

Preface

The contents and layout of this volume differ from its predecessors because of changes in circumstances. The text editions of volumes I–III are now available in digital form at <http://oracc.museum.upenn.edu/adsd/>, a project directed by Reinhard Pirngruber.

That project includes a complete glossary. For this reason, a glossary for the earlier volumes is not as important as envisaged at the beginning of the Diaries project. In this volume, I have only included a list of terms which are peculiar to the Astronomical Diaries, but I did not attempt to provide a glossary.

In earlier volumes, photos of the tablets were included. Recently, the fees for publishing photos of objects kept in the British Museum were raised significantly. I considered it unjustified to spend a huge amount of British pounds on photos (which would also have increased the price of the book). Nowadays photos can be transmitted electronically with little difficulty. I therefore decided to indicate in this edition who took the photos of the tablets (and allowed me to use them). Anyone who wants to see such a photo can ask the person(s) who took it. In this way, credit for the considerable work of photographing a large number of tablets is given to those who undertook it. The procedure also has the advantage that it avoids the problem of copyright. In the headings of the texts, the source of photographs is abbreviated as JCF for Jeanette Fincke, YM for Yasuyuki Mitsuma, and HH for myself. Other photographers are mentioned by their full names. In addition, Enrique Jiménez allowed me to use photos from the project “Electronic Babylonian Literature” (of the Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität in Munich), which will be made available next year.

I do reproduce a few photos from sources where I have received explicit permission to publish them.

For permission to publish the Diaries kept in London, I thank the Trustees of the British Museum. For further permission to publish Diaries (and photos), I thank Barbara Helwing, director of the Vorderasiatisches Museum in Berlin; Steve Tinney, curator of the Babylonian Section of the University Museum in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; Beatrice André-Salvini, director of the Oriental Antiquities Department at The Louvre Museum; Ashley Cooke, senior curator of antiquities at the World Museum in Liverpool; and Michael Strong, director of The Abbey Museum of Art and Archaeology in Caboolture, Queensland, Australia.

Many people helped me in this final period of the work. In the first place, I am indebted to the colleagues at the British Museum, especially Christopher Walker, Jon Taylor and Irving Finkel. I owe a great debt to Yasuyuki Mitsuma, who took photos of most of the tablets in the British Museum and generously allowed me to use them; without his photos, it would have taken much more time and extended stays in London to read the tablets. I am also grateful to Jeanette Fincke, who on several occasions provided me with many very good photos according to my needs.

I have discussed a number of tablets containing historical information with Robartus van der Spek, who is preparing a publication on chronicles and similar texts, and I thank him for his many helpful suggestions.

For a number of tablets, dates were established by Teije De Jong, whose astronomical competence solved problems which were unsurmountable to me. Before that, I had the help of Richard Stephenson with datings in several cases.

I wish to remind the reader that we owe the existence of this work to the ground laid by Abe Sachs. I would never have dared to start the project on my own. His vast knowledge and his attention to details were a constant inspiration to me when adding new texts to what he had begun.

It should also be mentioned that the project was financed entirely by the generosity of Otto Neugebauer.

It is with a deep feeling of gratitude that I finish this edition of the Astronomical Diaries. I thank God for having let me live long enough.

Vienna, Christmas 2021

Hermann Hunger