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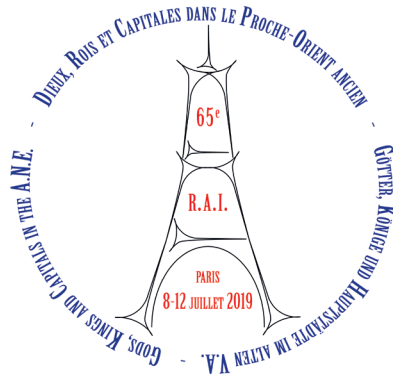
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PIPOAC 5

# DIEUX, ROIS ET CAPITALES DANS LE PROCHE-ORIENT ANCIEN

COMPTE RENDU DE LA LXV<sup>e</sup> RENCONTRE  
ASSYRIOLOGIQUE INTERNATIONALE  
(PARIS, 8-12 JUILLET 2019)



édité par  
Marine Béranger, Francesca Nebiolo  
et Nele Ziegler



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## WHY DOES HAMMURAPI STAND IN FRONT OF ŠAMAŠ?

Adel V. NEMIROVSKAYA\*

In the twelfth century BC, the Elamite king Shutruk-Nahhunte captured the Law Code stela of Hammurapi (now also known as Louvre stela Sb 8, *henceforth: the Stela*) and brought it to Elam. The Stela's original location is traditionally considered to be Sippar, the main cult centre of the sun-god Šamaš, however, without absolute certainty. Scholars have to use words such as: “presumably” (Driver & Miles 1952, p. 29, with n. 1; 1955, p. 304),<sup>1</sup> “most likely” (Van De Mierop 2005, p. 99), “often said” (Van De Mierop 2011, p. 306, with n. 2), “doubtlessly” (Charpin 2012, p. 9; see also p. 110), “the evidence for this is circumstantial at best” (Michalowski & Streck 2018, p. 381-382) in this regard. A radically different opinion has also been expressed claiming that the Stela “was originally erected in Babylon” (Ornan 2019, p. 87).

Furthermore, it has been not infrequently mentioned that the Stela could be just one of the several erected by Hammurapi in various cities and temples of his kingdom (Roth 1997, p. 73; Charpin 2010, p. 71, 78; Van De Mierop 2011, p. 307; Michalowski & Streck 2018, p. 381). In such case, it is the supposed main exemplar placed in the temple of Marduk in Babylon that is described in the Prologue of the Stela. Additionally, M. Van De Mierop observes that “possibly Hammurabi set up such stelas throughout his kingdom announcing the message that he was a king of justice” (*ibid.*). Similarly, M. Roth underlines that to a large degree the composition was addressed to “the subject peoples and vassal rulers of the many cities Hammurabi conquered and subjugated during his forty-two year reign” (Roth 1995, p. 18). These considerations provide a framework for the following discussion.

\* Saint Petersburg State University, Saint Petersburg, Russia.

<sup>1</sup> “*libitti É-BARBAR(RA)* (sic!) <...> *šuāti* may be taken together as meaning *die Mauer dieses Ebarra* (Winckler, who reads *É-BAR<sup>RA</sup>*) and therefore as referring to the temple in Sippar in which the stele may be presumed to have been set up <...> and this view is perhaps supported by the similar use of *šu’āti* elsewhere, notably in reference to *É-BABBAR* which is described as *É šuāti* on a N.-Bab. inscription found at Sippar” (Driver & Miles 1955, p. 304, commentary on l. 76-77).



## 1. ICONOGRAPHY

It is commonly accepted that the deity depicted on the Stela (see *fig. 1*) is Šamaš, the god of justice. This identification is based on two particular iconographical features. First and foremost, the god is shown with sun-rays emanating from his shoulders (Charpin 2010, p. 82) which was typical of the sun-god iconography of the Akkadian Period (Steinkeller 1992, p. 256; Black & Green 1998, p. 183 *fig. 152*). For the second millennium, by contrast, it is a unique case (Collon 2007, p. 103) since from the second to the first millennium sun radiance was usually represented separately by the solar disk.<sup>2</sup> An early example of this is the arched relief of Louvre stela Sb 7 (see *fig. 2*) commonly dated to the late third or early second millennium (Ornan 2019, p. 100-102). In addition, a seated deity wearing a flounced garment revealing its right shoulder is quite typical of the third-millennium presentation scene (Woods 2004, p. 54 n. 149). The second essential iconographical feature is the rows of stylized mountains as the deity's footrest. This element also resembles a common Sargonic motif of the sun-god climbing mountains (Woods 2004, p. 57, with n. 175) which later during the Old Babylonian period turned into a stylized "box-like mountain" under the deity's right foot (Collon 2007, p. 104; cf. Sologubova 2016). It is worth noting that this visual allusion to the Akkadian Period iconography may be seen as a parallel to the revival of the Old Akkadian textual tradition during Hammurapi's reign:

"That he revived the use of bilingual monumental inscriptions to commemorate his military feats, and placed the monuments in the various major cities of his state, suggests that he sought to emulate his long-dead Old Akkadian predecessors. Although the substance of his inscriptions does not sound Old Akkadian, the form he gave them does <...> This would strengthen the message of many of these inscriptions: like the kings of Agade Hammurabi claimed a universal dominion, not just over Babylonia" (Van De Mieroop 2011, p. 328).

As for "rod-and-ring" in the god's hand, it is in fact a symbol of high-ranking divinity, not specific to Utu/Šamaš at all (Wiggermann 2007). As F. A. M. Wiggermann quite rigorously put it, "the combination of the putative measuring instruments of Ur-Namma with Šamaš on the Codex of Hammurapi has led to the untenable notion that R. [*Ring und Stab*]

<sup>2</sup> This symbol of the sun-god is attested as early as the Sargonic period (Woods 2004, p. 50, with n. 129).

*Ring and rod*] are symbols of justice” (*ibid.* 421). Concerning its function Wiggermann summarizes:

“The king does not receive R. from the deity, and is never shown holding them. Although it is clear that R. establish an exclusive relation between the major gods and the king, none of the royal inscriptions involved relates the representations to an investiture <...> The relation is better defined as one of divine selection (and the implied royal responsibility), something more permanent than the momentary act of investiture <...> The gods involved are not just any major gods, but the quite specific subgroup of city gods that select a national ruler, that is the gods of the successive (native and foreign) dynasties” (*ibid.* 417).



Fig. 1. Figurative part of Hammurapi’s Law Code stela. Louvre Museum.  
Picture courtesy Ariane Thomas.



Fig. 2. Louvre stela Sb 7.

## 2. TEXT: PROLOGUE AND EPILOGUE

Although it is Šamaš who is depicted on the Stela, the wording of the Prologue was obviously intended to commemorate the triad constituted by the god Marduk, the Esagil temple, and the city of Babylon:

(i 1-49)<sup>3</sup>

When (*īnu*)

the august Anu, king of the Anunnaki, (and) Enlil, lord of heaven and earth, who determines the destinies of the land, allotted supreme power over all peoples to Marduk, the first son of Ea, exalted him among the Igigi, named Babylon with its august name and made it supreme all over the world (*in kibrātim*), and established for him within it eternal kingship whose foundations are as fixed as heaven and earth,

<sup>3</sup> My interpretation differs somewhat from the translation in Roth 1997, p. 76, 80-81; on *īnu* and its derivatives used for highlighting key points in OB royal inscriptions as well as literary compositions, see Ziegler 2019.

At that time (*inūmīšu*)

Anu and Enlil, for the enhancement of the well-being of the people (*ana šir niši ṭubbim*), called (me by) my name: Hammurapi, the pious prince <...> to make order<sup>4</sup> visible in the land (*mīšaram ina mātīm ana šūpīm*) <...> to rise like Šamaš over humankind and to give light to the land.

(v 14-25)

When (*inūma*)

Marduk commanded me to lead the people of the land aright (*ana šutēšur niši mātīm*) <...> I put (words of) truth and order into the land's mouth (*kittam u mīšaram ina pī mātīm aškun*), I gave well-being to the people (*šir niši uṭīb*),

At that time (*inūmīšu*)

*Šumma*-lawsuits, or according to its official formulation: “the lawsuits of the order which I inscribed on this (lit. my) stela” (*awāt mīšarim ša ina narī-ja ašṭuru*, xlvi=rev. xxv 64-67), followed by “the verdicts of the order which Hammurapi, the able king, confirmed” (*dīnāt mīšarim ša H. šarrum le'ūm ukinnu*, xlvi=rev. xxiv 1-5).

The god Šamaš is simply mentioned within “the topographical outline of 26 towns presented in the Prologue to the Code, summarising the state of affairs at the end of Hammurabi's reign” (Charpin 2012, p. 71). D. Charpin finds the list to have been arranged in four groups according not to merely geographical idea but for some ideological and political reasons as well. This approach is intended to explain not only the logic of the sequence of the cities listed but also the reason for some important centres being omitted (Charpin 2003). It is interesting to note that Samsu-iluna, Hammurapi's successor, declared he had defeated exactly twenty six rebel kings of Mesopotamia in the text commemorating the construction of the wall of Kiš, which gave name to his 24<sup>th</sup> regnal year<sup>5</sup>:

26 LUGAL ḥa-am-ma-i za-i-ri-šu i-na-ar gi-me-er-šu-nu iš-ki-iš

“Twenty-six rebel kings, his foes, he killed; he destroyed all of them”.

This number coincidence may relate to the fact that it was Samsu-iluna who actually ruled during the last two or three years of Hammurapi's reign when “H. may have become ill or feeble, perhaps succumbing to

<sup>4</sup> Leaving aside *mīšarum* as a type of document (“edict”/“act”/“decree”, see Charpin 2010, p. 83-96), the interpretation of *mīšarum* as “order” in relation to the discussed context seems to be more concrete and more appropriate than the commonly used “justice” (Charpin 2012, p. 150-152). In a similar way, such a phrase as *aššum šarrum mīšaram ana mātīm iškunu* has been translated elsewhere as “because the king has restored the righteous order in the land” (Goddeeris 2002, p. 327).

<sup>5</sup> Frayne 1990, p. 387, Samsu-iluna 7, l. 101-103.

old age, by his 40<sup>th</sup> year” (Michalowski & Streck 2018, p. 389). In addition, it should have been precisely within the timespan when the Stela and its supposed counterparts were finished and erected providing that “the text undoubtedly went through various redactions, but the final version was created toward the end of H.’s reign” (*ibid.* 381, see also p. 387).<sup>6</sup>

In the Prologue of the Stela, Šamaš is mentioned after the god Šin, matched with the cities he patronized, namely Sippar and Larsa, and named king’s ally: *muddiš Ebabbar ana Šamaš rēšišu*, “he who renews the Ebabbar temple for the god Šamaš his ally” (ii 32-36, with Roth 1997, p. 77). As Jennie Myers points out:

“The language Hammurapi uses, however, reveals that the image he wished to portray of himself was not simply that of the prototypical just king. Rather, Hammurapi casts himself in the role of human counterpart to the god Šamaš, who is, along with Marduk, the divine patron of his kingship.

The privileged position that Hammurapi accords to Šamaš on his stela represents the culmination of a special relationship that existed between the kings of the First Dynasty of Babylon and the patron deity of Sippar” (Myers 2007, p. 193).

Furthermore, it is not surprising that “the brick of Esagil” is specifically mentioned in the Epilogue:

*šēdum lamassum ilū ēribūt Esagil libitti Esagil igirrē ūmišam ina maḥar  
Marduk bēlija Zarpānītum bēltija lidammīqū*

May the protective spirits, the gods who enter the Esagil temple, and the very brickwork of the Esagil temple, make my daily portents auspicious before the gods Marduk, my lord, and Zarpanitu, my lady (xlvi 39-58, with Roth 1997, p. 135).

However, it is not the only temple brick(work) mentioned there as a mediator between a deity and its worshipper. The other “temple brick” referred to in the Epilogue is the brick of the Ebabbar temple of Šamaš:

*ilū rabūtum ša šamē u eršetim Anunnakū ina napharišunu šēd bītīm libitti Ebab-  
bara šuāti zērašu māssu šabašu nišišu u ummānšu erretam maruštam lirurū*

May the great gods of heaven and earth, all the Anunnaki deities together, the protective spirit of the temple, the very brickwork of the Ebabbar temple, curse that one, his seed, his land, his troops, his people, and his army with a terrible curse (li 70-83, with Roth 1997, p. 140).

<sup>6</sup> This resembles the so-called Laws of Ur-Namma. Whereas only the king Ur-Namma is mentioned in the prologue to this law collection from Ur, it is his son and successor Šulgi who the Laws are attributed to by some scholars (Roth 1997, p. 13).



It is apparent that the text concerns the three monuments taken as a whole: a stela with judicial decisions, a statue of Marduk with Zarpanitu and ultimately a statue of Hammurapi himself. Although the latter has never been found, the name for Hammurapi's 22<sup>nd</sup> regnal year refers to a statue representing "the king of the order" (*šar mišarim*) at the entrance to the Esagil temple (Charpin 2012, p. 110), despite the fact that his second regnal year had already been named "the year in which Hammurapi established a *mišarum*-edict in the land" (Roth 1997, p. 71).

It seems that the Stela could comprise the composition of all three monuments though the deity in the spotlight is not Marduk but Šamaš since the Stela was presumably to be placed in his Ebabbar temple. The brick(work) of Ebabbar mentioned at the end of the Epilogue is likely to support this view (Driver & Miles 1952, p. 29, with n. 4). Remarkably, close relationship between Marduk and Šamaš – especially, as noted by J. Scurlock (2018, p. 412), Šamaš of Sippar – that is traditionally conveyed by means of ideograms (<sup>d</sup>UTU // <sup>d</sup>AMAR.UTU)<sup>7</sup> is expressed in the Epilogue by the paralleled phrases (Driver & Miles 1952, p. 39, with n. 1):

*ina qibūt Šamaš<sup>d</sup>UTU dayyānim rabīm ša šamē u eršetim mišarī ina mātīm lištēpi*

By the command of Šamaš, the great judge of heaven and earth, may this (lit. my) order be made visible (or: be displayed) in the land!

*ina awāt Marduk<sup>d</sup>AMAR.UTU) bēlīja ušurātū'a mušassikam aj-iršijā*

By the word of Marduk, my lord, may these (lit. my) ordinances/designs<sup>8</sup> not acquire any remover!

<sup>7</sup> A much more cautious approach also exists: "There is one obvious etymology of the name, "Bull-calf of Utu" <...> But however well this idea may meet the requirements of philology, it runs into the formidable objection that, so far as our knowledge goes, it is theological nonsense. There is no evidence that Marduk was ever conceived as related to a sun-god, whether of Larsa, Sippar, or anywhere else. But our knowledge on such matters only commences with the First Dynasty of Babylon, so there is room for speculation. If this etymology is sustained, one must suppose that somehow Marduk's attributes and position in the pantheon changed over the centuries" (Lambert 2013, p. 163); according to another view, Marduk's early relations with Utu/Šamaš still require further study (Johandi 2018, p. 568).

<sup>8</sup> In this context *ušurātū'a* is usually interpreted as "my carved figures" implying "the figures of god and king above the text of the Laws" (xxivb 91, with Driver & Miles 1955, p. 97, 285, v. note to l. 91-92), and similarly "my engraved image" (xlvi 84-92, with Roth 1997, p. 134; see also CAD U/W 292). But the parallelism (*mišarī // ušurātū'a*) led us to turn to the meaning of this plural form as it had been established by W. von Soden for some other contexts of the Prologue and Epilogue, namely "Vorzeichnung(en), Planung(en), Fügung(en) (der Götter)" with reference to CH iii 31 (*mukīn ušurātīm ša Keš*, "(Hammurapi is) the accomplisher of the plans for Keš") and to CH xxvi Rev. 9, 31 where *ušurātum* is used with *nukkurum* (AHw 1440); the passage xlvi 73 should be also added (*ušurātija*

## 3. ŠAMAŠ – “THE JUDGE OF HEAVEN AND EARTH”

The epithet of Šamaš, *dayyānum ša šamê u eršetim*, appears twice in the Epilogue (one passage is cited above, the other below). In fact, the text itself explains what it means. The second half of the Epilogue invokes the gods of Babylonia to curse and punish a future ruler who would not take care of the monument and would not heed Hammurapi’s pronouncements or would change them. The sequence of the gods in the Epilogue is the following: Anu, Enlil, Ninlil, and Ea. Then comes Šamaš, and only afterwards comes Sîn (as opposed to the sequence of the Prologue) to be followed by Adad, Zababa, Ištar, etc. In other words, Šamaš is placed there immediately after the traditional supreme gods:

(But) if that man (a future ruler) has not heeded my words <...>  
 May Šamaš, the great judge of heaven and earth, who keeps in order<sup>9</sup> all living beings (*muštēšer šaknat napištim*), the lord, my trust, overturn his kingship, may he not judge his case<sup>10</sup> (*dīn-šu aj-idīn*) <...>  
 When divination is performed for him, may he place (for) him an evil omen (*ina bīrī-šu šīram lemnam* <...> *liškun-šum*) portending the uprooting of his kingship and the ruin of his land.  
 May the malevolent word of Šamaš quickly overtake him, may he uproot him from among the living above (*eliš ina balūtīm lissuḥ-šu*) and make his ghost to thirst for water below in the Netherworld (*šapliš ina eršetim eṭemmī-šu mē lišašmi*)!

It is apparent that the role of Šamaš as the supreme judge of the Netherworld,<sup>11</sup> the authority over the living and the dead,<sup>12</sup> and the god

*aj-ušassik*, “may he not remove my designs”); the same lexical nuance has been established elsewhere: *ušurtu(m)* – “transf. usu. pl. “designs, plans, ordinances” of gods” (CDA 429a).

<sup>9</sup> Akk. *muštēšer* was rendered as “who indeed gives justice” (xxviii 17, with Driver & Miles 1955, p. 103) and “who provides just ways” (l 14-40, with Roth 1997, p. 137), but elsewhere as “one who gives correct decisions” in the context of prayers and rituals relating, e.g., to Ištar: *dayyānāti dīnī dīn[ī] muštēširāti alakī li[mḍī]*, “You are one who judges, judge my case. You are one who gives correct decisions, grant me an (oracular) decision” (Abusch 1987, p. 23).

<sup>10</sup> Cf. “may he not judge his judgment” being understood as “the man’s wickedness will be so enormous as to require no trial” (Driver & Miles 1955, p. 103, 296); another variant is: “may he not render his judgments” (Roth 1997, p. 137).

<sup>11</sup> See an Old Babylonian copy of a Sumerian hymn to Utu “that pays special attention of the sun god’s role as supreme judge of the dead”; besides, there are first-millennium copies of a ritual against ghosts where Šamaš, Gilgameš and the Anunnaki (i.e. the supreme judge of the Netherworld, the ruler of the shades, and the chthonic deities as a whole, respectively) are imagined to be present (George 2003, p. 127, 134).

<sup>12</sup> See the invocation in a prayer (a first-millennium copy): *Šamaš dayyān šamê u eršeti dayyān mīti u balāti attā-ma*, “O Shamash, the judge of the heavens and the netherworld, the judge of the dead and of the living are you” (Abusch 1987, p. 27).

of oracular decisions is highly important in the passage. Indeed, Šamaš was typically in charge of the oracular decision (*dīnum*) received via extispicy when he gave a firm reply by means of placing a true sign (*kit-tam šakānum*) in the entrails of a sacrificed animal. Accordingly, Šamaš was regularly addressed to as either “judge” (*dayyānum*) or “the lord of decision” (*bēl dīnim*).<sup>13</sup> For example, one may consider this phraseology in an Old Babylonian “*ikribu*-like prayer” used by the diviner in order to have the gods gathered for listening to his inquiries (Lenzi 2011):

9 <i>el-le-ku a-na pu-ḥu-ur i-lí e-te-eh-ḥi</i>	I am pure. I draw near to the assembly of the gods
10 <i>a-na di-nim</i>	For judgment.
11 <sup>d</sup> UTU <i>be-el di-nim</i> <sup>d</sup> IŠKUR <i>be-el ik-ri-bi ù bi-ri</i>	O Shamash, lord of the decision, Adad, lord of ritual prayers and divination,
12 <i>i-na ik-ri-ib a-ka-ra-bu i-na te-er-ti e-pu-šu</i>	In the ritual prayer that I perform, in extispicy that I do,
13 <i>ki-it-tam šu-uk-nam</i> <...>	Place the truth.
23 <i>ù at-ta mu-te-sí</i> <sup>d</sup> bu-ne-ne <i>na-aš-pa-ar</i>	And you, O Bunene, reliable messenger, wash yourself
24 <i>ki-it-tim ma-ḥa-ar</i> <sup>d</sup> UTU <i>da-a-a-nim</i> <...>	Before Shamash, the judge.
58 <i>ši-ib</i> <sup>d</sup> UTU <i>qú-ra-du li-iš-bu</i>	Sit, O Shamash, warrior, may
59 <i>it-ti-ka</i> DINGIR.MEŠ <i>ra-bu-tum</i>	The great gods sit with you.

With respect to the correlation between judicial and divinatory phraseology (cf. Charpin 2010, p. 76-77) including such terms as *dīnu*, *purussû*, *dīna šutēšuru*, *warkata parāsu*, Tz. Abusch gave the following commentary:

“Regardless of whether these judicial terms are regarded as intrusions from the legal domain into that of divination or from divination into law

<sup>13</sup> Concerning some early evidence of Šamaš mentioned in curses together with Adad (Simurrum, ca. 2100-2000 BC), W. Lambert made a significant remark: “the epithet of Šamaš in both texts, “lord of the judgment” (*be-el/él di.kud.(da)*) points to oracular activity, not justice” (Lambert 2007, p. 2). See another epithet used, e.g., in an Old Babylonian letter oath formula: *aššum* <sup>d</sup>Šamaš *bēl kittim ašapparamma*, “by Šamaš, the lord of truth, I will send” (Veenhof 1978, p. 187). Šamaš is also called *dayyān kinātim*, “the judge of truth” (as it is rendered in the publication, but it would be more accurate to say “the judge of true signs”), in an Old Babylonian prayer to the gods of night (celestial deities) invoked to take part in an extispicy ritual (Cooley 2011, l. 12).



[It should not be forgotten that divination may be used to settle legal matters when normal “human” juridical processes are unable to resolve the problem], these terms became the common property of the law court and of the divination priest. Consequently, divine deliberation came to be seen as a judgment, and the revelation of the divine decision by means of signs as the handing of a verdict. The literary consequences are striking, for with the introduction of legal images and courtroom metaphors, prayers for divine guidance are modified and even transformed into addresses to divine judges, and divination procedures take on the guise of a hearing. And legal formulations serve complements of and alternatives to prayer and oracular formulae. It should suffice to compare the beginning of Codex Hammurabi § 5: *šumma dayyānum idīn purussām iprus*, “If a judge judged a case and rendered a verdict,” with the common *dīnī dīn purussāya purus*, “provide my judgment, render my verdict,” of the prayers of the individual as well as with such phrases drawn from the rituals of the *bārū* priest as *dīnu u purussū*, “divine judgment and verdict,” *dīnu u būru*, “divine judgment and oracular answer (extispicy),” and *bīru u purussū*, “oracular answer and divine verdict” (Abusch 1987, p. 25-26, with n. 34).

Intrinsically, not only the phraseology of the Epilogue referring to Šamaš is the same as in various prayers and rituals concerning divination, extispicy, and oracular decisions, but the context itself is alike. Considering all that, the passage from the Epilogue *Ḥammurapi šar mīšarim ša Šamaš kinātīm išruku-šum* can be interpreted as “Hammurapi, the king of the order, whom Šamaš has granted true signs”.<sup>14</sup>

At the same time, Šamaš was not the only god referred to as “judge” (*dayyānum*). Numerous personal names including the Old Babylonian ones show that this role could be played by different gods whose decisions were important for their worshippers. There were persons named not only *Šamaš-dayyān*, but also <sup>d</sup>*Marduk*(amar.utu)-*dayyān*(di.kud) (George 2009, p. 50ff.; Sommerfeld 1982, p. 30), or <sup>md</sup>*Sîn*(suen)-*da-a-[a-an]* (George 2018, p. 150), including an individual named <sup>f</sup>*Dajānti-ina-Uruk* “She is the judge in Uruk” which is likely to imply the goddess Ištar (Stamm 1968, p. 229). The fact that gods’ roles and functions were variable can be also illustrated by the topographic text TIN. TIR<sup>ki</sup> = Babilu V which describes the city of Babylon in the time of the last Kassite kings and the Second Isin Dynasty (George 1992, p. 13).

<sup>14</sup> This interpretation differs somewhat from the standard one, cf. “I am Ḥammu-rabi, the just king [lit. “king of justice”], to whom Shamash has granted the truth [lit. “true things”]” (Driver & Miles 1955, p. 99, with d, e); “I am Hammurabi, king of justice, to whom the god Shamash has granted (insight into) the truth” (Roth 1997, p. 135).

Here, the god Nabû and not Šamaš is associated with the role of “judge” (*ibid.* 66-69):

43 bára <sup>d</sup> nabû(nà) da-a-a-an <ni>-ši-šú	
Dais: “Nabû is the Judge of his People.”	
56 ká.gal <sup>d</sup> šamaš išid(suḫuš) ummāni(érin) <sup>meš</sup> kīn(gi.na)	abul <sup>d</sup> šamaš
City Gate: “O Šamaš, Make Firm the Foundation of the Troops!”	the Šamaš Gate.
67 sila <sup>d</sup> nabû(muati) da-a-a-an ni-ši-šú	sūq(sila) abul [ <sup>d</sup> uraš]
Street: “Nabû is the Judge of his People.”	the Street of the [Uraš] Gate.
74 sila <sup>d</sup> šamaš šu-lul ummāni(érin) <sup>meš</sup> -šú	sūq abul <sup>d</sup> šamaš
Street: “Šamaš is the Protection of his Troops.”	the Street of the Šamaš Gate.

Although Šamaš has been commonly characterized as the god who “was in charge of verifying weights, measures and trade in general”, “there are nonetheless many references to measures of other gods”, for instance, Marduk, Sîn, Kittum (the goddess of “The Divine Justice”), Zababa etc. (de Boer 2013, p. 104, with n. 7). Regarding numerous economic documents that have led one “to think that the temples of Šamaš played a banking role throughout Mesopotamia”,<sup>15</sup> D. Charpin provides sufficient evidence indicating that the picture was actually more complex and varied than is often believed and/or described:

“We can see, therefore, that gods other than Šamaš could act as creditors. This was sometimes the chief deity of the city <...> But they could also be divinities with a more modest local role, such as Nin-šubur in Sippar or Gula and Ninlil in Ur.

One thing should be stressed. These loans may well have involved certain symbolic aspects which escape us. V. Scheil had at one point suggested that Šamaš, the Sun-god, and Sin, the Moon-god, were the two main lender gods by reason of the association between these celestial bodies and the two precious metals then used in transactions, namely gold and silver. The idea may seem amusing nowadays, but the fact remains that some tablets which record loans by these divinities include a drawing of a solar disc or a moon

<sup>15</sup> Naturally, “Šamaš occurs in all the oaths of the documents from Sippar <...> In legal procedures, oaths are often taken in front of (cultic symbols of) these gods,” namely Šamaš, Aia, and Marduk (Goddeeris 2002, p. 42); some documents from Sippar mention judges who were “part of the collegium of Šamaš” (*ibid.* 60).

crescent... Incidentally, it is surely not a coincidence that the Sumerian words for “mercy” are I.<sup>d</sup>UTU and I.<sup>d</sup>NANNA [See CAD I/J, p. 317b (*iutû*) and p. 144 (*inannû*)], that is to say forms of invocation to the Sun and Moon gods” (Charpin 2015, p. 157-158, with n. 46; the rest of the footnotes have been omitted).

In the inscription describing laying the foundation of the Sippar wall and its subsequent construction (the name of the 23<sup>rd</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> regnal year of Hammurapi, respectively), it is Šamaš who is referred to as “the great lord of heaven and earth, king of the gods”, <sup>d</sup>UTU *be-lum ra-bi-um ša ša-ma-i ù er-še-tim* LUGAL *ša* DINGIR.DINGIR (Frayne 1990, p. 334, *Ḫammu-rapi* 2, l. 1-4). Similarly, Šamaš is honoured as “the king” in an Old Babylonian copy of the Gilgamesh Epic: *ù ša ta-mu-ru<sup>d</sup>šamaš(UTU)-<sup>r</sup>ma šar-ru<sup>1</sup>*, “But the one you saw was King Šamaš” (George 2003, p. 234-235, OB Schøyen<sub>2</sub> l. 21). On the other hand, in the inscription dedicated to the building of the Sippar wall and the restoration of the Ebabbar temple during the reign of Samsu-iluna, it is Enlil who is called: <sup>d</sup>en-líl LUGAL *ša ì-lí be-lum ra-bi-um ša ma-tá-tim*, “the king of the gods, great lord of the foreign lands” (Frayne 1990, p. 376, Samsu-iluna 3, l. 1-4), while the opening line of another inscription of Samsu-iluna reads: AN <sup>d</sup>en-líl *šar-ru ša* AN <sup>r</sup>ù<sup>1</sup> KI, “the gods Anum and Enlil, the kings of heaven and earth”.<sup>16</sup> The sun-god, incidentally, is titled “the great judge of the gods” and not that of humankind, <sup>d</sup>UTU DI.KUD.GAL DINGIR.MEŠ, in the text of Sargon’s II report on his eighth campaign (Mayer 2013, p. 104, l. 94).

## CONCLUSION

The god Šamaš depiction on the Stela has been traditionally explained by the deity’s commonly assumed role within the so-called Mesopotamian pantheon as “the god of justice”. Today, however, there is enough evidence available that allows us to consider this simplified approach

<sup>16</sup> The beginning of this very inscription of Samsu-iluna closely resembles the wording of the Prologue of the Stela, though the latter is evidently much more wordy and impressive (cited above), cf. “When the gods Anum and Enlil, the kings of heaven and earth, joyously looked at the god Marduk, first-born son of the god Ea, gave to him the rule of the four quarters, called (his) exalted name in (the assembly of) the *Anunnaku* gods, (and) made the foundation of Babylon firm for him like (that of) heaven and earth, at that time, the god Marduk, the Enlil of his land, the god who creates wisdom, gave to me, Samsu-iluna, king of his pleasure, the totality of the lands to shepherd (and) laid a great commission on me to make his nation lie down in pastures and to lead his extensive people in well-being, forever” (Frayne 1990, p. 381, Samsu-iluna 5, l. 1-24).

to be not quite adequate. Instead, the most plausible reason for this depiction should have been the Sippar origin of the Stela, the only fully preserved instance of this group of monuments. The people of Sippar could thereby observe their patron deity Šamaš granting his divine administration, true and righteous beyond any doubt, to the king Hammurapi<sup>17</sup> and, to some extent, to (any of) his successor(s).<sup>18</sup> The other major factor could be special relationship between the rulers of the First Babylonian dynasty including Hammurapi himself and the patron deity of Sippar, in other words, between the two cities of Babylon and Sippar (Myers 2007).

As is well known, “a fundamental element in the Mesopotamian ideology regarding cities was the concept that each was the dwelling of a particular god or goddess” (Van De Mieroop 2007, p. 45). Thus we may suggest that the wording of the Prologue and most of the Epilogue commemorating the triad “Marduk – Esagil – Babylon” was meant to be quite standard and unified for different cities throughout the kingdom.<sup>19</sup> On the other hand, each copy erected in a given city was probably dedicated to its own patron deity mentioned in the Prologue, where Sippar and Larsa in particular are named side by side as patronized by the same god Šamaš. Regarding the purpose and function of the monument, M. Van De Mieroop claims:

“Especially in the last half century scholars have argued convincingly that the stele does not contain a law code in the sense of the Napoleonic Code and the like and was not intended to guide judges in their deliberations of court cases.

The stele was a public monument to commemorate Hammurabi as a king of justice (Akkadian *šar mišarim*), and it demonstrated his accomplishments

<sup>17</sup> Just as the king himself uttered it in the inscription related to the construction of the wall of Sippar: “When the god Šamaš, great lord of heaven and earth, king of the gods, with his shine face, joyfully looked at me, Ḫ., the prince, his favourite, granted to me everlasting kingship (and) a reign of long days <...> I establish joy for the people of Sippar. They pray for my life <...> I put my good name in the mouths of the people (in order) that they proclaim it daily like (that of) a god and that it not be forgotten, forever” (Frayne 1990, p. 334-336, Ḫammu-rapi 2, l. 1-12, 68-81).

<sup>18</sup> As it is formulated in the Epilogue: “May any king who will appear in the land in the future, at any time, observe the pronouncements of justice (*awât mišarim*) <...> If that man (a future ruler) heeds my pronouncements which I have inscribed upon my stela, and does not reject my judgments <...> then may the god Šamaš lengthen his reign (*ḫaṭṭa-šu lirrik*), just as (he has done) for me, the king of justice (*šar mišarim*), and so may he shepherd his people with justice (*nišī-šu ina mišarim lirē*)” (xlvi 59-xlix 17, with Roth 1997, p. 135-136).

<sup>19</sup> On the considerable homogeneity of the Prologue that is attested in different copies (“Duplikate”) of the Stela, see Borger 2006, p. 8.

in that aspect of government exemplifying legal principles that existed in his reign” (Van De Mieroop 2011, p. 306).

According to D. Charpin, however, the text can still be treated as an applied code, which could serve as a guideline for judges (Charpin 2010, p. 79-81). In any case, it is clear that the monument aimed to praise the king Hammurapi – gratefully and eternally – for establishing his *mīšarum*, ‘the righteous world order’, with the city of Babylon in the centre, which was an achievement the ruler himself thought to be his exceptional merit:

I am the king pre-eminent among kings. These (lit. my) lawsuits are well chosen (*awâtū-’a nasqā*), my ability has no rival <...> May my name always be remembered favourably in Esagil which I love! Let any wronged man who has a lawsuit (*ša awātam irāššū*) come before my statue, ‘King of the Order’ (*ana maḥar šalmī-ja šar mīšarim*) <...> Let he listen to these (lit. my) very valuable lawsuits (*awâtī-ja šūqurātīm*), and let this (lit. my) inscribed stela show him the lawsuit (*awātam likallim-šu*). Let he examine the verdict (for) him (*dīn-šu līmur*). (Thus) let his heart breathe freely (*libba-šu linappiš-ma*), saying:

“Hammurapi, the lord, who is like a father and begetter to his people <...> He gladdened the heart of Marduk, his lord, and he secured the eternal well-being of the people and kept the land in order (*mātam uštēšer*).” May he say thus, and may he pray for me with his whole heart before Marduk, my lord, (and) Zarpanitu, my lady!<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> xxivb 79-xxvb 47 (with Driver & Miles 1955, p. 96-99); xlvi 79-xlviii 47 (with Roth 1997, p. 134-135). Notably, in the latter edition *šar mīšarim* is rendered “the statue of me, the king of justice” and thus being interpreted as an epithet of the king as opposed to the interpretation followed here “my statue (called) ‘King of Justice’” (Driver & Miles 1955, p. 97).

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