NEW DATA ON THE *SIDRU*-OFFERING IN NEO-BABYLONIAN SIPPAR[1]

by RADOSŁAW TARASEWICZ

This article presents a study of the little known *sidru*-offering from the Neo-Babylonian Ebabbar temple at Sippar. The source data comes from an unpublished tablet belonging to the so-called Ebabbar archives. It is the only known example of the performance of this offering in a Babylonian temple. The organization of the cult and cultic calendar of Babylonian temples are the subject of numerous studies and much debate; the content of this tablet contributes valuable new data to the discussion.

Introduction

The cultic calendars of Uruk and Babylon in the Neo-Babylonian period are yet to be fully established, and the same can be said of the offering system. Yet recent studies by Linssen (2004) on the cultic calendar of these two cities and by Beaulieu (2003) on the pantheon of Uruk have contributed significantly to these subjects. The picture is less clear with regard to Sippar, although new evidence has emerged with the publication of BM 50503 by Maul (1999) and Zawadzki's (2006) study of cultic garment practices. The present article treats the little known *sidru*-offering, which until now has been attested only in *Nbn* 768; the translation "offering"[2] is put beyond doubt.

BM 70159: an account settlement concerning offerings in Ebabbar

The tablet published here comes from the "Sippar collections" of the British Museum; it almost certainly belonged to the Ebabbar temple archives, although neither the name of the temple (Ebabbar) nor the city (Sippar) appears in the text. The attribution is confirmed mainly by the prosopography, i.e., the occurrence of Bēl-šarru-bulliṭ (for which see below), active in the Ebabbar temple during Nabonidus's reign. The tablet is well preserved except for the top and part of the right side. Other damage is minimal and does not significantly affect our understanding of the content.

BM 70159 (82-9-18, 10159; Figs. 1–2)[3]
6.8 x 9.1 cm

Obv.

1' [...]
2' [...] ⌜TA É NÍG.GA⌝ SUM[*na*...]
3' [... *a-na si-di*]-*ri*^{meš} SUM*n*[*a*...]
4' [x GU_4 x UDU.NÍTA] *si-di-ri* ITI.DIR[IG.ŠE.KIN.KUD U_4.x.KAM]
5' [1?] ⌜GU_4⌝ 10 UDU.NÍTA ⌜*si*⌝-*di-ri* ITI.ŠE U[$_4$.x.KAM MU.15.KAM EN]
6' [IT]I.BÁR MU.16.KAM ^{md}⌜AG⌝-I LUGAL TIN.TI[R^{ki}]
7' ⌜1?⌝ GU_4⌝ 14 UDU.NÍTA *si-di-*⌜*ri*⌝ ITI.BÁR U_4.26.KA[M...] ⌜x⌝
8' 9 UDU.NÍTA *ina* ŠU^{ii} ^{lú}⌜SIPA⌝ *sat-tuk nu-uk-ku-su ina* ŠU^{ii} [...] ⌜x⌝
9' (erasure) ITI.GU_4 U_4.23.KAM *u* [...] ⌜x⌝
10' 1 GU_4 14 UDU.NÍTA *si-di-ri šá* KÁ ITI.ŠU U_4.7.KAM [(x)]
11' 14 UDU.NÍTA *si-di-ri šá* KÁ ITI.NE U_4.7.KAM [(x)]

[1] I am deeply grateful to Dr. E. Gehlken, Prof. T. Kwasman, Dr. M. Sandowicz and Prof. S. Zawadzki for reading a draft of this paper and making valuable suggestions. Any errors and over-interpretation are my own. This article would not have been possible without the financial support of the Lanckoroński Foundation and the Foundation for Polish Science.

[2] *CAD* S 232–33 s.v. *sidru* offers tentatively "regular offering(?)".

[3] The text is published here with the kind permission of the Trustees of the British Museum.

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12' 10 ⌜UDU.NÍTA⌝ *si-di-ri* ITI.NE U_4.25.KAM
13' 10 UDU.NÍTA *a-na* {*šá*} SÍSKUR LUGAL NU KUD^{su} ITI.KIN U_4.15.KAM
14' 1 GU_4 1⌜8⌝ UDU.NÍTA *si-di-ri šá* KÁ *ina lìb-bi* 4 *nu-uk-<ku>-su*
15' ⌜*ina*⌝ ŠU^{ii} ^{md}EN-LUGAL-*bul-lit-tu*$_4$ *šu-bu-ul* ITI.KIN U_4.21.KAM
16' ⌜1⌝ GU_4 10 UDU.NÍTA *si-di-ri* ITI.KIN U_4.23.KAM
17' 1 GU_4 14 UDU.NÍTA *si-di-ri* ITI.KIN U[$_4$.23+]1.KAM
18' 1 GU_4 16 UDU.NÍTA *si-di-ri* EN$^{?}$ ⌜x x⌝ [...]
19' *šá* ^{m}*Tak-lak-*^{d}AG NU KUD (T:UD) ITI.⌜APIN$^{?}$⌝ [U_4.x.KAM]
20' 5 UDU.NÍTA *šam-mu it-ti* 5 UDU.N[ÍTA GAL^{lú}(x)]
21' [*ina* Š]U^{ii} ^{m}*Id-*⌜*da-ía*⌝ *nu-uk-ku-su* IT[I.x...]

Lo.e.
22' [x] UDU.NÍTA KI.MIN UDU.NÍTA GAL^{lú} *a-na* [...]
23' [*ina qí*]-*bi šá* ^{lú}GAL NÍG.KA$_9$ ITI.ZÍZ ⌜U_4.⌝[x.KAM]

Rev.
24' [x UDU.NÍTA] *la-pa-ni* ^{lú}SIPA *sat-*⌜*tu*⌝[*k*...]
25' *ina* ⌜Š⌝[U^{ii}] ⌜^{m}*Ia*⌝*-qa-bi u* ^{m}*Uk-kal-*[x *nu-uk-ku-su*]
26' ⌜ITI⌝.ZÍZ U_4.25.KAM MU.16.KAM
27' ⌜2⌝ UDU.NÍTA *it-ti* (erasure) 2 UDU.NÍTA ⌜GAL^{lú}⌝ [...]
28' SUM^{na} ITI.ŠE U_4.9.KAM
29' 10 ⌜UDU.NÍTA⌝ *si-di-ri šá* KÁ *gab-bi* KUD⌜*s*⌝[*u*]
30' ITI.ŠE U_4.14.KAM
31' PAP 10 $GU_4^{meš}$ 2 ME 99 UDU.NÍTA TA ITI.ŠE.DIRIG.KIN.KUD
32' MU.15.KAM EN *qí-it* ⌜*šá*⌝ ITI.ŠE MU.16.KAM
33' ^{md}AG-I LUGAL TIN.TIR^{ki}
34' ⌜*ina lìb-bi*⌝ 10 UDU.NÍTA *šá* ITI.KIN U_4.27.KAM ⌜MU⌝.15.KAM
35' [*it*]-*ti* 1 GU_4 *a-na* ^{giš}BANŠUR SUM^{na}
36' [x x] ⌜x⌝ *šá* ^{m}*Kal-ba-a* A-*šú šá* ^{m}*Ú-bar-*^{d}IGI.⌜DU⌝
37' [PAP] ⌜11 G⌝[U_4] *ù* 3 ME 9 UDU.NÍT[A]

Obv.
1' [...]
2' [...] from the storehouse were given [...]
3' [...for the *sid*]*ru*-offerings were giv[en...]
4' [x ox(en), x sheep] (for) the *sidru*-offering: [the nth day of the month *addaru* II];
5' [1$^{?}$] ox 10 sheep (for) the *sidru*-offering: [the nth day] of the month *addaru,* [the 15th year till]
6' [the mon]th *nisannu*, 16th year of Nabonidus, king of Babyl[on];
7' 1$^{?}$ ox 14 sheep (for) the *sidru*-offering: the 26th day of the month *nisannu*, x;
8' 9 sheep slaughtered by the herdsman of the regular offering, {from [(x)]
9' (erasure)}: the 23rd day of the month *ayyaru* and [...] x;
10' 1 ox 14 sheep (for) the *sidru*-offering at the gate; the 7th day of the month *du'ūzu* [(x)];
11' 14 sheep (for) the *sidru*-offering at the gate; the 7th day of the month *abu* [(x)];
12' 10 sheep (for) the *sidru*-offering; the 15th day of the month *abu*;
13' 10 sheep for the king's offering not slaughtered; the 15th day of the month *ulūlu*;
14' 1 ox 18 sheep (for) the *sidru*-offering at the gate, therein 4 slaughtered (sheep),
15' brought by Bēl-šarru-bullit; the 21st day of the month *ulūlu*;
16' 1 ox 10 sheep (for) the *sidru*-offering; the 23rd day of the month *ulūlu*;
17' 1 ox 14 sheep (for) the *sidru*-offering; the [23+]1 d[ay] of the month *ulūlu*;
18' 1 ox 16 sheep (for) the *sidru*-offering; EN$^{?}$ ⌜x⌝ [...];
19' by the Ṭaklak-Nabû, not slaughtered; the [nth day] of the month *araḫsamna*;
20' 5 grass-fed sheep with 5 [fully fattened] shee[p]
21' slaughtered [b]y Iddaya; the [nth day] of the [nth] mont[h];

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Lo.e.
22' [x] sheep, *ditto,* (and) fully fattened sheep for [...]
23' [by ord]er of the chief of accounts; [nth] da[y] of the month of *šabāṭu*;

Rev.
24' [x sheep] from before the herdsman of the regular offering [...];
25' [slaughtered by] Iaqabi and *Uk-kal*-[x]
26' the 25th day of the month of *šabāṭu*, the 16th year.
27' 2 sheep with 2 fully fattened sheep [...]
28' were given; the 9th day of the month *addaru*;
29' 10 sheep (for) the *sidru*-offering at the gate, all slaughte[red];
30' 14th day of the month *addaru*;
31' total 10 oxen 299 sheep from the month *addaru* II
32' of the 15th year till the end of the month *addaru* of the 16th year of
33' Nabonidus, king of Babylon.
34' In addition to 10 sheep which (for) the 28th day of the month *ulūlu*, the 15th year,
35' [a]nd 1 ox for the offering table, were given;
36' [x x] x of Kalbaya, son of Ubar-Nergal.
37' [Grand total]: 11 ox[en] and 309 shee[p.]

Notes

4'–5'. The total number of sheep indicated in the text is 299. Only 163 sheep can be accounted for on the preserved part of the tablet. The missing numbers in ll. 4', 22' and 24' cannot be restored.

8'–9' It seems that at the very beginning of line 9' the scribe erased ^{lú}SIPA *sat-tuk*, but he forgot to erase *ina qātê* at the end of l. 8'.

11'.{*šá*} after *a-na* is a scribal mistake.

15'. Bēl-šarru-bulliṭ *ša kurummat šarri* is attested in documents dated to the time of Nabonidus. He appears in *Akkadica* 126, 13: 5 dated to Nabonidus' 6th year and even earlier in *OrSu* 50, 11: rev. 9', dated to his 1st year, but without a title. He is attested with his title as late as the 9th year (BM 67172, BM 67647 and *Nbn* 332), although he could have held his office as late as the 16th year (BM 70159: 15'). On the other hand, BM 83891: 5', dated to the 6th [+x?] year, mentions Bēl-šarru-bulliṭ *ša muḫḫi qu*[*ppi ša Ebabbar*][4] and BM 61213: 3, dated to the 16th year, *rab quppi ša Ebabbar*.

17'. The date is broken, but the preserved vertical wedges and comparison with the date in l. 16' suggests the restoration [23+]ʳ1ˡ.

18'–19'. The broken end of l. 18' precludes any speculation as to the role of Taklak-Nabû, attested here for the first time.

19'. The UD sign is clear, but it appears to be a scribal mistake for KUD.

20'. Grass-fed sheep (*šammu*) are seldom attested in Neo-Babylonian texts, cf. *CAD* Š/I: 317–18. In BM 84025 grass-fed sheep appear next to *ša urê* and *puḫādu*. It is worth noting that this damaged text lists animals distributed for offerings (next to *guqqû*-offerings and *lubuštu* and *ḫašādu* festivals). Thus the context of BM 84025 is similar to BM 70159 and seems to have been a cultic one; [GAL^{u}] is reconstructed on the basis of l. 22'. Although a GAL^{u} (*rabû*) animal is usually translated as "adult, full-grown" (see *CAD* R s.v.), in an offering context it should be translated as "fattened during the *urê*-cycle" (Tarasewicz, in preparation A). In BM 70159 data on what the animals consumed occurs only with regard to days not connected with the *sidru*. It is not clear why the information was given only in these cases. Neither has it been ascertained why only some animals were called *šammu* and *rabû*. For example, in ritual texts, animals are categorized according to the way they are fed (Robbins 1996: 65): barley-fed (ŠE.BAR KÚ), milk-fed (*kabri ša* GA) or not barley-fed (ŠE.BAR *la* KÚ). This classification may have depended on the source of supply. Grass-fed sheep may come directly from the temple's shepherds and those fattened during the *urê*-cycle from, obviously, the *bīt immerī*. However, for offering purposes it seems that it depended on the quality of the animals. The *rabû* animals should thus be understood as animals of the best grade and suitable to be sacrificed to the gods.

36'. The role of Kalbaya, son of the Ubar-Nergal, attested here for the first time, is not certain.

[4] Another possible restoration is *ša muḫḫi qu*[*ppi ša šarri*], since a similar title is confirmed by BM 64046: 3, although dated to the 6th year of Cyrus.

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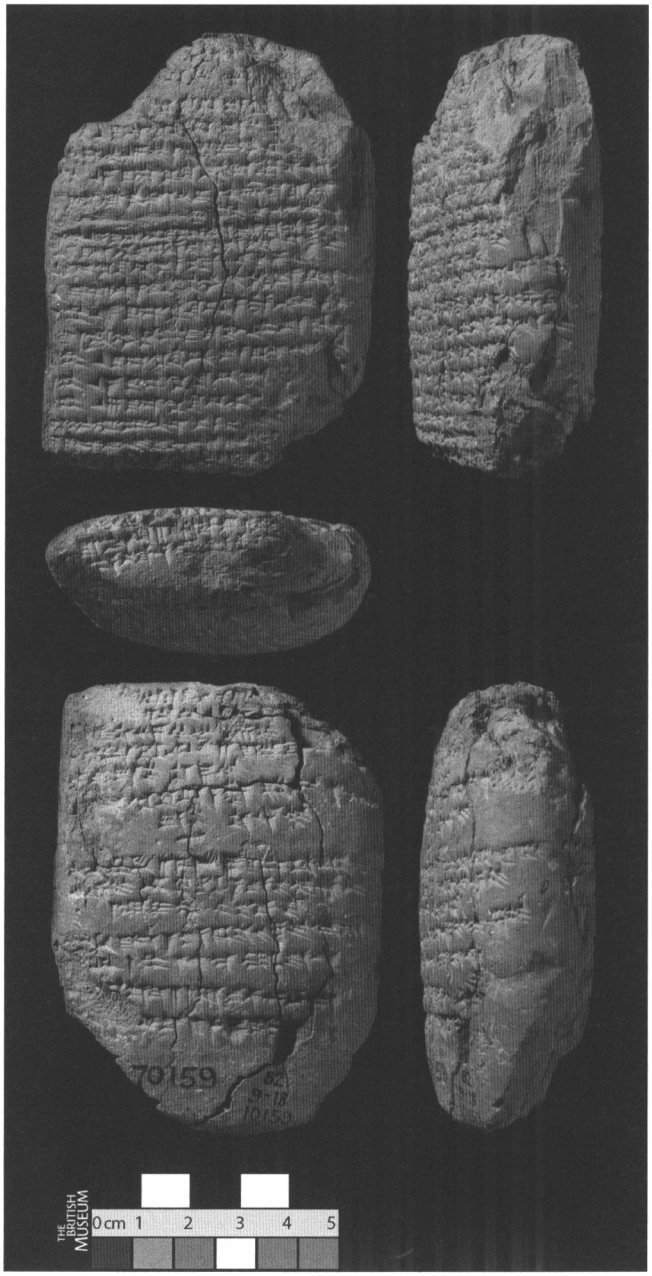
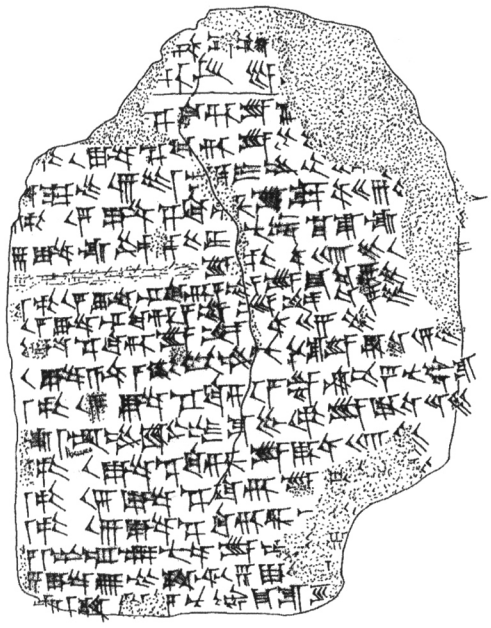


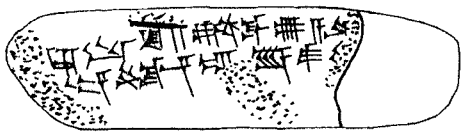
Fig. 1 BM 70159. © Trustees of the British Museum

The text is an account settlement. It deals with the distribution of cattle and sheep for *sidru* and *sidru ša bābi* offerings, but also for occasions which are not specified, with the exception of the *niqê šarri*. The animals were distributed over the course of one year (from the second *addaru*, 15th year till the end of the 16th year of Nabonidus). In total, 10 oxen and 299 sheep were issued, plus a further 10 sheep sacrificed on the 28th day of *ulūlu*, 15th year, and one ox *ana paššūri*, "for the table". The damaged beginning of the tablet makes it impossible to say who was responsible for the animals and with whom the settlement was made.

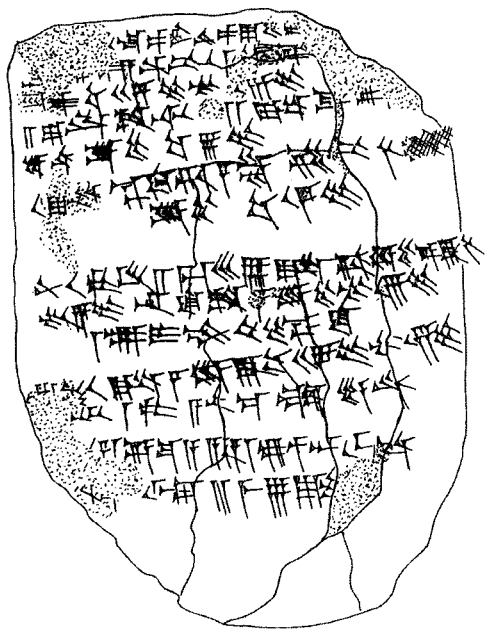
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obv.



lo. e.



rev.

Fig. 2 BM 70159.

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Date	*Oxen*	*Sheep*
[x].XIIb	[x]	[x]
[x].XII	[x]	10
26.I	1?	14
20.III[5]	1	-
25.V	-	10
23.VI	⌜1⌝	10
[23+?]1.VI	1	14
[x].VIII?	1	16

Fig. 3 The *sidru*-offering as documented in BM 70159 and Nbn 768.

The sidru*-offering*

As noted above, BM 70159 distinguishes the *sidru*-offering from the *sidru*-offering "at the gate" (*ša bābi*). *Sidru*-offerings were performed seven times: twice in the 15th year and five times in the 16th year of Nabonidus.

It is doubtful whether our text comprises a complete list of *sidru*-offerings, considering that another *sidru*-offering dated on the 20th day of *simanu* is attested in *Nbn* 768. It is therefore impossible to establish the frequency of *sidru*-offerings. Sometimes a *sidru*-offering was performed on consecutive days: the 23rd and 24th of *ulūlu*, which was preceded with a *sidru ša bābi* on the 21st of *ulūlu*. This can be linked to a festival or ceremony celebrated during a few days of the sixth month, although the actual occasion during this period in Sippar cannot be ascertained. As can be seen from the above table (Fig. 3), a single ox was offered regularly, while the number of sheep differed. Because the animals were issued for offerings and the offerings were made before the gods, it is reasonable to suggest that the difference in the number of sheep depended on the number of gods participating in these offerings. The list of participants of the divine meals is not given in BM 70159, and we can only assume that one of them could have been Marduk, as in *Nbn* 768:

Nbn 768 (BM 60446)
Obv.
1) 1 GU_4 ŠU.DU_7 DUMU.M[U.AN.NA]
2) *šá* ^{md}U+GUR-*na-ṣir* A [GN]-⌜PAP⌝
3) *a-na eš-ri-šú a-na* ⌜*É*⌝-[*babbar*]-⌜*ra*⌝
4) *it-ta-din* GU_4 *a-na si-*⌜*id-ri*⌝
5) *šá* U_4.20.KAM *a-na* ^{d}AMAR.UTU *na-din*
6) 1^{en} 4^{u} 1 DUMU.MU.AN.NA

Lo.e.
7) *a-na* 1/3 6 GÍN KÙ.BABBAR

Rev.
8) ^{m}*Mu-šal-lim-*^{d}AMAR.UTU *a-na*
9) *É-babbar-ra it-ta-din*
10) 6 GÍN KÙ.BABBAR U_4.15.KAM
11) ^{m}*Mu-šal-lim-*^{d}AMAR.UTU *ma-ḫir*
12) 1/3 GÍN KÙ.BABBAR-*šú ri-e-ḫi*
13) ITI.SIG_4 U_4.20.1.LÁ.KAM

U.e.
14) MU.14.KAM ^{d}AG-*na-'-id*
15) LUGAL TIN.TIR^{ki}

[5] *Nbn* 768.

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1 one-ye[ar old] uncastrated ox which Nergal-nāṣir, son of [GN]-nāṣir gave to Ebabbar as his tithe. The ox was given to Marduk for a *sidru*-offering on the 20th day. Mušallim-Marduk sold 1 four-year old (and) 1 one-year (ox) to Ebabbar for 26 shekels of silver. On the 15th day, Mušallim-Marduk received 6 shekels of silver. 20 shekels of silver is the remainder (which Ebabbar owes him). The 19th day of *ṣimānu*, the 14th year of Nabonidus, King of Babylon.

Nbn 768 gives details about the ox and the source of supply. Thus a one-year old uncastrated ox came from the tithe delivered to Ebabbar by Nergal-nāṣir. Similar practices are well attested at the Ebabbar temple (see Jursa 1998); a one-year old uncastrated ox was the animal most frequently used for offerings. The first columns of the so-called "animal offering lists" name uncastrated oxen, although the age of the oxen is not always indicated.

The sidrū ša bābi-*offerings*

The *sidrū ša bābi*-offerings were performed on the 7th day of *du'uzu* and *abu*, on the 21st day of *ulūlu* and on the 14th day of *addaru* (see Fig. 4). The same number of unslaughtered sheep (14) was distributed for the first three periods (there are 14 unslaughtered sheep, if we take 4 *nukkusū* out of the 18 animals on the 21.VI). For the 21st of *ulūlu* 4 slaughtered sheep were served additionally and 10 slaughtered sheep were assigned for the 14th of *addaru*. A single ox was presented on the 7th of *du'ūzu* and on the 21st of *ulūlu*.

This pattern appears to suggest that the sequence of days on which *sidrū ša bābi*-offerings were performed may have been timed to overlap with the phases of the moon: the offering on the 7th day with the first sighting of the half moon, and that on 14th day with the first sighting of the full moon. The issue has gained legitimacy following Maul's (1999: 303–04) suggestion that the three days of every month celebrated for Šamaš ([1st], 8th and 15th) coincided with the lunar phases: "Mit der hier wahrscheinlich gemachten Abfolge der Festtage (1., 8., 15. Tag) können wir in der Festordnung des É-babbar von Sippar die Idee einer Sieben-Tage-Woche erkennen [...]".

The most important elements of the Babylonian calendar may be summarised as follows:

- "the day was reckoned from one sunset to the next. The monthly count was based on lunar phases, with the month beginning after sunset when the new crescent of the moon was seen again in the western horizon" (Beaulieu 1993: 66);
- "the need to determine the beginning of the month by observation stemmed from the simple fact that not all lunar months have the same length" - defective/short and "full" (Beaulieu 1993: 66–67);
- sighting of the new moon and the month-length influenced when specific cultic ceremonies took place.

The 7th, 14th and 21st days mentioned in BM 70159 clearly overlapped with the lunar phases. It should be kept in mind, however, that the system would not have been consistent considering when the new moon is first sighted and the month-length. It is evident that at least the 7th and 14th days were linked to the 8th and 15th days of the special ceremony for Šamaš. Thus, the idea of a seven-day week is open to doubt. Firstly, the year is a luni-solar year, not just a lunar year. Four weeks have 28 days exactly. A lunar cycle has 29.5 days; in other words it cannot be used to construe a seven-day-week. If there is a ceremony on the 1st day of, for example, *nisannu*, the next ones (with regard to a "week") would be on the 8th, 15th, 22nd, 29th and 36th = 6th of *ayyaru* (since *nisannu* normally has 30 days), and so on. It is the day of the lunar phase that is important, not the day of the

Date	*Oxen*	*Sheep*
7.IV	1	14
7.V	-	14
21.VI	⌜1⌝	1⌜8⌝ *ina libbi* 4 *nukkusū*
14.XII	-	10 *nukkusū*

Fig. 4 The *sidru ša bābi* offering as documented in BM 70159.

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(nonexistent) "week" or of the civil calendar. "Week" and month connected to lunar phases are two different concepts. A week has to be defined; it is a numerical unit for administrative purposes. The phases of the moon are a natural phenomenon, which is not defined but observed. The differences between the phases of the moon, the days of the week and the days of a Babylonian month are independent of one another.

The 20th day remains a problem, Maul (1999: 303) having pointed out that it is the only day that has no direct link to the phases of the moon. A *balag*-lamentation text demonstrated that the constellation of UTU – NANNA can overlap with the 20th day of every month "wenn der abnehmende (Halb-)Mond am Vormittagshimmel hoch im Süden stehend sichtbar ist" (Maul 1999: 311). If it is true that the 20th day could determine the third quarter of the cycle of the moon, then it would contradict K 2164+ ii 2-10, in which the third quarter of the moon would fall on the 21st/22nd day (Livingstone 1986: 39). Surely Neo-Babylonian priests needed the dates in the cultic calendar to be determined with precision, not only to be able to perform their tasks, but also to ensure the proper functioning of the temple.[6] Moreover, the *sidru ša bābi*-offering made on the 21st day and the *sidrū*-offerings made on the 23rd and 24th overlapped with the culmination of an important festival celebrated on the 20th day (BM 50503).

The question that arises as to exactly what the *sidru ša bābi*-offering was. The name might refer to the real gates of the temple just before their opening on the 7th, 14th and 21st day. It might also be related to the invisible gates of the lunar phases. It is worth noting that the *sidru ša bābi*-offering is reminiscent of a practice known from the Ur III period. Ritual texts from Ur listed offerings assigned to the SI.GAR, which has been translated in a ritual context by Levine and Hallo (1967: 48–50) as the "gate". These offerings were performed on certain occasions called the *eššešu* of the New Moon, on the 7th, 15th and 21st day of the month (Levine and Hallo 1967: 18). In Neo-Babylonian Uruk "up to 11 days per month are connected with *eššešu*, but they almost never mention the specific dates of these days" (Linssen 2004: 45). In Sippar, the private archival text BM 74620 (= Bertin 2112) mentions a prebend of "sheep before Gula for the *eššešu*-festivals of the entire year" (Bongenaar 1997: 241). But it is, to the best of my knowledge, the only attestation of the *eššešu* in Sippar. Of course, this raises the question as to whether the *sidru*-offering in the institutional terminology of Sippar was used for occasions which in Uruk and Babylon were called *eššešu*.

Other offerings

The text mentions several other occasions in addition to the *sidru* and *sidru ša bābi*-offerings (see Fig. 5). Unfortunately, the only recognisable one is the king's offering (*niqê šarri*), for which 10

Date	*Type*	*Oxen*	*Sheep*
23.II and [x]	9 *immerū ina qātê rē'i sattukki nukkusu*	-	⌜9⌝
15.VI	10 *immerū ana* {*ša*} *niqê šarri lā nukkusu*	-	10
[x]	5 *immerū šammū itti 5 imme*[*rū rabû ina qā*]*tê* Iddaya *nukkusu*	-	5 *šammu* 5 *rabû*
[x].XI	[x] *immeru* ditto *immeru rabû ana* [...*ina qı*]*bi ša rab nikkassi*	-	*šammu rabūtu*
25.XI	[x *immeru*] *lapani rē'û sattu*[*kki*...] *ina qā*[*tê*] Iaqabi *u* Ukkal[lu *nukkusu*]	-	*nukkusū*
9.XII	-	-	2 and 2 *rabû*
27.VI 15	*immerū*		10

Fig. 5 Other occasions mentioned in BM 70159.

[6] Beaulieu (1993) has demonstrated the importance of observation of the sky to the Babylonians. However, the text from Uruk published there is not the only example known. In *UET* 4, 168 from Ur one reads: *kî aṣṣuru erpati ibašši attalû ittaškina ḫurṣamma šupra*, "I watched (but) there were clouds, write me an exact report telling whether the eclipse took place". A monographic study based on tablets from Late Babylonian Ur is in progress (Tarasewicz in preparation B).

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unslaughtered sheep were brought. In other cases, due to the partially damaged lines or to the brevity of the information, it is not possible to say for what purpose the animals were issued.

The *sidru*-offering was restricted to six months (I, III, V, VI, VIII, XII/XIIb) and the *sidru ša bābi*-offering to four months (IV, V, VI, XII), as can be seen from the table below (Fig. 6). Since *Nbn* 768 demonstrates that BM 70159 does not contain all the information, it cannot be discounted that these offerings were also served on other days.

Conclusion

While the significance of the *sidru*-offering — and especially the *sidru ša bābi* — remains elusive, it is now possible to say that it was at least partly related to festivals celebrated on specific days of the cultic year. The *sidru* should be regarded as an offering performed regularly during the days of special ceremonies held according to a fixed cultic calendar. Thus, the etymological meaning of *sidru*, which derives from *sadāru*, "to do regularly" (*CAD* S 11–12 s.v.), does not contradict the well known *ginû/sattukku*, the regular offering performed on any day in the course of the year. As suggested above, the number of animals may have depended on the number of gods that participated in the offerings. Interestingly, BM 70159 distinguishes between slaughtered (*nukkusū*) and unslaughtered (*lā nukkusū*) animals, although some are not specified and one is presented "on the table". What then was the difference between animals *ana paššūri* and those described as *nukkusū*? And were animals not described as *nukkusū* actually slaughtered? Regarding the first question, it seems that *ana paššūri* animals really were presented "on the table". Those described as *nukkusū* were presented before the gods, but not "on the table". The ritual text *TU* 38 (AO 6451; Linssen

Date	*Type*	*Oxen*	*Sheep*
26.I	*sidru*	⌜2⌝	14
23.II and [x][7]	-		⌜8⌝ *nukkussu*
20.III[8]	*sidru*	1	
7.IV	*sidru ša bābi*	1	14
7.V	*sidru ša bābi*		14
15.V	*sidru*		10
15.VI	*niqê šarri*		10 *lā nukkussu*
21.VI	*sidru ša bābi*	⌜1⌝	1⌜8⌝ *ina libbi* 5 *nukkussu*
23.VI	*sidru*	⌜1⌝	10
[23+]1.VI	*sidru*	1	15
28.VI	?		10
[x].VIII	*sidru*	1	16
[x].<??>	?		5 *šammu*, 5 [*rabūtu*]
[x].XI	?		KI.MIN, *rabūtu*
25.XI	?		[x]
9.XII	?		2, 2 *rabūtu*
14.XII	*sidru ša bābi*		10 *nukkussu*
[x].XII	*sidru*	[x]	10
[x].XIIb	*sidru*	[x]	[x]

Fig. 6 Chronological list of all of the offerings.

[7] Delivered by *rē'û sattukki*.

[8] *Nbn* 768.

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2004: 172–83) clearly distinguishes between offerings presented "on the table" and those presented to the gods, but not "on the table". The offerings presented "on the table" consist of a variety of products: barley, emmer, beer, milk, drawn wine, etc., but never animals or their parts. The latter were presented (*qarābu*) directly to the gods, however, but not "on the table". Additionally, the butcher would say a blessing when he slaughtered (*nakāsu*) the oxen and sheep. The second question is much more problematic. It seems that animals not described as *nukkusū* were "offered" only symbolically and were kept alive. L. 13' should be understood as sheep for the king's offering (*niqê šarri*) that were not slaughtered (*lā nukkusū*) and l. 14' that out of 18 sheep only 4 were slaughtered. This would mean that the remaining animals were not slaughtered at all or were slaughtered elsewhere, or in a different way.

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