

4. BABYLONIAN KING LIST

Sources, Textual Evidence³³²

- **Old Babylonian KL**, generally known as the **SKL**: for instance W.-B. 444: SCHMIDTKE (1952) 70ff. and table 1. The SKL also catalogues the rulers of the Ur III and the Isin I dynasties.
- **BKL A**: BM 33332, CT 36, 24 and 25. SCHMIDTKE (1952) 77ff. and tables 2 and 3; BRINKMAN, PHPKB 36–67 and MSKH; GRAYSON (1980–1983) 90–96
- **BKL B**: BM 38122, PINCHES, *PSBA* 3 (1881) 21–22. SCHMIDTKE (1952) 80f. and table 4; ROST, *MVAeG* 2/II (1987), 240, table 1; GRAYSON (1980–1983) 100
- **BKL C**: POEBEL (1955); BRINKMAN, PHPKB 83; GRAYSON (1980–1983) 96–97
- **Ur-Isin KL** also referred to as “**Erlenmeyer-list**”: SOLLBERGER, *JCS* 8 (1954) 135–136 (two exemplars: text A+text B); GRAYSON (1980–1983) 90
- **Larsa KL**: YBC 2142, YOS 1, 32. THUREAU-DANGIN, *RA* 15 (1918) 2–3; GOETZE, *JCS* 4 (1952) 99–100; SCHMIDTKE (1952) 77; EDZARD (1957) 22; GRAYSON, *ABC* 267
- **Dynastic Chronicle (ABC no. 18)**: BM 35572+; published as a chronicle.³³³ See GRAYSON, *ABC* 40–42 for further details and (1980–1983) 89; FINKEL, *JCS* 32 (1980) 65–72 (bilingual fragments: BM 35572 and BM 40565) (→ **SKL**)

General Features

Unlike the AKL, which is basically one text preserved in several duplicates, the BKL consists of various non-duplicating versions. This means that each BKL text must be treated individually before it can be combined with the others to form a “canonical” BKL. The main versions of the BKL are BKL A, B and C.

On the formal structure (categories “A–D”) of the various versions of the BKL see GRAYSON, *ABC* 5–6³³⁴ and RÖLLIG (1969) 265ff. (sub his category “C”). According to Röllig all three recensions, BKL A–C, belong to the same literary genre, listing the number of years (with fractional years), the king’s name, and occasionally the filiation. Due to the lack of space ancestors seldom found their way into the BKL. This is a major difference between the BKL and the **GHD** and **AKL**. According to GRAYSON, *ABC* 193 and (1980–1983) 90, the BKL is to be considered as a further stage of the **date-lists**, which list the **year-names** of a king’s reign in successive order: to these date-lists a summary of the number of kings and their number of regnal years were added. Such lists of summaries form the earliest KLs in category “A” (for example, the Larsa KL).

Category A is characterized by the formulae “the year when ...” and “x were/are the years of the king” (GRAYSON [1980] 172–177: the basic scheme is “**x years – royal name**”; in some versions the word “king” is added). The Larsa KL and the Ur-Isin KL belong to *category A*.³³⁵ At the end of the list or the various sections the total number of regnal years of all kings can be found in most cases. BKL C also belongs to *category A*, although the pattern in it is simpler due to the absence of the word “year(s)” from the second formulaic phrase. In BKL A this pattern can be found within the dynastic summaries, which state the total number of years and kings of each dynasty (see WALKER [1995] 235ff. for the summaries of regnal years for each Babylonian dynasty). The category’s origin obviously can be traced back to date-lists. This may be paralleled with the relationship between the EL and

³³² A useful bibliography is offered by GRAYSON, *ABC* 267–269. A complete transcription of the various versions of the BKL can be found in *RIA* 6 (1980–1983) 89–97 and 100 by the same author.

³³³ Sometimes no clear distinction between KLs and chronicles can be made. See ROWTON (1970) 199: the first part is formulated chronicle-like and includes the earliest Sumerian dynasties. → **Chronicle**.

³³⁴ In *category C* the royal name follows a narrative (e.g. Tumul and Weidner chronicle). *Category D* includes synchronistic texts (e.g. Synchronistic History).

³³⁵ This view is only partly shared by BRINKMAN, *MSKH* 428²⁶, who pointed out that no date-lists were compiled from the 14th cent. onwards. Also chronicles as source material have to be ruled out for the period before 626, since none of the chronicles known to us give such a detailed account on every single year of a king.

AKL. The Uruk KL, which is later than the others and starts where BKL A breaks off, is to be added to *category A* as well.

The characteristic formula of *category B* is “royal name – number of year(s) – a predicate” (sum. AK “to do”, i.e. “to reign, rule”: “The king ruled for x years”), which first appears in the SKL. Like the SKL and AKL, BKL B and the Dynastic Chronicle belong to this category, adding a predicate to the formula (GRAYSON, ABC 6).

It is generally assumed that KLs and genealogies were primarily written for ideological purposes: that is to legitimize the current ruler and to assert continuity. HALLO (1983) 11–12 showed that the historiography of 2nd millennium Mesopotamia consisted of converting simple lists of year dates or eponyms into comprehensive overviews “which pressed the chronography into the service of ideology”. In the BKL there seem to be no errors in the sequence of names, but the numbers are often unreliable, at least in the early portion of BKL A. In contrast to the “geographical” account of the SKL or BKL, the Assyrian scribes created a different KL for Assyria (Upper Mesopotamia), which suppressed geographical or ethnical affiliations of the named kings: consequently in the AKL the grouping of kings does not depend on family affiliation (compare the GHD).

In the past much discussion revolved around the historical validity or accuracy of the SKL. While JACOBSEN (1939) believed the list to be a valid and useful account of the early kings, FINKELSTEIN (1979)³³⁶ and MICHALOWSKI, *JAOS* 103 (1983) 237–248 argued that the SKL served ideological purposes. In *ChrMés* GLASSNER extensively dealt with this matter as well. The SKL tries to show how history should have been, rather than how it really was – a fact once again illustrated in the manuscript USKL published by STEINKELLER in 2003. On the other hand it lists successions of rulers that seem to be fairly accurate (for example the Kiš I dynasty). As mentioned by Steinkeller (pp. 282 and 284), the main difference between the USKL and the SKL is the part on the Pre-Sargonic section dealing with the kings of Kiš, where the USKL offers detailed information probably drawn from votive inscriptions. The USKL further

differs from the SKL by listing events and rulers in linear fashion: this means that the kingdom stayed in Kiš until Sargon I after it had descended from heaven. Then followed Uruk, Akkad (compare with the “Curse of Akkade”), Uruk, the *ummānum*, Adab, Uruk and Ur. The USKL suggests that the SKL with its different structure was composed during the Isin I dynasty after the fall of the Ur III dynasty due to a new concept of depicting history (from linear sequence to cyclical pattern).

4.0. “Old Babylonian KL”, or SKL, contains a mythological introduction (“when kingship came down from heaven...”) and runs from the beginning of mankind to the **Isin I dynasty**. The best known version of the SKL is the Weld Blundell prism W.-B. 444 from Larsa, which has the shape of a cuboid with sides divided into two columns each. The prism was published by LANGDON, OECT 2, London (1923) pls. I–IV.

The various Old Babylonian tablets from Mesopotamia, Northern Syria and Elam (Susa) containing the SKL have been compiled by JACOBSEN (1939), GRAYSON, ABC 268–269, EDZARD (1980–1983) 77–78, VINCENTE, *ZA* 85 (1995) 234ff., GLASSNER, *ChrMés* 67–87, 119–133, 137–142, STEINKELLER (2003) 167–192, and <http://www-etcs1.orient.ox.ac.uk/section2/b211.htm> (Oct. 2007).

4.1. BKL A: BKL A took up where the SKL left off, the Babylon I dynasty, and continued through seven more dynasties (Sum. BALA, Akk. *palû*)³³⁷ identified by city names (Kiš, Uruk, etc.). BKL A lists the Babylonian kings with reign lengths from Babylon I until Kandalānu (in 626). The 10th, or so-called “Chaldean” dynasty, is not preserved in this list, but can be reconstructed from other sources. The beginning of the tablet is badly broken: in all one third of it seems to be missing, and the rest is sometimes hardly legible due to its poor state of preservation.³³⁸ This means that the kings of the **Babylon I** and **Sealand I dynasties** are missing (for these kings see BKL B) except for the total of regnal years. The redaction of BKL A, which is of unknown provenance, is assumed to have been done in the 7th or 6th cent. BC. The tablet measures 8.5 × 7.5 cm and is divided into two columns on the obverse and reverse. The various dynasties are separated from each other by horizontal lines.

³³⁶ FINKELSTEIN, Early Mesopotamia, 2500–1000 B.C., in: H.D. LASSWELL *et al.* (eds.), *Propaganda and Communication in World History, Volume 1: The Symbolic Instrument in Early Times*, University Press of Hawaii, Honolulu (1979) 50–110.

³³⁷ BALA is also understood as “turn of office, era or cycle” implying changes of power (HALLO [1983] 10). In the SKL

kingship circulated from town to town after it had descended from heaven. Note WILCKE (1982) 37 and 41, with the translation “Amtszeiten” with respect to the GHD, where the Akk. term *palû* is used. → **Genealogy**.

³³⁸ On the present state of the tablet see GRAYSON (1980–1983) 90–91.

BKL A is considered to be the most important source for the chronology of the Kassite and Post-Kassite periods. Although some parts are difficult to read due to its state of preservation and gaps throughout the text, the number of kings can be reconstructed. To the left of the tablet the reign length of the king on the right is usually listed. The number of years of each dynasty's rule is stated before every change of dynasty: x (years) y kings of the z dynasty". The last legible name is Kandalānu; but the list may have continued on to the Persian Empire.

4.2. BKL B is a continuation of the SKL. It starts with the **Babylon I dynasty** and its founder Sumuabum and ends with Ea-gāmil of the **Sealand I dynasty**. The tablet is of unknown provenance. Obverse and reverse contain two independent lists of one column each. The obverse lists the names of eleven kings of the Babylon I dynasty, their filiation and their regnal years.³³⁹ BKL B's first section follows *category B*, which is first represented by the SKL (although simplified without a predicate: royal name, year, number of years and two dynastic summaries) and represents a shortened version of the **Dynastic Chronicle**. The second part of BKL B, on its reverse, simply lists the ten rulers of the Sealand I dynasty without further information: in only two instances is a filiation recorded. This section is comparable to the early-rulers section in the AKL. The tablet is well preserved and inscribed in Neo-Babylonian script. The figures noted on the obverse are often unreliable (in contrast to BKL A). Unfortunately the reign lengths and genealogical information of the rulers of the Sealand I dynasty are missing. The sum of kings listed at the end of the tablet is incorrect. It is assumed that BKL B, like BKL C, was a school tablet.

4.3. BKL C: This list, a small school tablet from Babylonia (in private possession), contains the names of the first seven rulers of the **Isin II dynasty** (1157–1069)³⁴⁰ with the reign lengths to the left (as on BKL A). The reverse seems to have contained a summary of kings and reign lengths: it is barely legi-

ble and therefore offers no useful further information. BKL C seems to be a practice piece or rough copy. It has a curious "beetle-like" shape, measures 5.8 × 3.7 × 2.3 cm and consists of only nine lines).³⁴¹ It is presumed to have been compiled during the reign of Adad-apla-iddina, since his predecessor is the last king listed. Of course, this list could have been an extract from a longer (and older?) list.

4.4. Ur-Isin KL contains the rulers of the Ur III and Isin I dynasties with their reign lengths. It ends with the fourth year of Damiq-ilišu. The text is known to us in two exemplars (A and B), which most probably derive from Isin. Most of the listed kings are preceded by a divine determinative, as in the UKL and the ancestors' list from Ebla.³⁴²

4.5. Larsa KL: The gaps between W.-B. 444 (SKL) and BKL A/BKL B are bridged by the KL of the **Larsa dynasty**. It starts with the dynasty's founder Naplānum and ends with the conquest of Larsa by Babylon and the rule of Hammurāpi' and Samsuiluna, its last named ruler. Its structure is the same as BKL A and C, simply listing the kings and their reign lengths. Some of the reign lengths can be restored with the help of duplicate lists and date-lists. The obverse of the tablet contained the same information as the reverse. It therefore must have been a school tablet which extracted information most probably from the prism AO 7025 containing all rulers of Larsa.³⁴³ The Larsa KL, which is badly damaged and was found at Larsa, was most probably compiled after the 12th year of Samsuiluna.

4.6. Dynastic Chronicle (ABC no. 18): This "chronicle" is a narration of events from the antediluvian period³⁴⁴ down to the 8th cent. BC in a mixture of Sumerian and Akkadian. The tablet, which was found in the library of Aššurbanipal in Nineveh, is badly preserved (three pieces that do not join) and consisted of three columns on each side. No king seems to have been omitted from the surviving sections, but the order of kings and reigns lengths are often incorrect. The compiler was obviously more interested in the

³³⁹ For the restoration of some of the numbers see POEBEL (1947) 110–121.

³⁴⁰ Note that the kings of the Isin II dynasty in this list are also mentioned in BKL A, various **chronicles**, the **Synchronistic History** and the **Synchronistic KL**. See the folding table in BRINKMAN, PHPKB.

³⁴¹ GRAYSON (1980–1983) 96. See POEBEL (1955) 2–3 for a copy.

³⁴² ARCHI (1996) 11 and (2001) 4. For the UKL see ARNAUD (1998) 153–173 and YOUNGER, in: W.W. HALLO (ed.), *The Context of Scripture* 1, Leiden (1997) 356–357.

³⁴³ THUREAU-DANGIN, *RA* 15 (1918) 52–56.

³⁴⁴ The antediluvian tradition, which is found at the beginning of the SKL, is known from other literary contexts and was added secondarily to the SKL. The SKL's antediluvian cities are Eridu, Badtibira, Larak, Sippir, and Šuruppak. The postdiluvian dynasties of the SKL are Kiš I, Uruk I, Ur, Awan, Kiš II, Hamazi, Uruk II, Ur II, Adab, Mari, Kiš III, Akšak, Kiš IV, Uruk III, Akkad, Uruk IV, Gutī, Uruk V, Ur III, and Isin I.

burial places of the kings of the Babylon I and Sealand dynasties, than in chronological issues. The Dynastic Chronicle is closely related to the SKL, but differs by the additional formula “the king was buried in ...”. The antediluvian rulers in col. I are listed in a different order than they are in the SKL. Two more bilingual fragments of the Dynastic Chronicle from Babylon, which date to the Late Babylonian period, have been published by FINKEL (1980) 65–72. They show some dependence on the SKL. Finkel therefore declared them as a “*bilingual copy of the Sumerian King List*” containing a description of kingship. These copies are an important link to the tradition of Berossus.

Like the **AKL**, the **BKL** refers only seldom and briefly to historical events (chronicle-like insertions), as they are found in the Babylonian chronicles. In contrast to the **AKL**, the **BKL** (esp. **BKL A**) is divided into dynasties (**BALA**: Babylon I dynasty, Sealand dynasty, Isin dynasty, etc.) and does not focus on one city only. It is obvious that the **SKL** intended to show a unitary Mesopotamian empire, a picture which did not conform to reality. It seems that during both the Ur III and Isin I dynasties the rulers were anxious to justify their right to rule.³⁴⁵

Value for Absolute Chronology

BKL A, which lists the kings and their reign lengths starting with the Babylon I dynasty, can be supplemented by **BKL B**, which gives the names of the kings of the Babylon I and Sealand dynasties (mostly in abbreviated form³⁴⁶), and **BKL C**, which preserved the names of the kings of the Isin II dynasty. However, **BKL A** and **BKL B**, though they cover the Dark Age, have little value for 2nd millennium chronology

since they are either badly preserved or contain unreliable numbers.³⁴⁷ **BKL C** is more reliable and lists the first seven kings of the Isin II dynasty (which, according to **BKL A**, lasted 132 years and 6 months).³⁴⁸ The previous period between the Ur III dynasty (probably starting with the accession of Ur-Nammu) and the conquest of Hammu-rāpi³ was covered by the **SKL** as well as by the Ur-Isin **KL** (Ur III, Isin I).

HORSNELL (1999) 223–224, who studied the **year-names** of the Babylon I dynasty, pointed out that **date-lists** are generally regarded as chronologically more reliable than the **BKL**, particularly more reliable than **BKL B**, which is the only **KL** to have preserved the reign lengths for the kings of the Babylon I dynasty:³⁴⁹ “The date-lists taken as a whole and used critically can, therefore, be accepted as reliable evidence for the calculation of the number of years each king of the dynasty reigned.” (p. 223) Due to the known synchronism between Šamši-Adad I and Hammu-rāpi³ attested in the Mari correspondence³⁵⁰ the **AKL** and **Synchronistic KL** have to be considered as well when evaluating data from **BKL** and restoring the gaps in **BKL A**, since the Babylonian dates are dependent on the Assyrian ones.³⁵¹ Except for the **astronomical data**, whose chronological usefulness is disputed, there is no real anchor for the floating dates and synchronisms for the rulers of the first half of 2nd millennium Babylonia.³⁵² Furthermore, since the **BKL** does not show a continuous line of rulers and lists as successive, some dynasties we know from other sources to have been overlapping, the chronology of the Early Kassite dynasty remains unknown (→ **Babylonia**).

BKL A³⁵³ lists the kings of Babylonia and their regnal years starting with the Babylon I dynasty and end-

³⁴⁵ MICHALOWSKI, *JAO* 103 (1983) 237–248, SELZ (2002) 25–27.

³⁴⁶ On more abbreviations in **BKL A** see BRINKMAN, *MSKH* 426–427.

³⁴⁷ BRINKMAN, *PHPKB* 26–27: “Kinglist A, on the other hand, though more removed in time from the kings with which it deals, is the only Babylonian document thus far unearthed that originally listed all the Babylonian monarchs of this time and the length of their reigns.”

³⁴⁸ BRINKMAN, *PHPKB* 26: “(**BKL C**)... is undoubtedly the best secondary document available for the period which it treats, being almost a contemporary source.”

³⁴⁹ Note RICHARDSON’s remark on p. 49¹⁸³ on Poebel’s restoration of reign lengths in the **BKL B**, about possible breaks within the **BKL B** which might indicate that the end of the Babylon I dynasty occurred during Ammišaduqa’s rather than Samsuditana’s reign. But → sub **Babylonia** for Hittite raids during the reign of Samsuditana. However, the latter’s presence at Terqa indicates that the Babylon I dynasty still had control of the middle Euphrates during his reign.

³⁵⁰ *ARM* 1, 93: DURAND (1997) 501.

³⁵¹ A synopsis of the Babylonian dynasties on the basis of **BKL A** and **B** was provided by SCHMIDTKE (1952) 47–52. For a now-outdated study on chronology based on **AKL** fragments, the **Synchronistic KL** and **BKL A** see WEIDNER (1917).

³⁵² Unfortunately the Babylonian **Distanzangaben** do not help in this respect. → below.

³⁵³ BRINKMAN, *MSKH* 424ff. “Notes on Kinglist A” surveys the problem in **BKL A** concerning genealogy, sequence of rulers, regnal lengths, omissions etc. See especially 429ff. for the Sealand I dynasty, the Kassite dynasty, the Isin II dynasty, etc. On pp. 434ff. he lists the conflicts in the texts with reign lengths, starting with the Kassite dynasty. Omitted rulers are compiled on pp. 438f. For more information on the reign of Tukulti-Ninurta I and the Elamite interregnum between the Kassite and Isin II dynasties see BRINKMAN, *PHPKB* 78–83.

ing with the Chaldean dynasty. According to Grayson the text was “a basic reference work”. Like the SKL (which was called a “city list” by HALLO [1983] 10³⁵⁴) it depicted various dynasties (BALA) as consecutive and ignored overlapping or synchronous dynasties. However, we know that the Babylon I, Sealand and Kassite dynasties were partly synchronous. Furthermore, some of the listed figures have been proven to be incorrect.³⁵⁵ Unfortunately, the beginning and end of the text are lost, and it has three large internal gaps. This complicates the reconstruction of the early Kassite dynasty. Still, BKL A offers the most complete list of known Babylonian rulers for the time it documents. It especially is a valuable source for the reigns of the Kassite kings from the 14th to the 11th cent. The reign lengths for each of the rulers documented in BKL A and in economic texts have been compiled by BRINKMAN, MSKH 21–24 and PHPKB 37–40.³⁵⁶ In general the data of BKL A and those of the economic texts do agree (in case of differences, Brinkman adopted the higher number – usually that of BKL A).³⁵⁷ Wherever lacunae occur in BKL A, other KLS, chronicles or dated documents are usually able to fill the gaps. For chronological purposes fractions of one year are calculated as 0 years.

Further, Brinkman asserted that the ancient Babylonian **Distanzangaben** are limited in their usefulness because (1) we do not know what information was available to the scribes,³⁵⁸ and how they reckoned contemporary dynasties (this is to be compared with the Assyrian **Distanzangaben**, which show a relation to the AKL and ELs) and (2) all known figures for the **Distanzangaben** pertaining to this era in Babylonia are multiples of either six or 100 (MSKH 8⁵). We are not sure where these numbers derive from and how they are to be understood.³⁵⁹

The information of BKL A remains the starting point for the calculation of relative chronology of

the **Kassite dynasty**.³⁶⁰ It states that the dynasty had 36 kings and lasted 576 years (9 *šušī* 36 MU) and 9 months (9 ITI). Synchronisms between Assyrian and **Kassite** rulers in the latter half of the 2nd millennium suggest that the Kassite rule ended in 1155. Adding 576 or 575 years to this means that the beginning of the Kassite dynasty would have been in 1729 or 1730 (BRINKMAN, MSKH 25), which clearly implies an overlap of the Kassite and Babylon I dynasties (independently of the chronology used). BRINKMAN, MSKH 25 and (1976–1980) 467 reduced this number to 575 years. SASSMANNSHAUSEN, MDAR 64 however, dismissed it. On the other hand EDER (2004) 213–217 accepted BKL’s number for the length of the Kassite dynasty. For details → **Distanzangaben** sub 9.6. So far, no independent evidence exists which could confirm the number recorded in BKL A for the length of Kassite rule.

Unfortunately, BKL A covers only about half the sequence of rulers’ nos. 1–6 and 26–36, and the reign lengths only of kings nos. 22–25 are preserved.³⁶¹ The **Synchronistic KL** contains names of the first 13 rulers of the dynasty. The 14 known synchronisms between Assyrian and Kassite rulers help to fill the large gaps of BKL A. **Chronicle P**, which deals with Assyro-Babylonian-Elamite conflicts starting with the reign of Aššur-uballiṭ I, also contains Assyro-Babylonian synchronisms. It is considered to be more reliable than the **Synchronistic History**, its “Assyrian counterpart” (→ **Chronicles**). The textual evidence from the Kassite period is the great number of administrative documents dating to the time from Burna-Buriaš II to Šagarakti-Šuriaš, marking the start of the reliable part of BKL A (1359–1233, according to BRINKMAN [1977]).³⁶²

BKL A and the **Synchronistic KL** invert the order of kings nos. 4 and 5, Abi-Rattaš and Kaštiliašu; a problem which cannot be resolved by any other evi-

³⁵⁴ It was carefully organized on the basis of cities: structural elements that mark the transition from one dynasty to the next one; eleven cities are listed as having exercised hegemony over lower Mesopotamia.

³⁵⁵ See BRINKMAN, PHPKB 27 for general remarks on BKL A.

³⁵⁶ In MSKH BRINKMAN attempted to reconstruct the whole Kassite dynasty (see esp. pp. 26–27; on the textual evidence see pp. 50–73). For a more recent assessment see SASSMANNSHAUSEN, MDAR 61–70.

³⁵⁷ For issues of absolute Babylonian chronology see BRINKMAN, MSKH 32⁸⁹.

³⁵⁸ Note e.g. the change in counting years (year-names versus regnal years).

³⁵⁹ See SCHAUDIG (2003) 463–464, 468, and 494.

³⁶⁰ For the origin of the Kassites as a group of nomads in the Old Babylonian period on the basis of Old Babylonian documents and letters from Samsuiluna onwards see VAN LERBERGHE (1995) 379–393. For year-names mentioning the Kassite threat see STOL (1976) 44–45 and 54. On the attestations of Kassites as part of the deportees from the Zagros mentioned in the texts from Mari and Šemšāra see VAN KOPPEN, MDAR 20–21.

³⁶¹ For useful lists of regnal years preserved in BKL A compared to those attested in other documents see BRINKMAN, MSKH 21–32.

³⁶² BOESE (1982) 23 applied reduced dates to the Kassite kings: 1354–1328. On the reasons for reducing Babylonian dates see the useful summary by BRINKMAN, MSKH 32⁸⁹ and → below.

dence. The **Agum-kakrime inscription** does not contain any further information about these two rulers. The first known Kassite ruler was Gandaš, who may have been a contemporary of Samsuiluna.³⁶³

Kings nos. 7–14 are rather badly preserved in the **Synchronistic KL**, but the **King Chronicle** and the **Agum-kakrime inscription** give us additional information about this period. Only concerning the tenth king, Burna-Buriaš I, who reigned after the fall of the Babylon I dynasty, are we reasonably well informed. In his inscription Agum(-kakrime) placed him shortly after the reign of the last Babylonian ruler Samsuditana³⁶⁴ (start of the Dark Age). The names of the kings nos. 8, 9, 11, 12, 13, and 14 are broken, with the exception of Harba-x (no. 7) and Burna-Buriaš (no. 10). Babylonian rulers known from the other records mentioned above are Burna-Buriaš I, who is synchronous with Puzur-Aššur III, Ulam-Bur(i)aš, brother of Kaštiliašu and son of Burna-Burariaš, and Agum, son of Kaštiliašu (who fought against the **Sealand dynasty** king Ea-gāmil).³⁶⁵ Kaštiliašu, Ulam-Buriaš and Agum (III? = Agum-kakrime?)³⁶⁶ are usually assumed to have followed Burna-Buriaš I.

Kings 15–21 (?) are not preserved in the **BKL**,³⁶⁷ and it is uncertain whether no. 21 (Nazi-Bugaš) was originally included in the 36 kings of **BKL A**³⁶⁸, since **BKL A** is broken at this point. The **Synchronistic History** states Nazi-Bugaš was the immediate predecessor of Kurigalzu *šeḫru* (Akk. for “small”; king no. 22). Burna-Buriaš II was a contemporary of Aššur-uballiṭ, who placed him on the throne, and is known from other sources, such as the Amarna correspondence.³⁶⁹ Thus the Babylonian rulers can be securely synchronized with the Assyrian, Hittite and Egyptian kings. As BRINKMAN, MSKH 6, affirmed in his outline of the Kassite dynasty, Babylonian absolute chronology can only be established by Assyrian chronology,

which is the “*only stable and relatively fixed scheme to which it can meaningfully be related*”. Hittite and Egyptian chronologies are much too fluid to help establish Babylonian absolute chronology. Only the synchronisms in the Amarna letters (Babylonian-Egyptian) and in Hittite sources³⁷⁰ can help establish a chronological framework for Babylonia in the second half of the 2nd millennium. → **General**.

According to BRINKMAN, MSKH 7¹ the frequently discussed letter KBo 1, 10 which refers to strained relations between Kadašman-Turgu and Ḫattušili III (lines 55ff.), does not contain enough evidence to place the reigns of Kadašman-Turgu or Kadašman-Enlil II relative to Ramses (Egyptian-Hittite treaty between Ramses II year 21 and Ḫattušili III). Brinkman recommended abandoning attempts such as those by TADMOR (1958), ROWTON (1960) or HORNUNG (1964) at chronologically organizing the texts. On the basis of the Assyrian (!) chronology (→ **Distanzangaben**) BOESE – WILHELM (1979) 36–37 suggested that a low Egyptian chronology seems to be most likely.

The names of kings nos. 22–25 are only partly preserved in **BKL A** (see GRAYSON [1980–1983] 91). The reign lengths, which usually coincide with the information drawn from other documents, are legible for kings nos. 23 and 24 and are 26 and 18 years respectively: but these values are higher than in contemporary documents. Another problem is that the tablet **A.1998** inserts another Kadašman-Enlil (II) before Kadašman-Turgu (no. 24).³⁷¹ Nothing further is known about this Kadašman-Enlil (BRINKMAN [1983] 74).

BKL A preserves kings nos. 26–36, but some of their names are given in abbreviated form. The names of kings nos. 35 and 36 can be restored from the **Synchronistic History** and the literary text **K.2660** [= **III R 38, 2**], which relates to the downfall of the dynasty (→ **Historical Epic** sub **13.6.**). **BKL A**

³⁶³ The year-name of Samsuiluna's 9th year mentions an army of Kassites: VAN LERBERGHE (1995) 381. → **Babylonia** sub **5**.

³⁶⁴ In the **Marduk prophecy** (K. 2158+) it is stated that 24 years passed between the time the Marduk statue was taken to Ḫatti by Muršili I during the raid on Babylon, and when Agum(-kakrime) re-conquered the statue in the land of Ḫana (Hani). See BRINKMAN, MSKH 97.

³⁶⁵ BRINKMAN, MSKH 11ff.

³⁶⁶ See the **Agum-kakrime inscription** and the **Marduk prophecy**: BRINKMAN, MSKH 13. → **Royal Inscriptions** for the problem of the identification of Agum.

³⁶⁷ For an overview see WALKER (1995) 235, who lists the specific Kassite kings mentioned in the **Synchronistic History** (ABC no. 21) and **Chronicle P** (ABC no. 22).

³⁶⁸ The Amarna letters offer some more information on the sequence of kings.

³⁶⁹ For the synchronisms with Egypt see KÜHNE (1982) 203–264 or VON BECKERATH (1997) 65–66. A useful table can be found in VEENHOF (2001) 313. → **General** sub **1.6.2**.

³⁷⁰ KLENGEL (1999) 270–272, WILHELM – BOESE (1987) 74–117, WILHELM (1991) 470–476, DE MARTINO (1993) 218–240.

³⁷¹ BRINKMAN (1983) 67–74 has two proposals concerning this ‘new’ Kassite king. **A.1998** was published by DONBAZ (1982) 207–212.

cites too few years for king no. 26, Kudur-Enlil: instead of only 6 years Kudur-Enlil reigned 9 years.³⁷² According to BKL A kings nos. 24–28 ruled for four generations, but a total of only 39 years (BRINKMAN, MSKH 203–204): Brinkman suspected that either the reign lengths or genealogies might be faulty. Nothing further is known that might clarify this (see the paragraph above for a previously unknown Kadašman-Enlil as king no. 23, which demonstrates the uncertainties in this part of the BKL). Problems also arise for the kings no. 28–32 (from Kaštiliašu IV to Adad-šuma-ušur): in contradiction to BKL A and other Babylonian sources, **Chronicle P**³⁷³ credits Tukultī-Ninurta I as ruler of Babylon with seven years after Kaštiliašu IV.³⁷⁴ A text from Nippur (see text no. 13 in MSKH) is dated to Tukultī-Ninurta's accession year (→ **AKL**), but the *kudurru* (boundary stone)³⁷⁵ of Meli-Šipak (see King, BBSt no. 3) omits him from the conventional sequence of kings.³⁷⁶ Brinkman assumed that Chronicle P did not arrange every detail in strict chronological order and that certain events that occurred closely together in time were inserted (Assyrian domination, Elamite invasions under Kidin-Hutran III): His tentative reconstruction of these events is that after Kaštiliašu IV was removed from power, Tukultī-Ninurta I became suzerain over Babylonia for seven or eight years until a Babylonian revolt took place which ended with the accession of Adad-šuma-ušur (Chronicle P).³⁷⁷ (ROWTON [1970] 205 proposed here the insertion of a questionable Elamite rulership/interregnum).³⁷⁸ → **Chronicles** sub 7.3. and 7.7.

The surviving economic texts indicate that Kadašman-Ḫarbe II (no. 30) reigned 2 years instead of the

BKL A's 1 year.³⁷⁹ But such variants are too small to affect the general chronological scheme for the Babylonian dynasties listed in the BKL.

In MSKH the dates for the earliest kings were computed by means of the total dynasty length cited in BKL A. The uncertainty of ± 5 years cited for the reigns of kings nos. 22–36 is a minimum value because it assumes that all other factors of the reconstruction are accurate (AKL, regnal length of Kadašman-Enlil II and the sequence of rulers after Kaštiliašu IV). However, there are still some open questions (such as the reign length of Aššur-nādin-apli [3 or 4 years], Ninurta-apil-Ekur [3 or 13 years]) that could affect all specific dates. For the moment, the **Synchronistic History's** synchronism of Ninurta-apil-Ekur & Adad-šuma-ušur is taken as authoritative.³⁸⁰ The Isin II dynasty is understood to begin in 1157 BC (± 5 years); and the last year of the Kassite dynasty³⁸¹ was set at 1155 BC (± 5 years) by BRINKMAN, MSKH 33. These dates take into account contemporary economic texts, the BKL A and the known Babylonian-Assyrian synchronisms (→ below). BOESE (1982) 15–26, however, lowered Brinkman's dates by five years, giving values accepted by GASCHÉ *et al.*, *Dating ...* beginning with the reign of Kadašman-Enlil I (no. 18), whom they dated to 1369–1355 instead of 1374–1360 (→ **AKL** sub 2.2.1.3.). For a list of Kassite-Middle Assyrian synchronisms and their ranges of possible dates see SASSMANNSHAUSEN, MDAR 67.

BKL C reports on the first seven rulers of the **Isin II dynasty** (ca. 1157–1069³⁸²) from Marduk-kabit-aḫḫēšu to Marduk-šāpik-zēri. At the end a summary of 500 years from one (unknown) fixed point to another is calculated. No specific contemporary evi-

³⁷² BRINKMAN, MSKH 430.

³⁷³ TADMOR (1958) 136–137.

³⁷⁴ Chronicle P further offers synchronisms with Elamite kings: Enlil-nādin-šumi & Kidin-Hutran III (written Kidin-Ḫudrudiš) and Adad-šuma-iddina & Kidin-Hutran III.

³⁷⁵ According to SLANSKI (2000) 95–97 these are *narû* “(stone) monuments”.

³⁷⁶ ROWTON (1970) 199.

³⁷⁷ While Tukultī-Ninurta I was the overlord of Babylonia, documents were only dated in his accession-year; the rest of the texts of his Babylonian reign were dated in the names of the vassal kings nos. 29–31. → **AKL** sub 2.2.1.3

³⁷⁸ BRINKMAN, MSKH presents the **BKL A's** reign-lengths for the Kassite rulers on pp. 21–22 (see also GRAYSON, RIA 6 [1980–1983] 91–93) and compares these values with economic texts on pp. 22–23. The reign-lengths of kings nos. 19 and 22–28 are listed on p. 23 and discussed on pp. 24–25; On pp. 26–27 a chart of the relative chronology of

the Kassite dynasty is offered. Some of the discrepancies may be explained by the method of recording accession years. The reign length for Kudur-Enlil implied by the economic texts is to be preferred over that given by the KL (see fn. 62 for details). BKL A credits the Assyrian vassal kings nos. 29–31 with a total of 9 years and Chronicle P with 7 or 8 years; but nothing is presently known to show which is correct. BRINKMAN, MSKH 430.

³⁷⁹ But see SASSMANNSHAUSEN, MDAR 61.

³⁸⁰ A newly discovered administrative document from Aššur provides a new synchronism: Meli-Šipak and Ninurta-apil-Ekur: s. FRAHM, *MDOG* 134 (2002) 75.

³⁸¹ The third regnal year of the Kassite ruler Enlil-nādin-aḫi was identical with the accession year of Marduk-kabit-aḫḫēšu of the Isin II dynasty.

³⁸² BKL A gives 132 years and 6 months for this dynasty: BRINKMAN, PPKB 38.

dence for the interval between the end of the **Kassite dynasty** and the beginning of the Isin II dynasty, are known (see BRINKMAN, MSKH 29⁸⁵ for details). ROWTON (1959) 1–11 assumed that the final year of Enlil-nādin-aḫi, the last ruler of the Kassite dynasty, was synchronous with the accession of Marduk-kabit-aḫḫēšu, the first Isin II ruler. However BRINKMAN, PHPKB 78–83 pointed out that there was no evidence for this assumption and therefore an overlap of dynasties has to be taken into consideration at this point, even though they are listed consecutively in BKL A. In general, Brinkman believed that the Kassite chronology should be dealt with without reference to Isin II dates. He therefore proposed a revision of Rowton's table of late Kassite rulers (also based on the texts BE 14, 38 [CBS 3044] and CBS 15050 [unpublished] of Kurigalzu's reign). It is also unknown how many years elapsed between the end of the reign of Kaštiliašu IV and the first year of Adad-šuma-ušur, which make the margin of error for the CAH scheme even larger than the proposed five years (→ above).

BRINKMAN (1970) 307 proposed maximum and minimum dates for the **Kassite** kings based solely on the known synchronisms plus that of Adad-nīrārī I & Kadašman-Turgu (see note 62). All dates therefore can be raised by four years or lowered by 18 (from Adad-šuma-ušur onwards nine years) without affecting synchronisms. Brinkman assumed a wider margin of error than generally accepted, which should be taken into account in discussions of Babylonian relations. As a consequence, much more time can be assumed for Kadašman-Ḥarbe I in the interval between Kara-indaš and Burna-Buriaš II and a slight overlap of the Isin II and Kassite dynasties might have been the case.

The reign lengths of the **Sealand I dynasty**, which parallels the early Kassite dynasty (Ea-gāmil & Ulam-

Buriaš), are only documented in BKL A (see BRINKMAN, MSKH 21ff. for the figures provided by BKL A compared with the numbers from economic texts). These numbers should be regarded as not fully reliable since no corroborative material exists.³⁸³ Currently the **King Chronicle** (ABC no. 20B) is the only source that presents the beginning and end of this dynasty (also preserved in BKL B), with Iluma-AN being the first ruler.³⁸⁴

BKL B states the reign lengths for the kings of the Babylon I dynasty and was most probably copied from an earlier version, which itself was partly damaged,³⁸⁵ as is implied by BKL B's estimates of figures which had obviously been lost.³⁸⁶ Unfortunately no regnal lengths for the rulers of the Sealand dynasty are recorded in this list. According to BKL A and B, the **Babylon I dynasty** ruled 300 years and the **Sealand I dynasty** some 368 years.³⁸⁷ Both dynasties overlapped for about 147 years, since the first year of Iluma-AN coincides with the 9th year of Samsuiluna. Further, Ea-gāmil was dethroned by Ulam-Buriaš, who according to the Synchronistic KL was the 13th ruler of the Kassite dynasty.³⁸⁸ Corrections concerning the older Kassite kings were given by WEIDNER (1959–1960) 138 based on a collation of the Synchronistic KL by Kraus in the Istanbul Museum. For recent reassessments of the Kassite rulers see BRINKMAN, MSKH and RIA 5 (1976–1980) 464–473 and SASSMANNSHAUSEN, MDAR 61–70. The total dynasty durations given by the lists, specifically 576 years for the Kassite dynasty and 368 years for the Sealand dynasty have proven no help in settling problems of 2nd millennium Mesopotamian chronology; instead they are considered merely “typological”. A Distanzangabe referring to the reign of Gulkišar of the Sealand I dynasty, BE 1, 83, states that 696 years passed between his reign and that of Nebuchadnezzar I (1125–1104). → **Distanzangaben**

³⁸³ BRINKMAN (1993–1997) 6–10. The so-called “Sealand tablets” (unpublished letters) of the Schøyen collection formally correspond to the Old Babylonian format (shape and paleography) and show Middle Babylonian grammatical features (M. Jursa, priv. comm.). This may be an important clue for the chronological placement of the dynasty.

³⁸⁴ For year-names during Iluma-AN see LANDSBERGER (1954) 68¹⁷⁴. → **Babylonia**

³⁸⁵ GRAYSON (1980–1983) 100.

³⁸⁶ ROWTON (1970) 199.

³⁸⁷ Note that this number does not coincide with the sum of the regnal years given in BKL A, which is 356 or 346 years. BRINKMAN, MSKH 429 speculated that the missing 12 or 22

years were those of the missing ruler of the Sealand dynasty mentioned only in the Synchronistic KL, IDIŠ+U-EN.

³⁸⁸ WEIDNER (1926) discussed these chronological relationships between the Babylon I, Sealand, and Kassite dynasties (including earlier proposals by Meyer, Fotheringham – Langdon and Schoch) and concluded that a general reduction of dates was necessary (though still in the range of the UHC!). He proposed 2057–1758 for the Babylon I dynasty, 1904–1536 for the Sealand I dynasty, 1760–1185 for the Kassite dynasty. Weidner suggested that Ea-gāmil was deposed in 1536 and Ulam-Buriaš was enthroned in 1530. But he warned against using the VT because of its corrupt text and the irregular intercalations of that era.

The **Larsa KL** lists the kings of the Larsa dynasty (copied twice on both sides of the tablet) and includes the first two Babylonian rulers of Larsa. It was written during the 12th year of Samsuiluna³⁸⁹ and is considered a reliable source, although the numerals are badly damaged. Duplicate lists as well as date-lists allow some restoration. According to GRAYSON (1980–1983) 89, only the number of regnal years of Nūr-Adad remains doubtful. GASCHE *et al.*, *Dating ...* have noted some uncertainties concerning the length of individual reigns within the KL due to the number of known year-names, specifically for the reigns of Gungunum (27 or 28 years) and Rim-Sin I (61 or 60 years). → **Babylonia** and **Year**. The preceding Ur III and contemporary Isin I dynasties are listed in the **Ur-Isin KL**, which contains reliable reign lengths.³⁹⁰ The **Dynastic Chronicle**, however, due mainly to its bad state of preservation, has no reliable information on this period, nor is it useful for the chronology of the other Babylonian dynasties, such as the Sealand dynasty.

Because of its inflated reign lengths and its uncertain textual history, the SKL is not regarded as a historically and chronologically reliable source. EDZARD (1980–1983) 81 pointed out, the time span between Ur-Nammu of the Ur III and Sargon of the Akkad dynasty is impossible to determine on the basis of the SKL.³⁹¹ Moreover, a number of rulers are missing from the list (see JACOBSEN [1939] 180–183; for a list of rulers preserved in the SKL see EDZARD [1980–1983] 82–84). And there are problems with the real as well as legendary numbers cited in this

text.³⁹² Its very number of variants indicates that the SKL cannot be used as a chronologically primary source but instead must be thought of as a “*Produkt der Schreibergelehrsamkeit*” with propagandistic and political intent.³⁹³ Still, it represents an important document for our historical understanding of events at the turn of the 2nd millennium BC.³⁹⁴

In conclusion, the various BKL lists are less reliable and informative for genealogical issues and historical events than other lists, most notably the AKL. Some of the recorded filiations are incorrect, as can be proven for Kassite rulers. Most irritating is the persistent listing of dynasties as consecutive which are known to have been concurrent. Especially for the Dark Age and the period just preceding it, the BKL does not provide clear information. Other sources are not as precise as one would wish to define various inner-Babylonian synchronisms and there are very few sources from the Dark Age itself. For some dynasties, like the Babylon I dynasty, the **date-lists** and **year-names** compiled from various documents prove to be extremely valuable for the evaluation of the given data. Additionally the preservation state of the BKLs (BKL A, Larsa KL) is bad, at times almost 2/3 of the text is missing (to say nothing of the “problems” connected with school tablets: copying, spelling or mnemonic mistakes, and the like). Only in a few cases can the gaps be bridged (such as for the Isin II dynasty on the basis of BKL C). And there are omissions: the BKL A, for instance, says nothing about the Sealand I dynasty. Due the numerous problems and mistakes, it is hard to decide

³⁸⁹ ROWTON (1970) 200.

³⁹⁰ Reign lengths for the kings of the Ur III and the Isin I dynasties can be computed from the attested number of **year-names** for each reign. The reign length totals of various dynasties differ on the different SKL tablets: for the Ur III period it is stated that four kings ruled 108 years (correct number!); on the other hand 117, 120 + x and 123 years are given for five kings. After the summary of the Ur III dynasty kings “the kingship was taken to Isin”; but especially the reign lengths for the kings of the Isin I dynasty presented in the SKL have proven to be unreliable, and the total reign length for the Isin I dynasty is variously given as 203 years and 225 years and 6 months – both numbers are wrong, but the sequence of rulers is correct. In this case **date-lists** and the **Ur-Isin KL** help verify the numbers. Furthermore, it is known that the Ur III and Isin I dynasties overlapped for ca. ten years (→ **Year-names**: Ibbi-Sin year 8 = Išbi-Era year 1), which the SKL does not say. Generally, information drawn from date-lists is to be considered more reliable for chronological purposes than KLs. The differences in numbers of regnal years between the Ur-Isin KL, date-lists and the SKL have been

summarized by SALLABERGER (2004) 38 and shown in his table 6. Differences totalling up to a few years only can be observed.

³⁹¹ SALLABERGER (2004) 29–37. Between the Akkad and Ur III dynasties was the Gutium period. The SKL reports that the “kings” of Gutium ruled a total of ca. 100 years. Sallaberger, referring to DITTMANN, *BaM* 25 (1994) 98, suggested a time span of at least 40 years. See ZETTLER (2003) 19–20, referring to HALLO in *RIA* 3 (1972–1975) 713f., where a maximum of 50 years is proposed for the interregnum of the Gutian kings. The MC (BRINKMAN [1977]) is based on the assumption of an 80-year Gutium period. For scholars in favor of a lower chronology, and its consequences on the dating of the Sargonic dynasty, see ZETTLER (2003) 20, referring to dates proposed by BOESE (1982), GASCHE *et al.*, *Dating ...* and READE (2001).

³⁹² EDZARD (1980–1983) 81 with examples.

³⁹³ ARCHI (2001) 10. Note STEINKELLER (2003) 268 who stated that the incorrect sequence of Sargonic rulers in the USKL “... makes one wonder whether the SKL should be given any credence in this area (*pre-Ur III periods*) at all.”

³⁹⁴ EDZARD (2004) 40.

which text groups other than **date-lists** served as source material for the BKL. Their value for absolute chronology is very limited, but at least the BKL gives us some information about otherwise scarcely docu-

mented periods. Basically nothing in the BKL can be accepted without verification. But used in tandem with the Assyrian data, it is an enormously important chronological document.

Parts of the 2nd millennium BC covered by the various versions of the BKL

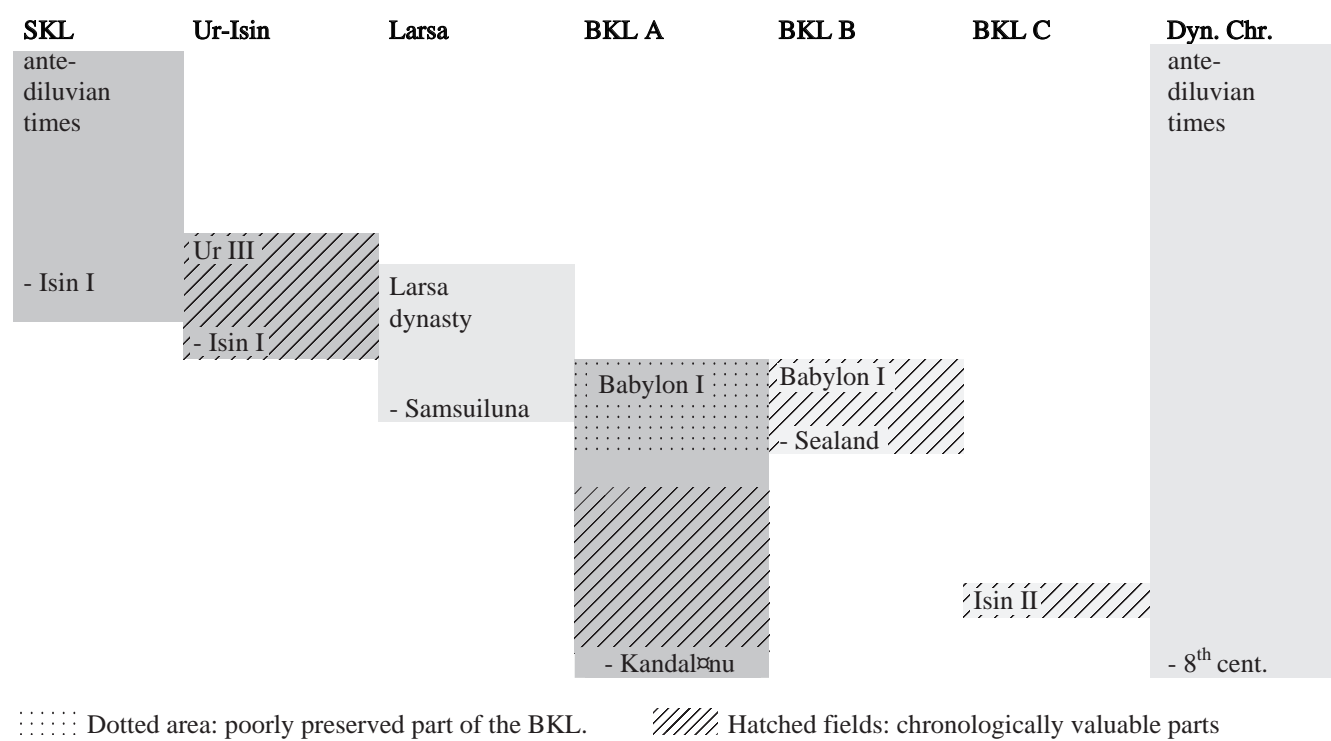


Table 24

Links

AKL, Babylon I Dynasty, Chronicles, Chronicle P, Date-lists, Distanzangaben, Genealogy, GHD, Historical Epic, Isin I Dynasty, Isin II Dynasty, (Early) Kassite Dynasty, Larsa Dynasty, Old Babylonian Period, Royal Inscriptions, Sealand I dynasty, Synchronistic KL, Synchronistic History, Year-names