

[home](#) : [index](#) : [ancient Mesopotamia](#) : [Babylonian Chronicles](#) : text A.K. Grayson ©

The Uruk King List



The Uruk King List, obverse
(from FS Von Soden; @!!!)

The *Uruk King List* (also known as "King List 5") is an important historiographical document from ancient [Babylonia](#). It mentions the length of the reigns of several kings, beginning with Kandalanu (647-627) and continuing to the [Seleucid](#) king Seleucus II Callinicus (246-226/225). Together the *Babylonian King List of the Hellenistic Period*, the Uruk King list is a useful text for those who are reconstructing the chronology of Babylonia in the late fourth to mid-second centuries.



Unless it was stolen when the museum was looted in April 2003, the cuneiform tablet (IM 65066) is in the Bagdad Museum. On this website, you will find a slightly adapted transcription by A.K. Grayson, from the *Reallexikon der Assyriologie*, s.v. "Königslisten und Chroniken". The photos on this page were taken from Grayson's article in the Festschrift Von Soden.

Chronological notes have been added; the right-hand column is a modern approximation of regnal dates.

Description of the tablet

This list of kings of [Babylonia](#) and their regnal years, which appears on a fragment from the middle of a small tablet found at Uruk, covers in its preserved portion the period (obverse) from Kandalanu (647-627 BCE) to Darius I (522-486 BCE) and from (reverse) Darius III (335-331 BCE) to Seleucus II (246-226/225 BCE). The script is late Babylonian and the tablet was obviously inscribed some time after the reign of Seleucus II.



The Uruk King List, reverse
(from FS Von Soden; @!!!)

Previous editions:

- R. Borger, *Archiv für Orientforschung* 25 (1974-1977) 165ff
- J.J.A. van Dijk, *Vorläufiger Bericht über die Ausgrabungen in Uruk-Warka* 18, pages 53-60.
- G.F. Del Monte, *Testi dalla Babilonia Ellenistica. Volume I. Testi Cronografici* (1997 Pisa, Roma)
- A.K. Grayson, from the *Reallexikon der Assyriologie*, s.v. "Königslisten und Chroniken".
- A.K. Grayson, 'Assyrian and Babylonian King Lists,' in: *Lišan mithurti*. (Festschrift Von Soden) (Kevelaer : Neukirchen-Vluyn : Butzon & Bercker; 1969) Plate III.

TEXT: OBVERSE		TRANSLATION		DATES
Lacuna		Lacuna		
1' /MU 21\	[^m Aššur-bâni-apli]	Aššurbanipal	21 years	668-631
2' ša-niš	/ ^m Šamaš-šuma-ukîn	Šamaš-šuma-ukîn	at the same time	667-648
3' MU 21	^m K[an-da]-la-an	Kandalanu	21 years	647-627
4' MU 1	^m dŠîn ₂ -šumu-lišir ₂	Sin-šumlišir	1 year	626
5' u	^m dŠîn ₂ -šarra-iš-ku-un	and Sin-šar-iškûn		
6' MU 21	^m dNabû-apla-usur	Nabopolassar	21 years	626-605
7' [M]U 43	^m dNabû-kuddurî-usur	Nebuchadnezzar [II]	43 years	604-562

8' [M]U 2	^m <i>Amil-dMarduk</i>	Amel-Marduk	2 years	561-560
9' [MU] /3\ 8 ITI	^m <i>Nergal₂-šarra-usur</i>	Neriglissar	3 years, 8 months	559-556
10' [(...)] 3 ITI	^m <i>La-ba-ši-dMarduk</i>	Labaši-Marduk	[accession year] 3 months	556
11' [MU] /17 [?] \	^m <i>Nabû-nâ'id</i>	Nabonidus	17 [?] years	555-539
12' [MU x	^m <i>K]ur-aš</i>	Cyrus [the Great]	[x years]	539-530
13' [MU x	^m <i>Kambu-z]i-i</i>	Cambyses [II]	[x years]	530-522
14' [MU x	^m <i>Daria-m]uš</i>	Darius [the Great]	[x years]	522-486
Lacuna		Lacuna		
TEXT: REVERSE		TRANSLATION		
1' [š]á MU šá-nu-ú	^m <i>Nidin-dB[êl]</i>	[...] whose second name is Nidin-Bêl	[...]	336??
2' [M]U 5	^m <i>Da-ra-a-muš</i>	Darius [III Codomannus]	5 years	336-331
3' MU 7 [?]	^m <i>A-lik-sa-an-dar</i>	Alexander [the Great]	7 [?] years	331-323
4' MU 6	^m <i>Pi-il-ip-su</i>	Philip [III Arridaeus]	6 years	323-317
5' MU 6	^m <i>At-tu-gu-un</i>	Antigonus [the One-eyed]	6 years	317-311
6' MU 31	^m <i>Si-lu-ku</i>	Seleucus [I Nicator]	31 years	311-281
7' MU 22	^m <i>An-ti-'u-ku-su</i>	Antiochus [I Soter]	22 years	281-261
8' MU 15	^m <i>An-ti-'u-ku-su</i>	Antiochus [II Theos]	15 years	261-246
9' [MU] [...]	^m <i>Si-lu-k[u]</i>	Seleucus [II Callinicus]	[... years]	246-225
Lacuna		Lacuna		

Obv.1-2:

The reconstruction of lines 1-2 was proposed by R.Borger. Aššurbanipal was king of [Assyria](#) in 668-631, and appointed his brothers Šamaš-šumai-ukîn and Kandalanu as kings of Babylonia.

Obv.4:

Sin-šumlišir and Sin-šar-iškûn acted as some sort of Assyrian governors.

Obv.6:

According to the [Babylonian chronicle](#) known as [ABC 2](#), the Babylonian general Nabopolassar was recognized as king on 23 November 626.

Obv.10:

Labaši-Marduk probably ruled just 3 months at the end of 556, but the tablet leaves space for something like MU 1.

Rev.1:

The Uruk King List is the only evidence that the reign of the Achaemenid king [Darius III Codomannus](#) was preceded by a ruler named Nidin-Bêl. A scribal error is likely, but it must be noted that the chaotic transition from [Artaxerxes III Ochus](#) to Darius III leaves sufficient room for a short-lived Babylonian rebellion: in Egypt, a native ruler named Khababash revolted, in the far west, the [Yaunâ](#) were restless, and according to the [Dynastic prophecy](#) even Darius started his career as a rebel satrap.

Rev.7':

Twenty-two years is probably a scribal error.

Rev.9':

All editions have /20\ but the tablet is badly damaged. A photo can be found in A.K. Grayson, "Assyrian and Babylonian King Lists" in: W. Röllig (ed.), *Lišan mithurti. Festschrift Wolfram Freiherr von Soden zum 19.6.1968*

[home](#) : [index](#) : [ancient Mesopotamia](#)
[Babylonian Chronicles](#)