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# NABONIDUS AND FORTY THIEVES OF URUK

## Criminal Investigation in Neo-Babylonian Eanna

By M. SANDOWICZ

This paper studies a group of documents produced in the course of investigation into the activities of a gang that operated in Uruk in the latter part of Nabonidus' rule. It examines the composition of this criminal group and the offences committed by its members. Above all, however, it seeks to reconstruct the procedures implemented by the temple officials in response to a hitherto unpublished royal writ BM 114574, a document that throws new light on the involvement of the king in the administration of justice in the Neo-Babylonian period.

### Introduction

A recently published text from the time of Assurbanipal (Waerzeggers 2010 no. 220) records an exceptional trial over the inheritance of a prebend in the Ezida temple of Borsippa. The uniqueness of the trial is determined by two elements: firstly, the litigation took place in Nineveh (rather than in Borsippa) and, more strikingly, the case was decided by the king himself. The king is said to have delivered the verdict and spoken directly to the litigants;<sup>1</sup> the wording seems to reflect the actual narrative of the trial. Such personal involvement of the king in the execution of justice is poorly attested in Babylonia under Assyrian rule.<sup>2</sup>

Evidence of the monarch's role in the court system under Chaldean rule is just as limited.<sup>3</sup> Notable exceptions include Weidner 1954–1956, a land sale deed with an elaborate introduction describing king Nebuchadnezzar II rendering a verdict in a case of high treason, and *King of Justice*, a literary text attributed to Nebuchadnezzar II or Nabonidus, showing a monarch intervening in the case of a delinquent who fraudulently sought to re-open a case he had previously lost.<sup>4</sup> The king appears in similar contexts in a few other documents, although these cannot confidently be linked with legal proceedings.<sup>5</sup> This meagre body of evidence has brought many scholars to the opinion that royal involvement in the administration of justice was significantly smaller than in earlier periods of Babylonian history.<sup>6</sup>

\* The Trustees of the British Museum are acknowledged for permission to publish texts from the collection under their care. The author's stay in London was possible thanks to a grant from the Polish National Science Centre. Stefan Zawadzki kindly read a draft of the paper and offered valuable suggestions. Irving Finkel provided a preliminary transliteration of BM 114604 and Radosław Tarasewicz collated a copy of BM 114603. Any mistakes and inaccuracies remain, obviously, the responsibility of the author. The following abbreviations are used: ABL = Harper 1892–1914; AnOr 8 = Pohl 1933; AUWE 5 = von Weiher 1998; AUWE 8 = Kessler 1991; *Black's Law Dictionary* = Garner (ed.) 2004; CM 20 = Wunsch 2000; CT 22 = Campbell-Thompson 1906; Dar = Strassmaier 1892–1897; GAG - von Soden 1995; GCCI 2 = Dougherty 1933; OIP 122 = Weisberg 2003; SAA 10 = Parpola 1993; SAA 18 = Reynolds 2003; TCL 13 = Contenau 1929; TuM2/3 = Krückmann 1933; YOS 3 = Clay 1919; YOS 6 = Dougherty 1920; YOS 7 = Tremayne 1925; YOS 19 = Beaulieu 2000a.

<sup>1</sup> *lugal kur aš-šur.ki* <sup>5</sup> *di-i-ni ip-ru-su um-ma* “the king of Aššur decided the case as follows”; <sup>10</sup> *ù lugal kur aš-šur.ki i-qab-bi [um-ma]* “and the king of Aššur says [as follows].”

<sup>2</sup> SAA 10 161, a letter from a Babylonian astrologer Munnabitū comprises a plea to have the sender's case adjudicated (*dma parāsu*) by Esarhaddon himself. It is not very revealing of the court system, however, since Munnabitū

belonged to circles close to the court. Isolated documents show the king ordering the arrest of criminals, and their dispatch to him for interrogation and trial is equally rare. Cf. the letter ABL 287 in which Assurbanipal commands the citizens of Nippur to capture three criminals and SAA 18 83, where citizens of Uruk denounce criminals and send them together with witnesses to the king for questioning. The king is known to have been the ultimate appeal instance that could have been addressed by pronouncing *amat šarri* “king's word” (Postgate 1976). However, hitherto no case of royal intervention in a court case is known (*idem*: 426).

<sup>3</sup> For a brief overview, see Oelsner, Wells and Wunsch 2003: 915, 918.

<sup>4</sup> See Schaudig 2001: 579–80 for a recent edition and references.

<sup>5</sup> E.g., the letter YOS 3 182 conveying a royal order that a man be delivered (to the king?) in fetters and under guard, or Wunsch 2000 7 dealing with the ownership of a date garden which mentions actions undertaken *ina qtbāta šarri* “on the king's instructions”.

<sup>6</sup> According to Magdalene “the king's *direct* involvement in trials was virtually non-existent outside of matters of treason against the king” (2007: 58) and “kings of these empires probably delegated most of their authority” (2007: 58–59). Liverani expressed the opinion that in this late period, the king ceased to fulfil any significant role in the

Such a picture of the king's role in the execution of justice may, however, result from the vagaries of textual discovery. The corpus of Neo-Babylonian court documents comprises abundant temple files on the one hand and private records, some of them kept in the private archives of judges, on the other. But since no state or proper court archives are available, an important piece of the puzzle may be missing. This paper will present evidence that the involvement of the king in the local administration of justice could have been more extensive than previously assumed. Moreover, it was not restricted to crimes of special nature. The evidence is based on a dossier, the crucial element of which is BM 114574.

*Day one: royal message is delivered to Eanna (BM 114574)*

BM 114574 is a formal record confirming receipt of a message in the Eanna temple on the ninth of *abu* of Nabonidus' fourteenth year:

**BM 114574** (1920–6–15, 170)

6.3 × 4.6

1. <sup>m</sup>ir-<sup>d</sup>amar.utu a-šú šá <sup>m</sup>numun-ia a <sup>m</sup>e-gi-bi
  2. <sup>md</sup>di.ku<sub>5</sub>-šeš.meš-mu a-šú šá <sup>m</sup>gi-mil-lu a <sup>m</sup>ši-gu-ú-a
  3. <sup>md</sup>en-dù a-šú šá <sup>m</sup>bul-luṭ a <sup>lú</sup>šu.ku<sub>6</sub>
  4. <sup>m</sup>ki-rib-ti a-šú šá <sup>m</sup>na-din a <sup>m</sup>ba-bu-tu
  5. <sup>m</sup>pir-'u a-šú šá <sup>m</sup>tab-né-e-a a <sup>lú</sup>šu.ku<sub>6</sub>
  6. <sup>md</sup>nà-gin-a a-šú šá <sup>m</sup>na-din a <sup>m</sup>da-bi-bi
  7. <sup>md</sup>utu-eri<sub>4</sub>-ba a-šú šá <sup>md</sup>u.gur-mu a <sup>md</sup>30-tab-ni
  8. <sup>md</sup>nà-numun-giš a-šú šá <sup>m</sup>en-šú-nu a <sup>m</sup>kur-i
  9. <sup>lú</sup>.dumu ba-ni-i.meš šá i-na pa-ni-šú-nu
  10. <sup>m</sup>re-mut <sup>r</sup>a-šú<sup>1</sup> šá <sup>md</sup>u.gur<sup>1</sup>-a-šá-red a <sup>m</sup>ri-ma-nu
  11. a-na <sup>m</sup>dingir.meš-re-man-ni <sup>lú</sup>.sag lugal
- l.e.
12. <sup>lú</sup>.en pi-qit-ti é.an.na
- rev.
13. iq-bu-ú um-ma a-mat lugal ina muḫ-ḫi-ka
  14. um-ma <sup>m</sup>i-sin-na-a-a <sup>lú</sup>.qal-la šá <sup>m</sup>re-mut
  15. <sup>md</sup>a-nu-um-zi-ti-ùru a-šú šá <sup>m</sup>ša-pi-i-<sup>d</sup>en
  16. <sup>md</sup>nà-lu-ú-sa-lim <sup>r</sup>lú<sup>1</sup>.qal-la šá <sup>md</sup>amar.utu-sur
  17. <sup>m</sup>kal-bi a-šú šá <sup>m</sup>zálag-e-<sup>r</sup>a<sup>1</sup> <sup>m</sup>šeš-<sup>r</sup>mu<sup>1</sup> a-šú šá <sup>m</sup>ir-<sup>d</sup>en
  18. pab 5 <sup>lú</sup>.érin.meš šá ú-kal-lim-ú-k[a] la tu-maš-šar
  19. <sup>lú</sup>.sa-ar-ri-ú-tu <sup>r</sup>šú-nu<sup>1</sup> (erasure)
20. <sup>lú</sup>.umbisag <sup>m</sup>gi-mil-lu a-šú šá <sup>md</sup>in-nin-numun-mu
  21. unug.ki iti.ne u<sub>4</sub>.9.kám mu.14.kám
  22. <sup>md</sup>nà-i lugal tin.tir.ki

<sup>1</sup>Arad-Marduk/Zēria//Egibi,

<sup>2</sup>Madānu-aḫḫē-iddin/Gimillu//Šigūa,

<sup>3</sup>Bēl-ibni/Bulluṭ//Bā'iru,

<sup>4</sup>Kiribti/Nādin//Babūtu,

<sup>5</sup>Pir' u/Tabnēa//Bā'iru,

<sup>6</sup>Nabū-mukīn-apli/Nādin//Dābibi,

<sup>7</sup>Šamaš-erība/Nergal-iddin//Sin-tabni,

<sup>8</sup>Nabū-zēru-lišir/Bēlšunu//Kurī –

<sup>9</sup>these are the *mār banē* in whose presence <sup>10–13a</sup>Rēmūt/<sup>r</sup>Nergal<sup>1</sup>-ašāred//Rīmanu said to Ilū-rēmanni, the royal supervisor of Eanna, as follows:

<sup>13b</sup>Royal order is upon you as follows:

<sup>14</sup>Isinnāya, the slave of Rēmūt,

<sup>15</sup>Anu-napišti-ušur/Ša-pi-Bēl,

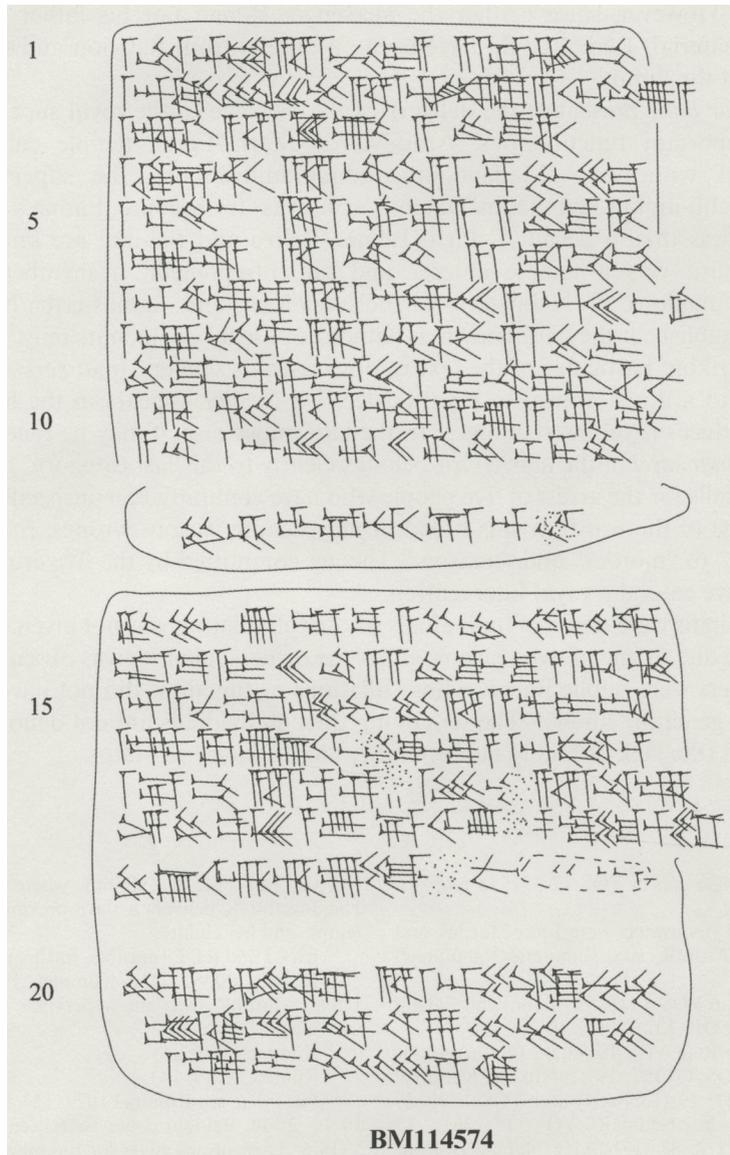
<sup>16</sup>Nabū-lū-sālim, the slave of Marduk-ētir,

<sup>17</sup>Kalbu/Nūrēa,

Aḫu-<sup>r</sup>iddin<sup>1</sup>/Arad-Bēl

administrative and judicial realm on the local level; his functions were taken over by local governors (*non vidi*, after the translation of Barjamović, 2004: 48, n. 2).

– <sup>18</sup>the total of five men that I have pointed out to you, you shall not release. <sup>19</sup>They are criminals.”  
<sup>20</sup>Scribe: Gimillu/Innin-zēru-iddin.  
<sup>21</sup>Uruk, the ninth of *abu*, fourteenth year of <sup>22</sup>Nabonidus, king of Babylon.



The text follows a formula referred to in Assyriological literature as a deposition; in this paper, it will be called a “writ”. At first glance, the document looks like an arrest warrant, but as will be demonstrated below, it had the effect of a writ of mandamus. Such a document is defined by *Black’s Law Dictionary* as “a writ issued by a superior court to compel a lower court or a government officer to perform mandatory or purely ministerial duties correctly.” More generally, mandamus may refer to any writ issued by a superior institution with such authority that calls upon another institution to perform its duties.

The message was delivered to Eanna by Rēmūt, son of Nergal-ašarēd from the Rīmanu (Rīm-Anu) family.<sup>7</sup> The Rīmanus were not one of Eanna’s leading families, but they did own the prebend of *šangū*

<sup>7</sup> Despite the unexpectedly long *a* in the second syllable (<sup>m</sup>*ri-ma-a-nu*) in several cases, Rīmanu is undoubtedly a sandhi form of Rīm-Anu “Wild bull of Anu.” This follows

clearly from parallel writings of the family names of Šamaš-uballit/Nabū-mušetiq-udde (<sup>m</sup>*am-d*-*a-nu* in YOS 7 5: 22 and TCL 13 131: 17 and <sup>m</sup>*ri-ma-a-nu* in YOS 7 35: 24) and

of Nergal and Ereškigal.<sup>8</sup> They appear among the *mār banē*<sup>9</sup> and witnesses of legal deeds;<sup>10</sup> only two of the family members are known to have been scribes.<sup>11</sup> The Rīmanus also owned and rented land in and around the city.<sup>12</sup> They were rich enough to have donated oblates to Eanna.<sup>13</sup> A policeman (*paqūdu*) Šamaš-aḥu-iddin/Šamaš-šumu-iddin/Rīmanu is attested in a document from Cambyses' accession year.<sup>14</sup> However, since neither the messenger Rēmūt nor his father are known from published Uruk material, Rēmūt could have been an official from Babylon and not a member of the local branch of the family.

The body of *mār banē* present at the delivery of the message to the royal supervisor comprised Eanna's most important functionaries: Arad-Marduk/Zēria/Egibi, temple enterer who heads numerous lists of witnesses,<sup>15</sup> Madānu-aḥḥē-iddin/Gimillu/Šigūa, the supervisor of temple brewers<sup>16</sup> and Nabû-mukīn-apli/Nādin/Dābībī, who was to become Eanna's *šatammu* (chief administrator) in less than a decade.<sup>17</sup> Pir'u/Tabnēa/Bā'iru and Bēl-ibni are known as scribes.<sup>18</sup> Kiribtī/Nādin/Babūtu was a temple enterer and an entrepreneur, a member of the temple assembly.<sup>19</sup> The functions of Nabû-zēru-līšir/Bēlšunu/Kurī and Šamaš-erība/Nergal-iddin/Sīntabni cannot be established; they are known as witnesses of legal documents only.<sup>20</sup>

But the most striking particular of the text is, obviously, its sender. *Amat šarri*,<sup>21</sup> literally "royal word," may refer to a direct appeal to royal justice,<sup>22</sup> it further appears in the headings of royal letters and it introduces royal instructions.<sup>23</sup> In the lattermost case, it may be rendered simply as a "royal order."<sup>24</sup> *Amat šarri* in the above writ belongs clearly to this last category.

The royal writ calls for the arrest of five people who have committed an unspecified crime (*sarru*). The semantic range of the word *sarru* is broad: it may denote various wrongs, from "lie," through "theft" and "fraud" to "murder" and "treason." The act committed by the five criminals must have been horrific to have caused a royal intervention.

Two of the criminals were slaves of individuals whose full filiation was not given. This terseness of description may be due to one of two reasons: either the owners' identity was obscure or, much more plausibly, the owners were public figures whose filiations or functions did not have to be specified, because they were generally known. The remaining three individuals are not denoted as slaves, but their short filiation (the lack of family names) may point to their low status.

Kudurru/Ardā (<sup>m</sup>ri-i-mi-<sup>d</sup>a-nim in YOS 17 357: 18 and <sup>m</sup>ri-ma-nu in YOS 17 4: 21).

<sup>8</sup> Beaulieu 2003: 297 (its owners were Iqīša-Marduk and Ea-zēru-iqīša, sons of Ardā/R, Ištar-šumu-ēreš/Nabû-aḥḥē-šullim/R, 16NbkII).

<sup>9</sup> Šulā/Kudurru<sup>7</sup>/R in YOS 6 116: 5 (10Nbn) and Balātu/Nabû-šumu-iškun/R in OIP 122 36, rev. 10' (3Cyr).

<sup>10</sup> E.g., Gimillu/Iqīša/R in YOS 19 83: 12 (4Nbn); Iqīša-Marduk/Ardā/R in YOS 17 357: 19 (13NbkII); Kudurru/Ardā/R in YOS 17 357: 19 (13NbkII) and YOS 17 4: 20 (16NbkII); Nabû-zēru-līšir/Nādin/R YOS 17 361: 17 (16NbkII) and YOS 17 2: 37 (17NbkII); Nabû-zēru-līšir/X/R in AUWE 5 287: 14–15 (15DarI); Šamaš-uballit/Nabû-mušetiq-udde/R in YOS 7 5: 21 (1Cyr), YOS 7 35: 23 (3Cyr) and TCL 13 131: 17 (1 + [x]Cyr).

<sup>11</sup> Itti-Nabû-balaṭu/Nabû-iqbi (AUWE 8 24: 10' [7Nbn] and 42: 12' [xNbn]), Nanāya-iddin/Dam<qa>ia (BM 114494: 19, 10Nbn).

<sup>12</sup> Cf. houses of Nabû-apkal-ili/R and Nabû[mistake for Ištar?]-šumu-ēreš/Nabû-aḥḥē-šullim/R in the vicinity of the Egalḥalḥal temple in Uruk (AnOr 8 3, 3NbkII); fallow land close to the Kanisurra Gate neighbouring on his own house bought by Ištar-šumu-ēreš/Nabû-aḥḥē-šullim/R (YOS 17 2, 17NbkII) and land in the vicinity of the Lugalgirra temple purchased by him (TCL 12 33, 12NbkII); a date grove on the Banītu Canal bought by his brother Silim-ili/Nabû-aḥḥē-šullim/R (BIN 2 131, 13NbkII). Note also a date grove on the Royal Canal rented by Rēmūt/Nabû-<sup>f</sup>mušetiq-udde<sup>7</sup>/R (YOS 6 46, 3Nbn).

<sup>13</sup> Cf. BM 114526 ([x]Nbn), where Nabû-mušetiq-udde/Nabû-ušabši/R delivers a slave previously promised to the temple and her children.

<sup>14</sup> BIN 1 169 (cf. Pirngruber, forthcoming): 11.

<sup>15</sup> Kessler 2006: 241, Kümmel 1979: 152. His son Lābāši-Marduk was the supervisor of temple bakers at the time.

<sup>16</sup> Kümmel 1979: 151.

<sup>17</sup> Kümmel 1979: 143.

<sup>18</sup> For Pir'u, see Kümmel 1979: 123, for Bēl-ibni, see YOS 19 19, 2: 42. Bēl-ibni could have been a temple merchant: YOS 6, 57 mentions silver for the purchase of animals and wine issued to him between the first and the sixth years of Nabonidus.

<sup>19</sup> YOS 6 77: 11 (4Nbn), AUWE 8 50: 9 ([x]Nbn).

<sup>20</sup> For Nabû-zēru-līšir/Bēlšunu/Kurī, see YOS 6 92: 69 (7Nbn), YOS 6 143: 18 (<sup>f</sup>10'Nbn), YOS 6 224: 6 (15Nbn), YOS 7 17: 19 (3Cyr). For Šamaš-erība/Nergal-iddin/Sīntabni, see YOS 6 18: 14 (1Nbn), YOS 19 100: 15 (1Nbn), YOS 19 91: 9 (2Nbn), YOS 6 92: 67 (7Nbn), AUWE 8 72: 11 ([x]RN).

<sup>21</sup> Cf. Wunsch and Magdalene 2012: 113–114 quoting a forthcoming study by M. Jursa.

<sup>22</sup> Cf. GCCI 2 395: 18, 21 (Jursa 2006: 164–65), TuM 2/3 161: 9, YOS 21 89: 7.

<sup>23</sup> E.g., YOS 3 2–6, 115.

<sup>24</sup> E.g., CT 22 231: 5, YOS 3 152: 13. Under Darius, this phrasing seems to have been replaced by *šarru ṭema iltakan umma* (MacGinnis 2008: 88, ll. 7–8, Dar 451: 4–5).

Luckily, the identity of these wrong-doers can be reconstructed based on a group of documents from the Eanna files. The principal part of the dossier was identified over a decade ago by Francis Joannès (2000: 215–17), who offered a translation of three documents belonging to it, preceded by a brief overview. The present royal writ may now be added to it, as well as plausibly YOS 6 213. Based on this material, the nature of the *sarru* committed by the criminals can be established.

*Day two: release is granted to criminal number four (YOS 6 213)*

Action in response to the royal order was undertaken already on the following day. On the tenth of *abu*, officials of Eanna allowed the temporary release of Kalbu, son of Nūrēa, the fourth criminal listed in the royal writ.

YOS 6 213<sup>25</sup>

1. *pu-ut* <sup>m</sup>*kal-bi a-šú šá* <sup>m</sup>*zálag-e-a*
  2. <sup>m</sup>*zálag-e-a a-šú šá* <sup>m</sup>*a-ḫu-lap*-<sup>d</sup>xv *ad-šú*
  3. <sup>m</sup>*ba-la-tu a-šú šá* <sup>md</sup>*nà-gi a* <sup>md</sup>30-ti-*èr*
  4. *a-di* u<sub>4</sub>.10.kám *šá iti.kin i-na* *šu*<sup>ii</sup>
  5. <sup>m</sup>*dingir.meš-re-man-ni lú.sag lugal lú.en pi-qit-ti*
  6. *é.an.na na-šú-ú u<sub>4</sub>-mu*
  7. *šá re-e-su in-na-šú-ú*
  8. *i-ba-kám-nim-ma i-nam-din-nu*
  9. *ki-i la i-tab-kám-nim-ma*
- l.e.
10. *la it-tan-ni*
- rev.
11. *ḫi-tu šá lugal i-šad-da-du*
  12. *ina gub-zu šá* <sup>m</sup>*šeš-šú-nu lú.gal bán šá kur.[tam]-ti*
  13. *lú.mu-kin-nu* <sup>md</sup>30-kám *a-šú šá* <sup>md</sup>*nà-mu-giš*
  14. *a* <sup>m</sup>*ib-ni-dingir* <sup>md</sup>*nà-du-numun a-šú*
  15. *šá* <sup>m</sup>*na-din a* <sup>m</sup>*da-bi-bi* <sup>md</sup>*en-dù*
  16. *a-šú šá* <sup>m</sup>*bul-luṭ a lú.š.u.ku<sub>6</sub>* <sup>md</sup>*innin-na-mu-šeš*
  17. *a-šú šá* <sup>m</sup>*mu-<sup>d</sup>nà a* <sup>m</sup>*ki-din-<sup>d</sup>amar.utu*
  18. *lú.umbisag* <sup>m</sup>*gi-mil-lu a-šú šá*
  19. <sup>md</sup>*innin-na-numun-mu unug.ki*
- u.e.
20. *iti.ne* u<sub>4</sub>.10.kám *mu.14.kám*
  21. <sup>md</sup>*nà-i lugal e.ki*

<sup>1-6a</sup>For Kalbu/Nūrēa, his father Nūrēa/Aḫulap-Ištar (and) Balāṭu/Nabû-ušallim//Sîn-lēqe-unninī assume guarantee to Ilu-rēmanni, the royal administrator of Eanna, till the tenth of *ulūlu*.

<sup>6b-8</sup>On the day he (the administrator) summons him (Kalbu), they<sup>l</sup> will bring (him) and hand (him) in.

<sup>9-11</sup>If they<sup>l</sup> do not bring and do not hand (him) in, they will bear the penalty of the king.

<sup>12</sup>In the presence of Aḫušunu, chief bowman of the [Sea]land.

<sup>13-17</sup>Witnesses: Sîn-ēreš/Nabû-šumu-līšir//Ibni-ilī,

Nabû-mukṭn-zēri/Nādin//Dābibi,

Bēl-ibni/Bulluṭ//Bā'iru,

Innin-nādin-aḫi/Iddin-Nabû/Kidin-Marduk.

<sup>18-19a</sup>Scribe: Gimillu/Innin-zēru-iddin.

<sup>19b-21</sup>Uruk, tenth of *abu*, fourteenth year of Nabonidus, king of Babylon.

Ll. 8–10. One expects *ibbakūnimma*, *ittabkūnimma*, *ittannū* (3<sup>rd</sup> plural).

Thus, custody over Kalbu was entrusted to his father and yet another individual. The father of Kalbu is referred to with his father's name only, which might be indicative of his low social standing, unless he is identical with a certain Nūrēa/Aḫulap-Ištar//Ašûšu-namir, the first witness at

<sup>25</sup>For transliteration and translation of the operative section, see Dougherty 1930: 91 and Holtz 2009: 190–91.

a slave sale YOS 6 197 concluded four years earlier in Uruk. This identification would speak in favour of the higher status of Nūrēa and at the same time the higher status of his delinquent son. The other surety, Balātu/Nabû-ušallim//Sin-lēqe-unninī was a member of the local elite; he belonged to an influential Uruk family of *kalû*-singers and was possibly a scribe.<sup>26</sup>

Both guarantors undertook an obligation to bring Kalbu back to the royal supervisor in a month's time (or earlier, upon summons). Failure to do so was to result in the "penalty of the king" (*ḫītu ša šarri*). Temporary custody release secured by suretyship was common in Neo-Babylonian investigation procedures.<sup>27</sup> It allowed criminals and defaulting debtors to remain at home rather than being kept in a temple or private prison. Home detention is attested even in the case of very serious charges, including murder. Suretyship was often assumed by family members and respected members of the local community. Failure to deliver such releasees was liable to high financial fines, from one mina up to half a talent of silver, or, less frequently, to the "penalty of the king" or a governor (*ḫītu ša šarri* or *ḫītu ša Gubāru*).<sup>28</sup> The release to custody must have been considered as a secure measure, otherwise Kalbu would not have been set free the day after the writ instructing against doing so had reached the Eanna officials.

*Day eight: confession of Isinnāya (AnOr 8, 21)*

The next step of the temple authorities is restored from a document written seven days later. According to the autographed copy, the text comes from Nabonidus' fourth (rather than fourteenth) year, but on account of the incumbency of the royal supervisor the date no doubt has to be emended: Ilu-rēmanni was the *bēl piqitti* of Eanna between Nabonidus' fourteenth and sixteenth year.<sup>29</sup> This tablet is of crucial importance for the reconstruction of the case. It records a confession of Isinnāya, criminal number one in the royal writ. Before a group of *mār banē* and the royal supervisor of the temple, Isinnāya denounced as many as thirty nine people as his accomplices.

**AnOr 8 21**<sup>30</sup>

1. <sup>m</sup>re-mut-<sup>d</sup>en a-šú šá <sup>md</sup>en-tin-iṭ a <sup>m</sup>šu-<sup>d</sup>na-na-a
  2. <sup>m</sup>kal-ba-a a-šú šá <sup>m</sup>ba-šá a <sup>m</sup>ba-si-a
  3. <sup>md</sup>di.ku<sub>5</sub>-šeš.meš-mu a-šú šá <sup>m</sup>gi-mil-lu a <sup>m</sup>ši-gu-ú-a
  4. <sup>m</sup>ki-rib-ti a-šú šá <sup>m</sup>na-di-nu a <sup>m</sup>ba-bu-tu
  5. <sup>md</sup>en-šeš.meš-mu a-šú šá <sup>md</sup>en-da a lú.ma-la-ḫu
  6. <sup>m</sup>zálag-<sup>d</sup>30 a-šú šá <sup>md</sup>nà-dù-šeš a <sup>m</sup>zálag-<sup>d</sup>30
  7. <sup>md</sup>en-šeš-gál-ši a-šú šá <sup>m</sup>ša-pi-i-<sup>d</sup>en a lú.<sup>d</sup>idim
  8. <sup>m</sup>e-li-<sup>d</sup>amar.utu a-šú šá <sup>md</sup>nà-mu-du a lú.gír.lá
  9. <sup>md</sup>na-na-a-kám a-šú šá <sup>md</sup>en-gi a <sup>m</sup>ki-din-<sup>d</sup>amar.utu
  10. [<sup>m</sup>nà-na-din-ibila a-šú šá <sup>m</sup>ba-ni-ia a lú.šu.ku<sub>6</sub>
  11. lú.dumu ba-ni-i.meš šá ina pa-ni-šú-nu <sup>m</sup>i-sin-na-a
  12. lú.qal-la šá <sup>m</sup>re-mut a-na <sup>md</sup>ingir.meš-re-man-ni
  13. [lú<sup>1</sup>.sag lugal lú.en pi-qit-ti é.an.na
  14. [iq<sup>1</sup>-bu-ú um-[ma] <sup>m</sup>ḫaš-da-a a-šú šá
- rev.
15. [<sup>m</sup>gi-mil-lu [<sup>m</sup>re-e<sup>1</sup>]-a-nu a-šú šá <sup>md</sup>innin-na-numun-dù
  16. [o<sup>m</sup>]ir-ia a-šú šá <sup>md</sup>na-na-a-sízkur <sup>m</sup>ni-din-ti
  17. [a-šú šá] <sup>md</sup>dù-<sup>d</sup>xv <sup>m</sup>u-qu-pu a-šú šá <sup>md</sup>utu-šeš.meš-mu
  18. [<sup>m</sup>še]š.meš-ba-šá a-šú šá <sup>md</sup>en-tin-iṭ <sup>md</sup>nà-re-ḫi-it-ùru
  19. [lú.qal]-la šá <sup><m></sup>kal-ba-a <sup>md</sup>nà-lu-ú-sa-lim lú.qal-la šá <sup>md</sup>amar.<sup>r</sup>utu-sur<sup>1</sup>
  20. <sup>mr</sup>hu<sup>?</sup> x<sup>1</sup> [x x]-a <sup>mr</sup>ir-ia u <sup>md</sup>en-dù a.meš šá<sup>1</sup> <sup>md</sup>nà-na-din-mu a <sup>mr</sup>x x<sup>1</sup>-a-a
  21. <sup>mr</sup>pa<sup>1</sup>-[šá]-nu [a-šú šá] <sup>md</sup>nà-mu-še- <šē > -tíq-ud.da <sup>md</sup>na-na-a-mu lú.šu.i

<sup>26</sup> Kümmel 1979: 111. For Sin-lēqe-unninīs in general, see Beaulieu 2000b.

<sup>27</sup> See Sandowicz, forthcoming.

<sup>28</sup> It is striking that failure to deliver people charged with very similar offences incurred various pending penalties. Several reasons may stand behind this discrepancy, but with the circumstances of Kalbu's release in mind a question suggests itself: perhaps the

failure to deliver was liable to the penalty of the king (or a governor) whenever investigation into the case was run under the auspices of the royal administration? A forthcoming study on *ḫītu*-texts by C. Wunsch, F. R. Magdalene and B. Wells will certainly improve our understanding of this institution.

<sup>29</sup> Kümmel 1979: 144.

<sup>30</sup> For translation, see Joannès 2000: 216.

22. <sup>md</sup>na-[na-a-siz]kur a-šú šá <sup>m</sup>da-a-né-eš-šú <sup>m</sup>e-rib-šú šá é qé-me-ti  
 23. <sup>md</sup>lu-ú-ma-gi-il šá é qé-me-ti <sup>md</sup>30-šeš-mu a-šú šá <sup>m</sup>igi-ni-ia  
 24. <sup>md</sup>di.ku<sub>5</sub>-lugal-ùru šá é qí-me-ti <sup>m</sup>ki-di-nu šá é qé-me-ti  
 25. <sup>m</sup>ni-din-ti a-šú šá <sup>m</sup>id-di-ia <sup>m</sup>ki-di-nu šá é re-du-ú-tu  
 26. <sup>m</sup>ni-din-ti a-šú šá <sup>md</sup>tin <sup>md</sup>utu-numun-dù a-šú šá <sup>md</sup>nà-en-mu-m[eš] <sup>m</sup>gi-mil<sup>l</sup>-lu a-šú šá <sup>md</sup>utu-tin  
 27. <sup>m</sup>ú-bar a-šú šá <sup>m</sup>šu <sup>m</sup>šil-la-a u šeš-šú lú.ma-ḫi-še. [meš <sup>md</sup>amar.]utu-šeš-mu  
 28. lú.ḫa-at-ta-šú šá <sup>md</sup>utu-mu-mu <sup>m</sup>gu-za-nu a-šú šá <sup>md</sup>na-na-a-mu  
 29. <sup>m</sup>pir-'u a-šú šá <sup>m</sup>še-el-le-bi <sup>m</sup>ni-iḫ-ḫu-ru u <sup>m</sup>ša-ši-ru a.meš<sup>l</sup>(t:lú) šá <sup>md</sup>nà-ú-šur-šú lú.uš.bar  
 30. <sup>m</sup>eš-šú-ú-a lú.kur [x x]-ú-tu lú.ḫa-at-ta-šú šá <sup>md</sup>dù-ia lú.si-pi-ri  
 31. <sup>m</sup>id-di-ia šá é <sup>md</sup>amar.utu-numun-dù <sup>m</sup>bu-ú-šu a-šú šá <sup>m</sup>kar<sup>d</sup>-en  
 32. <sup>m</sup>la-ba-a-ši lú.šir-ki lú.mu <sup>m</sup>ni-din-ti a-šú šá <sup>md</sup>en-su  
 u.e.  
 33. <sup>m</sup>ni-din-ti a-šú šá <sup>md</sup>nà-mu-giš <sup>m</sup>ni-din-ti a-šú šá <sup>m</sup>tab-né-e-a a lú.gal [x]  
 34. lú.sa-ar-ri-ú-tu it-ti-ia šú-nu  
 35. lú.umbisag <sup>m</sup>gi-mil-lu <sup>r</sup>a-šú šá <sup>m</sup>in-nin-numun-mu  
 l.h.e.  
 36. unug.ki iti.ne u<sub>4</sub>.17.kám  
 37. mu. <1> 4.kám <sup>md</sup>nà-i lugal tin.tir.ki

L. 30. lú.qúr-[bu]-ú-tu seems unlikely for reasons of orthography: the first sign is always spelled *qur*.

- <sup>1</sup>Rēmūt-Bēl/Bēl-uballit//Gimil-Nanāya,  
<sup>2</sup>Kalbā/Iqīša//Basia,  
<sup>3</sup>Madānu-aḫḫē-iddin/Gimillu//Šigūa,  
<sup>4</sup>Kiribtu/Nādin//Bābūtu,  
<sup>5</sup>Bēl-aḫḫē-iddin/Bēl-le''i//Malāḫu,  
<sup>6</sup>Nūr-Sin/Nabū-bāni-aḫi//Nūr-Sin,  
<sup>7</sup>Bēl-aḫu-ušabši/Ša-pī-Bēl//Amēl-Ea,  
<sup>8</sup>Eli-Marduk/Nabū-šumu-ukīn//Tābiḫu,  
<sup>9</sup>Nanāya-ēreš/Bēl-ušallim//Kidin-Marduk,  
<sup>10</sup>Nabū-nādin-apli/Bānia/Bā'iru

– <sup>11–14a</sup>these are the *mār banē* in whose presence Isinnāya, the slave of Rēmūt, said as follows to Ilu-rēmāni, the royal supervisor of Eanna: <sup>14b–15</sup>“Ḫašda/Gimillu, Re[’ā]nu/Innin-zēru-ibni, <sup>16–17</sup>Ardia/Nanāya-karābi, Nidintu/[I]bni-Ištar, Uqūpu/Šamaš-aḫḫē-iddin, <sup>18–19</sup>[Aḫḫ]ē-iqīša/Bēl-uballit, Nabū-reḫit-ušur, the [sla]ve of Kalbā, Nabū-lū-sālim, the slave of Marduk-eṭir, <sup>20</sup>Ḫ[u? ..]a, Ardia and Bēl-ibni, sons<sup>l</sup> of Nabū-nādin-šumi// [...]āya, <sup>21</sup>P[āšā]nu/Nabū-mušētiq-uddē, Nanāya-iddin, the barber, <sup>22</sup>Na[nāya-ka]rābi/Dāneššu, Ereḫšu from the flour mill, <sup>23</sup>Lū-māgil from the flour mill, Sīn-aḫu-iddin/Iniya, <sup>24</sup>Madānu-šarru-ušur of flour mill, Kidin from the flour mill, <sup>25</sup>Nidintu/Iddia, Kidin from the crown prince’s estate, <sup>26</sup>Nidintu/Balāḫu, Šamaš-zēru-ibni/Nabū-bēl-šumāte, Gimillu/Šamaš-uballit, <sup>27</sup>Ubar/Gimillu, Šillā and his brother, scout[s], [Mar]duk-aḫu-iddin, <sup>28</sup>the ḫattaššu of Šamaš-šumu-iddin, Guzānu/Nanāya-iddin, <sup>29</sup>Pir’u/Šellēbu, Niḫḫuru and Šaširu, sons<sup>l</sup> of the weaver Nabū-ušuršu, <sup>30</sup>Eššua [...], the ḫattaššu of the Aramaic scribe Bānia, <sup>31</sup>Iddia of the house of Marduk-zēru-ibni, Būšu/Mušēzib-Bēl, <sup>32</sup>Lābāši, the oblate, the cook, Nidintu/Bēl-erība, <sup>33</sup>Nidintu/Nabū-šumu-lišir, Nidintu/Tabnēa//Rab [...]

– <sup>34</sup>they are criminals together with me.”

<sup>35</sup>Scribe: Gimillu/Innin-zēru-iddin

<sup>36</sup>Uruk, seventeenth of *abu*, <sup>37</sup>four<teen>th year of Nabonidus, king of Babylon.

*Day(s) X: further hearings (Stigers, JCS 28 39, GCCI 2 350)*

The texts discussed so far disclosed the identity of the criminals, but they have not been very revealing when it comes to the nature of the crime or crimes committed. This may be culled from two memoranda, short notes written in the course of evidentiary procedures. They are not dated, but the identity of people listed in them as members of Isinnaya’s gang is easily established.

Stigers, JCS 28 39<sup>31</sup>

1. <sup>m</sup>i-sin-na-a-a
2. <sup>m</sup>pa-šá-nu
3. <sup>md</sup>en-dù a <sup>md</sup>nà-na-din-mu
4. <sup>m</sup>re-a-nu
5. <sup>m</sup>haš-da-a
6. <sup>md</sup>na-na-a-mu <<a>> lú.š.u
7. <sup>m</sup>pir-'u
8. <sup>f</sup>nu-up-ta-a šá ta-aq-bu-ú
9. um-ma <sup>m</sup>i-sin-na-a-a ina pa-ni-ía
10. iq-ta-bi um-ma a-na é
11. <sup>mtin</sup> a <sup>md</sup>innin-mu-kám ki-i ni<sup>l</sup>(t:er)-ru-bu
12. 1-en kuš.ḥi-in-du-šá tap-tin<sup>l</sup>-nu
13. <sup>f</sup>re-e'-in-du dumu.sal-su šá <sup>m</sup>ir-<sup>d</sup>innin-na

L. 11. After the list of seven names a plural form is expected, hence the emendation *er* > *ni*. The resulting Preterite form stands further in agreement with the following Perfect *tapti* (unlike the 1 Sg Present *errubu*). The emendation is very speculative, however; the text needs to be collated.

L. 12. I take *taptinnu* for Perfect with Ventive and 1sg Dative (for *-nu* rather than the more common *-ni*, see GAG §42 k3).

Isinnāya, Pašānu, Bēl-ibni/Nabû-nādin-šumi, Rē'anu, Ḥašdā, Nanāya-iddin the barber, Pir'u –

it is <sup>f</sup>Nuptā who said (about them) as follows: “In my presence Isinnāya said: When *we* entered the house of Balāṭu/Ištar-šumu-ereš, *she* opened to me one bag of hers.”

<sup>f</sup>Rē'indu, the daughter of Arad-Innin.

The text starts with a list of the names of seven men known to us from Isinnāya's testimony,<sup>32</sup> followed by a deposition of a certain <sup>f</sup>Nuptā. It is uncertain whether <sup>f</sup>Nuptā was a member of the gang. She is not listed in any other document of the dossier, so she could have been connected with the criminals in another way. The reading of a crucial place of the text is obscure, but it is certain that it deals with “entering” (i.e., “breaking into”) the house of a certain Balāṭu and with a *ḥindu*, a leather pouch used for keeping silver and valuables.

This memorandum is not a formal document, but rather a note drawn up ad hoc, meant to be rewritten later. It could have been drafted at an informal questioning. The text is thus not very well phrased; particularly striking is the female name in the bottom line, clearly having no syntactic link with the text above. If we accept that a genitive suffix and a female verbal form are to be read in the difficult part of l. 12, the name in the bottom line could specify who “she” and “her” are referring to.

A characteristic of the scribe's manner of writing is the usage of A (“descendant”) for A-šú šá (“son of”) in lines 3 and 11. The sign certainly introduces the name of the father rather than that of an ancestor, as follows from AnOr 8 21, where Bēl-ibni is called “the son of Nabû-nādin-šumi.”

The last document of the dossier is even more provisional in character:

GCC I 2 350<sup>33</sup>

1. 2 udu.<sup>f</sup>nita<sup>l</sup> šá <sup>m</sup>i-sin-na-a-a ul-tu <X>
  2. a <sup>m</sup>ir-<sup>d</sup>in-nin i-bu-ku ina igi <sup>m</sup>re-m[ut a]
  3. <sup>m</sup>id-di-ia šá é <sup>md</sup>amar.utu-numun-dù
  4. <sup>md</sup>en-dù a <sup>md</sup>nà-na-din-mu
  5. <sup>md</sup>60-ik-šur
  6. <sup>m</sup>šeš-mu ina é <sup>m</sup>ba-šá-<sup>d</sup>amar.utu
  7. <sup>m</sup>ú-bar a <sup>m</sup>gi-mil-lu
  8. <sup>md</sup>na-na-a-mu a <sup>md</sup>en-lu-mur lú.š.u
  9. <sup>mtin</sup> a <sup>md</sup>nà-en-mu.me
- rev.
10. 2 TÚG.KUR.RA 1 túg.ga-am-mi-da-tu<sub>4</sub>
  11. <sup>m</sup>ba-šá-<sup>d</sup>amar.utu a <sup>m</sup>idim-ía

<sup>31</sup> For translation, see Joannès 2000: 216.

<sup>32</sup> See Table 1 for textual references.

<sup>33</sup> For translation, see Joannès 2000: 217.

<sup>1-3</sup>Two sheep that Isinnāya took from <x>/Arad-Innin: with Rēm[ūt]/Iddia of the house of Marduk-zēru-ibni;

<sup>4</sup>Bēl-ibni/Nabû-nādin-šumi, <sup>5</sup>Anu-ikšur, <sup>6</sup>Aḥu-iddin: in the house of Iqīša-Marduk;

<sup>7</sup>Ubār/Gimillu, <sup>8</sup>Nanāya-iddin/Bēl-lūmur, the barber, <sup>9</sup>Balātu/Nabû-bēl-šumāte: <sup>10</sup>two TÚG.KUR.RA-garments, one *gammidātu*-cloth.

<sup>11</sup>Iqīša-Marduk/Kabtia

L. 2 [u] instead of [a] at the end of the line is also possible (“Rēm[ūt and] Iddia”).

As in Stigers, JCS 28 39, a name syntactically unrelated to the previous part of the text is found in the bottom line. In similarity to the previous memorandum, the function of this note may have been to specify the identity of Iqīša-Marduk from l. 6. The person who was drafting the document did not have time to put down all the details as dictated, so he added an important detail later on; this detail could have been included in the main body of the formal document that was later rewritten. The fact that the same characteristic is found in both texts suggests the common authorship of both memoranda. This assumption is further strengthened by the same use of A (“descendant”) for A-šú šá (“son of”) common to both documents. The scribe probably chose the former form for reasons of economy of time. His haste is noticeable also in l. 1 where he skipped the name of the robbed man, a son of Arad-Innin.

This memorandum, like the previous one, deals with theft, this time of sheep and garments. Several of the men who are mentioned may be identified as members of the gang: Isinnāya himself, Bēl-ibni/Nabû-nādin-šumi, Ubār/Gimillu and the barber Nanāya-lūmur.<sup>34</sup> The fifth man, Balātu/Nabû-bēl-šumāte, was possibly the brother of Šamaš-zēru-ibni/Nabû-bēl-šumāte listed in AnOr 8 21: 26, while Rēmūt, in whose house the two sheep stolen by Isinnāya were hidden, could have been the son of Iddia turned in by Isinnāya in his testimony (AnOr 8 21: 31). Two names, however – those of Anu-ikšur, Aḥu-iddin – are new.

Since they are intermingled with those of members of the gang, there is little doubt that these three men were likewise Isinnāya’s accomplices. It is unclear why they are missing from Isinnāya’s testimony; a number of possible reasons can be given. More importantly, both men may perhaps be identified with individuals listed in the royal writ. If we look back at the five men referred to as “criminals” by the king, we can now establish that two of them – the slaves Isinnāya and Nabû-lū-sālim – were certainly involved in the same case, the case of Isinnāya’s gang. This is less certain in the case of Kalbu, who was released to house arrest by the board of Eanna. That leaves two men, Anu-napišti-ušur and Aḥu-iddin. The latter could be identical with the thief Aḥu-iddin listed in the second memorandum. The last identification is more problematic. The two names – Anu-napišti-ušur, Anu-ikšur – sound similar, so the scribe who drew up the memorandum (or the writ) may have misheard the name and made a mistake.<sup>35</sup> If this identification is correct, it is possible that the entire royal writ dealt with one case, the case of Isinnāya’s gang, and not with a number of individual criminals that the royal administration was seeking to track down. This assumption may be corroborated, however, only with new textual evidence.

Going back to GCCI 2 350, it is clear despite the terseness of its formulary that the text deals with the location of stolen goods and the identification of their owners. Two individuals mentioned in it were apparently victims of the thieves. The first one is “son of Arad-Innin” (l. 2), possibly a brother of Rē’indu, daughter of Arad-Innin from Stigers, JCS 28 39. If that is the case, Isinnāya and his men stole in one break-in not only valuables, but also sheep. Provided our interpretation of lines 4–6 is correct, the second victim was Iqīša-Marduk, son of Kabtia (as specified in the bottom line), whose house was burglarised by three members of the gang. He could be identical with a man of the same name from the Šigūa family, brother of Mušezib-Marduk, an influential scribe and a prebendary baker of Nanāya.<sup>36</sup> Finally, lines 7–10

<sup>34</sup> See Table 1 for references.

<sup>35</sup> GCCI 2 350 has not been collated, perhaps the mistake is that of the copyist.

<sup>36</sup> Kabtia/Šigūa appears as a witness in YOS 6 134: 14 (12Nbn). For his brother Mušezib-Marduk, see Kümmel 1979: 118, 149 (10Nbn-6Cyr).

name three criminals next to several garments that were assumingly found in their hands and not yet traced back to their owners.

Both memoranda are extremely concise and laconic. They must have been produced in the course of criminal investigation procedures: collection of evidence, questioning of witnesses and suspects. It is regrettable that we do not know the people behind these procedures, Eanna's detectives and policemen.

### *The composition of the gang*

Throughout the dossier, criminals are identified by their father's names, their occupation or status. These data give an insight into the social structure of Isinnāya's gang. In this respect, the dossier is extremely valuable, as it provides insight into the lower strata of Neo-Babylonian urban society.

The head of the gang, Isinnāya, was a slave. Unfortunately, it is impossible to establish conclusively who his master Rēmūt was. As noticed earlier on, the fact that Rēmūt's name was not given suggests that he was well known and easily recognizable. The *zazakku* Rēmūt, a close associate of Nabonidus, could be a candidate, but no strong arguments in favour of this identification may be offered.<sup>37</sup> It seems less plausible that the owner of Isinnāya was Rēmūt/Rīmanu, the messenger who brought the royal writ to Uruk. Isinnāya is called "the slave of Rēmūt" (with no filiation given) also in BM 114574; had the messenger been the owner, his filiation or function should have been specified there.

Two more individuals are labelled as *qallus*,<sup>38</sup> and one as an oblate (a cook by profession).<sup>39</sup> Four flour-mill workers belonged to the gang,<sup>40</sup> one barber,<sup>41</sup> two individuals labelled *hattaššu* (the meaning of this term is uncertain),<sup>42</sup> two scouts,<sup>43</sup> two sons of a weaver,<sup>44</sup> and one man from the crown prince's estate.<sup>45</sup> Several members of the gang were related: three groups of brothers may be detected,<sup>46</sup> and possibly a few father-and-son pairs.<sup>47</sup>

Most of the gang members do not seem to be linked formally to the temple: apart from one oblate, none of the criminals were identified as members of the Eanna household; Kalbu/Nūrēa, the man released to his father's custody may be the sole exception. The victims, on the other hand, were possibly prebendaries of Eanna. It is unclear whether it was for this reason that the case came under temple jurisdiction.<sup>48</sup> Perhaps, alternatively, Eanna was the sole judiciary institution in Uruk at the time, representing the royal administration of justice also among people who were not members of the temple household.

All the criminals bear purely Babylonian names. One or at most two people have three-tier filiation indicative of a more noble pedigree,<sup>49</sup> but the overwhelming majority seem to be simple lower-class Urukeans. Since their filiation is short, associating them with any individuals known from the Uruk material is hazardous. One identification, however, seems very plausible. In Nabonidus' seventh year a certain Ardia/Nanāya-karābī and his accomplice broke into a storehouse and stole offering dates, garments and wooden tablets.<sup>50</sup> Not only the name, the (quite rare) father's name and the chronological proximity, but also a criminal past allow the man's identification with one of Isinnāya's colleagues.

<sup>37</sup> Rēmūt was nominated to this post after the king's return from Teima, cf. Beaulieu 1989: 216–17, *idem* 1993: 258–59.

<sup>38</sup> Nabû-lu-salim, slave of Marduk-ētir, and Nabû-rēhit-ušur, slave of Kalbā. For references, see Table 1.

<sup>39</sup> Lābāšī (*širku*, *nuḫatimmu*).

<sup>40</sup> Erēbšu, Kidin, Lu-māgil, Madānu-šarru-ušur (*ša bit qēmēti*).

<sup>41</sup> Nanāya-iddin/Bēl-lūmur (*gallabu*).

<sup>42</sup> Marduk-aḫu-iddin *hattaššu* of Šamaš-šumu-iddin, Eššūa *hattaššu* of the Aramaic scribe Bānia.

<sup>43</sup> Šillā and his brother (*maḫṭšu*). The term may denote "scout," "military scout," "hunter" or "weaver" (CAD s. vv.). The last meaning is the least probable, since Neo-Babylonian prefers uš.bar for this profession.

<sup>44</sup> Niḫḫuru and Sašeru, sons' of the weaver Nabû-ušuršu.

<sup>45</sup> Kidin (*ša bit redūti*).

<sup>46</sup> H[u...], Ardia and Bēl-ibni, sons of /Nabû-nādin-šumi// [...].āya, Niḫḫuru and Šaširu, sons of the weaver Nabû-ušuršu; Šilā and Ubār, sons of Gimillu.

<sup>47</sup> Iddia of the house of Marduk-zēru-ibni and Nidintu/Iddia; Nanāya-iddin/Bēl-lūmur and Guzanu/Nanāya-iddin; Na[nāya-ka]rābī/Dāneššu and Ardia/Nanāya-karābī; Gimillu/Šamaš-uballit and Ḥašdā/Gimillu or Ubār/Gimillu; Balātu/Nabû-bēl-šumāte and Nidintu/Balātu.

<sup>48</sup> In accordance with semi-in-rem jurisdiction ("j. over a person, but based on that person's interest in property located within the court's territory," according to *Black's Law Dictionary*: 870).

<sup>49</sup> Nidintu/Tabnēa/Rab [...], perhaps also sons of Nabû-nādin-šumi// [...].āya.

<sup>50</sup> Kessler 1999. See Table 2 below.

TABLE 1: Criminals of Uruk

	<i>name</i>	<i>identity</i>	<i>BM</i> 114574	<i>YOS 6</i> 213	<i>AnOr 8</i> 21	<i>Stigers, JCS</i> 28 39	<i>GCCI 2</i> 350
	Isinnāya	slave of Rēmūt	x		x	x	x
	[Aḫḫ]ē-iqīša/Bēl-uballit				x		
	Aḫu-iddin/Arad-Bēl		x				x
	Anu-napišti-ušur/Ša-pī-Bēl		x				x <sup>7</sup>
	Ardia/Nabû-nādin-šumi/[...]jāya	brother of Ḫ[u...] and Bēl-ibni			x		
	Ardia/Nanāya-karābī				x		
	Balātu/Nabû-bēl-šumāte						x
	Bēl-ibni/Nabû-nādin-šumi/[...]jāya	brother of Ḫ[u...] and Ardia			x	x	x
0	Būšu/Mušēzib-Bēl				x		
	Erēbšu	from the flour mill			x		
1	Eššua	lú.kur [x] tu, ḫattaššu of <i>sēpiru</i> Bānia			x		
2	Gimillu/Šamaš-uballit				x		
3	Guzānu/Nanāya-iddin				x		
4	Ḫašdā/Gimillu				x	x	
5	Ḫ[u...]/Nabû-nādin-šumi/[...]jāya	brother of Ardia and Bēl-ibni			x		
6	Iddia	of the house of Marduk-zēru-ibni			x		(x)
7	Kalbu	/Nurēa	x	x			
8	Kidin	from the flour mill			x		
9	Kidin	from the crown prince's estate			x		
0	Lābaši	oblate, cook			x		
1	Lū-māgil	from the flour mill			x		
2	Madānu-šarru-ušur	from the flour mill			x		
3	Marduk-aḫu-iddin	ḫattaššu of Šamaš-šumu-iddin			x		
4	Nabû-lū-salim	slave of Marduk-ētir	x		x		
5	Nabû-rēhit-ušur	slave of Kalba			x		
6	Nanāya-iddin/Bēl-lūmur	barber			x	x	x
7	Na[nāya-ka]rābī/Dāneššu				x		
8	Nidintu/Balātu				x		
9	Nidintu/Bēl-erība				x		
0	Nidintu/Ibni-Ištar				x		
1	Nidintu/Iddia				x		
2	Nidintu/Nabû-šumu-līšir				x		
3	Nidintu/Tabnēa//Rab [...]				x		
4	Niḫḫuru, son <sup>1</sup> of the weaver Nabû-ušuršu	brother of Šaširu			x		
5	P[āšā]nu/Nabû-mušētiq-udde				x	x	
6	Pir'u/Šellēbu				x	x	
7	[Re']ānu/Innin-zēru-ibni				x	x	
8	Rēmūt/Iddia						x
9	Šin-aḫu-iddin/Iniya				x		
0	Šaširu, son <sup>1</sup> of the weaver Nabû-ušuršu	brother of Niḫḫuru			x		

Continued

TABLE 1: Continued

	<i>name</i>	<i>identity</i>	<i>BM</i> 114574	<i>YOS 6</i> 213	<i>AnOr 8</i> 21	<i>Stigers, JCS</i> 28 39	<i>GCCI 2</i> 350
1	Šilla	scout, brother of PN			x		
2	Šamaš-zēru-ibni/Nabû-bēl-šumāte				x		
3	Ubār/Gimillu				x		x
4	Uqūpu/Šamaš-aḥḥē-iddin				x		
5	PN	scout, brother of Šilla			x		

### *Investigation proceedings*

The dossier comprises five documents produced in the course of subsequent stages of the investigation proceedings undertaken by Eanna; seldom is the accumulation of available evidence so thick. The effectiveness of temple officials is impressive. The investigation began when the order of the king reached Uruk on the ninth of *abu*. The first steps in response to the writ were taken on the following day, when Kalbu was granted house arrest (tenth of *abu*). Seven days later Isinnāya disclosed his accomplices (seventeenth of *abu*). It is uncertain where in time to locate the undated memoranda: the questioning recorded in them could have taken place between the receipt of the royal writ and Isinnāya's testimony (ninth–seventeenth of *abu*) or after the latter event. Still, within roughly eight days, temple officials had managed to track down the criminals listed in the royal writ, receive their testimonies, question witnesses and locate at least part of the stolen goods.

Several officials were involved in the investigation. The royal order was addressed to the royal administrator of the temple, *ša reš šarri bēl piqitti* of Eanna, but the receipt of the writ was officially acknowledged in the assembly of *mār banē*. No specific *mār banē* seem to have been assigned to the case; with two exceptions (Bēl-ibni/Bulluṭ/Ba'iru and Innin-nādin-aḥi/Iddin-Nabû/Kidin-Marduk), they changed from record to record. Characteristically, the second top-ranking official of Eanna, the chief administrator (*šatammu*), who usually appears in similar contexts next to the *bēl piqitti*, is missing from all documents. It is uncertain whether any significance is to be ascribed to this fact.

Interestingly, on the day Kalbu's release was granted yet another record of legal deposition was drafted in Eanna (BM 114603). The collegia of the *mār banē* who appeared as witnesses of these two transactions differ substantially from one another.<sup>51</sup> This provides insight into the temple board's sitting practice: either the body of the *mār banē* changed over the day or two parallel sittings were held. On the other hand, the two documents, as well as the formal acknowledgment of the royal writ BM 114574 drafted a day earlier, were written by the same scribe, perhaps on account of his being assigned to the case.

Unfortunately, it is not known how this trial proceeded. Kalbu's release to house arrest was granted for a period of one month. By this time, presumably, the investigation was expected to have ended and the criminals put to trial. This last, crucial piece of the documentation is missing: there is no trial record, so it is not clear whether the court case took place in Uruk, at the local court, or in Babylon.<sup>52</sup> Finally, the sentence passed is unknown.

### *Nabonidus' return from Teima*

One more aspect of BM 114574 is of interest as it contributes to our knowledge of the chronology of Nabonidus' reign. The king is known to have moved to the oasis of Teima in Arabia in his third year,

<sup>51</sup> See Table 2.

<sup>52</sup> If the latter was the case, the transport of such a group of gangsters must have been a difficult operation.

TABLE 2: Composition of temple bodies

<i>BM 114574 (9.5.14Nbn)</i>	<i>YOS 6, 213 (10.5.14Nbn)</i>	<i>BM 114603 (10.5.14Nbn)</i>
officials		
Ilu-rēmanni <i>bēl piqitti Eanna</i>	Aḥuṣunu, chief bowman of the [Sea] land	–
<i>mār banē</i>		
Arad-Marduk/Zēria//Egibi Madanu-aḥḥē-iddin/Gimillu// Šigūa <b>Bēl-ibni/Bulluṭ//Bā'iru</b> Kiribtī/Nādin//Babūtu	Sin-ēreš/Nabū-šumu-līšir//Ibni-ili Nabū-mukīn-zēri/Nādin//Dabibī  <b>Bēl-ibni/Bulluṭ//Bā'iru</b> <b>Innin-nādin-aḥi/Iddin-Nabū/Kidin-</b> <b>Marduk</b>	Arad-Innin/Bēl-iddin//Kurī <b>Innin-nādin-aḥi/Iddin-Nabū/Kidin-</b> <b>Marduk</b> Sin-ibni/Šamaš-dāmiq/Rē'i- <alpī> Nūrēa/Nergal-ēṭir//Rab-banē
Pir'u/Tabnēa//Bā'iru Nabū-mukīn-apli/Nādin// Dābibī Šamaš-erība/Nergal-iddin//Sin- tabni Nabū-zēru-līšir/Bēlšunu//Kurī		Nūr-Sin/Nabū-tabni-ušur/Nūr-Sin
scribes		
<b>Gimillu//Innin-zēru-iddin</b>	<b>Gimillu//Innin-zēru-iddin</b>	<b>Gimillu//Innin-zēru-iddin</b>

but the precise date of his return to Babylon and his assuming of royal functions is disputed; opinions vary between his thirteenth and fifteenth year.

Paul-Alain Beaulieu quoted several arguments in favour of the former option.<sup>53</sup> Firstly, Inscription no. 13 states clearly that Nabonidus returned from Arabia ten years after his departure (which took place in his third year, according to the *Verse Account*). Secondly, late in the thirteenth year several high officials were replaced in Uruk, a fact which may be linked to the king's reorganisation of the local administration upon his return.<sup>54</sup> Thirdly, up till the thirteenth year royal letters opened with the heading *amat mār šarri* "the word of the crown prince", afterwards the formula went back to the standard *amat šarri* "the word of the king."

The validity of Beaulieu's arguments was questioned by A.C.V.M. Bongenaar (1993) who noted that Belshazzar was still enjoying royal prerogatives in Sippar in the fourth month of the fifteenth year: a royal share of the sacrifices was sent to him.

Similarly to all the royal messages dispatched beginning with the thirteenth year, BM 114574 opens with *amat šarri* rather than *amat mār šarri*. This confirms the consistency of the formulary used by royal scribes and thus adds weight to Beaulieu's third argument. With this consistency in mind, it seems unlikely that the message came from the crown prince Belshazzar. The writ could have obviously been dispatched from Arabia, but Nabonidus' involvement in a local criminal investigation would be very unusual had the king still been away. It seems much more probable that in his fourteenth year Nabonidus was already back in Babylon. Bongenaar's argument is strong, but a solution can be offered. Sacrificial remains were divided between the king and the crown prince during the Teima period,<sup>55</sup> but perhaps they also continued to be divided also later on, for example whenever the king and the crown prince were in different locations. Belshazzar could have also retained part of his earlier duties and privileges. Alternatively, the dispatch of sacrificial baskets from Sippar to Belshazzar could simply have continued as it had been for the ten preceding years.

<sup>53</sup> Beaulieu 1989: 149–65.

<sup>54</sup> Joannès (1992) suggests that also royal judges were exchanged by the king in his thirteenth year. This cannot be excluded, but one should note that the body of available

judicial documents diminishes significantly after this date; the break in continuity of attestations of judges may be due to a paucity of sources.

<sup>55</sup> Beaulieu 1989: 157–59.

### Conclusions

The royal writ puts the dossier of Isinnāya's gang in an entirely new perspective. If not for it, the remaining documents could have been treated as a product of an internal temple investigation, following which a local trial would be expected.

The dossier demonstrates that the king interfered in the execution of justice on a local level in cases of not only state importance, but also petty crime like theft and burglary, committed by simple, low class city dwellers. Obviously, not all the details of the case are known and the size of the gang and the possible scope of its activities may not be irrelevant.

The royal writ is a unique document and as long as it remains isolated, it does not provide sufficient grounds to reformulate opinions about the shape of the Neo-Babylonian court system. It does, however, increase awareness of the lamentable one-sidedness of our material.

### APPENDIX

#### BM 114603 (1920-06-15, 199)

5.3 × 4.2

1. <sup>m</sup>ir-<sup>d</sup>in-nin a-šú šá <sup>md</sup>en-mu a <sup>m</sup>kur-i
2. <sup>md</sup>in-nin-mu-ùru a-šú šá <sup>m</sup>mu-<sup>d</sup>nà a <sup>m</sup>ki-din-<sup>d</sup>šú
3. <sup>md</sup>30-ib-ni a-šú šá <sup>md</sup>utu-sig<sub>15</sub> a lú.sipa-i- <gu<sub>4</sub>>
4. <sup>m</sup>zálag-e-a a-šú šá <sup>md</sup>u.gur-sur a lú.gal.dù<sup>over erasure</sup>
5. <sup>m</sup>zálag-<sup>d</sup>30 a-šú šá <sup>md</sup>nà-dù-šeš a <sup>m</sup>zálag-<sup>d</sup>30
6. lú.dumu ba-ni-i.meš šá ina pa-ni-šú-nu
7. <sup>f</sup>é.sag.gil-be-let dumu.sal-su

l.e.

8. šá <sup>md</sup>u.gur-mu a <sup>m</sup>ár-rab-tu<sub>4</sub>
9. taq<sup>over erasure</sup>-bu-ú um-ma túg.šir-a-am

rev.

10. šá ina <sup>f</sup>šu<sup>ii1</sup> <sup>f</sup>nu-up-ta-a dumu.sal-su
11. šá <sup>md</sup>nà-sur áš-šu-ú at-tu-ú-a
12. šī-i
13. lú.umbisag <sup>m</sup>r<sup>f</sup>gī<sup>1</sup>-mil-lu a-šú šá <sup>md</sup>innin-na-numun-mu
14. unug<sup>(over erasure)</sup>.ki iti.ne u<sub>4</sub>.10.kám
15. mu.14.kám <sup>m</sup>nà-i lugal e.ki

Arad-Innin/Bēl-iddin//Kurī,  
 Innin-šumu-ušur/Iddin-Nabû//Kidin-Marduk,  
 Šîn-ibni/Šamaš-udammīq//Rē'i- <alpi> ,  
 Nūrēa/Nergal-ētir//Rab-banē,  
 Nūr-Šîn/Nabû-bāni-aḫi//Nūr-Šîn.

– these are the *mār banē* in whose presence <sup>f</sup>Esangil-belet/Nergal-iddin//Arrabtu said as follows: “The *šir'am*-cloth that I took from <sup>f</sup>Nuptā/Nabû-ētir is mine.”

Scribe: Gimillu/Innin-zēru-iddin.

Uruk, tenth of *abu*, fourteenth year of Nabonidus, king of Babylon.

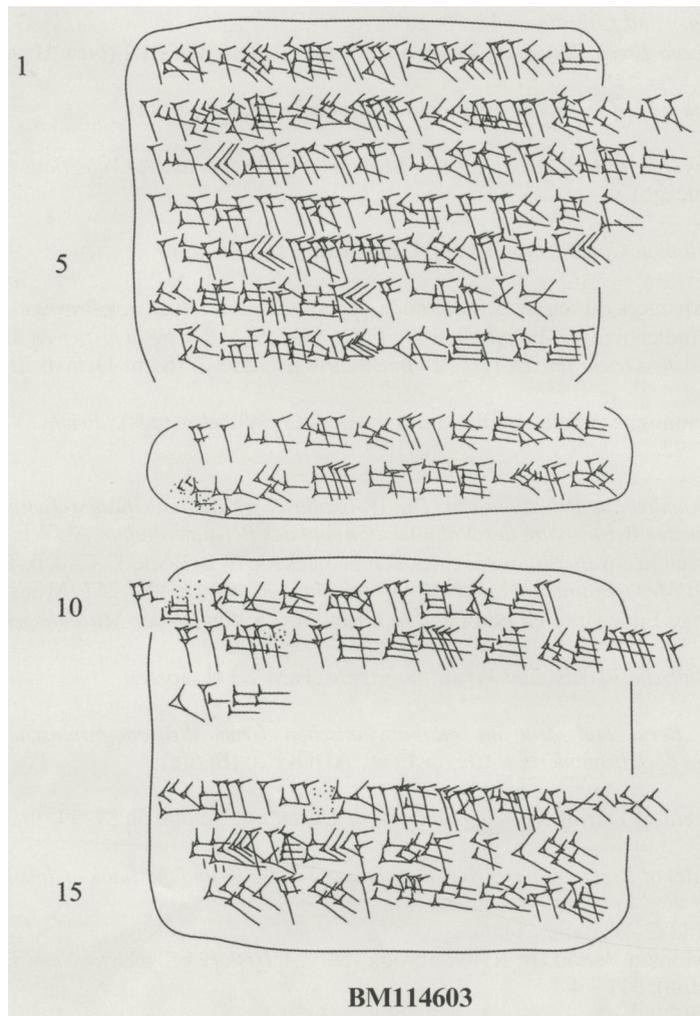
See Table 2 for the juxtaposition of the *mār banē* present at this and yet another hearing held on the same day.

The identity of neither of the protagonists can be established. Among the *mār banē* there is Šîn-ibni/Šamaš-udammīq//Rē'i-alpī, Eanna's “Generalpächter” (*ša muḫḫi sūti*) and crop estimator.<sup>56</sup> His three sons were scribes and his family held the milk supply prebend in Eanna.<sup>57</sup> Nūr-Šîn/Nabû-bāni-aḫi//Nūr-Šîn was a jeweller.<sup>58</sup> The remaining *mār banē* are, to my knowledge, hitherto unattested.

<sup>56</sup> Kümmel 1979: 105–06.

<sup>57</sup> Kümmel 1979: 82–83

<sup>58</sup> Kümmel 1979: 26.



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نَبُو نِيدِ وَالْأَرْبَعِينَ حَرَامِي فِي الْوُرُكَاءِ  
 أم. ساندوفيتش

يدرس البحث مجموعة من الوثائق نتجت خلال تحري فعاليات عصابة كانت تزاوّل أفعالها في الوركاء خلال المرحلة المتأخرة من حكم نَبُو نِيدِ. وفحص تكوين هذه العصابة المجرمة والجرائم التي ارتكبتها أفرادها. ولكن قبل كل شيء تحاول ان تحدد الإجراءات التي اتخذها مسؤولو المعبد استجابة الى الأمر الملكي BM 114574 غير المنشور لحد الآن. وثيقة تلقي الضوء على تدخل الملك في تطبيق العدالة خلال العصر البابلي الحديث.