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Eclipse Prediction in Mesopotamia

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*1414, LBAT 1415 + 1416 + 1417, and LBAT *1419 which are all laid out in a format based upon this distribution of eclipse possibilities. These texts were all written sometime after the middle of the fourth century BC but refer to dates stretching back to –730. However, the preserved part of the text LBAT *1420 contains eclipse observations and predictions from –603 to –575 which also follow the 8-7-8-7-8 arrangement of eclipse possibilities, and this text was probably compiled not long after its final entry in –575, thus indicating that the Saros was in use by this period. Temple documents describing the ritual performed in anticipation of an eclipse that did not occur in the eighth year of Cyrus also imply that the Saros was in use by at least the sixth century BC.³⁸

³⁸ P.-A. Beaulieu and J. P. Britton, “Rituals for an Eclipse Possibility in the 8th Year of Cyrus,” *Journal of Cuneiform Studies* 46 (1994), 73–86.