

# BABYLONIAN CHRONOLOGY

626 B.C.-A.D. 75

BY

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AND

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## II KINGS' REIGNS

THE general basis for the chronology of the period here treated is furnished by the Ptolemaic Canon, with help from classical sources. Cuneiform chronicles and lists of kings have also been of considerable help in checking and improving on the general framework of chronology. The numerous cuneiform economic texts often furnish an accurate check on the lengths of reigns. Since these texts cover the larger part of the period, from 626 B.C. to the middle of the second century B.C., they are of prime importance. Dates from cuneiform astronomical texts are especially helpful for the chronology of the third and second centuries B.C.

The foundations for a study of this kind were laid by Kugler in his monumental studies *Sternkunde und Sterndienst in Babel* (1907-35) and *Von Moses bis Paulus* (1922) and by Sidersky's *Étude sur la chronologie assyro-babylonienne* (1916). For seventh-century chronology Streck's *Assurbanipal* (1916) is also essential. Important syntheses were achieved by Olmstead, "The Chaldaean dynasty," *Hebrew Union College Annual* II (1925) 29-55, and "Cuneiform texts and Hellenistic chronology," *Classical Philology* XXXII (1937) 1-14.

Recent studies which have helped to clarify Babylonian chronology are these:

André Aymard, "Du nouveau sur la chronologie des Séleucides," *Revue des Études Anciennes* LVII (1955) 102-12.

George G. Cameron, "Darius and Xerxes in Babylonia," *AJSL* LVIII (1941) 314-25.

George G. Cameron, "Darius, Egypt, and the 'lands beyond the sea,'" *JNES* II (1943) 307-13.

Waldo H. Dubberstein, "The chronology of Cyrus and Cambyses," *AJSL* LV (1938) 417-19.

Waldo H. Dubberstein, "Assyrian-Babylonian chronology (669-612 B.C.)," *JNES* III (1944) 38-42.

Albrecht Goetze, "Additions to Parker and Dubberstein's Babylonian chronology," *JNES* III 43-46.

Richard T. Hallock, "Darius I, the king of the Persepolis tablets," *JNES* I (1942) 230-32.

A. T. Olmstead, "Darius and his Behistun inscription," *AJSL* LV 392-416.

Richard A. Parker, "Darius and his Egyptian campaign," *AJSL* LVIII 373-77.

Richard A. Parker, "Persian and Egyptian chronology," *ibid.* pp. 285-301.

Arno Poebel, "Chronology of Darius' first year of reign," *AJSL* LV 142-65 and 285-314.

- Arno Poebel, "The duration of the reign of Smerdis, the Magian, and the reigns of Nebuchadnezzar III and Nebuchadnezzar IV," *AJSL* LVI (1939) 121-45.
- Arno Poebel, "The names and the order of the Old Persian and Elamite months during the Achaemenian period," *AJSL* LV 130-41.
- A. J. Sachs and D. J. Wiseman, "A Babylonian king list of the Hellenistic period," *Iraq* XVI (1954) 202-12.
- D. J. Wiseman, *Chronicles of Chaldaean Kings (626-556 B.C.) in the British Museum* (London, 1956).

Although Kugler (*SSB* II 438-63), Clay (*BE* VIII I, pp. 4-14), and others have given lists of kings and attempted to fix their reigns more exactly, most of such lists cover only parts of the entire period with which we are concerned. Moreover, the numerous economic texts published in the last forty years have made it possible to improve on their efforts in certain cases by correcting their dates, especially those preceding the fourth century B.C. For the Seleucid and Arsacid periods less improvement is possible, but we have given a full list of rulers in order that our tables may be complete.<sup>1</sup>

#### NABOPOLASSAR

##### *Evidence for End of Kandalanu's Reign*

- II/6/21, Babylon (unpub. text *YBC* 11428, Goetze, *JNES* III [1944] 44).
- II/1/3/21, Sippar (J. Oppert in *ZA* VII [1892] 341).
- VIII/—/21, Babylon (BM 36514, D. J. Wiseman, *Chronicles of Chaldaean Kings (626-556 B.C.) in the British Museum* [London, 1956] Pl. 21).
- VIII/2/22 (Oct. 30, 626), Babylon (BM 40039, Wiseman, *op. cit.* Pl. 19 and p. 89).

The last two tablets are dated in years 21/22 "after" (*arki*; not "of") Kandalanu, from which we must now conclude that while his death took place in the interval between II/13/21 and VIII/—/21 (May to November 627 B.C.) his reign was carried artificially on to fill the interregnum up to the accession of Nabopolassar; see Wiseman, *op. cit.* 89-90.

##### *Evidence for Beginning of Nabopolassar's Reign*

- II/13 or 16 or 19/acc. (May 17 etc., 626) (unpub. text *NCBT* 557, Goetze, *op. cit.* p. 44).
- VI/22/acc. (Sept. 21, 626), Sippar (BM 49656, Wiseman, *op. cit.* Pl. 21 and p. 93).

The Chronicle (BM 25127, ll. 14-15, Wiseman, *op. cit.* pp. 7, 51 and 93) has Nabopolassar formally occupying the throne in Babylon on VIII/26/acc. (Nov. 23, 662). From the tablets it would appear that his authority was recognized elsewhere in the country before that date.

##### *Evidence for End of Nabopolassar's Reign*

- II/—/21, Sippar (J. Strassmaier in *ZA* IV [1889] 121 f. and 145-47, No. 19).

<sup>1</sup> Wherever the city is not given in this list, it is missing on the tablet also, and the source cannot be established by other data. All dates are B.C. Missing days, months, or years are indicated by means of dashes.

II/6/21 (May 16, 605) (unpub. text YBC 4150, Goetze, *op. cit.* p. 44).

V/1/21 (Aug. 8, 605) (Moore, *NBD*, No. 35).<sup>2</sup>

V/1/21, KUR.A.DAN.ŠU (unpub. text, Oriental Institute A 5302).

V/8/21 (Aug. 15, 605), death of Nabopolassar according to the Chronicle (BM 21946, l. 10, Wiseman, *op. cit.* pp. 26 and 69).

#### NEBUCHADNEZZAR II

##### *Evidence for Beginning of Reign*

VI/1/acc. (Sept. 7, 605), Nebuchadnezzar ascends the throne in Babylon (Chronicle, BM 21946. ll. 10–11, Wiseman, *op. cit.* pp. 27 and 69).

VI/12/acc. (Sept. 18, 605) (unpub. text NBC 4746, Goetze, *op. cit.* p. 44).

VI/18/acc. (Sept. 24, 605), Sippar (unpub. text BM 49524, Wiseman, *op. cit.*, p. 85, note to l. 11).

VII/5/acc. (Oct. 11, 605) (BM 92472 = Strassmaier, *Nabuchodonosor*, No. 2).

A collation by Sachs and Wiseman has shown that the text from Sippar (Strassmaier, *loc. cit.*) thought to be from the 4th month is correctly to be dated VII/—/acc.

##### *Evidence for End of Reign*

VI/14/43 (Sept. 26, 562), Uruk (Pohl, *NBRU* I 18).

VI/21/43 (Oct. 3, 562), Uruk (unpub. text NCBT 286, Goetze, *op. cit.* p. 44).

VI/26/43 (Oct. 8, 562), Uruk (Contenau, *TCL* XII 58).

The first tablet dated to Amel-Marduk (see below) comes from Sippar(?) and is dated on the same day as the last tablet of Nebuchadnezzar from Uruk. Accordingly Nebuchadnezzar died during the first days of October, 562.

#### AMEL-MARDUK

##### *Evidence for Beginning of Reign*

VI/26/acc. (Oct. 8, 562), Sippar? (B. T. A. Evetts, *Inscriptions of the Reigns of Evil-Merodach, Neriglissar, and Laborosoarchod* ["Babylonische Texte" [III] Heft 6 B (Leipzig, 1892)] Evil-Merodach, No. 1).

VII/19/acc. (Oct. 31, 562), Babylon (*ibid.* No. 2).

##### *Evidence for End of Reign*

V/13/2 (Aug. 3, 560), Babylon (unpub. text YBC 3692, Goetze, *op. cit.* p. 44).

V/17/2 (Aug. 7, 560) (Clay, *BE* VIII 1, No. 34).

Since the first text dated to Nergal-shar-usur was written at Babylon six days after the Clay text, the date of Amel-Marduk's death may be fixed between August 7 and August 13, 560.

#### NERGAL-SHAR-USUR

##### *Evidence for Beginning of Reign*

V/23/acc. (Aug. 13, 560), [Babylon?] (*VAS* III 40)

V/27/acc. (Aug. 17, 560), Uruk (unpub. text NBC 4584, Goetze, *op. cit.* p. 44).

##### *Evidence for End of Reign*

I/2/4 (Apr. 12, 556), Shahrinu (Evetts, *op. cit.*, Neriglissar, Nos. 68 and 69).

I?/6/4 (Apr. 16, 556), Uruk (unpub. text YBC 3433, Goetze, *op. cit.* p. 44).

Nergal-shar-usur's death occurred in late April or early May, 556.

<sup>2</sup> Editor gives Babylon as place of origin, but evidence to confirm this seems lacking.

## LABASHI-MARDUK

*Evidence for Beginning of Reign*

I/23/acc. (May 3, 556), Uruk (unpub. text *NBC* 4534, *ibid.*).

II/12/acc. (May 22, 556), Sippar? (Evetts, *op. cit.*, Laborosoarchod, No. 2).

*Evidence for End of Reign*

III/9/acc. (June 17, 556) (Strassmaier in *Actes du huitième Congrès international des orientalistes, tenu en 1889 à Stockholm et à Christiania*, 2. partie [Leide, 1893] section sémitique [B] at end, No. 15)

III/12/acc. (June 20, 556), Sippar? (Evetts, *op. cit.*, Laborosoarchod, No. 1).

Labashi-Marduk seems to have been recognized as king only in May and June, 556, and even then possibly not throughout Babylonia (see under NABUNAIID). Berossus (frag. 14) *apud* Josephus *Against Apion* i. 20 states that Labashi-Marduk ruled nine (ἐννέα) months. If Berossus' own manuscript used a numeral instead of the spelled-out number, confusion between  $\theta$  (9) and  $\beta$  (2) could easily have arisen; hence the original text may have said 2 months.

## NABUNAIID

*Evidence for Beginning of Reign*

II/15/acc. (May 25, 556), NA.ŠU.ŠA.KU.NA (Clay, *BE* VIII 1, No. 39).

III/1/acc. (June 9, 556), Sippar? (*VAS* VI 65; see Kugler, *SSB* II 405-8).

III/18/acc. (June 26, 556), Sippar (Strassmaier, *Nabonidus*, No. 1).

III/23/acc. (July 1, 556) Uruk (Dougherty, *REN*, No. 1).<sup>3</sup>

III/26/acc. (July 4, 556), Sippar (Strassmaier, *Nabonidus*, No. 2).

Nabunaid must have been a contender for the throne almost from the death of Nergal-shar-usur. By the end of June, 556, he was sole ruler of Babylonia.

*Evidence for End of Reign*

VI/3/17 to VI/28/17 (Aug. 31 to Sept. 25, 539), chiefly from Babylon and Sippar (Strassmaier, *Nabonidus*, Nos. 1046-52).

VI/6/17 (Sept. 3, 539), Uruk (Contenau, *TCL* XII 121; line 19 reads VI/6/18, but in line 1 the date is given as VI/6/17; year 18 is impossible, so we assume either a scribal error or an error by Contenau).

VI/25/17 (Sept. 22, 539) (unpub. text *MLC* 1011, Goetze, *op. cit.* p. 44).

VII/4?/17 (Sept. 30, 539), Larsa (unpub. text *YBC* 7385, *ibid.*).

VII/8/17 (Oct. 4, 539), Uruk (Dougherty, *REN*, No. 189).

VII/17/17 (Oct. 13, 539), Uruk (Dougherty, *GCCI* I 390).

The Nabunaid Chronicle (last published by Smith, *BHT*, pp. 98-123 and Pls. XI-XIV) iii 14-18 states that Sippar fell to Persian forces VII/14/17 (Oct. 10, 539), that Babylon fell VII/16/17 (Oct. 12), and that Cyrus entered Babylon VIII/3/17 (Oct. 29). This fixes the end of Nabunaid's reign and the beginning of the reign of Cyrus. Interestingly enough, the last tablet dated to Nabunaid from Uruk is dated the day after Babylon fell to Cyrus. News of its capture had not yet reached the southern city some 125 miles distant. Strassmaier, *Nabonidus*, No. 1054, has the date VIII/10/17; but the month sign is shaded, and in view of known facts this date cannot be accepted. No. 1055 is dated to

<sup>3</sup> Goetze (*op. cit.* p. 44) doubts the correctness of the date.

IX/—/17 by Strassmaier on the basis of the giving of the *maššartum* for the IX/—/17 of Nabunaid (lines 2–4). Since a *maššartum* was often given some months in advance (see Strassmaier, *Nabonidus*, Nos. 219, 346, 361) this tablet is useless for exact dating purposes. This fact was recognized by Kugler, *SSB* II 388 f., but not by Clay, *BE* VIII 1, pp. 4 f.

## CYRUS

### *Evidence for Beginning of Reign*

VII/14/acc. (Oct. 10, 539), Sippar is taken by Persian forces.

VII/16/acc. (Oct. 12), Babylon falls.

VIII/3/acc. (Oct. 29), Cyrus enters Babylon.

These dates are from the Nabunaid Chronicle (see under NABUNAIID).

VII/—/acc. (not later than Oct. 26, 539) (Strassmaier, *Cyrus*, No. 1).

VIII/24/acc. (Nov. 19, 539) (*ibid.* No. 2).

X/21/acc. (Jan. 14, 538), Uruk (Tremayne, *RECC*, No. 1).

### *Evidence for End of Reign*

IV/7/9 (June 28, 530), Babylon (Strassmaier, *Cyrus*, No. 340).

IV/27/9 (July 18, 530), Babylon (*ibid.* No. 341).

V/13/9 (Aug. 2, 530), Nippur (Clay, *BE* VIII 1, No. 74).

V/23/9 (Aug. 12, 530), Borsippa (*VAS* V 42).

Coregency of Cyrus and Cambyses probably began Nisanu 1 (March 26), 530; see Kugler, *SSB* II 397–401, and Dubberstein in *AJS* LV (1938) 417–19. The death of Cyrus while he was fighting on the northeastern front was probably reported in Babylon in August, 530, whereupon Cambyses was recognized as sole king.

## CAMBYSES

### *Evidence for Beginning of Reign*

VI/12/acc. (Aug. 31, 530), Babylon (Strassmaier, *Cambyses*, No. 1).

VI/16/acc. (Sept. 4, 530), Babylon (*ibid.* No. 2).

VI/20/acc. (Sept. 8, 530), Babylon (*ibid.* No. 3).

### *Evidence for End of Reign*

I/4? and 5/8 (Mar. 30? and 31, 522), Sippar (*ibid.* Nos. 407 and 408).

I/12/8 (Apr. 7, 522), Uruk (Dougherty, *GCCI* II 106).

I/10+x/8 (Apr. 5+x, 522), Nippur (Clay, *BE* VIII 1, No. 71).

I/23/8 (Apr. 18, 522), Shahrinu (Strassmaier, *Cambyses*, No. 409).

For the period from the death of Cambyses to the 2d year of Darius I consult the articles listed in the introduction to this section. Those articles are essential to an understanding of these complex years. As the evidence indicates, Cambyses was still recognized in April, 522. The Behistun inscription, § 11, seems to indicate that he did not die until after July 1, 522 (after IV/9/8). However, his successor, Bardiya, was certainly recognized in Babylonia already in months I and II (see under BARDIYA).

## BARDIYA (SMERDIS, GAUMATA)

### *Evidence for Beginning of Reign*

XII/14/— (Mar. 11, 522), Bardiya revolts in Persia (Behistun, § 11).

I/19/1 (Apr. 14, 522), Hubadishu? (Strassmaier in *ZA* IV 123–25 and 148 f., No. 2).

I/—/acc. (II began Apr. 25, 522), Babylon (*ibid.* pp. 123 and 147 f., No. 1).

III/6/acc. (May 30, 522), Babylon (*VAS* IV 85).

III/23/1 (June 16, 522), Sippar (Strassmaier in *ZA* IV 125 f. and 149, No. 3).

IV/9/— (July 1, 522), entire empire seized by Bardiya (Behistun, § 11).

On the confusion of accession year and year 1 in this reign see Cameron in *AJSL* LVIII (1941) 314 f.

#### *Evidence for End of Reign*

VI/20/1 (Sept. 9, 522), Babylon (Strassmaier in *ZA* IV 127 f. and 151 f., No. 8).

VII/1/1 (Sept. 20, 522), Babylon (*ibid.* pp. 128 and 152, No. 9).

VII/10/— (Sept. 29, 522), Bardiya killed by Darius (Behistun, § 13).

#### NEBUCHADNEZZAR III (NIDINTU-BEL)

##### *Evidence for Beginning of Reign*

VII/14/— (Oct. 3, 522), Sippar (Strassmaier, *Nabuchodonosor*, No. 1, gives as 4th month; G. G. Cameron in *AJSL* LVIII 317 f. suggests as probable an emendation to 7th; a recent collation by Sachs approves 7th as certain).

VII/17/— (Oct. 6, 522), Babylon (Strassmaier, *Nabuchodonosor*, No. 3).

VII/20/— (Oct. 9, 522), Babylon (*ibid.* No. 4).

##### *Evidence for End of Reign*

IX/7/— (Nov. 24, 522), Borsippa (Krückmann, *NBRVT*, No. 6).

IX/20/— (Dec. 7, 522), Babylon (Strassmaier, *Nabuchodonosor*, No. 9).

IX/21/— (Dec. 8, 522), Babylon (*ibid.* No. 10).

IX/26/— (Dec. 13, 522), Darius defeats Nebuchadnezzar III at the Tigris River (Behistun, § 18).

X/2/— (Dec. 18, 522), Darius defeats Nebuchadnezzar at the Euphrates River near *Zazannu*. Shortly thereafter he captures and kills Nebuchadnezzar in Babylon (Behistun, §§ 19 and 20).

#### DARIUS I

##### *Evidence for Beginning of Reign*

X/6, 24, 25 and XI/6/acc. (Dec. 22, 522, and Jan. 9, 10, and 21, 521), Babylon (F. H. Weissbach, *Babylonische Miscellen* [Leipzig, 1903] Pl. 15, No. 3).

These four dates are mentioned in the text, which is not dated but was probably written in month XI. Hence this text does not prove conclusively that Darius already held Babylon on December 22, 522.

XI/20/acc. (Feb. 4, 521), Sippar (Strassmaier, *Darius*, No. 1).

XI/25/acc. (Feb. 9, 521), Kutha (unpublished text, Oriental Institute A 729).

Darius I continued to be recognized as king in Babylonia until VI/1/1 (Sept. 8, 521). Then came the revolt of Nebuchadnezzar IV.

##### *Evidence for Darius' Rule in Babylonia before the Revolt of Nebuchadnezzar IV*

V/17/1 (Aug. 26, 521), Sippar (Strassmaier, *Darius*, No. 17).

V/18/1 (Aug. 27, 521), Sippar (*ibid.* No. 18).

VI/1/1 (Sept. 8, 521) Sippar (*ibid.* No. 19).

Both Poebel in *AJSL* LVI (1939) 135 and 138 and Cameron in *AJSL* LVIII (1941) 318 f. accept Strassmaier, *Darius*, No. 20, as dating to an unknown day of month VII, year 1. Actually, the year number is damaged and might easily have been 2 or 3. This lone tablet cannot prove that Darius held Sippar in month VII, year 1, especially since there is contradictory evidence (see under NEBUCHADNEZZAR IV)

#### NEBUCHADNEZZAR IV (ARAKA)

##### *Evidence for Beginning of Reign*

V/16/1 (Aug. 25, 521), *al Ga-di-e-ti* (unpub. text YBC 4049, Goetze, *op. cit.* p. 45).

V/24/1 (Sept. 2, 521), Uruk (unpub. text YBC 7386, *ibid.*).

V/26/1 (Sept. 4, 521), Uruk (unpub. text NCBT 364, *ibid.*).

##### *Evidence for End of Reign*

VII/13/1 (Oct. 20, 521), Uruk (Keiser, *LCE*, No. 99).

VII/16/1 (Oct. 23, 521), Babylon (Strassmaier, *Nabuchodonosor*, No. 17).

VII/27/1 (Nov. 3, 521), Sippar (*ibid.* No. 18).

VIII/22/1 (Nov. 27, 521), capture of Nebuchadnezzar IV by Persian forces (Behistun, §§ 49 and 50).

Cameron, *loc. cit.*, accepts Strassmaier, *Nabuchodonosor*, No. 12, as evidence that Nebuchadnezzar IV had already revolted in month IV (before Aug. 10, 521) and was recognized in Babylon. The month sign and the year sign are damaged; hence this tablet's date remains uncertain. The uncertainty is increased when the list of tablets dated to Nebuchadnezzar IV (given above) is inspected. The rather closely bunched tablets begin September 9 and carry through to November 3. Between the first certain tablet and the tablet from month IV used by Cameron there is a lacuna of a full month and possibly two months.

The following interpretation is offered: After the defeat and death of Nebuchadnezzar III late in December, 522, Darius I was recognized as ruler of Babylonia until the beginning of September, 521. Toward late August Nebuchadnezzar IV revolted and was recognized as king of Babylonia until late in November, 521. The army sent by Darius achieved the defeat and capture of Nebuchadnezzar on November 27, 521.

#### DARIUS I

##### *Evidence for Reacceptance of Darius after Defeat of Nebuchadnezzar IV*

IX/20/1 (Dec. 25, 521), Borsippa (Clay, *BE* VIII 1, No. 103).

X/5/1 (Jan. 8, 520), Sippar (Strassmaier, *Darius*, No. 22).

X/22/1 (Jan. 25, 520), Babylon (*VAS* IV 89).

##### *Evidence for End of Reign*

VI/13/36 (Sept. 24, 486), Dilbat (*VAS* III 165).

VI/19/36 (Sept. 30, 486), Dilbat (*VAS* V 110).

VII/16/36 (Oct. 27, 486), Sippar (unpub. text YBC 7421, Goetze, *op. cit.* p. 45).

VII/27?/36 (Nov. 7?, 486), Borsippa (*VAS* IV 180). The day numeral is damaged and may have been 17 instead of 27, though there seems to be space for a lost 10.

According to this evidence Darius I died in November, 486.

#### XERXES

##### *Evidence for Beginning of Reign*

VIII/22/acc. (Dec. 1, 486), Borsippa (*VAS* V 117).

X/7/acc. (Jan. 14, 485) (Strassmaier in *Actes* . . . , No. 16).

*VAS* VI 177, from the accession year of Xerxes, has the month sign damaged. It might be IX but more probably is XII. *VAS* VI 182, from Borsippa, is dated to month XI of Xerxes; day and year are broken away. In lines 7 f. there is a reference to month IX of year 36. While no king is mentioned, it is certainly Darius I, who presumably was succeeded by Xerxes in month VIII. It seems probable that the date IX/36 given in this contract is anticipatory, in connection with the delivery of specified quantities of malt beverage. Hence it should not be used to determine the length of the reign of Darius I.

#### BEL-SHIMANNI, SHAMASH-ERIBA

Cameron in *AJS* LVIII 319-25 has shown the probability that the revolts of Bel-shimanni and Shamash-eriba fall into the 4th year of Xerxes' reign. The revolts were of short duration but apparently brought about a change in royal titulary on Babylonian tablets and possibly the destruction of Babylon. The evidence for the length of the reign of each of these two kings has been presented by Cameron. Here it is merely abstracted and assigned to the 4th year.

Tablet evidence for the rule of Bel-shimanni includes only the period from V/10?/acc. (Aug. 9?, 482) to VI/1 acc. (Aug. 29, 482).

Tablet evidence for the rule of Shamash-eriba includes the period from VI/25/acc. (Sept. 22, 482) to VII/23/acc. (Oct. 20, 482).

#### XERXES

##### *Evidence for End of Reign*

VI/10/16 (Sept. 24, 470), *Bitu eš-šú* (suburb of Borsippa) (*VAS* III 184).

X-XII/—/20 (XII ends Mar. 24, 465), Persepolis (unpub. text, Oriental Institute A 23253 [courtesy of Professor Cameron]).

V/14?-18?/21 (Aug. 4?-8?, 465), death by murder of Xerxes (unpub. eclipse text BM 32234 = S† 76-11-17, 1961, rev. II' 4' described *LBART* No.

\*1419. The day number is imperfectly preserved and all numbers from 14 to 18 are possible [Sachs]).

#### ARTAXERXES I

##### *Evidence for Beginning of Reign*

III/—/1 (III begins June 11, 464), Persepolis (unpub. text, Teheran, Iran, PT 4 441 [Cameron]).

I-IV/—/1 (IV ends Aug. 9, 464), Persepolis (unpub. text, Oriental Institute A 23324 [Cameron]).

VII/4/1 (Oct. 12, 464), Nippur (Krückmann, *NBRVT*, No. 142).

VII/5/1 (Oct. 13, 464), Borsippa (Clay, *BE VIII* 1, No. 121).

*Evidence for End of Reign*

IX/12/41 (Dec. 24, 424), Nippur (Clay, *BE IX* 108).

XI/17/41 (Feb. 26, 423), *TAR-ba-a-a* (Clay, *BE IX* 109).

Clay in *BE X*, page 2, suggests that the last date may incorporate a scribal error, in view of the evidence for the beginning of the reign of Darius II given below. It is also possible that news of the change in rulers had not yet reached the little village near Nippur. Clay (*loc. cit.*) refers also to an unpublished text, C.B.M. 5310, dated to Artaxerxes, XI/3/41. However, a tablet bearing the number C.B.S. 5310 (presumably the same text) was published by Clay himself a few years later (*PBS II* 1, No. 17). Its date is clearly XI/3/1, Darius. Since there seems to be some confusion, the date from the unpublished text cannot be used.

There is no evidence in cuneiform tablets accepted as contemporary that Xerxes II was ever acknowledged as king in Babylonia. Artaxerxes I was recognized as king until the end of December, 424, and possibly even as late as the following February. Certainly Darius II was king, and tablets were dated to him, by the middle of February, 423.

**DARIUS II**

*Evidence for Beginning of Reign*

XI/4/acc. (Feb. 13, 423), Babylon (Clay, *BE X* 1 [republished by Krückmann, *NBRVT*, No. 29]).

XI/15/acc. (Feb. 24, 423), Nippur (Clay, *BE X* 2 and 3).

XII/17/acc. (Mar. 28, 423), Nippur (Clay, *BE X* 5).

Two tablets have unusual date formulas. Clay, *BE X* 4 (republished by Krückmann, *NBRVT*, No. 216), and Clay, *BE VIII* 1, No. 127, are dated "41st year, accession year, 12th month" (latter text wrongly "51st year"), the 14th and 20th days respectively of "Darius, king of lands." An unpublished economic text BM 33342 (Sachs) is dated "4th month, day 25(?), 41st year, accession year, Darius, king of lands."

*Evidence for End of Reign*

VI<sub>2</sub>/2/16 (Sept. 20, 408), Ur (Figulla, *UET IV* 93; the intercalary month fixes the date to year 16 of Darius II).

There is no evidence from contemporary business documents for the years 17 to 19 of Darius II, nor are there dated tablets from the accession year of Artaxerxes II. Artaxerxes II was recognized as king before April, 404.

The lengths of the king's reigns from here on are established chiefly by use of the well known Ptolemaic Canon, of the Saros Tablet (Strassmaier in *ZA VII* [1892] 198–201 and in *ZA VIII* [1893] 106–8; Kugler, *SSB II* 363–66), and of the valuable Saros Canon (Joseph Epping and Strassmaier in *ZA VIII* 149–78 and Strassmaier in *ZA X* [1895] 64–69; photographs and a new transliteration were made available through the courtesy of Professor Otto Neugebauer). Additional chronological information from cuneiform texts as well as from

Greek sources was quoted and used by Kugler, *SSB* II 362-438. It has not been thought necessary to repeat evidence of a general character for the lengths of reigns. Our conversion tables indicate the years assigned to the several rulers on the basis of the materials listed above.

#### ARTAXERXES II

##### *Evidence for Beginning of Reign*

II/25/1 (June 3, 404), Ur (Figulla, *UET* IV 60).

VII/28/1 (Nov. 1, 404), Nippur (Clay, *BE* IX 1).

##### *Evidence for End of Reign*

VIII/10/46 (Nov. 25, 359), Babylon (*VAS* VI 186; the year numeral is damaged slightly but was read as "46" by Arthur Ungnad).

Artaxerxes II died and was succeeded by Artaxerxes III between late November, 359, and April, 358.

#### ARTAXERXES III

Accession date indicated by evidence given under ARTAXERXES II. No contemporary cuneiform documents help to establish his twenty-one years of rule, which ended in 338/37.

#### ARSES

No contemporary evidence is available for his rule of two years (338/37 to 336/35). He is recognized in the lists referred to under DARIUS II.

#### DARIUS III

No certain contemporary evidence for his rule of five years. See references under DARIUS II. The Ptolemaic Canon gives Darius III a four-year rule in Egypt. Cuneiform evidence gives Darius III five years in Babylonia.

#### ALEXANDER III THE GREAT

Alexander was recognized in Egypt probably shortly after his invasion, late in 332. He was recognized in Babylon after Gaugamela in October, 331. Cuneiform evidence for the period of Alexander is confused, since two systems of dating were used. One system reckoned year 1 of Alexander as beginning April 3, 330; the other counted from his Macedonian accession, with year 1 as 336, since Macedonian usage did not have an "accession year." The few dated business tablets<sup>4</sup> are not decisive in determining contemporary practice.

#### PHILIP ARRHIDAEUS

Recognized as king after Alexander's death, in the summer of 323. The Saros Canon and the Diadochi Chronicle (published by Smith, *BHT*, pp. 124-49 and

<sup>4</sup> Three listed by Krückmann, *BRVU*, p. 20. But Olmstead in *Classical Philology* XXXII (1937) 4 says: "We have no published cuneiform records from Alexander the Great; those formerly so attributed come from the reign of his son of the same name." See also the references under DARIUS II. Alexander's death probably occurred on the 1st of Simanu (June 13), 323. With Alexander the well-known device of the "accession year" disappears from Babylonian usage, and the part of the regnal year remaining after the death of the previous ruler is reckoned as "year 1" of his successor.

Pls. XV–XVII) both count 323 as his year 1. The Diadochi Chronicle records events up to and including his 8th year (316). This dating is borne out by the business documents. The last document dated to Philip is of V/20/8 (Aug. 13, 316), Uruk (Contenau, *TCL XIII* 249). The Saros Canon, which is not contemporary, recognizes Antigonos as ruling in 317. The Saros Tablet, likewise not contemporary, apparently has the rule of Antigonos beginning in 316. Since Antigonos is never given the title of “king” in contemporary documents but is always called *rab uqu/a* (“general”), he should not be placed in the list of official kings. See on Philip and his successors Krückmann, *BRVU*, pp. 20 f.; T. G. Pinches in *PSBA VI* (1883/84) 204; Sidney Smith in *RA XXII* (1925) 179–97.

#### ALEXANDER (IV), SON OF ALEXANDER

Recognized as the successor of Philip in 316, which was year 8 for Philip and automatically became Alexander’s year 1, even though Antigonos remained the recognized authority behind the king. The Diadochi Chronicle makes it certain that Alexander was the official king up to his 9th year (308); Pinches in *PSBA VI* 204 refers to the existence of dated documents of his 10th year (307/6); and the new king list reckoned him as king to year 6 (S.E.). This dating is valid despite the Greek evidence, which indicates that Alexander and his mother were murdered probably in 310/9. Apparently the fiction of kingship was carried on after the death of the young Alexander.

#### SELEUCUS I NICATOR

In Syria Seleucus I began his official reign in the autumn of 312, shortly after he had taken Babylon. In Babylonia the fiction of the royal house of Macedonia continued as above indicated until some time in 306/5, possibly even later. However, when documents were dated to Seleucus I (earliest published text I/3/8 [Apr. 16, 304], *CT IV* [29 d]) in Babylonia, the first year of the king was officially reckoned as having begun on New Year’s Day, April 3, 311, a few months after Seleucus had conquered Babylon.

#### SELEUCID ERA

Beginning with Seleucus I the Babylonian scribe, who still wrote cuneiform, made one further innovation. He now not only had no “accession years,” but he dated continuously after 311, according to the era of Seleucus.<sup>5</sup> The beginnings and ends of reigns cannot always be determined with the exactitude which was possible in the earlier periods. However, the nineteen-year cycle had long been fixed, and there is no difficulty in establishing the calendar or in translating Seleucid or Arsacid dates into Julian dates.

With few exceptions all known economic texts have been listed by Krückmann, *BRVU*, pp. 20–23. Kugler in his extensive *SSB* has covered most of the chronological material which can be extracted from the astronomical texts. Olmstead in *Classical Philology XXXII* (1937) 1–14; N. C. Debevoise, *A Political History of Parthia* (Chicago, 1938); and Kugler, *SSB II* 438–63 and *Von Moses bis Paulus*

<sup>5</sup> In the Macedonian calendar the Seleucid era began with Dios 1 (Oct. 7), 312 B.C.; in the Babylonian it began with Nisanu 1 (Apr. 3), 311 B.C.

(Münster, 1922), pp. 309–44, have combined and ordered our knowledge of the chronology of this period. Of primary importance is the recent publication by A. J. Sachs and D. J. Wiseman, "A Babylonian king list of the Hellenistic period," *Iraq* XVI (1954) 202–12, which has been commented upon by André Aymard, "Du nouveau sur la chronologie des Séleucides," *Revue des Études Anciennes* LVII (1955) 102–12.

Using the cuneiform evidence presented in these studies, we offer this summary of the beginnings and ends of the reigns of Seleucid rulers. Where references for earliest and latest dates are already given in Kugler, *Von Moses bis Paulus*, or in Krückmann, *BRVU*, merely the author's name is indicated. New references are given in full.

## SELEUCUS I

*Latest Date*

XII/2/19 (Mar. 5, 292) (Kugler).

## SELEUCUS I and ANTIOCHUS I SOTER

*Earliest Date*

IX/20/20 (Dec. 13, 292) (Kugler).

*Latest Date*

VI/—/31 (ends Sept. 24, 281) (Sachs-Wiseman, *King list*; death of Seleucus).

The following date is anachronistic.

IX/10/31 (Dec. 2, 281) (Kugler).

## ANTIOCHUS I and SELEUCUS

*Earliest Date*

Year 32, no month, no day (Apr. 19, 280–Apr. 7, 279) (Kugler).

*Latest Date*

I/—/45 (ends Apr. 25, 267) (*LBART* Nos. 1220, \*1221).

## ANTIOCHUS I and ANTIOCHUS II THEOS

*Earliest Date*

Year 46, no month, no day (Apr. 15, 266–Apr. 3, 265) (Kugler).

The text which we had taken as year 45 (Clay, *BRLM* II, No. 11 and p. 84 = *MLC* 2111) has been re-examined by Goetze, *op. cit.* p. 46, and he believes the reading to be 47.

*Latest Date*

II/16/51 (June 2, 51) (Sachs-Wiseman, *King list*; death of Antiochus).

## ANTIOCHUS II THEOS

*Earliest Date*

VII/17/51 (Oct. 30, 261) (Krückmann).

*Latest Date*

V/—/66 (ends Aug. 29, 246) (Sachs-Wiseman, *King list*; death of Antiochus).