vice-versa) in the immediate aftermath of this submission. Since Sargon himself was not in the West in these years, it would seem that the erection of the stelae did not require his physical presence on campaign, unless they were actually dispatched to their destinations on the Tabal campaign of 705 BC before its fatal outcome.

An alternative line of enquiry might consider the relationship of the two inscriptions to the Kummuh campaign of 708 BC, when at least Sargon's generals were in the West with the army. Whether the stelae could have been set up during this period would depend on the chronological relationship between the events in Yadnana and those in Kummuh. Clearly they were close to contemporary, but it may be that the Yadnana sequence had a measure of chronological priority over that of Kummuh, as may be indicated by the placing in the Annals narrative of the former immediately before the latter. We may also note that no trace of a notice of the conquest of

<sup>10</sup> As noted by Fuchs, *Khorsabad*, 387 with n. 633. Other commentators, ignoring the evidence of side A, have dated Borowski also to the period of the conquest of Hamath: see W.G. Lambert in Muscarella, *Ladders*, 125, and K. Lawson Younger, Jr. in Hallo, *Scripture* 2, 294 nn. 1 and 3. The actual date of the submission of the 7 kings of Yadnana is uncertain. It is narrated in Sargon's Annals between the embassy from Mita of Muski received on the shore of the Persian gulf (in Bit-Yakin), and the account of the withholding of tribute by Mutallu of Kummuh and the subsequent conquest of Kummuh. See Fuchs, *Khorsabad*, 382, an ingenious attempt to sort out the dating of the incidents reported in the final passage of the Annals, especially the various embassies, according to where Sargon was when he received them. Thus for him, the submission of the seven kings made to Sargon in Babylon must thereby be dated to the 14<sup>th</sup> *palû* (708 BC), which relegates the erection of the Cyprus stele to the following year.

<sup>11</sup> The conquests of Melid (712 BC), Gurgum and Ashdod (711 BC) and especially Kummuh (708 BC).

Kummuh can be identified in BOROWSKI side A traces.<sup>12</sup> The CYPRUS stele of course reports no western conquests, early or recent, except that of Hamath.

Thus it would seem that the years 708 and 705 BC are possibilities for the year in which the BOROWSKI and CYPRUS stelae were erected in Hamath and Cyprus. Against 708 BC must be registered Fuchs' wish to date both to the 15<sup>th</sup> *palû* (707 BC), the year *after* the submission of the kings of Yadnana, dated by him to 708 BC while Sargon was in Babylon.<sup>13</sup> It seems to me however not impossible to telescope the submission and the stele erection into one year, 708 BC.

This probably is as far as speculation may usefully go. Whatever answers may be given to the problems connected with the BOROWSKI stele, I hope to have shown that these are of more interest than its fragmentary appearance might suggest.

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<sup>12</sup> Unless side A ll. 25–26, restored as describing the conquest of Pisiri of Karkamiš following Khorsabad cylinder text l. 26, could in the adaptation of the earlier material have been reapplied to Mutallu of Kummuh. Or possibly a passage referring to Kummuh could have been inserted as the lost l. 27.

<sup>13</sup> See above, n. 10.