



PIHANS • LVII

## CUNEIFORM ARCHIVES AND LIBRARIES

PAPERS READ AT THE 30<sup>E</sup> RENCONTRE ASSYRIOLOGIQUE INTERNATIONALE

LEIDEN, 4-8 JULY 1983

*Edited by*  
Klaas R. VEENHOF



NEDERLANDS INSTITUUT VOOR HET NABIJE OOSTEN

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Cover: Cuneiform tablets in the main archive room, L. 2769, in the Royal Palace G of Tell  
Mardikh/Ebla. Photograph made available by Professor P. Matthiae.

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J. J. ROODENBERG

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

VEENHOF, K. R.,	Cuneiform Archives. An introduction . . . . .	1
TUNCA, Ö.,	Le problème des archives dans l'architecture religieuse protodynastique . . . . .	37
FOSTER, B. R.,	Archives and empire in Sargonic Mesopotamia . . . . .	46
MATTHIAE, P.,	The archives of the Royal Palace G of Ebla. Distribution and arrangement of the tablets according to the archaeological evidence (figs. 1-20) . . . . .	53
ARCHI, A.,	The archives of Ebla (figs. 1-2) . . . . .	72
MIEROOP, M. VAN DE,	The administration of crafts in the Early Isin period (figs. 1-3) . . . . .	87
RENGER, J.,	Zu den altbabylonischen Archiven aus Sippar . . . . .	96
KLENGEL, H.,	Altbabylonische Privatarchive Babylons . . . . .	106
ELLIS, M. DE J.,	Delivery records from the archive of the Kititum temple at Ishchali . . . . .	112
CHARPIN, D.,	Transmission des titres de propriété et constitution des archives privées en Babylonie ancienne . . . . .	121
MARQUERON, J.,	Quelques remarques concernant les archives retrouvées dans le palais de Mari (figs. 1-2) . . . . .	141
FINET, A.,	Typologie des lettres des archives «royales» de Mari	153
MALAMAT, A.,	«Doorbells» at Mari. A textual-archaeological correlation (figs. 1-7) . . . . .	160
POSTGATE, J. N.,	Administrative archives from the city of Assur in the Middle Assyrian period (fig. 1) . . . . .	168
OTTEN, H.,	Archive und Bibliotheken in Ḫattuša (fig. 1) . . . . .	184
MAUER, G.,	Die Karriere des Schreibers Tattamaru, Sohn des Šaḫurunuwa . . . . .	191
SOLDT, W. H. VAN,	The palace archives at Ugarit (figs. 1-3) . . . . .	196
WANSBROUGH, J.,	Ugaritic in chancery practice . . . . .	205
ARTZI, P.,	Observations on the «library» of the Amarna archives . . . . .	210
READE, J.,	Archaeology and the Kuyunjik archives (figs. 1-3) . . . . .	213
PARPOLA, S.,	The royal archives of Nineveh . . . . .	223
KWASMAN, T.,	Neo-Assyrian legal archives in the Kouyunjik Collection . . . . .	237

GARELLI, P.,	Les archives inédites d'un centre provincial de l'empire assyrien . . . . .	241
HOMÈS-FREDERICQ, D.,	La glyptique des archives inédites d'un centre provincial de l'empire assyrien aux Musées Royaux d'Art et d'Histoire, Bruxelles (figs. 1-4) . . . . .	247
FRAME, G.,	The correspondence of Nabû-Ušabši, governor of Uruk . . . . .	260
DANDAMAYEV, M. A.,	The Neo-Babylonian archives . . . . .	273
ZADOK, R.,	Archives from Nippur in the first millennium B.C. . . . .	278
GREENFIELD, J. C.,	Aspects of archives in the Achaemenid period . . . . .	289
BISI, A. M.,	Un cas très rare d'emploi des «cretulae» dans le milieu phénicien d'occident (figs. 1-2) . . . . .	296
Appendix:	30e Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale, Leiden, 4-8 July 1983. Programme and papers delivered. . . . .	305

## PREFACE

This volume contains most of the papers on "cuneiform archives and libraries", some in revised form, read during the 30th Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale held at Leiden, July 1983. A comparison between the table of contents and the list of papers actually delivered (in the back of the volume) shows that some are missing. A few will be incorporated in due time in publications resulting from specific research projects (e.g. the papers on Nuzi); some were considered by their authors not ready for publication (needing further research or meant as provisional reports on recent discoveries only, the finds at Tell ed-Dēr and Dūr-Katlimmu); a few were not sent in or asked for publication.

Faithfully reflecting the original programme the volume exhibits additional gaps, since it proved impossible to cover all periods and areas which have yielded archives or libraries. A serious lacuna is the absence of even one single paper on the Ur III period, regretted by the organizers who were unable to find competent speakers able to participate. If some of them were daunted by the enormous amount of new material, both text publications and studies (partly in the form of microfilm dissertations), this volume should encourage them, since an archival study of the Ur III texts is a subject worth a volume of its own. A few topics missing, e.g. the Old Assyrian archives, have recently received a satisfactory treatment to which the reader is referred by means of references given in the first contribution.

The papers, printed in chronological order, generally deal with a number of specific archives and libraries. Nevertheless they contain, in various measure, enough factual and methodological observations of a more general impact to make a kind of (well illustrated) introduction to the subject. The first contribution is intended as an overview and calls attention to the various issues (to be) raised; for that reason it incorporates ample references to scholarly literature including the papers printed in this volume. It is to be hoped that this publication, by showing the potentials of an archival approach, will stimulate new research on topics or areas not (satisfactorily) treated here.

It is a pleasant duty to express my gratitude to all those who helped to realize the Rencontre and the publication of this volume. Apart from those who contributed papers (and whose patience was tested by the delay in their publication), the members of the organizing committee deserve our thanks: E. van Donzel, G. van Driel, Th. J. H. Krispijn, M. Stol, and in particular Mrs B. I. Beumer-Grill, the secretary of the Assyriological Institute, also for her help in preparing this volume

for publication. The Nederlands Instituut voor het Nabije Oosten was kind enough to continue a thirty years old tradition of cooperation in the organization of the Leiden Rencontres, also by taking care of its financial administration and by accepting this volume for publication in its series.

K. R. VEENHOF

*Abbreviations* follow the conventions current among Assyriologists for citing the main text editions and for the rest are those listed in *Reallexikon der Assyriologie und Vorderasiatischen Archäologie*, vol. 6 (Berlin, 1983), iii-xxvii. Additional ones are explained per article, usually in the first footnote.

## CUNEIFORM ARCHIVES\*

### An Introduction

KLAAS R. VEENHOF (Leiden)

Shortly before the end of the fourth millennium B.C., as a result of developments which have been convincingly reconstructed in recent years<sup>1</sup>, the clay tablet emerged as the standard vehicle of writing in ancient Mesopotamia. This novel use of clay had important consequences for the historical documentation, since it introduced the most durable writing material of antiquity, except for stone and certain metals which were only used on a small scale for specific, largely ceremonial and prestigious purposes. Clay tablets had a fair chance of surviving the ravages of time when they were baked—which was only done in particular situations<sup>2</sup>—or sun-dried. Of course, they could be broken or crushed (to use the ancient terminology for canceling legal documents<sup>3</sup>), they were vulnerable to (ground) water and could disintegrate because of the crystallization of the salt contained in their clays (still a concern of keepers of present day tablet collections). But frequently they survived, damaged or not, the destruction of buildings in which they were kept, in particular conflagration, the constant threat to perishable writing materials such as papyrus or parchment. Fire could even improve their durability, and probably more tablets in antiquity were baked and preserved by random fires than by deliberate baking in tablet ovens. Even tablets which no longer served administrative purposes and were discarded as superfluous, regularly survived, sometimes even

\* Revised and updated English version of the author's Dutch inaugural address delivered in Leiden, published as *Spijkerschriftarchieven* (Leiden, Brill, 1984) and also printed in *Phœnix* 28 (1982), 8-36. I have tried to take account of the papers published in this volume and incorporated references to them, mainly in the footnotes.

<sup>1</sup> D. Schmandt-Besserat, 'An Archaic Recording System and the Origin of Writing', in: *Syro-Mesopotamian Studies* 1/2 (1977), in particular 22ff. on the hollow clay *bullae* containing "tokens" and with impressions of them on their outer surface, convincingly interpreted as three-dimensional precursors of the flat clay tablet. Cf. eadem, *Visible Language* 15/4 (1981), 321-344.

<sup>2</sup> The question which tablets were deliberately baked in antiquity (and not accidentally fired by conflagration) deserves a special investigation which has to start from the tablets themselves, since written references to baking are extremely rare. Cf. *CAD* S 113b, *šarpu*, b, 3'; H. Hunger, *Babylonische und assyrische Kolophone* (*AOAT* 2; Neukirchen, 1968), 7, and the remarks by J. Reade in this volume on the baking of library texts. H. Hunger (*BagM* 5 [1970], 197) notes that all baked tablets in a private NB archive from Uruk are title-deeds recording purchases.

<sup>3</sup> *zir* (Sumerian), *ḫepûm*, *marāqum* (Neo-Assyrian).

in large groups. Many are discovered in secondary use as fill of walls and benches or for levelling floors, an understandable custom in an alluvial plain devoid of stone as cheap building material. The thousands of “Persepolis fortification tablets” (in Elamite and Aramaic) provide an impressive example (perpetuated in their name)<sup>4</sup>, and the custom was widespread, though not always recorded in excavation reports<sup>4a</sup>.

Accordingly, the historian of ancient Mesopotamia is in a favorable position compared to scholars studying countries and civilizations which used papyrus, leather, parchment or paper for daily recording. Even when rich epigraphical remains are available, like from ancient Egypt, one is faced with the effects of a “natural” selection, since as a rule only ceremonial inscriptions on stone etc. and texts deposited in places where destruction and climatic influences had little effect (such as tombs in the desert) have survived, while the bulk of what was written for administrative purposes has perished. The contrast is obvious in places where both clay tablets and papyri were written and kept, such as El Amarna, where only the official correspondence on clay was discovered. One of the archival rooms (no. 61) of Sennacherib’s “palace without rival” still contained many sealed bullae, but the papyri to which they originally had been affixed, originating from Syria, Palestine and Egypt, had disintegrated<sup>5</sup>. Thanks to Parpola we now know that in the first millennium B.C. Babylonian and Assyrian scribes regularly wrote on “codices”, multiple wax-covered wooden writing boards, in particular literary and scientific texts. But the hundreds of “codices” mentioned in the “library records” from the time of Ashurbanipal are not represented among the materials of the Kuyunjik collection; we only have one earlier specimen, made of ivory and preserved in a well at Nimrud. The rest must have been destroyed by fire together with the Assyrian palaces<sup>6</sup>.

In the “treasury” at Persepolis ca. ninety tablets were found, still with the traces of charred strings which passed through them. But the (probably Aramaic) “letter orders” on papyrus, to which these clay labels with Elamite summaries of their contents had been attached, of course had not survived the conflagration of the building<sup>7</sup>. Judging from the many sealed “clay rings” found, the municipal

<sup>4</sup> R. T. Hallock, ‘The Persepolis Fortification Archive’, *OrNS* 47 (1973), 320-23.

<sup>4a</sup> The Ur III tablets found during excavations at Ur in 1924/25 are not the archives of a “Registrar’s Office” situated in the Ē-dub-lá-mah, “fallen from the shelves where they had been stored” (*Antiquaries Journal* 5 [1925], 392), but had been used as filling material, five and six layers deep, underneath the Cassite pavement of baked bricks. See Th. Jacobsen, *AJA* 57 (1953), 125f.

<sup>5</sup> A. H. Layard, *Discoveries in Nineveh and Babylon* (London, 1853), 153f. 460f., on room no. 61, with a wall provided with niches where the papyri most probably were kept. G. Goossens, *RA* 46 (1952), 104 note 1, uses the term “chancellerie araméenne”. See also below for J. Reade’s observations on these archives.

<sup>6</sup> S. Parpola, ‘Assyrian Library Records’, *JNES* 42 (1983), 1-30.

<sup>7</sup> G. G. Cameron, *Persepolis Treasury Tablets* (*OIP* 64; Chicago, 1949), together with his observations in *JNES* 17 (1958), 161-176, and 24 (1965), 166-192.



registration office (*chreofulakion*) of Seleucid Uruk kept in its archives numerous contracts on papyrus, dealing with the sale of fields and slaves. But original deeds are only known in the form of clay tablets dated to the years before 275 B.C. Around that time Antiochus I introduced a fiscal measure (possibly in order to finance his military campaigns) which taxed such transactions and this apparently entailed the obligation of registering them officially, obviously in Greek and no longer in Babylonian. As a consequence, clay tablets disappeared and the "clay rings", once fitted around the Greek papyri, are the only trace of the archives consisting of perishable writing material<sup>8</sup>.

The survival of thousands of clay tablets provides the Assyriologist with a wealth and great variety of historical sources which have escaped selection but for the hazards of archaeological discovery and the preference of certain excavators for particular types of ruins<sup>9</sup>. They offer possibilities of detailed historical reconstruction, in particular when large, coherent groups of documents are (officially) excavated, carefully registered (according to find-spots) and published as a whole together with their archaeological record. Such groups are not rare, even though the conditions mentioned frequently are not fully met: some consist of libraries, many of archives.

Libraries captured the attention right from the beginning, thanks to the early discovery of Ashurbanipal's royal collection and to the fact that early Assyriology was strongly influenced by the literary-historical interests which pervaded classical scholarship and biblical studies. At first, attention was frequently focused on (at times single) texts as "historical documents" in a narrow sense, or as sources of legal or religious history. It was mainly after the beginning of the twentieth century that gradually a change was brought about by the discovery of thousands of administrative records in the various centres of the realm of the Third Dynasty of Ur (21st century B.C.)<sup>10</sup>. Faced with vast quantities of tablets which at times were depreciated as "dull records" or "laundry lists", Assyriologists could take example by the rapidly developing Papyrology. There, the value and possibilities of this type of records had soon been realized, and the importance of an "archival approach"

<sup>8</sup> M.I. Rostovtzeff, 'Seleucid Babylonia: Bullae and Seals of Clay with Greek Inscriptions', *Yale Classical Studies* 3 (1932), 3-114; L.T. Doty, *Cuneiform Archives from Hellenistic Uruk* (Diss. Yale, 1977; UM 77-27.070), Ch. IV, 'Royal Taxation and Record Keeping in Seleucid Uruk'. See also E. Posner, *Archives in the Ancient World* (Cambridge, Mass., 1972), 32 ff.

<sup>9</sup> Official excavations frequently concentrate on palaces and temples (Nineve, Mari, Tell Rimah, Ebla, etc.), so that our knowledge of private archives is restricted. Many of the latter, in particular from the OB and OA periods, originate from uncontrolled digging and have been broken up and dispersed by dealers.

<sup>10</sup> In particular the discoveries at Girsu (Tellah), Umma and Puzrish-Dagan (Drehem). See for an interpretational analysis of their impact and potential, T.B. Jones, 'Sumerian Administrative Documents: An Essay', in: *Sumerological Studies in Honor of Thorkild Jacobsen* (AS 20; Chicago, 1975), 41-62.

which attaches great value to their provenance (e.g. from one single mummy wrapping) had been acknowledged. In the wake of a number of diligent collectors, some industrious compilers and a few brilliant pioneers, interest in this kind of material grew rapidly, in particular after the second World War, favoured by an increasing popularity of social and economic history. This development was stimulated by the improved knowledge of Sumerian—the language of most administrative records from the third millennium B.C.—and the discovery of important Akkadian archives in Mari, Kanish, Nuzi, Ugarit e.a. Its effects can be observed in recent bibliographies of cuneiform studies, where titles using the words “archives” and “archival” have become rather numerous.

For many readers, the word “archives” may well evoke the spectacular pictures of room L. 2769 of the Early Bronze Age palace G in Ebla, filled with thousands of clay tablets<sup>11</sup>. This discovery, which sheds welcome new light on the material aspects of archives, also raises the question what archives in fact are. The first publications speak of “library” as well as “archives”<sup>12</sup>, which might annoy students of archival history. This somewhat inconsiderate use of terminology—not an isolated feature in Assyriology, compare the use of “myth” and “epic”—might suggest that both terms are interchangeable or at least that the combination of archival records and literary documents (scientific and school texts) was standard. It is true that texts of both types may originate from the same spot. A royal chancery not only dealt with administrative records, but presumably also with (the production of) certain royal inscriptions, perhaps including “laws” and hymns<sup>13</sup>. A temple frequently possessed texts of a liturgical or scientific nature alongside records reflecting its economic activities. Scholars often kept their private archives and professional libraries together, as the house of the famous “incantation priest” in Assur and that of Rap’anu in Ugarit show<sup>14</sup>.

The combination at Ebla, however, is of a different nature. Room L. 2769 contained administrative records and what Assyriologists call “school texts”, i.e.

<sup>11</sup> See the illustrations accompanying P. Matthiae’s contribution to this volume.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. e.g. G. Pettinato, *Testi Amministrativi della Biblioteca L 2769* (MEE 2; Napoli, 1980), alongside *The Archives of Ebla* (Garden City, 1981) by the same author. The designation “archives” now seems to be generally accepted, see e.g. the title of the series *Archivi reali di Ebla* (Roma, 1981 ff.). The designation “biblioteca” in the first title seems to refer to the room where most texts were discovered (L. 2769) rather than to its contents.

<sup>13</sup> See for the OB royal chancery (presumably the é.dub.ba of the residence) the remarks by F. R. Kraus, *Vom mesopotamischen Menschen der altbabylonischen Zeit und seiner Welt* (Kon. Ned. Akad. v. Wet., Afd. Lett. N.R. 36/6 (Amsterdam, 1973), 23 f. See for royal “scriptoria” in the NA period, not necessarily identical to the chancery, the remarks by Reade elsewhere in this volume.

<sup>14</sup> Documents from Rap’anu’s house were published in *Ugaritica* 5 (1969), 41-259; cf. the survey in *Dictionnaire de la Bible, Suppl.*, fasc. 52-53 (Paris, 1979), cols. 1253-1261. See for the libraries and archives excavated in Assur O. Pedersén, *Archives and Libraries in the City of Assur. A Survey of the Material from the German Excavations*, part I (*Studia Semitica Upsaliensia* 16; Uppsala, 1985) (forthcoming).

lists of signs and words and practice texts, including some literary pieces. Such combinations are not unknown from Mesopotamia proper, as is shown by discoveries e.g. in the "Tablet House" in Shuruppak<sup>15</sup> and in the mansion of the Old Babylonian priest Ur-Utu in Tell ed-Dēr, recently excavated by a Belgian expedition<sup>16</sup>. The combination is more likely in older periods and in small institutions without separate rooms for different activities, where the background of the individual scribe may have left its mark. It is quite natural for private houses, in particular during the Old Babylonian period, whose owner ran a school and kept his personal archives there as well, as was the case in "Quiet Street no. 7" in Ur<sup>17</sup>. But this does not mean that administrative records and school texts or libraries were normally kept together, or that scribal training and scribal practice were always combined. Large institutions frequently had special rooms for keeping and filing administrative records, such as the "archival rooms" in Eanna in Uruk during the Neo-Babylonian and early Achaemenid times<sup>18</sup>. Some of them (also?) served as repositories for archives in a narrow sense, i.e. records no longer in daily use and kept in separate storage. A good example is the so-called "archival building" in Girsu<sup>19</sup>, and in this volume van Soldt suggests the existence of a depository of older records of the 'central archives' on the second floor of the palace of Ugarit.

In general schools were private institutions during the Old Babylonian period, run in the houses of expert scribes and not located in temple or palace<sup>20</sup>. But of course, having completed their education and having entered such institutions, some scribes may have taken along handbooks and even some literary tablets which they had copied as students. However, such texts are more likely to be found where the professional activities of a scribe were not primarily of an administrative nature, but required the use of literary or scientific texts, which he might then keep in his room, as was the case with Anu-belshunu, a scholar attached to the Bit-Resh in Uruk during the Seleucid period, the remainder of whose archives and professional library were found together<sup>21</sup>.

<sup>15</sup> See H. P. Martin, 'The Tablets of Shuruppak', in: *Le temple et le culte (CRRAI 20; Istanbul, 1975)*, 18 ff.; D. O. Edzard, 'Die Archive von Šuruppak (Fāra) ...' in: E. Lipiński (ed.), *State and Temple Economy in the Ancient Near East, I (OLA 5; Leuven, 1979)*, 153 ff. Also F. Pomponio, "'Archives" and the Prosopography of Fara', *AJSL* 5 (1983), 127-145.

<sup>16</sup> L. de Meyer, *Archeologia* 195 (Oct. 1984), 21 ff.

<sup>17</sup> L. Woolley-M. Mallowan, *Ur Excavations VII. The Old Babylonian Period* (London, 1976), 110-112.

<sup>18</sup> See *UVB* 12/13 (1956), 13 and 18.

<sup>19</sup> See the description by L. Heuzey, in: É. de Sarzec, *Découvertes en Chaldée I* (Paris, 1884-1912), 435 ff., 'Fouilles au tell des tablettes', summarized by F. Milkau in: *Geschichte der Bibliotheken (Handbuch der Bibliothekswissenschaft, III/1, 1955)*, 25 ff.

<sup>20</sup> See A. W. Sjöberg in *AS* 20 (Chicago, 1975), 176 ff. The 'palace school' of Mari (rooms 24-25) is now convincingly interpreted as a storage room, see J. Margueron, *Recherches sur les palais mésopotamiens de l'Age du Bronze I (BAH 107; Paris, 1982)*, 345 ff.

<sup>21</sup> *UVB* 18 (Berlin, 1962), 43, II (W 20.030). Most texts of this group are now published in J. v. Dijk-W. R. Mayer, *Texte aus dem Rēš-Heiligtum in Uruk-Warka (BagM Beiheft 2; Berlin, 1980)*, where nos. 1-108 are literary and scientific texts and nos. 113-141 letters and records.

In Ebla, the obviously small number of professional scribes employed by the palace chancery apparently also acted as teachers. The impressive “school texts” of room L. 2769 must have been their own handbooks<sup>22</sup>, compiled during or after their education or acquired from others, and used for training apprentice scribes, as the many excerpts show. It is not surprising that they kept all their tablets, including “school texts”, in the only room well equipped for such purposes. The situation was in this respect similar in other places where Babylonian cuneiform was taught and used outside Mesopotamia, in particular during the second millennium B.C., as the discovery of records and “school texts” in such places as El-Amarna<sup>23</sup>, Afek, Ugarit, Alalakh, Boghazköy and Susa shows.

The presence of archival records in some collections of mainly literary and scientific texts can also be explained from the interest, no doubt fostered by the schools, in documents of the past, in particular in royal inscriptions, which were copied and included in various collections. A number of letters of kings of the Third Dynasty of Ur and some of their successors were studied and copied in the Old Babylonian schools and became part of the standard curriculum of that period<sup>24</sup>. In this connection the apparent mixture of library and archival texts in what is traditionally called “Ashurbanipal’s library” should also be mentioned. The conviction that this mixture is secondary, due to destruction or the collapse of rooms on a second floor, is now weakened by Parpola’s thesis, offered in this volume, that important groups of archival texts of the recent past were incorporated in some royal libraries out of historical interest. At the same time this warns us against lumping all “libraries” together and not distinguishing between a private scholar’s collection of professional handbooks and “classics” and a royal, palatial collection, including documents bearing on the history of the realm and the politics and exploits of previous kings as documented in records of the chancery.

Room L. 2769 in Ebla was a typical archival room, designed for systematically filing texts, not for writing or consulting them on the spot. This may have been done in the connecting room L. 2875, perhaps a *scriptorium* or scribal office, provided with low benches along the walls. This is a provision well known from Mesopotamia proper as one of the typical features of “tablet rooms”. It seems to have served various purposes, storing tablets, as we know from the “archival building” in Girsu, laying out records for consultation or filing, and seating scribes reading or writing tablets. Scribal activities in general are hard to prove since they

<sup>22</sup> We know that Eblaite scribes working for the palace also composed or copied ‘school texts’: Tira’il, e.g., the writer of the ‘Hamazi Letter’, is also known from some colophons of lexical texts, cf. Pettinato *MEE* 3, p. XIX, A, C.

<sup>23</sup> See the remarks by P. Artzi elsewhere in this volume on the “library” (actually “school texts”) discovered at El-Amarna together with the diplomatic correspondence.

<sup>24</sup> See P. Michalowski, *The Royal Correspondence of Ur* (UM 76.302.369), and for the interest in inscriptions of earlier (Oakk, Guti, Ur III) kings, F. R. Kraus, ‘Altbabylonische Quellensammlungen zur altnesopotamischen Geschichte’, *AfO* 20 (1963), 153-155.

rarely left clear archaeological traces, unless we are dealing with school rooms, where the typical lentil shaped “school texts” and other exercise tablets are proof of scribal activity.

Only in rare cases do the remains of tablet clay, unfinished tablets and writing instruments reveal the function of such “scribal offices”. A good example is provided by the discoveries (in room 8 and court 4) of the above-mentioned residence of Ur-Utu in Tell ed-Dēr<sup>25</sup>. The presence of a well or water jar in itself is not sufficient proof<sup>26</sup>. Since many “scribal offices” were located in rooms adjoining courts, we can also imagine the scribes working in the open air, profiting from the available light, in particular if there was some protection against the sun, as was afforded by the portico surrounding the palace court of Ebla. Clear traces of scribal activity were discovered in court V of the palace of Ugarit, which contained a tablet oven still filled with some seventy tablets, inscribed in alphabetic cuneiform. The oven must have been used by the scribes of the so-called south-western archives located in room 81 nearby. Apparently one of their tasks was translating documents arriving from abroad — such as the letter of a Hittite king, found in the oven — and baking them for the chancery archives<sup>27</sup>.

Most examples of “archives” adduced thusfar show that we do not use that term in its accepted meaning of a collection or repository of records no longer in use but preserved for their historical value and stored separately. We have mentioned a few occasions where such measures had been taken, but they probably were rare, not only in ancient Mesopotamia. Normally, old records no longer needed by the administration were thrown away in due time or put to secondary use, as building material, mummy wrapping, etc. The occasional presence of older documents without any apparent practical use may simply be due to the failure to take such measures on the part of the responsible scribes, e.g. when there was no lack of space to store them.

We use “archives” as a designation of what archival science calls a “fonds d’archives”, that is “the total of records accumulated during the time a particular task was performed by an institution or person”, to which some would like to add “and still present with those who made them out or used them”<sup>28</sup>. These conditions are met by many cuneiform archives, which were normally used and kept growing until the very moment they stopped, usually in consequence of some catastrophe.

<sup>25</sup> See note 16.

<sup>26</sup> Mallowan observed that rooms NT 12 of the Nabû Temple at Kalhu “contained a square recess in which there was a deep well of small diameter intended for use of the scribes who prepared the tablet clay” (*Nimrud and its Remains*, I, [London, 1966], 271). This interpretation was only possible because other features identified NT 12 as a ‘tablet room’.

<sup>27</sup> See *Ugaritica* 4 (1962), 51 ff. and *Dictionnaire de la Bible, Suppl.*, fasc. 52-53 (Paris, 1979), col. 1231-34.

<sup>28</sup> See for the question of the definition of “archive(s)”, Posner *op. cit.* (note 8), 4 ff. and J.L. van der Gouw, *Archiefwetenschap* (The Hague, 1973), 3 f.

The time of abandonment or destruction normally can be determined from the dates of the latest records. The location of many "tablet rooms", moreover, indicates that their "archives" were used and served practical purposes. We find them near the entrance of a palace for registering what is entering or leaving, near a court or audience room for consultation, near or in a workshop, kitchen or storehouse for checking the movements of goods, the consumption and the production, and for taking stock<sup>29</sup>.

In most cases, such archives were abandoned and left on the spot when the buildings which housed them were destroyed, as the examples of Ebla, *kārum* Kanish, Nuzi, etc. show. At times their owners must have tried to save a number of valuable records, as could be observed in Ur-Utu's house in Tell ed-Dēr, where a (partially?) unsuccessful attempt was made to save a number of precious title-deeds stored in room 8 or 12. When a palace was captured without destruction, some archives might be maintained and even continued by the new ruler in view of administrative continuity for which he needed earlier records and well-informed civil servants. This may have happened e.g. after Hammurabi's capture of Larsa or after the Persian conquest of Babylon, where the administrative records do not point to immediate radical changes. In the palace administration of Mari there are a few officials who survived a change of régime at the beginning of the Assyrian domination and after Zimrilim had conquered the throne. Zimrilim's chancery archives preserved hundreds of letters belonging to the correspondance of his Assyrian predecessors, but administrative records of that period apparently were removed. Part of these, clearly portions of much larger archives, were used for secondary purposes, as has become clear recently, when they were rediscovered i.a. as fill of mudbrick benches. There is no reason to deny these groups of administrative records from the period of Assyrian rule the qualification "archives", even though they were not found *in situ*. But we must be aware of considerable gaps due to selection (chronologically and typologically; the small daily records were preferred as filling material over the larger ledger tablets) and random discovery, which makes their use for statistical purposes risky<sup>30</sup>. Zimrilim's own chancery archives, including the earlier material they contained, were sorted out by scribes of Hammurabi after he had captured the city. According to the text of two famous clay labels discovered in room 115—where they may have assembled the chancery material they were interested in—they distinguished between "tablets of Zimrilim's

<sup>29</sup> Ugarit provides good examples with the "western archives" (rooms 2-5) and the "eastern archives" (rooms 54-56) located near the two entrances to the palace. The "archival rooms" of Ebla (L. 2769-2875) were strategically located both in relation to the court of audience and the administrative quarter. The 'kitchen archive' of Mari was housed in room 5, close to the kitchen itself.

<sup>30</sup> See in particular the observations by D. Charpin in *MARI* 3 (1984), 107f. and his analysis of 'Les archives du devin Asqudum', to be published in *MARI* 4 (colloque CNRS 620).

servants” and “tablets of Shamshi-Adad’s servants”<sup>31</sup>. We do not know which practical purposes the operation served, since Mari’s final destruction and abandonment followed soon. Hammurabi’s scribes may have collected information and taken along a number of important documents but, fortunately, they left the bulk of the palace archives on the spot.

A generally accepted Dutch definition of archives requires that they stem from administrative bodies or their officials, and that the records were made out, used, and preserved *ex officio*<sup>32</sup>. Many archives of ancient Mesopotamia and neighbouring areas where cuneiform was used meet this condition, in particular those of temples, palaces and governmental institutions. Their official character is clearly borne out by their location, contents, and by the titles and seals of the administrators involved, often qualified as servants of a king, a temple or a god. Such archives are extremely important for realizing one of the main goals of archival studies, that of reconstructing the administration of the past on the basis of complete collections of records of the same provenance. In practice, however, Assyriology uses a wider definition which includes private archives, an extension for which practical arguments can be adduced. We have a number of very large private archives from various periods which comprise hundreds of records, the analysis of which requires a systematic archival approach. Only in this way it will be possible to get insight into questions such as the origin, spread and range of records, the reasons for the presence or absence of particular (groups of) documents, the nature of the administration and bookkeeping procedures, the functions and competence of the persons involved. The difference between official and private archives, moreover, is at times less significant than the terminology might suggest. This is true when private archives belong to a person who heads a large, rich family which operates as a kind of institution, with a hierarchical structure, an efficient administration and a variety of personnel. We know archives of family firms of the Old Assyrian period, specialised in overland trade, with foreign branches and agents abroad, operating with capital invested by others<sup>33</sup>. Neo-Babylonian sources

<sup>31</sup> F. Thureau-Dangin, ‘Sur les étiquettes de paniers à tablettes provenant de Mari’, in: *Symbolae Koschaker* (SD 2; Leiden, 1939), 119 ff. According to the new functional analysis of the palace of Mari by Margueron (elsewhere in this volume), room 115 did not serve as archival room for the royal chancery, but was probably used by Hammurabi’s servants for assembling and sorting out documents from various places in the palace.

<sup>32</sup> Cf. Van der Gouw, *op. cit.* (noot 28), 3.

<sup>33</sup> See for example the archives of Imdilum recently studied by M. Ichisar, *Les archives cappadociennes du marchand Imdilum* (ADPF; Paris, 1981) and by M. T. Larsen in: *Societies and Languages of the Ancient Near East. Studies in Honour of I. M. Diakonoff* (Warminster, 1982), 214 ff., and those of Innaja, studied by N. D. C. Harper, *The Archive of Innaja: A study in the Internal Chronology of the Cappadocian Texts* (Diss. 1982; UM 82-21281). Large archives (originally) comprising between 500 and 1000 documents are furthermore those of Pūšukēn, Adadšulūli and Alāhum, the latter two still unpublished, excavated in *kārum* Kanish, level II/squares FG 9/10 and NOP 20.

acquaint us with some important family firms devoted to a variety of capitalistic activities, involving banking, trade and agricultural production, which yielded important archives covering several generations<sup>34</sup>. Some of the large private archives discovered in Nuzi are equally complex, though completely different since their wealthy and powerful owners operated within the socio-economic context of the more "feudal" Late Bronze Age<sup>35</sup>. All these archives owe their existence to the need of written documentation for evidentiary or informatory purposes, in order to control and steer the movement of goods and persons. The fact that most of these archives comprise some material of a more personal nature (correspondence with relatives, especially women; documents bearing on family affairs, such as marriage, adoption and inheritance) is understandable and no reason for a different classification.

The distinction between official and private archives, moreover, is not always as neat as we might wish. In particular when there is no archaeological information about the findspot of documents and we have to go only by their contents we meet problems of classification. Private archives of some size normally belong to persons of status and substance, which in urban Mesopotamia entails the drawing up and acquisition of records. Such persons usually had personal or business connections with the centres of administration, palace and temple (both also present on the local scene), and not infrequently held offices. This is reflected in their archives, also due to the rather poor separation in antiquity of official and private spheres. The archives of Shamash-hazir, Hammurabi's "administrator of the estate" (dub.sar a.šà.ga) in the south, found and sold by native diggers, are an example. They comprise not only official letters from the king and records bearing on his official duties, but also the correspondence of his wife and documents relating to his own business<sup>36</sup>. The archives of Ur-Utu, the "chief lamentation priest" of Annunitum

<sup>34</sup> Notably the archives designated after Egibi and Murashû and the archives of Sinilum; cf. H. Lanz, *Die neubabylonischen harrānu-Geschäftsunternehmen* (Berlin, 1976), 148 ff. with literature. See for Murashû now M. W. Stolper, *Entrepreneurs and Empire* (Istanbul, 1986), and for NB archives in general F. Joannès, *Textes économiques de la Babylonie récente* (ADPF; Paris, 1982). For NB archives excavated at Uruk, see — apart from that mentioned in note 21 — the enumeration in *UVB* 18 (1962), 39 ff.: W. 20.000 (205 texts); W. 20.010 (85 texts, in a jar), and W. 20.032 (32 texts), published by H. Hunger, *BagM* 5 (1970), 193-303. For archives from Babylon, see e.g. L. Jakob-Rost, *Forschungen und Berichte. Staatliche Museen zu Berlin* 10 (1968), 39-62 (no. 38135, from a jar in Merkes).

<sup>35</sup> See for Nuzi archives M. P. Maidman, *A Socio-economic Analysis of a Nuzi Family Archive* (UM 77-861) and idem, 'A Nuzi Private Archive. Morphological Considerations', *Assur* 1 (1979), 179-186 (the archives of Tehiptilla of more than 1000 texts). For the archives of Šilwa-Teššup, "prominent aristocrat and entrepreneur", see M. A. Morrison, 'The Family of Šilwa-Tešub mār šarri', *JCS* 31 (1979), 3-29, and G. Wilhelm, *Das Archiv des Šilwa-Teššup*, Heft 2, *Rationenlisten*, I (Wiesbaden, 1980). Important observations on the archive of Tehiptilla in Abdullah Fadhil, *Studien zur Topographie und Prosopographie der Provinzstädte des Königreichs Arraphe* (*BagF* 6; Mainz, 1983), see 'Indices', 351.

<sup>36</sup> See for him and his archives F. Thureau-Dangin, *RA* 21 (1924), 2 note 2; F. R. Kraus, *AbB* 4, vii; M. Gallery, *Afo* 27 (1980), 15b and 22b. The correspondence of his wife, Zinû, is to be found mainly in *TCL* 18, 108-112; contracts for the cultivation of date-palm gardens in *TCL* 11.



near Sippar, comprise his private title-deeds and correspondence alongside hundreds of debt-notes (in barley and silver), receipts and contracts which reflect his duties as chief (?) administrator of the temple estate and its property<sup>37</sup>. The Middle Assyrian archives of the family of Ashur-aha-iddina include private records, i.a. the deed of purchase of the house where they were found, and documents which owe their existence to his eldest son's office of governor of the province of Nahur, apparently taken home to Assur at a later time<sup>38</sup>.

Connections and overlap between official and private archives may also exist when no formal office is involved, but a well administrated contractual relationship. Such was the case e.g. with a category of people acting as managers of personnel, herds and estates of the palace or as sellers of its surpluses (barley, wool, dates, sesame, cattle) during the later OB period. In order to be relieved of direct managerial control over its dependents, the palace seems to have preferred entering a contractual relationship with more or less independent middlemen, charged to collect, deliver or sell what was due to the palace, against a fair commission. The consequence of this state of affairs, discovered by Kraus<sup>39</sup>, was an expansion of the administration and the necessity of bureaucratic control reflected in the nature and number of records. The persons involved figure in the palace archives, but also in their own documentation, partly because their activities were not limited to what they did for the palace. It is not always easy to decide for whom and in which capacity they are acting and to which archives records have to be assigned, in particular when their findspots are unknown<sup>40</sup>.

Clay tablets could be stored in various ways. Private persons might put them simply in a corner of a room, perhaps wrapped in a piece of textile or a reed mat, or keep them in a jar, basket, bag or box (*pišannum*). Substantial archives required special rooms, not only in administrative institutions, but at times also in private houses. A good example is the room (ca 5.5 by 2.75m) in the house in Nippur where

<sup>37</sup> See above note 16. I wish to thank Prof. de Meyer (Gent) for oral information and for the possibility to consult the unpublished dissertations on part of the Ur-Utu archives by Dr. K. van Lerberghe and Dr. M. Tanret. The situation was similar at Ishchali, where the archive of the Kititum temple is at the same time the archive of its *šangûm*, comprising also records of his private activities; see M. de J. Ellis, elsewhere in this volume, in §4.

<sup>38</sup> See for this archive elsewhere in this volume the observations by J. N. Postgate. Most documents from this archive of 83 texts (Assur 14327) were published in *KAJ*.

<sup>39</sup> F. R. Kraus, 'Der Palast', Produzent und Unternehmer im Königreiche Babylon nach Hammurabi' in: E. Lipinski (ed.), *State and Temple Economy in the Ancient Near East II* (OLA 6; Leuven, 1979), 423-434, idem, 'Königliche Verfügungen in altbabylonischer Zeit' (SD 11; Leiden, 1984), 332 ff. ('Ertragbringer'). Also D. Charpin, 'Marchands du palais et marchands du temple à la fin de la 1<sup>re</sup> dynastie de Babylone', *JA* 270 (1982), 25-64.

<sup>40</sup> See the criticism of some ideas put forward by N. Yoffee, *The Economic Role of the Crown in the Old Babylonian Period* (BiMes 5; Malibu, 1977), by Kraus, *op. cit.* (1979), 433, and Charpin, *JAOS* 100 (1980), 461 ff., in particular as regards the existence of a "bureau of wool accounts" of the palace and the transactions and records in which Utul-Ishtar figures.

the 730 tablets of the “archives of Murashû” had been stored (BE 9, p. 13). Together with objects of value, such tablets might be kept in a “sealed room” (é.kišib.ba, *bīt kunukkim*, *maknukum*), whose entrance was protected by a sealing, for which we have good evidence from Mari<sup>41</sup>. Access by breaking the seal was reserved to authorized persons and checked carefully<sup>42</sup>. Old Assyrian texts tell us that the opening of an absent or dead merchant’s “safe” (*maṣṣartum*) in order to inspect his tablets, was surrounded by security measures. It had to be done by a committee, usually of three people (*šalištum*), preferably neutral outsiders (*aḫiūtum*), who had to report on their findings<sup>43</sup>.

Larger archives required special provisions for storing and filing tablets. Posner distinguishes the open-shelf system, the pigeonhole system, and the container system<sup>44</sup>. The open-shelf system could make use of mudbrick benches or wooden shelving along the walls. Mudbrick benches, common in all periods, were usually ca. 50 cms wide, running along the walls or in the middle of a room. In the “archival building” in Girsu—without doors and to be entered from above, presumably for reasons of security—the excavators discovered on the benches up to six rows of tablets carefully arranged in what seems to have been a chronological order<sup>45</sup>. Such benches have also been found in Ebla and in the archival room (no. 8) of Ur-Utu’s mansion at ed-Dēr. A special provision has been observed in Uruk in the Eanna temple (square Qa XIV, 5). It was a room provided with a grooved floor consisting of very low mudbrick walls or ridges running parallel to each other, where the tablets must have been stored. In the “furrows” between them water must have flowed judging from the presence of clay sediment. It has been explained as a device for controlling the humidity in the archives in order to prevent the sun-dried tablets from crumbling in the dry, hot climate<sup>46</sup>.

Such benches may also have served to hold containers (coffers, baskets, bags) with tablets, though frequently rather for temporary purposes such as collecting, sorting and processing the records than for final storage. Baskets and leather bags were regularly used for transporting documents to the administrative centers as

<sup>41</sup> See elsewhere in this volume the contribution by A. Malamat.

<sup>42</sup> See J. M. Sasson, ‘Some Comments on Archive Keeping at Mari’, *Iraq* 34 (1972), 55-67, and M. Gallery, *AfO* 27 (1980), 6 ff. on é.kišib.ba.

<sup>43</sup> Cf. EL no. 274B and TCL 19, 99:6 ff.: “Read to the *kārum* the letter of the City and take three outsiders and enter the house of my ‘father’, the old one, and open the storeroom of A. (sealed) with the seals of his representatives; break their sealings—the three persons mentioned should seal it (again, later)—and the triple coffer (with) the tablets of P., our father, open (the coffer with) these tablets and select: one tablet about ...” (etc.). See now also L. Matouš—M. Matoušová-Rajmová, *Kappadokische Keilschrifttafeln mit Siegeln* (Prag, 1984), 80 f., I 580.

<sup>44</sup> Posner, *op cit.*, 56 ff.

<sup>45</sup> Implied by the observation of T. B. Jones, *AS* 20(1976), 43 f., that “the clandestine diggers ... seem to have concentrated on the area in which the tablets dated from Shulgi 44 to Amar-Sin were collected”.

<sup>46</sup> *UVB* 12/13 (Berlin, 1956), 18 with pls. 4 and 11. The archives cover the period between Sargon II and Darius II, roughly 200 years. A similar provision was discovered in a room of the house located in Nd XVI 4, cf. *UVB* 18 (1962), 14 and pl. 35.

well, as we know from the texts<sup>47</sup>, which in general are silent on the matters of storage in archival rooms and repositories.

Wooden shelving is known from several excavations, i.a. from Ebla, Ur, Kanish and Boghazköy (room V in building A)<sup>47a</sup>. In room L. 2769 at Ebla, a triple shelving had been installed, where at least the large rectangular tablets were placed in rows, with their flat sides to the front like cards in a tray. In Nippur (on brick benches) tablets “reclined against each other like a shelf of leaning books”<sup>48</sup>. There are, moreover, some indications for “horizontal filing” of tablets tied up in bundles, and for filing in small baskets or boxes with tablets along the shelves, also outside Mesopotamia, e.g. from the palace of Nestor at Pylos<sup>49</sup>.

Evidence for the pigeonhole system comes mainly from Neo-Assyrian times. The “library room”, no. 5, of the Nabû temple in Khorsabad had a wall with three rows of small, square niches (ca. 25-30 cms. square and ca. 40-50 cms deep) for storage of tablets as in a huge honey-comb<sup>50</sup>. A similar provision was in use for the papyrus archives in room 61 of Sennacherib’s palace in Nineveh, mentioned above (note 5). The “brick boxes” discovered in the “scribal office” (room no. 4) of the North-Western palace at Kalhu, described as “filing cabinets”, may be comparable<sup>51</sup>.

Storage in containers was widespread. Excavations have revealed many jars with collections of tablets, and from textual sources we know about the use of baskets and tablet coffer<sup>52</sup>. The existence of the latter can occasionally be deduced from the discovery of neat, square stacks of tablets whose wooden casing has disintegrated<sup>53</sup>. In the mansion of Ur-Utu at Tell ed-Dēr, according to oral information by Professor de Meyer, some bronze fastenings of such tablet coffer (originally placed on shelves?) have survived. Reed baskets, of course, rarely left traces.

Careful storage in the ways described implies categorization and filing<sup>54</sup> according to certain criteria in order to keep records available for consultation. Filing

<sup>47</sup> See for leather bags, *kušdu<sub>10</sub>.gan* = *tuk(k)annu*, containing tablets, and for “courier’s bags” (*kušdu<sub>10</sub>.gan.ti.bal.a*), qualified as *im.sar.ra gá.gá.dè* (BIN 9, 284:4f.; 307:1ff.) and *kišib.ra.a ba.an.gar ša é.dub.ba* (BIN 9, 413:9ff.), the references collected by M. Stol, *RIA* 6 (1983), 537b.

<sup>47a</sup> See K. Bittel, *Hattusha* (New York, 1970), 15f.

<sup>48</sup> A. T. Clay, *BE* 14 (1906), 1.

<sup>49</sup> T. G. Palaima-J. C. Wright, ‘Ins and Outs of the Archives Rooms at Pylos. Form and Function of a Mycenaean Palace’ *AJA* 89 (1985), 261a with note 33.

<sup>50</sup> G. Loud-C. B. Altman, *Khorsabad*, II (*OIP* 40; Chicago, 1938), 46 with pl. 19c.

<sup>51</sup> M. E. L. Mallowan, *Nimrud and its Remains*, I (London, 1966), 172.

<sup>52</sup> See for Mari, in the palace: ARM 10, 12:27ff.; 82:5ff.; 13,14:11ff. Elsewhere in OB: AbB 7, 74:5 (with records about herds); YOS 13, 95:34; 203, rev:1ff.; AbB 7, 69:9; BE 6/1, 103:41 (in private households). Transport of tablets in a *pišannum*: AbB 3, 84:6; 9, 14:15ff.; TCL 18, 119:20.

<sup>53</sup> E.g. in the “western archives” of the palace of Ugarit, rooms 4 and 5, where the tablets were found “parfois groupées en paquets” (*PRU* 3 [Paris, 1955], xii).

<sup>54</sup> Neo-Assyrian tablets discovered at Kalhu, with holes where remnants of string were still observable, are proof that at times tablets were literally “filed” by stringing and suspending on a rope records which had to be kept together, see B. Parker, *Iraq* 19 (1957), 125.

could be achieved by distributing them systematically over shelves, jars, coffer and benches according to contents, purpose, origin, date, etc. At times an initial differentiation according to size and shape of the tablet and lay-out of the text was possible, since there was a certain measure of correlation between a tablet's subject matter and its external features, to which also the presence or absence of an envelope or case and seal-impressions (in particular places) belong. Groups of tablets could also be identified by labels, by short inscriptions (on their container or on the tablet itself), and occasionally by other markings. Within a stable administrative system also the handwritings and styles of individual scribes attached to particular services, doubtlessly must have been a means of identification and categorization, occasionally recognized even today by some Assyriologists<sup>55</sup> on the basis of the original tablets (traditional cuneiform copies usually tend to distort such individual traits).

A specific way of marking documents was observed by Charpin at Mari: red stripes drawn over the full length of small account tablets which record single items and transactions. His convincing interpretation is that records thus marked had been filed and digested in the larger ledger-tablets and could be discarded or stored away<sup>56</sup>. The use of tablets of particular shapes, sizes, lay-outs and even styles of writing for specific administrative purposes is attested throughout Mesopotamian history, but has to be analysed per period. Its beginnings go back to the earliest stages of cuneiform writing<sup>56a</sup>. For Old Akkadian features ("imperial style"), I refer to Foster's contribution to this volume<sup>57</sup>. Good examples from Ur III are the so-called "round tablets" from 'Lagash', exclusively used for the assessment of plots of fields and their (expected) yield, in a way which evokes comparison with standard forms, since the figures for the grain (še.bi), as discovered by Maekawa, were added slightly later<sup>58</sup>. There is, moreover, the clear distinction between the small account tablets for recording single or daily transactions, and the multi-column ledger tablets. Typical for the Old Babylonian period are, apart from the remarkable "Quasi-Hüllentafel" discovered by Wilcke, and the *ze'pu*-letters, i.e. the "dockets" used in particular for the administration of labor performed by hired

<sup>55</sup> See e.g. S. Parpola's "distinctive feature analysis" applied to the writers belonging to the "inner circle" of the correspondents of Esarhaddon and Ashurbanipal, in *Letters from Assyrian Scholars to the Kings Esarhaddon and Assurbanipal*, II (AOAT 5/2; Neukirchen, 1983), Appendix M. In his commentary also paleographic arguments are used for assigning letters to particular writers.

<sup>56</sup> D. Charpin, 'Une pratique administrative méconnue', *MARI* 3 (1984), 258 ff., with additional remarks in his study of the archives of Asqudum, to appear in *MARI* 4 (1985).

<sup>56a</sup> See M. W. Green, 'The Construction and Implementation of the Cuneiform Writing System', *Visible Language* 15 (1981), 345 ff.

<sup>57</sup> See also his observations in 'Archives and Record Keeping in Sargonic Mesopotamia', *ZA* 72 (1982), 1 ff., esp. 3 f.

<sup>58</sup> G. Pettinato, *Die runden Tafeln* (AnOr 45; Roma, 1969); K. Maekawa, *AJS* 4 (1982), 98 ff., in particular 101, IV, 2.

workers<sup>59</sup>. For Neo-Assyrian times, I refer to Postgate's description of the difference in physical appearance of the various types of legal documents<sup>60</sup> and to the unique format of the so-called "queries" used for recording questions put by later Neo-Assyrian kings to the sungod and his subsequent answer in the form of an omen report<sup>60a</sup>. Such features are also helpful to the present-day Assyriologist, who would derive much profit from a well illustrated, diachronic "Urkundenlehre" of cuneiform tablets, which is a serious desideratum.

A convenient way of making tablets in an archive easily identifiable was inscribing a short note on the edge which was best in sight. This may apply already to Early Dynastic records in view of the position of some colophons<sup>61</sup> and to some large account tablets from Ebla, where the final date (the month-name) occasionally occupied a prominent, isolated position on or near the upper edge of the tablet<sup>62</sup>. Many OB administrative texts from the "early Isin craft archive" (BIN 9, *passim*) have short notes on their "left" edge (presumably their upper edge, if we assume "vertical" writing and filing), which mention the date, give a summary (numbers of animals whose hides had been processed), or designate the tablet as "copy" (gaba.ri). For still later periods we may refer to the well-known Aramaic epigraphs of the seventh and later centuries B.C., inscribed with stylus or pen on the edges of cuneiform tablets, which no doubt served easy identification by those less familiar with the cuneiform writing system<sup>63</sup>.

Distribution of records over various containers was observed by E. A. W. Budge at Tell ed-Dēr, where each jar would have contained the archives of one person<sup>64</sup>. Elsewhere he mentions the occurrence of jars with the names of the persons involved in the transaction written on the outside<sup>65</sup>. While these data cannot be

<sup>59</sup> C. Wilcke, in: *Zikir šumim. Festschrift F. R. Kraus* (Leiden, 1982), 450 ff.; see for ze'pu-letters, Finkelstein, YOS 13 (1972), 4 ff.; Kraus, AbB 7, p. 143 ad no. 180; Stol, AbB 9, 92 ad no. 145. See for the "dockets", M. Weitemeyer, *Aspects of the Hiring of Workers in the Sippar Region* (Copenhagen, 1962). See also M. de J. Ellis, elsewhere in this volume, note 16.

<sup>60</sup> J. N. Postgate, *Fifty Neo-Assyrian Legal Documents* (Warminster, 1976), 3 ff., § 1.2.

<sup>60a</sup> Cf. J. Aro, in: *La divination en Mésopotamie ancienne et dans les régions voisines* (CRAI 14; Paris, 1966), 110.

<sup>61</sup> See S. A. Picchioni, *OrNS* 49 (1980), 225 ff., esp. 243, with conclusions on the direction of writing, for which one may also consult M. A. Powell, *Visible Language* 15/4 (1981), 424 f.

<sup>62</sup> See e.g. *ARET* 4 (1984), nos. 4, 5, 10, 13 and 15. The final summary (ending with the monthname) usually occupies the last, upper column(s) of the reverse (with the columns in horizontal position). The month-names in the texts mentioned in *ARET* 4 are said to be on "verso, bordo s.", but as is clear from no. 4 on pl. VIII, this refers to the "left edge" of the tablet as printed (with vertical columns), which in fact is the upper (horizontal) edge according to Matthiae's description in this volume (§ 4).

<sup>63</sup> See L. Delaporte, *Épigraphes araméens* (Paris, 1912); S. J. Lieberman, *BASOR* 192 (1968), 25-31; F. Vattioni, 'Epigrafia Aramaica', in: *Augustinianum* 10 (1970), 493-532.

<sup>64</sup> See his description in *The Rise and Progress of Assyriology* (London, 1925), 142; attempts to move the jars ("with coverings fixed in position with bitumen") without emptying them resulted in their collapse. The Middle-Assyrian archive of Mutta (archive no. 2 in Postgate's contribution to this volume) consisted of 112 tablets in one jar, all dating from one single year.

<sup>65</sup> E. A. W. Budge, *ZA* 3 (1888), 213 ("in some excavations which have been made within the last year or two").

checked we have good evidence for the latter custom from Ashur around 1100 B.C. The ca. 650 records of the archives of Ezbu-leshir, head of the administration of the “regular gifts” (*rab ginā’ē*) of the Assur temple, were discovered in a group of ten jars, at least three of which had an inscription on the outside. That on Ass 18782 = KAH II no. 64 reads “holder(?) of sealed records concerning settlements” (*bīt kanikāte ša nikkassī*)<sup>66</sup>.

More common was the use of inscribed tags or labels for indentifying groups of tablets. They are attested for libraries, also in Boghazköy<sup>67</sup>, some attached to bundles or perhaps baskets of tablets belonging to one series, others simply placed beside them on a shelf or bench. From Mesopotamia proper, in particular from the centuries around 2000 B.C., we know many labels originally attached to baskets or coffers. Some are still recognizable as such from the perforations for the strings by means of which they were attached to the containers (cf. UET 3, 53, 54, 56; Sigrist, TÉN no. 451)<sup>68</sup>. Others, in particular during the earlier periods, were stuck to the basket as a sealing, as is clear from the impression of a reed pattern on their flat reverse, and may have secured the cords which closed the container in order to protect its contents<sup>69</sup>.

Such labels, frequently not recognizable as such from the cuneiform copies, especially when they are inscribed on both sides, are easily identifiable by their inscriptions. They almost invariably start with the sentence “tablet basket/coffer which contains ...” (<sup>gi</sup>pisan.dub.ba....i.(in.)gál), usually followed by a date, occasionally also by the names of persons (officials) involved and the accounting period covered. Their name, “pisanduba-labels”, is derived from this inscription and the tablet basket itself was considered so characteristic of the function of the administrator who had to process and file its contents, that it earned him his title pisandubba, psanda/uba, in Akkadian *šandabakku*<sup>70</sup>. He was an important figure in the bureaucracy who might acquire wider, even political powers<sup>71</sup>.

<sup>66</sup> See for this archive E. Weidner, ‘Amts- und Privatarhive aus Mittelassyrischer Zeit’, in *Festschrift V. Christian* (Wien, 1956), 112 f. and J.N. Postgate, *BiOr* 37 (1980), 68 f., and his contribution to this volume (archive no. 1). From Middle-Assyrian times we also have references to chests or boxes (*quppātu*) for storing tablets (Weidner, *op. cit.* 113 with note 6, referring to KAJ 310, which mentions 25 pieces, perhaps a depot).

<sup>67</sup> See the two labels, one of the series *Enūma Anu Enlil*, the other for the omen series *Šumma ālu*, published by Craig, AAT pl. 1. For labels at Boghazköy, see H. G. Güterbock, *MDOG* 72 (1933), 37 f.

<sup>68</sup> Falkenstein, *NSGU* 1, 17, mentions a specimen where the charred remains of the string by means of which it had been attached to the basket were still visible.

<sup>69</sup> See for a description BRM 3, p. 10 f., 14 f. An example from Early Dynastic Lagash with the impression of a reed pattern is LB no. 10, communicated by Böhl, *Mededeelingen uit de Leidsche Verzameling van Spijkerschriftinscripties* (Amsterdam, 1933) p. 9. See for other labels from that period J. Bauer, *Altsumerische Wirtschaftstexte aus Lagasch* (Roma, 1972), nos. 25, 102 and 166. For Sargonic labels see Foster, *op. cit.* (note 57), 11-22, with important conclusions on filing criteria and accountability.

<sup>70</sup> Cf. for his title Kraus, *op. cit.* (note 13), 72 f., with W. Farber, *BiOr* 34 (1977), 338a and S. Lieberman, *The Sumerian Loanwords in Old Babylonian Akkadian* (Missoula, 1977), 181 no. 105, esp. A, 5, 6.

<sup>71</sup> See for him i.a. I. J. Gelb in E. Lipiński (ed.), *op. cit.* (note 15), I, 14 (in early temples immediately

The ca. 300 basket labels known today are important because, according to Nelson who made a special study of them, they “are evidence of a filing system, for in reality they are archive labels”<sup>72</sup>. The majority, ca. 180, from Lagash, are said to reflect a well organized temple administration of considerable size, in which some twenty temples figure. Nelson distinguishes them into almost thirty different categories, subdivided for provenance from various cities. Seventeen of his categories are based on mostly well known key terms in records and ledgers, such as “inspection”, “balanced account”, “rations”, “disbursements”, “deliveries”, also “final verdicts”. The remainder are miscellaneous categories mainly derived from the subject matter, such as “cattle and herdsman”, “temples and establishments”, “fields, farms, orchards”.

The picture is rather diffuse. Homogeneous categories which correlate with well known types of records and transactions occur alongside less familiar ones and combinations of various types. A number of them is restricted to Lagash, which is partly due to the abundance of material from that city which yielded about two thirds of all known and where, moreover, temples figure predominantly in the documentation preserved. Contrast the almost complete absence of labels from Nippur, a fact no doubt related to the preponderance of private records in the material from that city. Even in Lagash there is variation, notably in the classification of the so-called “long tablets”, designated after persons involved, goods or materials handled, the place of the transaction, or the controller, while there are also combinations of these features. The classification of the records to some extent remains opaque to us and to some extent may reflect practical needs and *ad hoc* solutions of the administration rather than centrally imposed principles of categorization.

The recovery of the administrative procedures from the labels alone seems impossible, also because there is practically no information about their findspots, that means about their association with particular buildings or archives. We have not a single label found *in situ* together with the contents of the tablet basket to which it was attached. The labels are to be studied as a function of a complex administrative system with its own categories and taxonomies<sup>73</sup>. It aimed at registering all movements of persons and goods to keep check on and to steer the

under the sanga); *šandabakku*’s with a political career e.g. are Babati (*JCS* 28 [1976], 178; 35 [1983], 91 ff.) and DINGIR-am from Uruk (*BagM* 2 [1963], 36). For Mari see *ARMT* 1,109 on the appointment of a *šandabakku*, and *ARMT* 18, p. 235 f. on the powers of the well-known Jasim-Sumû; for a career of an OB *šandabakku*, cf. Charpin *JAOS* 100 (1980), 466 with note 26.

<sup>72</sup> R. C. Nelson, *Pisan-dub-ba Texts from the Sumerian Ur III Dynasty* (Diss. 1976, Minnesota; UM 76-27.824) with Idem, ‘Inventory of pisan.dub.ba Texts’, in *Studies in Honor of Tom B. Jones (AOAT 202; Neukirchen, 1979)*, 43-56, building on earlier studies, notably N. Schneider, ‘Die Urkundenbehälter von Ur III und ihre archivalische Systematik’, *OrNS* 9 (1940), 1-24. A number of labels quoted by Nelson as unpublished have since been edited notably by D. Owen, *MVN* 11 (Roma, 1982), nos. A-I, R-T, X, CC-DD.

<sup>73</sup> M. Civil, in *L’Archéologie de l’Iraq ...* (Colloque CNRS; Paris, 1980), 231.

use of manpower, materials and products in the various bureaux, workshops, services, temples, etc. This created a continuous stream of records which induced the (central) administrations which had to process and file them to produce a variety of ledgers, monthly and annual surveys, balanced accounts and registers of personnel in order to make stocktaking, checks on production and consumption and also a certain amount of economic planning possible<sup>74</sup>. The use of "filing baskets" provided with labels was an expedient for collecting or keeping together records of the same date or dealing with a particular type of transactions, a specific group of persons, etc. Whether all can be considered "archive labels" is a different question. It could be assumed on the basis of labels of baskets with di.til.la-records, which are commonly held to represent the archives of the judiciary authorities in Girsu, systematic collections of recorded cases or verdicts, arranged by year or judges acting and marked by labels<sup>75</sup>. On the other hand, one could also consider baskets with tablets collections of related records made per workshop or service unit and marked by labels for shipment to the centres of administration. We know that baskets were used for transport of tablets<sup>75a</sup> and from the Palace of Nestor at Pylos there is archaeological evidence for tablet baskets identified by "transport labels"<sup>76</sup>. The baskets then would have served only temporary (transport) purposes and their labels may have been discarded once they had been opened. This leaves the question open what happened to the numerous records of individual transactions after their data had been filed. They may have been stored away in archive rooms, possibly even in the baskets in which they had arrived and with (new?) labels. But we lack good archaeological evidence for such "archive baskets", even from the "archival building" at Girsu, where tablets were reportedly found laid out in rows on mudbrick benches. Nor do we have additional written information on the organization of Ur III archives which would allow us to interpret the pisanduba-labels as such. The only clear indication we have is that archives were arranged chronologically (see note 45) and this links up with the specification on many labels that their baskets contain records covering particular accounting periods, frequently one whole year. But this arrangement may as well go back to the office or service where the records originated or were collected for shipment.

Attempts to link the labels with known archival documents on the basis of identity of transactions and persons involved have not been very successful, even where much

<sup>74</sup> See in general T. B. Jones, *op. cit.* (note 10) and his 'Bookkeeping in Ancient Sumer', *Archaeology* 9 (1956), 16-21.

<sup>75</sup> Cf. the interpretation by Falkenstein, *NSGU* I, 17f.

<sup>75a</sup> See note 52 and also the interesting reference in *A/O* 22 (1968/9), 4 III: 2f.

<sup>76</sup> See Palaima-Wright, *op. cit.* (note 49), 260f. From the early OB period we know a basket label inscribed with the text "basket with cancelled tablets, to be destroyed" (<sup>g</sup>ṗisan im.sar.ra siḫiātum zi.re.dè, YOS 5, 58), and Nelson, *op. cit.* (1976), no. 61, is a <sup>g</sup>ṗisan.dub.ba é.tūm dub.zi.ri. Such baskets by definition cannot have been meant for storage in an archive.



material has survived (e.g. from Girsu). This may be due to our incomplete understanding of the role of many officials, in particular on a more elementary administrative level. Their activities, moreover, are frequently indicated by rather vague terms, such as “conveyed/verified(?) by” (gir), “in/through the hands of” (šu), or “in the presence of” (igi). Some titles or occupations, such as šà.tam, šabra, sukkal and even dub.sar are not specific enough to our taste for a reconstruction of the bureaucratic procedures, while also the seal practice still poses problems, partly due to “intricacies of the operational system”<sup>77</sup>. The steadily growing number of records, however, is encouraging and allows promising approaches, such as the reconstruction of one particular bureau or workshop or a systematic analysis of the large ledgers and comprehensive balanced accounts<sup>78</sup>.

The bureaucratic procedures of the Ur III empire set a standard for future administrators. In the following centuries, notwithstanding political fragmentation and reduction of scale, they survived as e.g. the “craft archive” from early Isin shows<sup>79</sup>. Bookkeeping techniques and terminology (frequently still in Sumerian, but occasionally translated into Akkadian, in particular in Assyria) were kept up, in particular by the accountants of the “large institutions”, for the registration of the movements of goods and persons. The traditions of the bureaucracy, fed by the principles of accountability and the need, inherent to the hierarchical system, to make facts and figures verifiable, continued to create large archives, now also of wealthy individuals or families. Occasionally texts shed some light on the use and usefulness of such extensive recording (in connection with census, distribution of land or rations, taxation, trade and credit, lawsuits), but at other times questions about its purpose and function hardly can be suppressed. They have recently been formulated by Sasson in connection with the analysis of the so-called “kitchen archives” from the OB palace at Mari<sup>80</sup>. He discovered that the accuracy in

<sup>77</sup> P. Steinkeller, ‘Seal Practice in the Ur III Period’, in M. Gibson-R. D. Biggs, *Seals and Sealing in the Ancient Near East* (*BiMes* 6; Malibu, 1977) 42f. The frequent loss of envelopes deprives us of useful and at times apparently surprising information. D. Owen, *JCS* 24 (1972), 133f., was able to show how a “letter-order” after having been opened was turned into a receipt by putting it in a new case, sealed by the recipient of the item ordered. See also Van de Mieroop’s remarks in this volume on the seal practice in the craft archive from Isin, and in *OLP* 15 (1984), 55ff. on an Ur III letter-order in envelope.

<sup>78</sup> See e.g. the analysis of ‘the basic organization at Drehem’ in T. B. Jones-J. W. Snyder, *Sumerian Economic Texts from the Third Dynasty of Ur* (Minneapolis, 1961), 212ff. and D. Loding, *A Craft Archive from Ur* (Diss. Pennsylvania 1974; UM 75-14.588). Cf. also D. M. McGuiness, *Studies in Neo-Sumerian Administrative Machinery* (Diss. 1976, Minnesota; UM 77-19.062), focussing on Umma and its “family society” dominated by the ensi, with due attention to the seal-impressions. Numerous recent studies could be added, also from Japanese assyriologists. Recently McGuiness published an article on ‘Archival Interrelationships during Ur III’ (*JANES* 13 [1981], 53-66), based on ch. 1 of his dissertation.

<sup>79</sup> See M. van de Mieroop, elsewhere in this volume. Note in particular his interesting observations on the use of copies, sealed tablets, and “Sammeltafeln”.

<sup>80</sup> J. M. Sasson, ‘Accounting Discrepancies in the Mari NĪ.GUB [NĪG.DU] Texts’, in *Zikir šumim. Festschrift F. R. Kraus* (Leiden, 1982), 326ff. See for the archive in question also R. R. Glaeseman, *The Practice of the King’s Meal at Mari* (Diss. UCLA 1978; UM 78-20220).

recording incoming and outgoing items at times was rather poor. Notable differences proved to exist between the records of the individual, mostly daily entries and their recapitulation in ledgers and monthly accounts, as witness incomplete or wrong figures. Apparently "the Mari scribe did not feel inordinately constrained to be accurate in registering outlays of food, and in computing their totals. ... We find numerous examples in which he calculated inaccurately, copied carelessly, shuffled indiscriminately, and resorted to short-cut measures to save linear space or to fill temporal gaps" (p. 340). This raises the question of the purpose of the whole bookkeeping enterprise, of the possibility of really balancing incoming food supplies and outgoing rations, where perhaps only half of the "originals" are registered into lists, and in the end of the reason why all these records were preserved over a period of several years. No doubt the same questions apply to comparable archives in other places and from other periods.

The excavations of the palace of Mari have brought to light a number of archives in various rooms, apart from the diplomatic ones and those of the kitchen (or of "the king's meal") mentioned above. The ca. twenty thousand tablets unearthed comprise archives from various rooms, bureaux and services. Some are easily identifiable by persons acting, by subject matter, or by information about their provenance from a particular room. An good example is the "custom's archive" published by M. Murton Burke<sup>81</sup>, whose find-spot seems to be unknown. It consists of "letters of clearance" supplied to owners or masters of boats with commercial cargo upon payment of an import duty (*miksum*) near the point where the Euphrates entered Mari territory. The letters apparently had to be handed in to the official of the central administration, Iddiniatum, to whom they were addressed, upon the boat's arrival in Mari. In other cases a reconstruction of archives poses problems, due to incomplete archaeological records of the find-spots or to displacement and transfer of groups of tablets both in antiquity (secondary use of old records; confusion created by Hammurabi's clerks) and during or after the excavations<sup>82</sup>. It is also regrettable that the find-spots of many of the sealings which secured the doors of archival rooms cannot be recovered, since it makes correlation between tablets, rooms and responsible officials much more difficult<sup>83</sup>. But we may expect that a systematic analysis of the documents and their prosopography in combination with the archaeological data available and obtained in recent years, eventually will yield a clearer picture of the archival situation at Mari. The suggestion made by Rouault<sup>84</sup>, that the apparent lack of system or disorder to

<sup>81</sup> ARMT 13 nos. 58-101, with *Syria* 41 (1964), 67-103, and *MARI* 2 (1983), 151-163.

<sup>82</sup> See the remarks in ARMT 23, p. If. (*Archives administratives de Mari*, 1) and in general for the archival situation the contribution by J. Margueron elsewhere in this volume.

<sup>83</sup> See D. Beyer, 'Scellements de portes du palais de Mari', in *MARI* 4 (Paris, 1985) (forthcoming), and A. Malamat, elsewhere in this volume.

<sup>84</sup> ARMT 18 p. 250, note 100, in a discussion of the place of Mukannišum (now known to have had the title of *šatammum*, cf. ARMT 21 no. 398: 1-4; see also *MARI* 2 [1983] 127 note 14) in the administrative

some extent may have been intentional, devised in order to limit access to vital written information to a small group of trusted officials, (fortunately) seems to lack good evidence. Some interesting letters, discussed by Sasson (see above, note 42), do indicate that taking sealed (baskets with) tablets out of archival rooms was checked and supervised by various officials, but this does not prove deliberate “fragmentation of the information”. The procedures are well explainable from the nature of the texts, such as “baskets with the total number of census lists” (*pišannātim ša napḫarat tēbibtum*, ARM 10, 82:13f.<sup>85</sup>) and from the illiteracy of many officials, pointed out by Sasson, which required secretarial assistance for the identification of records and perhaps mutual checking (so Rouault).

These observations focus the attention on the key figures of the administration, the scribes. We know dozens, hundreds of them by name, also from their seal inscriptions and much attention has been paid to their education as reconstructed from practice tablets from the school and from the so-called “é.dub.ba essays”. Their role in the administration and their position in society, which may range from that of a simple clerk or a paid letter writer on the market to that of a chief-accountant or secretary of a chancery or king, is more difficult to assess. What interests us here is the relation between the clerk, bookkeeper or accountant and his superiors. There is clear evidence from the Ur III period that many high officials were recruited from the ranks of the scribes, which implies that they were able to find, use and check written information independently. The general impression, which needs further proof, is that during the subsequent OB period this was less systematically the case. This would make officials much more dependent on their scribes and independent checks on recording, balancing and stocks by others than the accountants directly involved problematic. The laborious bookkeeping and accumulation of records may have served more and more purely internal purposes, also in order to satisfy the traditional requirements of matching figures and tallying balances, felt primarily by those directly responsible for their own archives<sup>86</sup>.

system. In ARM 10,12:8ff. he functions as *ebbum*, “controller”, accompanying an attaché of the king sent to take some baskets of tablets out of one of the archival rooms.

<sup>85</sup> These tablets are kept in a *bīt tuppātim* (1.5) which is sealed. After the room has been opened a certain Igmilum, belonging to the “secretariat” (*bīt tērtim*), points out the baskets in question, whereupon the addressee of the letter, Inibšina, sends the king the sealed records which have to be processed and assessed (*kunukki ša bulluṭim*; so with Durand, *MARI* 3 [1984], 260f. and not *šābulūtim*, “dried, baked”, proposed in ARMT 18,234).

<sup>86</sup> See for the role of the scribes after the Ur III period in particular Kraus, *op. cit.* (note 13), 18ff., and above note 71. N. Schneider, *OrNS* 15 (1946), 89ff. demonstrated that during the Ur III period many scribes were sons of city governors, temple officials, military leaders etc., which may have favoured their administrative career. C. J. Gadd, *Teachers and Students in the Oldest Schools* (London, 1956), 23, assumes that the situation was not much different during the OB period, but this requires further study. See for the situation in Sippar R. Harris, *Ancient Sippar* (Istanbul, 1975), 284-302, with the remarks by M. Stol., *BiOr* 33 (1976), 152f., also on careers (dub.sar becoming dumu é.dub.ba, “secretary”), but note the observations by D. Charpin, *JAOS* 100 (1980), 467ff. on the question of such careers and the meaning of titles and occupational designations.

Important for a reconstruction of the political history and the royal administration are the archives of the chancellery. A definition, however, of what that may have been in ancient Mesopotamia is not easy, as the existence of various archives in the palace of Mari shows, where, moreover, the official correspondence was probably found in secondary position, in room 115. Not everything relating to the activities and administration of a palace necessarily belonged to the competence of the chancellery which will have dealt primarily with political matters and the administration of the realm. We can, moreover, assume a gradual differentiation from one general palace archive (a stage apparently already passed in Ebla, where several "tablet rooms" are attested), to the coexistence of several administrative units or bureaux, each with their own archives and personnel, for which the palace of Ugarit provides good evidence (archives of international documents, of legal deeds such as land transfers, of records of the palace administration, etc.). Kraus<sup>87</sup>, who suggests for the OB period close links or even identity with the é.dub.ba.a of the residence, describes the chancellery as a scribal office whose tasks comprised not only the usual bookkeeping, accounting and filing (which implies archives), but also the production of official compositions (royal inscriptions in the broadest sense) and the promulgation of official texts (such as the year-names). On the analogy of imperial Rome we could visualize a scribal office headed by the king's or the palace's senior scribe as chancellor, where incoming documents were read, digested, and filed, and official texts (letters, charters, legal records, inscriptions) were composed, multiplied and promulgated. Its head may have had the royal seal at his disposal and have served as the king's secretary and even adviser (an *ummānum* of the type of Achiqar). Such a picture implies a fairly large scribal staff (at least for great palaces such as those of Mari and Niniveh), the existence of a scriptorium, and archives which, in view of the literary and historiographic tasks and interests, may have incorporated what we would call library material<sup>88</sup>. How rewarding a systematic analysis of chancellery archives can be for historical interpretation and for a reconstruction of the administrative structures (including its personnel and the composition of the army) has become clear in recent studies on official letters, administrative records and various lists (rations, inspection, etc.)<sup>89</sup>.

<sup>87</sup> *Op. cit.* (note 13) 23 ff. See for a sketch of a palace chancery of the Neo-Assyrian period J. V. Kinnier Wilson, *The Nimrud Wine Lists* (CTN 1; London, 1972), 62 ff.

<sup>88</sup> See elsewhere in this volume the contributions by Parpola (on library and archives) and Reade (on royal scriptoria).

<sup>89</sup> See e.g. S. Parpola, 'Assyrian Royal Inscriptions and Neo-Assyrian Letters', in M. Fales (ed.), *Assyrian Royal Inscriptions: New Horizons* (Roma, 1981), 117 ff.; idem, *Letters from Assyrian Scholars to the Kings Esarhaddon and Assurbanipal*, II (*AOAT* 5/2; Neukirchen, 1983); J. M. Sasson, 'Year: "Zimri-Lim Offered a Great Throne to Shamash of Mahnum"'. An overview of one year at Mari', part 1, in *MARI* 4 (Paris, 1985) (forthcoming); J.-M. Durand, 'Les dames du palais de Mari à l'époque du royaume de haute Mésopotamie', *ibidem*; J. V. Kinnier-Wilson, *op. cit.* (note 87), with S. Dalley-J. N. Postgate,

Archives discovered in palaces frequently comprise a number of apparently private legal documents. Examples are the “textes juridiques” (ARM 8) from Mari and numerous legal documents in the K-Collection from the palaces of Nineveh<sup>90</sup>. Various explanations for their presence there have been advanced. Private persons might have stored their valuable records in official buildings for safekeeping. Authorities might have obliged their subjects to register contracts in the palace for keeping up a land registry or for reasons of taxation or conscription. Institutions such as temple and palace might have made and kept copies of the deeds executed within their confines, the originals of which were handed over to the contracting parties<sup>91</sup>. A palace in this way might have built up a legal archive, including also records of lawsuits, for consultation by judges, jurists, and administrators.

There probably is no uniform explanation. The documents in question exhibit a great variety and there must have been changes in procedure over the centuries. Depositing records in temples was not customary, though it may have occurred in later periods among people closely associated with the sanctuary and in emergency situations. This erroneous idea (which links up with ideas about a “temple city”) may have been fostered for OB times by the interpretation of the archives of a class of well-to-do women dedicated to the sungod, discovered in Sippar. The special, walled quarter (called *gagûm*) where these ladies (called *nadîtu*) lived in their houses with their archives was wrongly considered part of the temple of Shamash<sup>91a</sup>. A mistaken etymology and translation of the name of the symbolic weapon of this sungod, the saw (*šaššarum*), used in oath ceremonies (i.a. lawsuits about real property), was responsible for the assumption that there existed a land registry of the Shamash temple<sup>92</sup>. In general official registration of legal transactions did not occur before the Seleucid period; institutions such as the Greek *archeion* or

*The Tablets from Fort Shalmaneser* (CTN 3; London, 1984), on wine lists and horse lists. See for the palace archives of Nuzi W. Mayer, *Nuzi Studien I. Die Archive des Palastes und die Prosopographie der Berufe* (AOAT 205/1; Neukirchen, 1978). An “archival approach” proves to be indispensable for the study of the textual material discovered in the palace of Ebla.

<sup>90</sup> See for this group the contribution to this volume by T. Kwasman.

<sup>91</sup> Interpretation proposed by M. Schorr, *VAB* 5 (Leipzig, 1913), xxii, 6, who rejected the possibility that parties deposited their original deeds in the temple archives.

<sup>91a</sup> R. Harris, *JESHO* 6 (1963), 153 f., still mentions “the cloister’s function of keeping records of transactions of the *nadîtu*’s” and the “safekeeping of the deeds of their inhabitants, probably in its administrative building”. This idea, based on a wrong interpretation of CT 6,6:25 (title-deeds “in the *gagûm* with our sister” to all appearances were kept in her house), is not repeated in her *Ancient Sippar* (Istanbul 1975). She maintains that the “cloister” “must have been within the temple complex” and the existence of “an administrative staff to supervise the activities of the individual *nadîtu* women”, without making clear what this implied (p. 188 f.).

<sup>92</sup> Schorr, *op. cit.* (note 91), xxiii and 349, where he assumes that the temple archive included groundplans of houses and field maps. See for *šaššarum*, which he connected with the Hebrew word *šāšar*, “red paste, minium” (p. 260 ad 7; actually represented by Akkadian *šarša/erru*), A. Walther, *Das altbabylonische Gerichtswesen* (LSS 6/4-6; 1917), 193 note 2.

*dèmosion* and obligatory registration (*anagrafè*) are unknown in earlier Mesopotamia<sup>93</sup>.

The collection in palaces of legal documents, including judiciary records and verdicts of lawsuits, was no general practice. Normally such records are found in private archives where they were kept by their owners (at the same time the winners of the lawsuits) for evidentiary purposes. Even the Old Assyrian letter ICK I no. 182, written by the ruler of Assur and addressed to *kārum* Kanish, was discovered in a private archive, that of the trader Imdilum, apparently because it communicated a legal decision by the City Council of Assur which affected him and granted him the right to obtain an attorney<sup>94</sup>. Of course we can never rule out (but rarely prove) the possibility that copies or rescripts were made of important legal documents and that the authorities which had been involved in the procedure (as judges or as superiors of the persons acting) kept them in their files<sup>95</sup>.

In some periods and situations the control of the "state" or palace on legal transactions of its subjects was fairly strict, in particular where immovable property and persons working for the palace were involved. In Ugarit, during the Late Bronze Age—a period characterized by a more "feudal" structure—many land transfers, also between individuals, were witnessed or even initiated by the king and discovered in the so-called "central archives" of the palace<sup>96</sup>. This suggests that the land involved was (at one time) held on condition (the holding entailing obligations or services) and that the official owner retained a certain right to control the disposition. Unfortunately we only have the deeds of transfer from the palace and no contemporary private archives, so that we cannot prove the likely suggestion that the new possessors too obtained written proof of their rights.

For the Neo-Assyrian period Postgate observes that in most cases we have to assume either that the main persons of the contracts acted *ex officio* or that the private archives in question belonged to palace officials who simply kept them in their office. A similar explanation probably obtains for the legal documents from Mari, mentioned above. Unfortunately, frequently "there is no formal way in which private and public transactions of an Assyrian official can be distinguished and hence only indirect means can be used to decide one way or the other"<sup>97</sup>.

<sup>93</sup> See above note 8.

<sup>94</sup> The letter was edited by M. Ichisar, *Les archives cappadociennes du marchand Imdilum* (Paris, 1981), 410 f.

<sup>95</sup> The occurrences and functions of copies or rescripts of records deserve a special investigation. See elsewhere in this volume the observations by M. van de Mieroop. Kwasman notes that several documents of the archive of Rēmāni-Adad have duplicates.

<sup>96</sup> See J. Nougayrol, *PRU* 3 (Paris, 1955), 23 f., and the observations by van Soldt in this volume.

<sup>97</sup> *Iraq* 32 (1970), 35; cf. his remarks in *The Governor's Palace Archive* (CTN 2; London, 1973), 12 f. There is no reason to assume, with Posner, *Archives* (above note 8), 40, that the *rab alāni* functioned as "chief land registrar". Kwasman, in this volume, notes that most legal archives in the K-Collection from Nineveh belong to members of the royal chariotry, documenting their acquisitions of land and slaves in the various places where they had been stationed and apparently ultimately taken back to Nineveh.

Evidence for forms of “state” control on legal transactions of subjects is also available from Eshnunna and Assur. In the former city one discovered an early OB archive of unique real estate transactions involving fields and houses. The deeds normally have two seal impressions, one by the seller and one by a palace official (called *kakikkum* for houses and *šassukkum* for fields), and in many ways are different from normal OB deeds of purchase. The witnesses mentioned did not seal the contract, the usual guaranty clauses etc. are missing, and the documents were discovered in the palace<sup>98</sup>. This latter fact, together with the apparently obligatory sealing by an official who must have acted as official recorder and supervisor of real estate transactions<sup>99</sup>, betrays a strong measure of state control. Some of the property sold is qualified as “(property) of the king” (in which case the officials mentioned also seal as sellers), and it is understandable that the palace wished to preserve written evidence of such transactions, even though this was not customary for private sellers. But the procedure is surprising for those cases where both seller and buyer seem to be private persons. We should, however, be careful in drawing more general conclusions on obligatory registration of deeds, state control on real estate transactions or use of private seals, etc. Unless the situation at Eshnunna was completely different from that in other OB citystates, it seems more likely that the documents concern specific property and or particular people<sup>100</sup>. A more comprehensive study of the Eshnunna palace archives seems desirable. Excavations outside the palace might help to define the nature of this archive of a “title office”, also by revealing whether the new private owners acquired their own (differently drafted?) copies of the title deeds, and who they were.

For Assur a stipulation in the so-called Middle Assyrian Laws (B, §6<sup>101</sup>) prescribes a complicated, bureaucratic procedure for the purchase of real property by its citizens, which implies a considerable measure of state intervention. Each prospective buyer is obliged to have his intentions publicly announced by the town-crier, no less than three times within one month, both in Assur and in the town where the property is situated. After that period a minister of the king, the city scribe and some other royal officials (*qēpūtu*), having witnessed the proclamations

<sup>98</sup> R. M. Whiting, ‘Sealing Practices on House and Land Sale Documents at Eshnunna in the Isin-Larsa Period, in *Seals and Sealing* (above note 77), 67 ff.

<sup>99</sup> The *šassukkum* is equated with the *dub.sar a.šà.ga*, “administrator of the fields” (*MSL* 12, 99, 143; cf. M. Gallery, *AfO* 27 [1980], 15b), and functioned as (chief) field surveyor; cf. his activities as described in *AbB* 3,55:18 ff.: *ašlam tarāšum u sikkatam maḥāšum*. The *kakikkum* according to an unpublished text from Eshnunna, quoted *CAD* K 43 f., was authorized to replace a (mistakenly) broken contract (*uddušum*). See for this function also Charpin, *Archives familiales* (below, note 119), 19 ff.

<sup>100</sup> The conclusions drawn by J. D. Muhly, *JAOS* 101 (1981), 401, about the possession and use of seals by private persons are unlikely generalizations from a rather specific situation.

<sup>101</sup> See on this paragraph P. Garelli, *Semitica* 17 (1967), 7 ff.; J. N. Postgate *BSOAS* 34 (1971) 388 and 514 f., with his remarks in *Studies ... Diakonoff* (above note 33), 308 f., with a reference to a Middle Assyrian deed which prescribes the measuring of the fields and the obligation “according to the edict of the king to have the town-crier make an announcement”.

and acting as (?) judges, draw up a written memorandum on the proclamation and its effect. If nobody has come forward with earlier rights or claims the property is considered legally free and, after having been measured by the royal measuring rope (as we know from contemporary deeds), finally can be purchased by drawing up of a “valid deed” (*tuppu dannutu*) before the king. This implies confirmation of the transaction by the authorities, perhaps in the form of sealing by the officials concerned, which evokes comparison with the procedure at Eshnunna, mentioned above. But, as Postgate observes, the role of the palace seems to be limited to that of an impartial arbiter, lending its authority to render the sale valid in the eyes of the law. There is no indication that this was a form of official registration in view of acquiring data for a royal land registry, though it offered the palace ideal opportunities of checking real estate transactions of its citizens. The question remains what happened to the records resulting from this form of state intervention. The text of the law breaks off when it starts to talk about the documents which the officials involved have to deliver. A possible solution, proposed by Cardascia<sup>102</sup>, is that palace, seller, and buyer each acquired one copy of the official memorandum on the proclamation, and this would mean that such texts should turn up in public and private archives. Unfortunately no tablets have been found in the private archives containing land sale documents which answer the description given in the law. We only have a piece of interesting information in an inventory (KAJ 310) listing i.a. boxes with tablets deposited in a special storeroom. One of the boxes contains “proclamations of the town-crier concerning houses in the City (of Assur)”<sup>103</sup>. The archive belongs to the Ashur-aha-iddina family (no. 6 in Postgate’s contribution to this volume), whose members held official functions, and the inventory also lists a box with tablets of the palace (line 26). This raises the possibility that the tablets in question were part of an official archive, but we cannot exclude the possibility that they were the copies belonging to their (private) owners, members of the family mentioned. A detailed study of the archive (Fundnummer Ass. 14327), promised by Postgate, may help to clarify the matter, further complicated by the remarkable absence of even one single “valid deed” of purchase in the private archives. What exactly was the role of the palace and its archives in relation to title deeds?

Whenever administrative measures by the palace resulted in some form of land registry it seems to have been of limited scope: no complete cadastral files or maps, no obligatory consultation when real estate was sold, no basis for imposing general land taxes, etc. The control normally linked up with the special status of the property or its possessor. The extensive lists resulting from the census (*tēbibtum*) at

<sup>102</sup> *Les lois assyriennes* (LAPO 2; Paris, 1969), 275.

<sup>103</sup> See for this document and the data on the boxes with tablets E. Weidner in *Festschrift Christian* (above note 66) 113. Lines 19f. read: *1 quppu ša sassu nāgiri ša bētāti ša alibbi-āli*.



Mari essentially served military conscription and to some extent also the allotment of fields to certain conscripts<sup>104</sup>. The chancery of Babylon under Hammurabi apparently had at its disposal some kind of register of fields covering "crown lands" allotted to various categories of civil servants (officials, conscripts, tenants of the crown) in exchange for particular services or a fixed share in their yields. Kraus<sup>105</sup> describes it as "ein Katastar des gesamten Lehnlandes in irgendeiner Form, ... der als "Grundbuch" diente" and which was consulted in case of complaint, disagreement or change. We do not know, however, whether it consisted of a complete series of (copies of) individual "tablets of allotment" (*tuppi isih̄tim*) or a register in which they had been digested<sup>106</sup>. Comparable lists must have existed of other servants of the crown who had entered a contractual arrangement with the crown in a variety of capacities without being rewarded by allotments of land (cf. above note 39). From the palace at Nineveh we know at least two registers describing and listing fields and villages, with their inhabitants and personnel, in the district of Harran. Recent investigations<sup>107</sup> have made it likely that these registers, called *Assyrian Doomsday Book* by their first editor, were lists of landed property which enjoyed immunities such as accorded by the Neo-Assyrian royal land grants. The census in question accordingly had a particular scope and covered only part of the district. We are not allowed to conceive the countryside as completely divided up into *latifundia* granted to Assyrian nobles and worked by their dependents.

According to some archival historians systematic registration of records may well have been introduced by those responsible for the jurisdiction, in order to have depositions, verdicts, and contracts endorsed by judges on file in view of precedents, appeals or cases reopened. Evidence for this view from ancient Mesopotamia in general is very weak, though judiciary records occasionally turn up in what must

<sup>104</sup> See for the *iēbibtum* at Mari J.-R. Kupper, *Les Nomades en Mesopotamie au temps des rois de Mari* (Paris, 1957), 23 ff. (where the religious aspects are rather heavily stressed) and the evidence in ARMT 1 nos. 6 and 7.

<sup>105</sup> In P. Garelli (ed.), *Le Palais et la Royauté* (Paris, 1974), 260.

<sup>106</sup> It is not easy to reconstruct the procedure from the official letters, published in AbB 4, which are our main source. Apart from the documentation in the palace at Babylon, based on decisions and assignments made "before the king" (7:8 ff.) and details on the actual assignments in the provinces reported back to Babylon by the regional administrators (11:27 ff.; 32:6 ff.), there must have been a local or regional registration (22). It comprised the "tablets of allotment" which the king sent to his regional administrators in order to inform them about his decisions which had to be implemented (8:15 f.; 26:5 ff.; 94:15 f.; 100:9 ff.(!); 103:13 f.). It is possible that they consisted (partly?) of official royal letters which contained the decision by the king (94:23: "this tablet of allotment"), perhaps of the type of 49 and 89 or the tablet quoted in 130. Finally we must assume that the beneficiaries themselves received a sealed deed of allotment (17:12; 37:8,19; 51:9; 79:6 f.). The details remain to be analysed (what exactly is a *tuppi pilkātīm*, 50:11; 99:8 ff.?), also the relation between records dealing with larger units or districts (*ugārum*) and groups of servants under a superior and those referring to individual fields and persons. "Registers of service allotments" (*tuppi ilkātīm*, 117:7; cf. *tuppātīm ša ilkim*, 11:4) were not restricted to government institutions; a temple archive, too, could contain such documents (118:11, 17 f.).

<sup>107</sup> See F. M. Fales, *Censimenti e catasti di epoca neo-assira* (Roma, 1973) with the important reviews by J. N. Postgate, *JESHO* 17 (1974), 225 ff. and S. Parpola, *ZA* 64 (1975), 96 ff.

have been official archives. The one exception is a collection of some two hundred court records in the form of “final verdicts” or “concluded cases” (in Sumerian *di.til.la*), found in ancient Girsu (Telloh) from the period of the Third Dynasty of Ur (second half 21st century B.C.). The collection is the remainder of an archive of the judiciary authorities and their scribes, systematically filed according to date (years) and judge officiating, as is clear from matching “basket labels” and quite a number of tablets which record a series of verdicts of the same date<sup>108</sup>. The exact find-spot of the group is unknown, but may well have been the central archives of the local governor (*ensi*), ultimately responsible for the jurisdiction in his province (the collection included some *di.til.la*’s of cases tried in other cities of his realm). The generally very terse text of the verdicts is not informative enough for ancient (and modern) jurists for a full reconstruction of the trials<sup>109</sup>. The archive must have served a practical purpose, presumably as a file to aid the memory of the judiciary authorities. In case of renewed trials, decisions challenged, or repeated appeals (not rare, e.g. when slave status was at stake) the files could produce essential information on earlier cases and verdicts and help to settle the new ones simply by the testimony of witnesses or judiciary officials engaged earlier, whose names were on record.

The presence of limited numbers of judiciary records in other official buildings or archives reflects various levels of involvement of the authorities in judiciary matters. The king was traditionally held responsible for the administration of justice and this is reflected in royal judgments (already in the Old Akkadian period; “laws” also are basically royal judgments), the existence of royal judges, and the “assignment” of cases to courts for trial<sup>110</sup>. Being invoked in the oath to prevent breach of contract, he could be appealed to by wronged parties. Some stipulations in legal compilations clearly implicate king or palace, as when “capital cases” are referred to the king’s jurisdiction or when people are sentenced to perform hard labor for the king<sup>111</sup>. The king’s involvement grew when plaintiff or damaged party were not simply

<sup>108</sup> See the edition by A. Falkenstein, *Neusumerische Gerichtsurkunden*, I-III (München, 1956-7), with the review by F. R. Kraus, *BiOr* 15 (1958), 70-84. See for the “basket labels” of this collection Falkenstein, 17 f. and Nelson, *op. cit.* (note 72), 5 f., who attempts to draw from them conclusions on legal procedure. See also E. Sollberger, *Festschrift Kramer (AOAT 25; Neukirchen, 1976)*, 440.

<sup>109</sup> They are quite different from what have been called “literary *di.til.la*’s”, sample court settlements recording proceedings of the assembly (*puhrum*) of Nippur, based on actual cases and incorporated in the law curriculum of the school. See M. Roth, *JAOS* 103 (1983), 279 ff.

<sup>110</sup> Th. Jacobsen, *Toward the Image of Tammuz* (Cambridge Mass., 1970), 194 with 198 lines 17 ff. See also Falkenstein, *op. cit.* (note 108), 24 ff. for the role of the king during the Ur III period.

<sup>111</sup> ‘Laws of Eshnunna’, § 48, *awat napištim ana šarrim*, “a matter of life (goes) to the king”; ‘Middle Assyrian Laws’, § A 18, 19, 21 and B 7, 9 f., 14: *šipar šarrim epāšum*. See for fines payable to the palace in OB Uruk *BagM* 2 (1963), 48 f. The measure of a king’s involvement of course is conditioned by the political realities, such as the difference between a small, early OB city-state, where the local ruler was present as chief judge, and an extended territorial state. In the latter the measure of bureaucratic control from the centre and of local autonomy may vary greatly.

subjects but servants of the crown, either palace officials, “crown tributaries”, or holders of palace lands. Much of the documentary evidence on Hammurabi’s activity as judge bears on such cases<sup>112</sup>. On a lower level palace officials could act in various judiciary capacities or get involved in lawsuits, either as superiors of the persons acting or for their own account (in which case the records might belong to their private archives kept in their office). All such circumstances could account for archival holdings of judiciary records in palaces, but this is not borne out by archaeological discoveries. The archive of Girsu thusfar is an exception.

The situation is not different when we look at temples. We know from the texts that temples might be involved in judiciary procedures, but their role in general seems to have been limited to providing meeting facilities in the immediate vicinity of the divine symbol, essential for recovering the truth by means of the oath. Priests occurring as judges rarely seem to have acted as such *ex officio* and we do not know whether they were the ones to administer the oath or whether this was done by other members of the clergy. In general priests must have become judges as respected and experienced members of the community<sup>113</sup>. It is possible that the importance of the god’s emblem for the oath ceremony and, more generally, their close association with the divine as source and guarantee of justice, originally was an important underlying motive of their judicial tasks. In historical times this was at most taken for granted and not formulated as a principle. It could not prevent a growing impact of the palace on the administration of justice, to which the king after all had excellent religious claims. For the Old Babylonian period the picture is somewhat distorted owing to the fact that about half of the number available judiciary records originates from (the) Sippar (area), a city with a very weak royal tradition, dominated by the temple of Shamash, god of justice. When texts refer to a “verdict of the Shamash temple”, however, this may mean little more than that the court met in the vicinity of the awe inspiring symbol of the “lord of justice”, and pronounced its verdict there<sup>114</sup>.

The normal pattern, in particular in earlier periods, was that justice was rendered by judges who were wise, respected, and independent representatives of the local

<sup>112</sup> W. F. Leemans ‘King Hammurapi as Judge’, in *Symbolae ... Martino David Dedicatae*, II (Leiden, 1968), 107 ff. Leemans notes (121) the fact that when the king remits a case to the local judges or authorities he often asks for a report on the issue. Such reports (in the form of official letters), when found, could be considered to belong to the judiciary archives.

<sup>113</sup> See A. Walther, *Das altbabylonische Gerichtswesen* (LSS 6/4-6; Leipzig, 1917), 179 ff., and G. Lautner, *Die richterliche Entscheidung und die Streitbeendigung im altbabylonischen Prozessrechte* (Leipzig, 1922), 73 f. On p. 82 he quotes a text where the judges (as happens frequently) send parties to a temple-gate to perform an oath to be sworn before “the judges of the temple-gate”, which hence seem to be distinguished from the ones conducting the trial (see his note 240).

<sup>114</sup> See for the situation at Sippar, moreover complicated by the fact that many of the judiciary records belong to archives of the *naditu*-women who had special links with the temple, R. Harris, *Ancient Sippar* (Istanbul, 1975), 116 ff. Note from Mari ARM 8,85:46 ff.: “The city (assembly) of Saggarātum convened and (king) Zimrilim passed sentence in the temple of Hanat”.

community and that depositions by witnesses, records of the litigation, and verdicts became the property of the winners of a case, who kept this valuable evidence as confirmation of their rights in their private archives. And when and where the influence of the central administration grew this latter feature remained essentially unchanged. Our main source of judiciary records are private archives.

Private archives are already attested during the third millennium B.C., but become more numerous and substantial after ca. 2000 B.C. They range from small collections of a few records belonging to persons of modest means and status to substantial archives of wealthy families with large property holdings or a great measure of professional specialisation, as 'free entrepreneurs' or high officials of temple or palace. Such archives normally contain a number of older records alongside the bulk of those reflecting more recent or current activities. Their chronological depth at times is surprising, up to two centuries and six generations. The archives of Ur-Utu from Tell ed-Dēr contain title-deeds some two hundred years old<sup>116</sup> and almost the same time span is covered by the Egibi archives from the Neo-Babylonian period (7th-5th century B.C.; see also note 46). The use of very old deeds is also documented in records of some lawsuits, where they were quoted or used as evidence<sup>117</sup>. The number of such old texts, however, was usually restricted, limited to a few title-deeds of early family property. The majority consists of documents covering the activities of the last generation or two, frequently not more than some fifty years, as is the case with the Old Assyrian archives discovered in Kanish.

The core of such archives consists of records with evidentiary value, carefully preserved, frequently in a sealed envelope. Some are title-deeds documenting purchase, exchange, donation or inheritance; others are proof of status, acquired by adoption or marriage<sup>118</sup>, which usually imply certain property rights; others again reflect succesful litigation whereby rights and status were defended and officially confirmed. In addition they may contain various settlements, receipts, and quit-tances as proof of obligations discharged or payments and deliveries made. A nice

<sup>115</sup> Usually in the form of sworn renunciations of claims by the losing party (*tuppi la ragānim*) which comprise a succinct account of the trial, with the verdict and the names of the witnesses. See Lautner, *op. cit.* (note 113), 39 ff. and R. Veenker, *HUCA* 45 (1975), 1-16.

<sup>116</sup> Personal communication by L. de Meyer. See also K. van Lerberghe, *AfOBeih.* 19 (1982), 280 ff. and idem, in: K. R. Veenhof (ed.), *Schrijvend Verleden* (Leiden/Zutphen, 1983), 143 ff., 'Immobiliëntransacties en eigendomstitels in de Oudbabylonische periode'.

<sup>117</sup> In the trial recorded on YOS 13,96, conducted during the reign of king Samsu-ditana of Babylon, reference is made to a deed of purchase from the 20th year of king Sin-muballit, more than 170 years earlier. The archives of the descendants of Ili-amranni from Dilbat, analysed by M. J. Desroches, *Aspects of the Structure of Dilbat during the Old Babylonian Period* (Diss. UCLA; UM 78-20207), cover the period from Sumu-abum until Samsu-iluna of similar length (235 ff.).

<sup>118</sup> According to S. Greengus, 'The Old Babylonian Marriage Contract', *JAOS* 89 (1969), 512b, the purpose of marriage documents "was not to record marriage but to record important transactions which could affect the status and rights of husbands or wives".

example of such an archival core is the collection of documents belonging to a certain Šilli-Ishtar from Kutalla (Tell Sifr). At a time of impending disaster, around 1740 B.C., he wrapped his valuable records in a reed-mat and hid them, together with a collection of copper objects, under a layer of mudbricks in his house<sup>119</sup>. He apparently never was able to recover them after his fears had come true. The majority of the seventy texts consists of the types of documents just mentioned, in particular records of acquisition of real estate. The period covered is perhaps about seventy years, but most texts are dated to the last twenty years of the last archive holder. A number of older records had been inherited from his father. These included a partition between the latter and his brothers and a few documents recording property rights of his father's adoptive mother, which ended up in his archive together with the deed of adoption which explains their presence there. A few other title-deeds of real estate in the name of other persons may have come into his possession when he acquired from them the property in question, as is suggested in the admirable edition and analysis of this archive by Charpin. They reflect the custom that conveyance of real property usually entails the transfer of the original or old title-deeds (in Dutch called "retroacten"), as we know from some cases where the impossibility or failure to do so caused a lawsuit. Such records, in Akkadian *tuppāt ummātim* (*u serdē*), in the possession of others than the present owner, were a potential danger and they may have been needed for the correct identification of the property and its chain of previous owners<sup>120</sup>. Charpin (*op. cit.*, 157 f.) presents evidence which suggests that the scribe drawing up a deed of conveyance of real property used or quoted such "old tablets" (as they are also called in contemporary documents).

Old, traditional family property frequently lacked such documentary proof of ownership, apart from subsequent inheritance deeds. When family property was (ultimately) divided deeds of partition had to be drawn up which could serve as such. When previously acquired real estate was divided among heirs, it would change hands together with the relevant title-deeds. From Nuzi we know a case where this happened between brothers and where the archive of the eldest of them contained receipts for such records signed by the younger ones<sup>121</sup>.

I designated Šilli-Ishtar's collection of tablets as the core of an archive, by which I mean a deliberately made selection of the most important documents which had to

<sup>119</sup> D. Charpin, *Archives familiales et propriété privée en Babylonie ancienne. Étude des documents de "Tell Sifr"* (Genève-Paris, 1980). See for the hoard of copper tools P. R. S. Moorey, *Iraq* 33 (1971), 61-84.

<sup>120</sup> See the discussion of such cases and the exact meaning of what are called *tuppāt ummātim* (*u serdē*) by C. Wilcke, *op. cit.* (note 59), 450ff., esp. 466f. and 478f., and the rather different interpretation by D. Charpin, elsewhere in this volume.

<sup>121</sup> M. P. Maidman, 'A Nuzi Private Archive: Morphological Considerations', *Assur* 1 (1979), 179-186, esp. 184f. On p. 182f. with note 13 Maidman offers interesting observations on the presence in an archive of "old accounts", "background texts", and "records of real estate litigations".

survive disaster. This is suggested by the total absence of other types of texts normally represented in private archives: administrative texts, various contracts, and letters. The former usually include lists and memorandums and a variety of receipts. Contracts rarely missing, dependent on the archive holder's position, are those with debtors, hired labourers, tenant farmers, lessees, etc. Many of these usually were preserved for several years, apparently also after the contracts in question had expired and the obligations recorded had been discharged. They represent the usual variety of 'business papers' kept first for administrative purposes and later for their informative value, or simply because their owner could not bring himself to clear his archive.

How complex a private archive at times could be is clear from an interesting Old Assyrian record of a lawsuit instituted because of the illegal opening and removal of a trader's archive<sup>122</sup>. The archive in question contained a rich variety of records kept in sealed coffers, which included documents entrusted or given to the archive-holder by colleagues and agents, bonds in the name of anonymous "moneylenders" (ceded or pledged as security by insolvent debtors), certificates of payment ("tablets of satisfaction") supplied on payment of a debt when it was impossible to return the original bond, etc. It will be obvious that the background and use of such documents, taken out of their archival context, would have remained a riddle. This applies also to the many Old Assyrian memorandums drawn up for private use in the first person, where the identity of the "I" is often difficult to establish. The publication of complete Old Assyrian archives, excavated since 1948 by Turkish archaeologists, now furthered by the institution of a "Kültepe Tablets Publication Committee", may provide models of what such archives in principle could contain<sup>123</sup>.

Letters are a regular component of private archives, in particular since the beginning of the second millennium B.C. They were preserved for reasons not essentially different from those which prompt us to do so. These include personal motives (letters of relatives) and the recognition of their informative value, in particular when their contents bear on other than purely domestic affairs. The Old Assyrian merchants in Kanish preserved large collections of business letters since they contained important information on their complicated affairs, together with instructions, promises and detailed reports on purchases and sales or expenses made. For the same reason they frequently made and kept archive copies of letters sent overland. The trader Imdilum, rebuked by one of his agents for sending him repeatedly 'incendiary letters' (*tuppū ša ḥimātīm*), is able to convincingly deny this reproach by writing him: "I keep copies of all the letters I am writing you"; none of

<sup>122</sup> Unpubl. text in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, to be published by M. T. Larsen (MET 5 in his numbering), who kindly put its transliteration at my disposal.

<sup>123</sup> See the two publications on Imdilum's archives mentioned in note 33 and my review article of Ichisar's book, 'The Reconstruction and Edition of an Old Assyrian Archive' in *BiOr* (forthcoming).

them apparently meets his qualification<sup>124</sup>. The contents of letters at times may lend them evidentiary force. The so-called ‘letter-orders’ of the Ur III period could serve as receipts to the officials issuing the items requested (see above note 78), and something similar may have happened later, especially with letters containing instructions from superiors and other orders and requests. Not infrequently such Old Babylonian letters conclude with the advice “keep/preserve this letter of mine as testimony/proof of me/my word/your word”<sup>125</sup>.

For letters in particular the archival context is important, since their often detailed information loses much of its value in isolation. Unfortunately, the majority of letters was discovered during uncontrolled digging and has been scattered over many collections, as the Old Assyrian example shows. Sufficiently large correspondences, once reassembled, still offer many possibilities of analysis, as that of Shamash-hazir (AbB 4) shows. But their separation from other records from the same archive is a serious setback as the questions of his function, title and station show (see also note 36). Such information should have been available in administrative records (with the inscribed seals of the officials concerned), which would also help to date persons and transactions and so supplement letters which are almost never dated.

Of course, letters contain a variety of indications of their date and provenance even apart from the factual information they contain. Features of palaeography, orthography and language offer valuable hints and important clues can be derived from their beginnings: the address and a formula in which the blessing of one or more gods is invoked upon the addressee. Style and ‘fashion’ of address and blessing formula show a considerable amount of variation, also related to time and place, and the names of the (local) gods invoked are a great help in determining their provenance<sup>126</sup>. Unfortunately, many letters of the Old Babylonian period

<sup>124</sup> CCT 2,6:14 ff., see Ichisar, *op. cit.* (see note 33), 214, and my remarks in *Medelhavsmuseet Bulletin* 19 (1984), 7.

<sup>125</sup> I know ca. 25 occurrences in OB letters (including a few unpubl. ones). The Akkadian phrase reads *tuppi/ze’pi/kaniki* (AbB 2,85:24) (*anniam*) (*ana qip awātia*; only AbB 10,148:32) *ana šibūtia/šibūt awātia* (*awātika*; AbB 1,48:18; 6,189:33; *Sumer* 14,45 no. 21:6, with *tuppaka*) *kil* (*killi/killā/killam*)/*uṣur* (AbB 6, 189:34; HE 108 edge; *Sumer* 14,57 no. 31:17!)/*tanaṣṣaram* (AbB 10, 148:35)/*šuṣṣur* (*Sumer* 14,45 no. 21:15!). Some of the shorter letters to which this applies, occasionally called *ze’pum*, compare well to the so-called “letter orders” (AbB 9, 164; 172). Some are in fact provided with a seal impression (BM 97677; courtesy W. H. van Soldt), not surprising since a few times such letters to be preserved are referred to as *kanikum*, “sealed document” (BM 97538:12, courtesy van Soldt; *Sumer* 14, 57 no. 31:16). See for *ze’pum* in this connection F. R. Kraus, *BiOr* 24 (1967), 13 f. Not all letters ending with the advice to preserve them are “letter orders” or requests. AbB 10,37 is to be preserved “als Aktenbeleg ... um als amtliche Darstellung des behandelten Falles und Beweis des Amtseifers der Lokalbehörde dienen zu können” (Kraus *ad loc.*, p. 49 note o).

<sup>126</sup> See for the beginnings of OB letters E. Salonen, *Die Gruss-und Höflichkeitsformeln in babylonisch-assyrischen Briefen* (*StOr* 38; Helsinki, 1967), 14 ff. (the gods invoked) and 22-51 (a survey of the formulas and their dated occurrences). Note also the observations by R. Frankena, *SLB* 4 (Leiden, 1978), 58 on the fact that *naditu*’s use to invoke their own gods and goddesses in the greeting formula and not, as was

invoke the more or less national gods, Marduk and Shamash, while many official letters of administrative nature do without blessing formula and even replace the name of the superior addressed by a respectful "my lord/chief". This makes us guess for his identity and the same is true of letters addressed to "my father", "my brother", terms which may denote relatives as well as friends and colleagues. A systematic analysis of the use of the polite, at times submissive, frequently elaborate formulas of the later Old Babylonian period could perhaps provide some clues for the status or rank of the addressee<sup>127</sup>, at least when we can study a rather complete archive which informs us about the identity of the persons involved. Old Assyrian writers usually follow a different convention, whereby the person with the higher status is mentioned first in the address of a letter, irrespective of whether he is its writer or addressee<sup>128</sup>.

A comparative analysis of private archives yields valuable insights into ancient history, in particular the social and economic realities of the times. It brings to life the fortunes of families which, for the very reason of being archive holders, must have been among the more affluent and important components of society. Such archives also reflect, in various measure, the impact of the powers of the state and may provide valuable evidence for the reconstruction of régimes existing, administrative procedures followed, and decrees promulgated, including their effects on the life of the citizens<sup>129</sup>. As such, they provide indispensable building stones for any ancient historian who wishes to go beyond the official, literary and purely political sources, is interested in social structures, and needs statistical data.

The analysis and historical evaluation of any archive of some size is a difficult and time-consuming job. In Assyriology it is, unfortunately, often compounded by the necessity of laboriously piecing together remnants of archives scattered by illicit

customary, those of the addressee. Salonen did not attempt to correlate the formula chosen with the status or rank of the addressee.

<sup>127</sup> Suggested by a cursory reading of the beginnings of the letters addressed to the *galamahhu* Ur-Utu in Tell ed-Dēr, in the unpublished dissertation by K. van Lerberghe. See for the letters addressed to the later Assyrian Kings S. Parpola, *op. cit.* (see note 55), 437 ff. ("each writer had his own, personal address conventions").

<sup>128</sup> Discovered by M. T. Larsen, *The Old Assyrian City-State and its Colonies* (Copenhagen, 1976), 125 f., and applied to the correspondence of Imdilum by him in *op. cit.* (note 33), 221 ff. H. Hirsch, 'Über den Briefbeginn in der Korrespondenz der altassyrischen Kaufleute', in R. G. Stiegner (ed.), *Al-Hudhud. Festschrift für Maria Höfner* (Graz, 1981), 79-93, argues for a "deutlich nuanciertes Anredesystem" and assumes that the order in the address also depended on whether the letter in question was an answer to one received, was a business letter or a more personal one, contained an order or a request, etc. The basic pattern discovered by Larsen, however, remains valid.

<sup>129</sup> See D. Charpin, *op. cit.* (note 119), 28-34, for the consequences of a royal edict (*mišarum*) on the local level for a particular family. In general most references to such promulgations, apart from the surviving texts of some decrees and references in year-names and a few royal inscriptions, are to be found in texts from private archives. See F. R. Kraus, *Königliche Verfügungen in altbabylonischer Zeit* (SD 11; Leiden, 1984), ch. 2-6.



diggers and antique dealers<sup>130</sup>, where even some knowledge of their itineraries may be helpful. Many obstacles have to be removed. Officially excavated archives have not always been carefully registered and frequently have been split up by partition. Excavation numbers are missing or have become useless by a subsequent (inconsistent) renumbering, at times also of the rooms where the tablets were found<sup>131</sup>. Essential data have been lost by accident, including the death of excavators whose reports were long overdue. Find circumstances, including matters of stratigraphy, bearing on subsequent floor levels and even storeys of buildings, have not always been well described or convincingly reconstructed. Ignorance about and inaccessibility of collections, due to official measures or private claims, have hampered archival research. Some text editions exhibit a startling lack of communication between archaeologist and philologist and indifference to findspots or archival background, due to a purely literary approach or a focus on the categories of textual analysis and legal history only<sup>132</sup>. Seal impressions, essential for archival reconstruction, have been neglected or published and studied separately as ‘works of art’<sup>133</sup>.

It is encouraging that the importance of the ‘archival approach’ is now generally acknowledged and that the ‘sins of youth’ mentioned become rarer. Some of those previously committed even can be repaired to some extent by a perusal of carefully recorded, often neglected archaeological data, as the case of the Middle-Assyrian archives from Assur shows. The possibilities of a comprehensive study of groups of texts as archaeological objects discovered in a particular context are demonstrated by several recent studies, such as that on a small family archive from OB

<sup>130</sup> See for the difficulties in reconstructing Old Babylonian archives some articles and reviews of recent text editions by D. Charpin (*BiOr* 36 [1979], 188 ff., on YOS 14; 38 [1981], 517 ff., on YOS 12; *AJO* 29/30 [1983/4], 103 ff., on AbB 8) and M. Stol (*BiOr* 28 [1971], 365 ff., on *YNER* 4; *JCS* 25 [1973], 224 ff., on YOS 13; *JAOS* 102 [1982], 161 ff., on YOS 12).

<sup>131</sup> For Mari, cf. the remarks in ARMT 23, “Préface”, i-iv; for OB Ur, the remarks in *The Old Babylonian Period* (UE 7; London, 1976), xviii; for Nuzi, the observations by W. Mayer, *op. cit.* (note 89), 12, second paragraph on the change in the numbering of the rooms of the palace.

<sup>132</sup> See for data on the Ur III texts excavated at Ur in the course of seven seasons, at various spots, not mentioned in the text edition (UET 3), Th. Jacobsen, *AJA* 57 (1953), 125 ff., with note 1. The Middle Assyrian texts from Assur were published in cuneiform copies (KAJ, legal documents; KAV, letters and some other texts) and in transliteration and translation (David-Ebeling, *Assyrische Rechtsurkunden* [Stuttgart, 1929]), without any references to known excavation numbers and archival context (see Postgate elsewhere in this volume).

<sup>133</sup> For Old Assyrian this applies to some editions only, such as CCT 1-5, repaired by the publication of the seals in CCT 6. The publication by L. Matouš-M. Matoušová-Rajmová of *Kappadokische Keilschrifttafeln mit Siegeln* (Prag, 1984), springs from the conviction that they belong together, though one might question the decision to isolate tablets with seal impressions from those without them in the same archive. But we should not be blind to the practical problems of publishing large archives or the impossibility of assigning a sufficient number of texts to a particular archive to warrant a special volume. It is to be hoped that the expected publication of the archives excavated at Kanish and kept in Ankara, will not separate texts and seals.

Nippur<sup>134</sup>. What careful archaeological recording of written material in its immediate and wider archaeological context, in combination with a study of handwriting, text types and traces of baskets and labels, can accomplish was recently demonstrated by a fascinating analysis of the linear B archives discovered in the Mycenaean Palace of Pylos<sup>135</sup>. Such a reconstruction should be a challenge to Assyriologists who in general have more chances of discovering comparable archival complexes.

<sup>134</sup> E. T. Stone, 'Texts, Architecture and Ethnographic Analogy: Patterns of Residence in Old Babylonian Nippur', *Iraq* 43 (1981), 19-34, where the correlation between the texts and the houses where they were excavated even allowed conclusions on OB surface measures and on the question whether unroofed courtyards were included in the surface of the houses mentioned in contracts. See also McGuire Gibson, 'Current Research at Nippur. Ecological, Anthropological and Documentary Interplay', in: *L'Archéologie de l'Iraq* (Paris, 1980), 194 ff.

<sup>135</sup> See Palaima-Wright, *op. cit.* (note 49).

## LE PROBLÈME DES ARCHIVES DANS L'ARCHITECTURE RELIGIEUSE PROTODYNASTIQUE\*

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### *Introduction*<sup>1</sup>

Dans l'étude des archives du Proche Orient ancien, les données archéologiques trouvent quelquefois leur place à côté des analyses de texte<sup>2</sup>. En particulier, ce sont elles qui permettent de reconstituer la disposition interne des pièces dans lesquelles les documents étaient conservés<sup>3</sup> et que nous appelons aussi «archives» (par extension de sens).

L'examen de ces archives, dans le cadre des recherches sur l'architecture mésopotamienne, ne manque pas d'intérêt. L'enquête qui sera présentée ici a été réalisée dans cette optique. Toutefois, elle porte seulement sur les archives dans l'architecture religieuse protodynastique, qui posent un problème particulier.

Mais celui-ci n'a pas de solution satisfaisante pour le moment. Dès lors, je me bornerai à citer les éléments du dossier que j'ai essayé de constituer, à faire le point de la situation et à énumérer les hypothèses qu'on peut formuler dans l'état présent des publications.

Nous pouvons dénombrer dans la documentation actuelle plus de 70 unités architecturales, attribuées à la période protodynastique, qui semblent avoir eu une

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<sup>1</sup> Abréviations supplémentaires: *OLA* 5: E. Lipiński (éd.), *State and Temple Economy in the Ancient Near East I (Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta 5)*; Louvain, 1979); *Suppl. Akkadica* 2: Ö. Tunca, *L'architecture religieuse protodynastique en Mésopotamie (Akkadica, Supplementum 2)*; Louvain 1984).

<sup>2</sup> Cf. J. Papritz, *Archive in Altmesopotamien*, *Archivalische Zeitschrift* 55 (1959), 22-25 et *passim*; K. R. Veenhof, *Spijkerschriftarchieven*, *Phanix* 28 (1982), 12, 14, 20 et *passim*. D'ailleurs, comme J. Papritz (*loc. cit.*) le fait remarquer, c'est plutôt le contexte archéologique des documents qui permet de reconstituer le contenu exact des archives.

<sup>3</sup> L'exemple le plus récent et le plus représentatif est certainement celui de la pièce L. 2769 du palais d'Ebla, qui a été soigneusement fouillée et enregistrée: P. Matthiae, *Ebla. Un impero ritrovato* (Turin, 1977), 161-171. Les observations sur la position des tablettes que l'on a faites à Ebla ont même pu être exploitées dans une étude portant sur le sens de l'écriture cunéiforme: S.A. Picchioni, *OrNS* 49 (1980), 241-245. [Voir maintenant les contributions de P. Matthiae et d'A. Archi dans ce volume-Ed.].

destination religieuse, au sens large du mot<sup>4</sup>. Les fonctions des différentes parties de ces édifices ne sont pas toujours facile à percevoir<sup>5</sup>. Chercher à localiser les archives dans ces divers bâtiments religieux relève de cette catégorie de problèmes.

Mais avant d'en arriver là, il est nécessaire de présenter brièvement les documents d'archives protodynastiques connus et de rappeler leurs provenances probables. Car, en l'absence de trouvailles de tablettes, il n'est pas possible de préciser la place des archives dans les édifices religieux au moyen d'une analyse purement architecturale, puisque les archives ne semblent pas avoir occupé dans l'architecture mésopotamienne des pièces de forme et de position bien définies<sup>6</sup>.

#### *Les documents d'archives protodynastiques*

A ma connaissance, il existe actuellement cinq lots de textes publiés qui ont apparemment fait partie d'archives protodynastiques.

Le premier lot provient de Fāra. Toutefois, aucun indice ne suggère l'appartenance d'un quelconque groupe de textes de ce lot aux archives d'un temple<sup>7</sup>. Le deuxième ensemble est celui qui a été trouvé à Abu Salabikh; il ne semble pas provenir non plus, d'après l'éditeur des textes, des archives d'un temple<sup>8</sup>. Le troisième lot de textes qu'il faut mentionner est constitué par environ 400 tablettes et fragments retrouvés à Ur, principalement dans les couches remaniées sous-jacentes au cimetière royal<sup>9</sup>. Il n'est pas aisé d'interpréter ces textes anciens retrouvés hors de leur contexte d'origine et qui semblent remonter au début de la période protodynastique; leur témoignage ne peut donc pas être retenu dans l'immédiat. Le quatrième lot comprend au moins 72

<sup>4</sup> Cf. *Suppl. Akkadica* 2, 199-207, 243. En vérité, l'étalement chronologique de ce matériel archéologique n'est probablement pas limité à la période protodynastique (ca. 2800-2370 av. J.-C.) à proprement parler: cf. *ibid.*, 238-242.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, 221-230.

<sup>6</sup> En l'absence d'étude systématique, on peut seulement signaler ici des exemples. Dans le palais d'Ebla, la pièce L. 2769 n'a aucune particularité architecturale apparente [voir ci-dessous la contribution de P. Matthiae, avec figs. 3, 4, 10, 11 - Ed.]. Dans le palais de Mari, certaines pièces d'archives étaient peut-être à l'étage, d'après J. Margueron, *Recherches sur les palais mésopotamiens de l'Âge du Bronze* (BAH 107; Paris, 1982), 364, 366. Les réflexions de J. M. Sasson (*Iraq* 34 [1972], 55-56) sur les archives de Mari doivent être revues en fonction des conclusions de J. Margueron, *op. cit.* (notamment) 353 (à propos de la salle 115), 345, 366, 480 (à propos de la salle 110), 296, 366 (à propos de la salle 108). [Voir ci-dessous pp. 141-152 - Ed.]. Enfin, les travaux du siècle dernier à Tellō avaient révélé l'existence d'archives sur le tell V ("tell des tablettes") (cf. K. R. Veenhof, *art. cit.*, 19 n. 32); malheureusement, le plan publié est plus qu'incomplet, voire suspect, et le contexte mal défini: voir L. Heuzey, in: *Déc. Chald.*, 435-444.

<sup>7</sup> Harriet P. Martin, *CRR* 20 (1975), 181. A propos des textes de Fāra, voir aussi D. O. Edzard, in: *OLA* 5, 153-169; F. Pomponio, *ASJ* 5 (1983), 127-145.

<sup>8</sup> R. D. Biggs, *OIP* 99, 44. Pour d'autres textes trouvés plus récemment à Abu Salabikh, voir *id.* et J. N. Postgate, *Iraq* 40 (1978), 101-117.

<sup>9</sup> E. Burrows, *UET* 2. Le contexte archéologique de la majorité des documents est cependant mal connu. 60 documents auraient été localisés dans la couche appelée SIS IV (qui était d'ailleurs par endroits difficile à distinguer de la couche SIS V); le reste des tablettes et des fragments a été ajouté à ce lot par des critères d'analogie.

tablettes dont les rapports ont été récemment mis en évidence par Powell<sup>10</sup>; ces tablettes achetées sur le marché des antiquités auraient fait partie des archives du temple d'Inanna à Zabala (Tell Ibzēh).

Enfin le cinquième lot est celui qui provient de Tellō. Il est constitué par plus de 1500 documents qui peuvent être datés des règnes d'Enentarzi, de Lugalanda et d'Uruinimgina de Lagash<sup>11</sup>. Ces tablettes ont été exhumées dans des fouilles clandestines et dispersées sur le marché des antiquités<sup>12</sup>.

Comme on le sait, c'est Deimel qui a reconstitué et étudié cet ensemble. Bien que le contexte archéologique des trouvailles soit totalement inconnu, Deimel a pensé, d'après le contenu des textes, que ces tablettes appartenaient aux archives du temple de Baba<sup>13</sup>.

Si nous retenons cette interprétation comme une première hypothèse de travail et comme les tablettes de Zabala mentionnées ci-dessus semblent aussi le suggérer, nous devons admettre que les temples protodynastiques avaient des archives. Pourtant, aucun document que l'on puisse attribuer à ce genre d'archives n'a été retrouvé dans les édifices religieux protodynastiques connus. Nous devons donc nous interroger sur les raisons de cette absence.

#### *Le témoignage de la documentation archéologique*

En premier lieu, on se demandera si les processus d'ensevelissement des vestiges pouvaient conduire à la découverte de tablettes dans les édifices religieux protodynastiques.

Rappelons que les tablettes, comme tous les objets, peuvent se trouver sur le terrain principalement dans trois positions. Elles peuvent être :

- situées dans des couches d'occupation, notamment sur des sols,
- dispersées dans des couches remaniées,
- contenues dans des intrusions, par exemple dans des fosses.

L'observation montre qu'on trouve très peu d'objets dans les sols résiduels qui représentent les phases d'occupation d'un bâtiment. C'est vraisemblablement dû au nettoyage et à l'entretien systématiques des sols pendant la période d'occupation et à l'enlèvement des objets avant la démolition<sup>14</sup>. A première vue, cette situation peut servir à expliquer l'absence de documents d'archives dans les édifices religieux

<sup>10</sup> M. A. Powell, *HUCA* 49 (1978), 1-58. Le chiffre cité ici comprend uniquement les tablettes que l'on peut dater du règne de Lugalzagesi avec plus ou moins de certitude d'après l'auteur (le nombre total de textes analysés atteint 102).

<sup>11</sup> Le nombre cité dans les publications récentes varie: cf. B. Foster, *JESHO* 24 (1981), 237 n. 38 («about 1500»); K. Maekawa, *Mesopotamia* 8-9 (1973-1974), 80 («over 1700»); I. J. Gelb, in: *Studi in onore Edoardo Volterra* (Rome, 1969), 139 («some 1800 ... published»). Pour les textes analysés par A. Deimel, voir n. 13.

<sup>12</sup> A cause de cet éparpillement, plusieurs tablettes ne sont pas encore publiées: cf. I. J. Gelb, *loc. cit.*

<sup>13</sup> Dans la synthèse finale, A. Deimel, *AnOr* 2 (1931), 71-113, on trouvera la liste des publications dans lesquelles les (1575) tablettes exploitées par l'auteur ont été publiées.

<sup>14</sup> *Suppl. Akkadica* 2, 180.

protodynastiques fouillés. Mais il faut rappeler que l'absence de matériel dans les sols résiduels n'est, à ma connaissance, que très rarement totale. Il reste souvent une trace, quelques fragments du matériel utilisé.

Le nombre d'objets retrouvés sur des sols d'occupation pourrait devenir plus important lorsque le bâtiment est abandonné ou détruit brutalement. C'est évidemment le cas le plus favorable et qui livre le plus d'informations. Parmi les bâtiments religieux protodynastiques, seul le Temple dit d'Ishtar G à Assur semble avoir été abandonné brusquement. Malheureusement la fouille n'a été que partielle et la totalité du bâtiment n'a pas pu être dégagée<sup>15</sup>. Andrae avait publié un plan qui montre la localisation des objets retrouvés<sup>16</sup>. Un tri effectué parmi les objets signalés permet de repérer les pièces retrouvées certainement sur le dernier sol d'occupation du Temple d'Ishtar G<sup>17</sup>. Sur le plan ainsi rectifié ne figure aucune tablette. Bien qu'on ait retrouvé, semble-t-il, dans ce même bâtiment sept tablettes akkadiennes dont le contexte et le contenu me sont inconnus<sup>18</sup>, nous retiendrons ici l'absence de tablettes protodynastiques provenant du Temple archaïque d'Ishtar à Assur (cette absence pourrait être, bien entendu, la conséquence du caractère limité des fouilles).

Toujours dans le but de chercher une explication à l'absence de documents d'archives dans les édifices religieux protodynastiques, la deuxième question portera sur la nature des constructions fouillées. On pourrait en effet se demander, lors même que l'interrogation pourrait paraître audacieuse, si les édifices que nous considérons comme étant religieux ne seraient pas plutôt profanes, ce qui expliquerait du coup l'absence d'archives attribuables à un temple dans cette architecture. Il est vrai qu'on peut mettre en doute le caractère religieux de certaines constructions interprétées jusqu'à présent comme des temples ou des sanctuaires<sup>19</sup>. Une analyse critique de la documentation montre cependant que la majorité des édifices protodynastiques considérés comme religieux ont des particularités architecturales ou ont livré du matériel archéologique qui les différencient suffisamment des constructions profanes de la même période<sup>20</sup>.

Donc, la première question posée plus haut n'a pas de réponse décisive dans l'immédiat et la deuxième, formulée ci-dessus, semble avoir une réponse plutôt négative. Il nous reste à voir, en troisième lieu, si l'examen des particularités architecturales des édifices religieux protodynastiques ne pourrait pas nous livrer des éléments susceptibles de guider la réflexion.

Tous les édifices religieux que nous connaissons n'ont pas le même degré d'élaboration architecturale. En partant de ce constat, j'ai déjà proposé dans une autre publication une nouvelle classification de l'architecture religieuse protodynasti-

<sup>15</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, fig. 151 et W. Andrae, *WVDOG* 39, 28, 29, pl. 3.

<sup>16</sup> W. Andrae, *op. cit.*, pl. 6.

<sup>17</sup> *Suppl. Akkadica* 2, fig. 190.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. G. R. Meyer, *WVDOG* 66, 12.

<sup>19</sup> *Suppl. Akkadica* 2, 206, 207.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, 148-159, 193-196.

que, fondée sur des analyses architecturales<sup>21</sup>. Cette classification élémentaire consiste à placer les édifices religieux protodynastiques dans une série, depuis les formes architecturales les plus simples jusqu'aux plus complexes.

On trouve au début de cette liste, par exemple, les Sanctuaires uniques I—II («Single Shrines I—II») à Tell Asmar<sup>22</sup>. Il s'agit d'une longue salle, flanquée d'une annexe (la communication entre les deux étant d'ailleurs douteuse, comme le montre l'analyse de la documentation)<sup>23</sup>. On peut citer ensuite, par exemple, les Petits Temples dans le carré O 43 à Hafāji, phases VI et VII, qui possèdent un agencement simple des espaces couverts et découverts, une circulation qu'on peut qualifier d'élémentaire et un plan qui trouve son origine dans un agencement agglutinant des espaces architecturaux<sup>24</sup>. On mentionnera ensuite le Temple carré à Tell Asmar qui possède, avec quelques autres bâtiments, en plus des caractéristiques mentionnées plus haut, une circulation que commande un espace central<sup>25</sup>. Quelques édifices, comme le Temple de Sin VIII à Hafāji, ont la particularité d'être isolés par une enceinte<sup>26</sup>. Au degré d'élaboration architecturale suivant, on trouve notamment le Temple ovale I à Hafāji, qui est une implantation indépendante, conçue comme une unité architecturale sans tenir compte des contraintes de son environnement urbain. Cet édifice possède aussi un agencement élaboré des espaces couverts et découverts, et une partie (appelée par convention «Maison D») apparemment organisée comme un secteur d'habitations<sup>27</sup>. On connaît enfin deux grands complexes architecturaux, en l'occurrence l'Eanna à Uruk et ce qu'on appelle la Terrasse de la Ziggurat à Ur<sup>28</sup>.

Comme nous l'avons vu plus haut, en l'absence de trouvaille de tablettes, il paraît inutile de chercher dans cette architecture l'emplacement des archives. Par contre, on peut tenter de préciser l'emplacement des magasins et des entrepôts. La présence de ceux-ci indiquerait l'existence d'activités de stockage (voire de redistribution), ces dernières impliquant la tenue d'une comptabilité, qui est au moins une des raisons de la création d'archives dans les temples.

Après avoir analysé l'architecture des palais mésopotamiens, Margueron pense qu'on peut effectivement reconnaître des magasins, au moins, dans des salles allongées, soit alignées les unes à côté des autres, soit entourant un espace central<sup>29</sup>.

<sup>21</sup> Ces analyses portent sur les espaces couverts et découverts, sur les circulations, sur les divisions fonctionnelles des bâtiments, pour autant qu'on puisse les définir, et sur les relations des édifices avec leur environnement urbain: *ibid.*, 213 ss.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, fig. 27 (= S. Lloyd, *OIP* 58, pl. 23).

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, 177.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, fig. 51-52 (= P. Delougaz, *OIP* 88, pl. 8-9; cf. *id.*, *OIP* 58, pl. 17).

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, fig. 26 (= S. Lloyd, *OIP* 58, pl. 22).

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, fig. 40 (= P. Delougaz, *OIP* 58, pl. 10).

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, fig. 55-57 (= P. Delougaz, *OIP* 53, pl. 3, fig. 56, pl. 4).

<sup>28</sup> Pour les plans d'Uruk, voir *ibid.*, fig. 158-164 (= *UVB* 9, pl. 7-9, *UVB* 11, pl. 14-19). Pour Ur. *ibid.*, 127 (= L. Woolley, *UE* 5, pl. 66); l'épais mur d'enceinte qui figure sur le plan publié par le fouilleur doit être apparemment modifié: cf. *ibid.*, 87-88.

<sup>29</sup> J. Margueron, *op. cit.* (n. 6), p. 549.

Les conclusions qu'on peut tirer de l'étude de l'architecture religieuse protodynastique ne sont pas aussi évidentes. Cependant, il paraît légitime d'admettre la présence de magasins dans un édifice de l'Eanna à Uruk appelé «Stampflehmgebäude»<sup>30</sup>. Avec ses salles allongées et ses longs couloirs, ce bâtiment toujours en cours de fouilles peut être interprété vraisemblablement comme un ensemble de magasins. Par ailleurs, on peut aussi penser que les salles allongées, disposées autour d'un espace central, qui occupent une partie du secteur sud-est de la Terrasse de la Ziggurat à Ur, correspondent de même à des magasins<sup>31</sup>. Des groupes de pièces de ce genre sont cependant absents dans les autres édifices religieux protodynastiques.

Pour en finir avec l'examen des témoignages archéologiques, on doit attirer l'attention sur l'implantation particulière de deux temples de notre documentation. On constate en effet que le Temple ovale à Hafāji, d'une part, le Temple dit de Shara à Tell Ajrab, d'autre part, étaient implantés à la lisière des sites, donc vraisemblablement en bordure des villes<sup>32</sup>. Ce genre d'implantation manifestement délibérée semble indiquer que le choix de cet emplacement n'était pas fortuit. Ces grands édifices étaient peut-être en relation avec des activités menées en dehors des centres urbains, autrement dit avec des activités agricoles<sup>33</sup>. Malheureusement, les données qui pourraient préciser cette hypothèse nous font défaut.

En résumé, mis à part les grands complexes d'Ur et d'Uruk, on ne perçoit pas dans tous les édifices religieux protodynastiques le reflet d'une activité économique quelconque qui aurait nécessité la tenue et la conservation de documents d'archives. Surtout les petits bâtiments donnent l'impression d'être des endroits exclusivement réservés au culte.

### *Evaluation*

Nous confronterons en dernier lieu les informations obtenues par les documents écrits et les conclusions auxquelles nous mène l'analyse de l'architecture religieuse protodynastique. Cette réflexion semble nécessaire dans la mesure où l'on voudra bien admettre qu'un même fait historique doit apparaître d'une façon concordante dans tous les genres de documentation.

L'étude archéologique suggère que des archives pourraient avoir existé à Uruk et à Ur. Toutefois, on n'a pas encore signalé sur ces deux sites un ensemble cohérent de tablettes retrouvé sur un emplacement bien défini où l'on puisse localiser des archives<sup>34</sup>. C'est peut-être dû au fait que les fouilles étaient limitées et de plus

<sup>30</sup> *Suppl. Akkadica* 2, 229, fig. 167-168 (= *UVB* 23, pl. 29 et J. Schmidt, *Sumer* 33 [1977], fig. 2).

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, fig. 127 (cf. ci-dessus n. 28); il s'agit de l'espace FF entouré des pièces GG, KK, JJ, HH, CC.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, fig. 34, 2 (= *OIP* 58, pl. 2, 25).

<sup>33</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, 245.

<sup>34</sup> Pour les textes «archaïques» d'Ur, voir ci-dessus n. 9. Pour les textes d'Uruk, voir Margaret W. Green, 'Miscellaneous Texts from Uruk', *ZA* 72 (1982), 163-177; à l'exception des nos 17-18 de date indéterminable, le reste des 19 tablettes publiées date apparemment de la période protodynastique. Dans les catalogues publiés dans les *UVB*, j'ai pu en outre repérer les tablettes suivantes sans doute protodynastiques: W 15241 (*UVB* 6, 37, pl. 32d), W 17258 (*UVB* 10, 19, pl. 26b), W 19296 (*UVB* 16, 58,



effectuées dans des contextes architecturaux constamment nettoyés et entretenus dans l'Antiquité. Comme on l'a déjà signalé plus haut, il y a peu d'espoir de trouver dans de telles conditions un matériel archéologique abondant et *in situ*. Pour ces deux complexes, nous laisserons la question en suspens.

Quant à expliquer l'absence d'archives pratiquement assurée dans les autres édifices religieux protodynastiques, on peut concevoir deux hypothèses principales qui sont d'ailleurs peut-être complémentaires.

En premier lieu, on peut imaginer que tous les temples à la période protodynastique n'étaient pas des centres d'activités économiques et que certains temples n'étaient que des lieux de culte. Leur liaison avec des activités économiques a commencé peut-être à la fin de la période, sinon encore plus tard, pour aboutir à la situation que l'on observe à la période d'Ur III.

Cette hypothèse est appuyée par une nouvelle interprétation des documents d'archives protodynastiques provenant de Tellō et attribués communément au temple de Baba<sup>35</sup>. On peut rappeler, en résumé, que l'expression é «Ba—ba<sub>6</sub>» n'apparaît dans les documents qu'après l'avènement d'Uruinimgina. Cette expression qu'il faut vraisemblablement traduire par «la maisonnée de Baba» («Household of Baba»)<sup>36</sup> désigne apparemment une institution rattachée auparavant, du moins pendant les règnes précédents, à la maisonnée de la femme du souverain (*ensi*). Sous le règne d'Uruinimgina, il semblerait qu'on ait modifié l'appellation de cette maisonnée et qu'on lui ait donné une coloration religieuse. On peut même imaginer qu'au fond, mis à part ce changement de nom, cette maisonnée a continué de fonctionner comme auparavant au service de la famille régnante<sup>37</sup>. En fait, avec Uruinimgina, certaines activités économiques à Lagash commencent à être transférées vers les temples dont la plupart ne semble pas en avoir eu jusqu'alors<sup>38</sup>. D'ailleurs, parmi les réformes d'Uruinimgina, le rattachement de certains secteurs économiques aux temples, qui n'en avaient pas, ne constituerait pas un retour aux sources, mais simplement une nouveauté dont les motifs véritables n'apparaissent pas clairement<sup>39</sup>.

Cette situation, bien entendu si elle n'est pas tout à fait particulière à Lagash, suggère que la plupart des temples pendant la période protodynastique n'avaient pas de liaison directe avec le secteur économique, ce qui pourrait expliquer, dans une

pl. 33g), W 19412. II (*ibid.*, 58, pl. 33e), W 21906 (*UVB* 25, 38, pl. 27a-b), W 21880 (*ibid.*, 38, pl. 27c); voir aussi A. Cavigneaux, *Sumer* 33 (1977), 115, fig. 12a (W 23949).

<sup>35</sup> K. Maekawa, 'The Development of the É-Mi in Lagash during Early Dynastic III', *Mesopotamia* 8-9 (1973-1974), 77-144; B. Foster, 'A New look at the Sumerian Temple State', *JESHO* 24 (1981), 225-241.

<sup>36</sup> Cf. I. J. Gelb, in: *OLA* 5, 1 ss, à propos de «household».

<sup>37</sup> Cf. déjà F. Thureau-Dangin, *SAK*, 224, qui considérait les archives de Tellō de la période de Lugalanda et d'Uruinimgina comme celles des institutions directement rattachées aux souverains de Lagash.

<sup>38</sup> K. Maekawa, *art. cit.*, 142.

<sup>39</sup> B. Foster, *art. cit.*, 235-237.

certaine mesure, l'absence d'archives dans la presque totalité des édifices religieux protodynastiques connus<sup>40</sup>.

Mais on peut aussi imaginer, en deuxième lieu, une autre possibilité. Il se peut que les endroits où se déroulaient les activités économiques en relation directe avec les différents temples, étaient séparés, du moins à la période protodynastique, des lieux de culte. En d'autres mots, les temples avaient peut-être des dépendances administratives en dehors des lieux de culte, dépendances où se trouvaient les archives.

Nous pouvons étayer cette hypothèse par un exemple, il est vrai, plus récent, mais qui me paraît significatif. On se souviendra que les fouilleurs de la plaine de la Diyala ont signalé à Hafāji, sur la colline D, l'existence d'un temple de Sin de la période paléo-babylonienne. Le rapport archéologique n'a pas encore été publié. Mais les 111 tablettes retrouvées dans le bâtiment et qui semblent avoir appartenu aux archives du temple ont été éditées par R. Harris<sup>41</sup>. Si je comprends bien une note de l'auteur<sup>42</sup>, l'identification de ce bâtiment, enclavé dans un quartier d'habitations, a été possible, non pas grâce à des critères d'ordre architectural, mais grâce aux tablettes qui y ont été retrouvées. Plus loin, R. Harris écrit que le bâtiment avait plutôt les caractéristiques d'un habitat<sup>43</sup>, donc apparemment pas celles d'un édifice de culte. On peut se demander, par conséquent, si les fouilleurs n'ont pas plutôt découvert une annexe administrative du temple de Sin, dans laquelle étaient notamment conservées des pièces d'archives<sup>44</sup>. Il est possible qu'à la période protodynastique des bâtiments analogues aient existé en dehors des espaces réservés au culte<sup>45</sup>.

Quoi qu'il en soit, l'absence de documents d'archives connus, retrouvés dans des édifices religieux protodynastiques, voire attribuables avec certitude à un temple, est embarrassante. D'une part l'étude de l'architecture religieuse protodynastique, dont

<sup>40</sup> La situation des tablettes de Zabala mentionnées plus haut (voir n. 10) n'est pas tellement différente de celle des documents de Tellō; cf. M. A. Powell, *art. cit.*, 26: «The evidence from Zabala is of a very different kind, but it is consistent with the picture deducible from the Girsu evidence: the ties between the head of state and the temple are very close, so close, in fact, that the lines dividing temple and state are not perceptible».

<sup>41</sup> Rivkah Harris, *JCS* 9 (1955), 31 ss, 59 ss, 91 ss.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, 33 n. 13.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, 35.

<sup>44</sup> Mais cette interprétation des faits n'est pas la seule possible. R. Harris (*loc. cit.*) pense qu'il pourrait s'agir, à cause des caractéristiques d'habitat que possède le secteur, des «living quarters of the *enum*-priest of the god Sin», mentionné comme prêtre dans 14 tablettes (*art. cit.*, 37). À la lumière des récentes découvertes de Tell ed-Dēr (cf. K. van Lerberghe, *CRR* 28 = *Afo Beih.* 19 [1982], 280-283, pour un aperçu des textes), on peut même élargir cette interprétation et se demander s'il ne s'agit pas de l'habitation privée du prêtre en dehors du temple à proprement parler. Ce genre d'interprétation pourrait conduire par ailleurs à réexaminer la nature de certaines archives des périodes postérieures à la période protodynastique.

<sup>45</sup> On peut mettre cette hypothèse en parallèle avec une autre réflexion; I. J. Gelb (in: *OLA* 5, 24) pense que le bâtiment important d'un «household» «... was not the manor house, but the storehouse ...» Certains temples prododynastiques étaient peut-être composés, en plus du bâtiment de culte, d'édifices de stockage et d'archives. Mais il faut bien avouer que nous ne possédons pas d'indices probants pour préciser ces hypothèses.

les principales conclusions ont été présentées ci-dessus, et d'autre part une nouvelle analyse des documents d'archives protodynastiques dont les résultats ont été déjà partiellement publiés, suggèrent bien l'existence de temples protodynastiques sans activités économiques apparentes. Toutefois ce n'est là qu'une interprétation provisoire qui n'a d'autre vertu que de mettre en évidence les lacunes et les incohérences de notre documentation actuelle.

## ARCHIVES AND EMPIRE IN SARGONIC MESOPOTAMIA

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Proceeding from classical models, historians have often wondered which of the early Mesopotamian empires was in fact an empire according to the senses they choose to assign the word. The usual criteria are a multinational state sustained by political, military, and economic power, consisting of a heartland and provinces, ruled by a single person who presents himself as larger than life, and interpreted for its subjects by a complex ideology<sup>1</sup>. This ideology can be set forth verbally in propagandistic texts, and materially, through monumental art and architecture, lavish display of wealth and might, and elaborate ceremony<sup>2</sup>.

Turning our attention to the Sargonic period, we can identify many of these classical criteria even among the scanty assortment of facts and artifacts at our disposal. In accordance with the aims of this conference, I submit here an evaluation of the Sargonic imperial achievement using its extant administrative archives. Despite their myopic horizon and fragmentary condition, these archives present us with usable facts and figures for our purpose, facts and figures which have the added usefulness of being "what is" rather than what skilled proponents of this imperial order wished their audience to believe.

The Sargonic archival evidence consists of about 4700 tablets which may be assigned to twenty or more significant archives. These come from at least sixteen sites throughout greater Mesopotamia, including Sumer, Akkad, the Diyala region, Gasur, Susa, and the Jezirah<sup>3</sup>. In recent years, several archival studies have appeared that seek to order and understand this material<sup>4</sup>. We are thus in a position to ask larger questions about these archives as cultural artifacts and what they can tell us about the society that produced them.

How can we use these archival artifacts to define more closely than hitherto what was "imperial" about the Sargonic empire? Consider that each Sargonic administrative archive, as opposed to private ones, can be viewed as a fragment of a larger

<sup>1</sup> For discussion, see P. Garelli, 'Les empires mésopotamiens', in M. Duverger, ed., *Le Concept d'Empire* (Paris, 1980), 25-43, with remarks on the Sargonic period, 29 ff.

<sup>2</sup> J.J. Finkelstein, 'Early Mesopotamia, 2500-1000 B.C.', in H.D. Lasswell, D. Lerner, H. Spier, eds., *Propaganda and Communication in World History* 1 (Honolulu, 1979), 50-110.

<sup>3</sup> Foster 1982d, 4 ff.

<sup>4</sup> See bibliography.

accounting code<sup>5</sup>. Within this code we can find regional similarities and differences.

Two important similarities are of use to our present inquiry. Handwriting conventions, including both how signs are made and arranged on tablets, and the way tablets are made, are strikingly similar throughout Mesopotamia in the Sargonic period, and I can see nothing like the regional variations characteristic of even late Pre-Sargonic archives, when for the first time we have material from different contemporaneous sites to compare<sup>6</sup>. The subject matter of accounting is the same everywhere: management of land, produce, livestock<sup>7</sup>, and valuable assets, on primary and secondary levels of accounting using both the exact and approximative modes of reckoning<sup>8</sup>.

The differences among Sargonic archives are just as significant to our inquiry, for our evaluation of these differences will prove crucial to our understanding the Sargonic *imperium*. First, we note a sharp regional distinction between accountability in Sumer and accountability in Akkad, running far deeper than the language records were written in, though that is important enough<sup>9</sup>. We can even consider the Sumerian and Akkadian accounting procedures “sub-codes”. The most important practical difference between the sub-codes is a tendency to use schematic, approximative reckoning in Akkad versus case-by-case exact reckoning in Sumer. I have suggested elsewhere that the Akkadian type of accounting is a descendant of the accounting principles that must have evolved under the first empire at Kish, the very place Mesopotamians themselves credited with the birth of the imperial ideal, and that Eblaite accounting is an earlier branch from this same tree<sup>10</sup>.

We can study these regional sub-codes, Sumerian and Akkadian, in direct contact with each other during the Sargonic period. The Me-ság archive is of prime importance for such a study because it is an Akkadian archive from Sumer: the archive of an artificially created, almost schematic administrative entity created near Lagash or Umma, and administered by an accountable person called ugula, “the accountable one”<sup>11</sup>. We can set this small imperial domain of about 360,000 sar (= 1270 hectares) in the much larger context of a vast imperial domain created during the reign of Rimuš in the Lagash region totalling about 129,000 hectares in area<sup>12</sup>. This domain lay at the heart of a reorganized province of Sumer with its

<sup>5</sup> M. W. Green, ‘The Construction and Implementation of the Cuneiform Writing System’, *Visible Language* 15/4 (1981), 345-372, a remarkable analysis of early Mesopotamian accountability.

<sup>6</sup> Foster 1982d, 3 f.; contrast R. D. Biggs, ‘On Regional Cuneiform Handwritings in Third Millennium Mesopotamia’, *OrNS* 42 (1973), 39-46.

<sup>7</sup> Foster 1982d, 9-11.

<sup>8</sup> Foster 1982a, 115 f.

<sup>9</sup> Foster 1982a, 116.

<sup>10</sup> Foster 1983b.

<sup>11</sup> Bridges 1981; cf. Foster 1982a, 52-69; Foster 1982d, 6. For the term ugula as head of an estate or chief accountable officer, see Foster 1983a, where the name of an ugula is used for dating purposes.

<sup>12</sup> For the figure 360,000 sar, see Foster 1982a, 57 (= *BIN* 8 291). For the royal domain of Rimuš, see Foster 1985, an edition and interpretation of the “Stèle de Victoire”, including a new inscribed fragment.

administrative center at Girsu, and I have suggested elsewhere that it was this privileged position that led to Girsu's remarkable prosperity in the post-Sargonic period<sup>13</sup>.

For present purposes, the importance of these two, originally regional, sub-codes of accounting is that during the later Sargonic period they tended to fuse, and from them a new system of accounting emerged that was to find its culmination in the Ur III period<sup>14</sup>. Let us look more closely at this fusion just at the moment it was taking place. In this breaking-down of localism we see the workaday imperial ideal, so to speak.

The turning point seems to be the reign of Naram-Sin, which I have suggested elsewhere was more than half a century in length<sup>15</sup>. During this reign we can detect signs of unification and standardization of accounting, yet one more facet of a unification that was taking place in many aspects of Mesopotamian civilization<sup>16</sup>. Best known perhaps is an ongoing attempt to syncretize traditional local theologies into a new imperial theology, a sort of official "grand scheme"<sup>17</sup>. Part of this process was deification of Naram-Sin himself, and, I have suggested, his city Agade as well: Naram-Sin as a Mesopotamian deity, and Agade as a fit object of worship for non-Mesopotamian, barbaric peoples<sup>18</sup>. Is this perhaps an early version of the "heartland-province" dichotomy we have suggested earlier to be characteristic of empires? And, of course, more locally, we have suggestions that Sumer itself was a "province" so to speak<sup>19</sup>, and no doubt rural Akkad as well, and the real heartland was Agade itself.

I believe we can see an imprint of this unification and standardization on local administrative records. When we look closely at the individual archives, we discover definable differences in the very same archive in the way tablets were made and written, and how explicit and informative they are<sup>20</sup>. This is because, within administrative archives, one category of records was intended to be examined, in theory at least, by outside, imperial inspectors, and this is the very reason these tablets tell us so much. They are designed to present in succinct form how much of

<sup>13</sup> Foster 1982a, 110f.; 1985.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. Foster 1982d, 25. At the present time, little research is available on Ur III accountability, so I cannot document this assertion conveniently here.

<sup>15</sup> Foster 1982h, 152 ff.

<sup>16</sup> H. J. Nissen, 'Die "Tempelstadt"; Regierungsform der frühdynastischen Zeit in Babylonien?', in H. Klengel, ed., *Gesellschaft und Kultur des alten Vorderasien* (*Schriften zur Geschichte und Kultur des Alten Orients* 15, Berlin, 1982), 195-200, with remarks on the Sargonic period, 198.

<sup>17</sup> J. van Dijk, 'Les contacts ethniques dans la Mésopotamie et les syncrétismes de la religion sumérienne', in S. Hartman, ed., *Syncretism* (*Scripta Instituti Donneriani Aboensis* 3, Stockholm, 1969), 171-206; W. W. Hallo - J. van Dijk, *YNER* 3 (1968), 1 ff.

<sup>18</sup> I maintain this interpretation (cf. *RA* 73 [1979], 179) despite W. Farber, 'Die Vergöttlichung Narām-Sins', *OrNS* 52 (1983), 67-72, who takes the Bassetki inscription of Naram-Sin to refer to the deification of the king himself. I hope to return to this problem elsewhere.

<sup>19</sup> M. Lambert 1974, 1 ff.; 1975, 159 ff.; 1979, 11 ff.

<sup>20</sup> Foster 1982c, 10.

what crown property was held or used by whom and often why and when. These tablets are quite different in appearance and content from records kept as vouchers or records of purely intramural interest. In addition to standardized form and content, these records were expected to be in the imperial writing style, to the extent that scribes who were not well versed in the imperial style affected it when they drew up such records. I have noted an instance where a scribe began a long tablet in the “imperial” style, but as he wearied towards the middle of the third column he lapsed into a much older writing habit, such that if the tablet were broken in half many of us would have dated the two halves to different generations<sup>21</sup>. This means that for some scribes the imperial style was consciously imposed on older habits, a fact of no small historical interest.

Having identified within archives a group of distinct records “inspectable” by outside authorities, let us now look in our archives for evidence of such inspections. In fact, there is such evidence. Inspection is of course a familiar phenomenon in bureaucracies, but prior to the Sargonic period, so far as I can see, inspection was done by arms of the same hierarchical organizations that produced the archives; that is, bureaucracy policed itself in its own interest<sup>22</sup>. What seems new about the Sargonic period is that while self-auditing continues as a function of accountability, a new dimension is added, inspection by royal agents. This gives a new, important piece of evidence for standardization and centralization so characteristic of empire, and in fact creates a necessity for such standardization. The royal agent should be able to understand the records of any locality insofar as they are concerned with imperial accountability.

Let us examine three cases of inspection from Sargonic archives, one from Akkad, one from Sumer, and one from the Diyala region. The first, from Pugdan (formerly Mugdan, correct reading established by Steinkeller), near Kish, during the reign of Naram-Sin, consists of the local accountable officer showing (*kullumu*) certain commodities to a *maškim lugal* “royal inspector” as proof that leases had been paid for on certain tracts of crown land<sup>23</sup>. Correspondingly, a group of tablets within the Pugdan archive is drawn up in the imperial style, and is detailed and explicit in formulary, as opposed to other groups which are less explicit and detailed and less neatly drawn up.

A second case comes from Sumer, the *Me-ság* estate<sup>24</sup>. Here the inspector was a certain *Dur-mupi*, known from his seal as the servant of *Rubatim* (or, a princess?), in

<sup>21</sup> B. Foster, ‘Collations to the Umm el-Jir Tablets’, *ASJ* 5 (1983), 173.

<sup>22</sup> This problem wants detailed study; some bibliography can be found in P. Steinkeller, ‘On the Reading and Meaning of *igi-kár* and *gúrum* (*IGI.GAR*)’, *ASJ* 4 (1982), 149-151.

<sup>23</sup> For a detailed study of this case, see Foster 1982c, 20 f. (to *BIN* 8 144). I do not understand the reason for Hirsch’s remark, *AfO* 20 (1983), 82, *ad loc.*, “es sicher nicht “zeigen” heissen kann”. This seems to me the only possible interpretation.

<sup>24</sup> Above, note 11; the texts are edited there.

either case perhaps a daughter of Naram-Sin. Dur-mupi held an inspection at Zabala and a set of records for this inspection has survived, some of them with Dur-mupi's verifying seal on them. Apparently Dur-mupi stationed himself at Zabala, the port and cult center near Umma, and various herds and commodities were brought before him, were verified, and removed. These consist of a large herd of goats (*BIN* 8 274), three large herds of sheep (*BIN* 8 283-285), an assortment of equids (*BIN* 8 273, NBC 6947), and a quantity of dairy products, horns, and hides (*BIN* 8 118). The verb used is *ibri* "inspected" of Dur-mupi (*in Zabala*<sup>ki</sup> *Dur-mupi ibri*<sup>25</sup>) and *mu-túm/ba-túm* of the goods. One has no way of knowing whether the goods were then shipped to Agade as tax, or whether they went back to the Me-ság estate for local management<sup>26</sup>.

Reference to another such inspection is found in *MAD* 1 220. Here Nabi-Ulmaš, presumably the son of Naram-Sin, makes an inspection in Tu-tu, presumably a writing for Tuttub. The phraseology, *Nabi-Ulmaš in Tutu ibri*, is similar to that of the Dur-mupi inspections<sup>27</sup>. Unfortunately the Diyala tablet has been separated from the records of the inspection, so we cannot say precisely what he inspected.

We can point to other lines of archival evidence for our imperial standardization and centralization during the time of Naram-Sin. One is the spread of the imperial measurement standard for dry measures, the *gur* Agade, which appears throughout Mesopotamia in the time of Naram-Sin, and was used in records of the "imperial" type that were for imperial accountability<sup>28</sup>. For internal records local standards were often used, not, I believe, as an act of local defiance, but merely because imperial control extended only to certain areas of accounting and was indifferent to others<sup>29</sup>.

From administrative and legal records we learn of a royal insignia that was escorted from place to place for use in oath-taking<sup>30</sup>, and, of course, texts invoking the imperial name in oaths are well known<sup>31</sup>. Royal soldiers, royal dependants, and royal officials appear in our archives alongside of the local ones, and when royal property is involved, the records tend to be of the elegant, imperial type<sup>32</sup>.

<sup>25</sup> *BIN* 8 273 iv 47 f., restored from parallel NBC 6947 (to be published by Bridges).

<sup>26</sup> In Foster 1977, 38 note 90 I suggested that *BIN* 8 267, 276, and 280 were commercial shipments, but, as concluded independently by Bridges and J.-J. Glassner, I prefer to see them now as tax deliveries from the Me-ság estate. The inspected goods may have been consigned to such shipments.

<sup>27</sup> Correct the interpretations of *CAD* B, 117a and *MAD* 3, 100, both of which understand the "inspection" to refer in some way to the year date on the tablet.

<sup>28</sup> Foster 1982h, 6, 110. For a collection of data, see Wilcke in A. Finet, ed., *La voix de l'Opposition en Mésopotamie* (Bruxelles, Institut des Hautes Études de Belgique, 1973), 44 f.

<sup>29</sup> Foster 1982h, 7 with note 83.

<sup>30</sup> Foster 1982h, 105 f.

<sup>31</sup> E.g., Edzard, *SRDJ* 85; Foster 1982g, 19. For the latter text it seems preferable, as W. W. Hallo has indicated to me, to take the *sum-a* as referring to the "giving-over" of the parties for the oath; cf. Hallo, *AS* 16 (1965), 203. Thereby the fragment would mean "PN<sub>1</sub> and PN<sub>2</sub>, having been given over by PN<sub>3</sub> for an oath on the name of Šarkališarri ...".

<sup>32</sup> Cf. Foster 1982h, 147 f.; Foster 1981.



To return to the starting point, our archives are part of a larger code. This code helps form the very fabric of Sargonic social, political, and economic organization and has its characteristic reflexes in the remains of art, architecture, literature, and theology that have come down to us<sup>33</sup>. While I am in no better position than I was before to define “empire”, I would here stress one factor the importance of which can hardly be overestimated: ideology. As W. B. Yeats puts it, “People are conquered by an ideal of life upheld by authority”<sup>34</sup>. The subjects of Naram-Sin, like the subjects of Queen Victoria and Louis XIV, believed themselves, for better or worse, to be part of an empire, a world order that was sanctioned and unalterable in its essentials<sup>35</sup>.

In other words, there was more than masonry to the walls of Rome. The collapse of such orders is always a shock, especially when people see how weak they become when their ideology gives way<sup>36</sup>. The Mesopotamians never seem to have been able to recapture the serene belief in their social order that I see as characteristic of the “Sargonic way”, with all its finesse and hyperbole<sup>37</sup>. Pride and self-confidence are the very qualities that set this period apart in Mesopotamian history, and helped to endow it with enduring interest to millennia of Mesopotamian scholars. Archives allow us to appreciate the uniqueness of the Sargonic period without subjecting us to the dark glasses of tradition or deliberate propaganda. Here we see something like the factual and numerical basis for ideology.

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<sup>33</sup> Compare the remarks of P. Amiet, *L’art d’Agadé au Musée du Louvre* (Paris, 1976), 6 on the centralized imperial sculptural style.

<sup>34</sup> *Autobiography of William Butler Yeats* (New York, 1965), 333.

<sup>35</sup> A. Westenholz, ‘The Old Akkadian Empire in Contemporary Opinion’, in M. T. Larsen, ed., *Power and Propaganda, A Symposium on Ancient Empires (Mesopotamia 7)*, Copenhagen, 1979), 107-123.

<sup>36</sup> The classic study remains E. A. Speiser, ‘Some Factors in the Collapse of Akkad’, *JAOS* 72 (1952), 97-101 (= *Oriental and Biblical Studies. Collected Writings* [Philadelphia, 1967], 232-243).

<sup>37</sup> M. Lambert puts it this way, “On sent à les lire, à suivre la rectitude calme, la finesse et le nombre serré des traits, que ces scribes (= Sargonic, B. R. F.) appartient — et se savent appartenir, à une époque de maîtrise de soi et de sûreté dans l’avenir”, *RA* 50 (1956), 95. As an example of hyperbole I would offer the letter edited by Thureau-Dangin, *RA* 23 (1926), 25, for the historical background of which see Foster, *JNES* 37 (1978), 275 and Biga, *RSO* 53 (1979), 204.

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THE ARCHIVES OF THE ROYAL PALACE G OF EBLA  
DISTRIBUTION AND ARRANGEMENT OF THE TABLETS  
ACCORDING TO THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVIDENCE

PAOLO MATTHIAE (Roma)

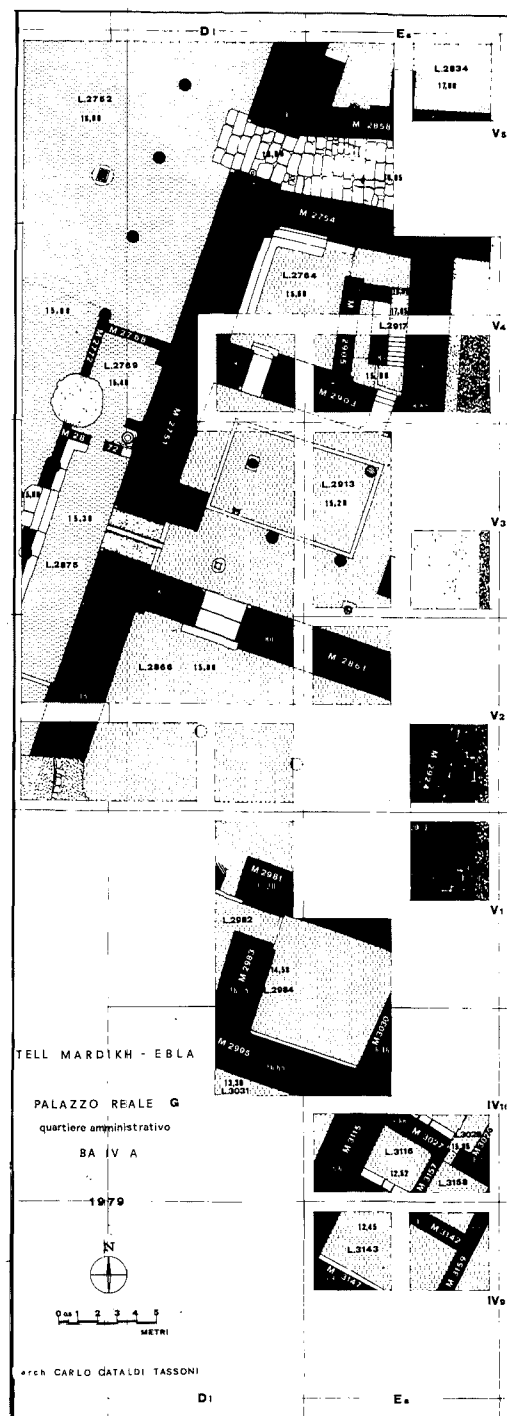
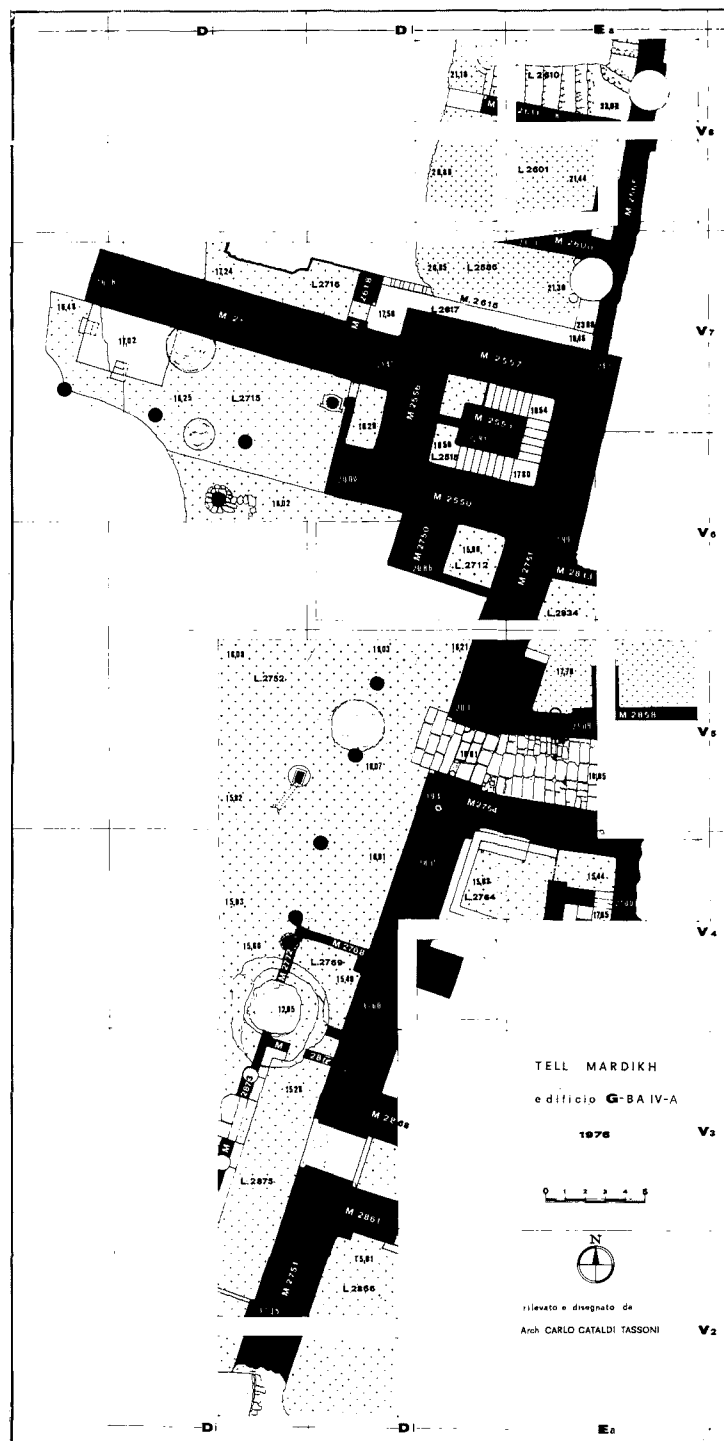
1. *Introduction: Sectors of the Royal Palace G*

The Royal Palace of Mardikh IIB1 at Ebla was destroyed around 2300 or 2250 B.C. It has not yet been completely explored owing to its planimetric extension, and to its altimetric distribution<sup>1</sup>. Actually, it is possible to reconstruct at least three major sectors of the Royal Palace, of which only the second one is almost completely known: the Central Complex in the central-southern area of the Acropolis, the Administrative Quarter at the western foot, and the Southern Quarter at the southern base of the Acropolis.

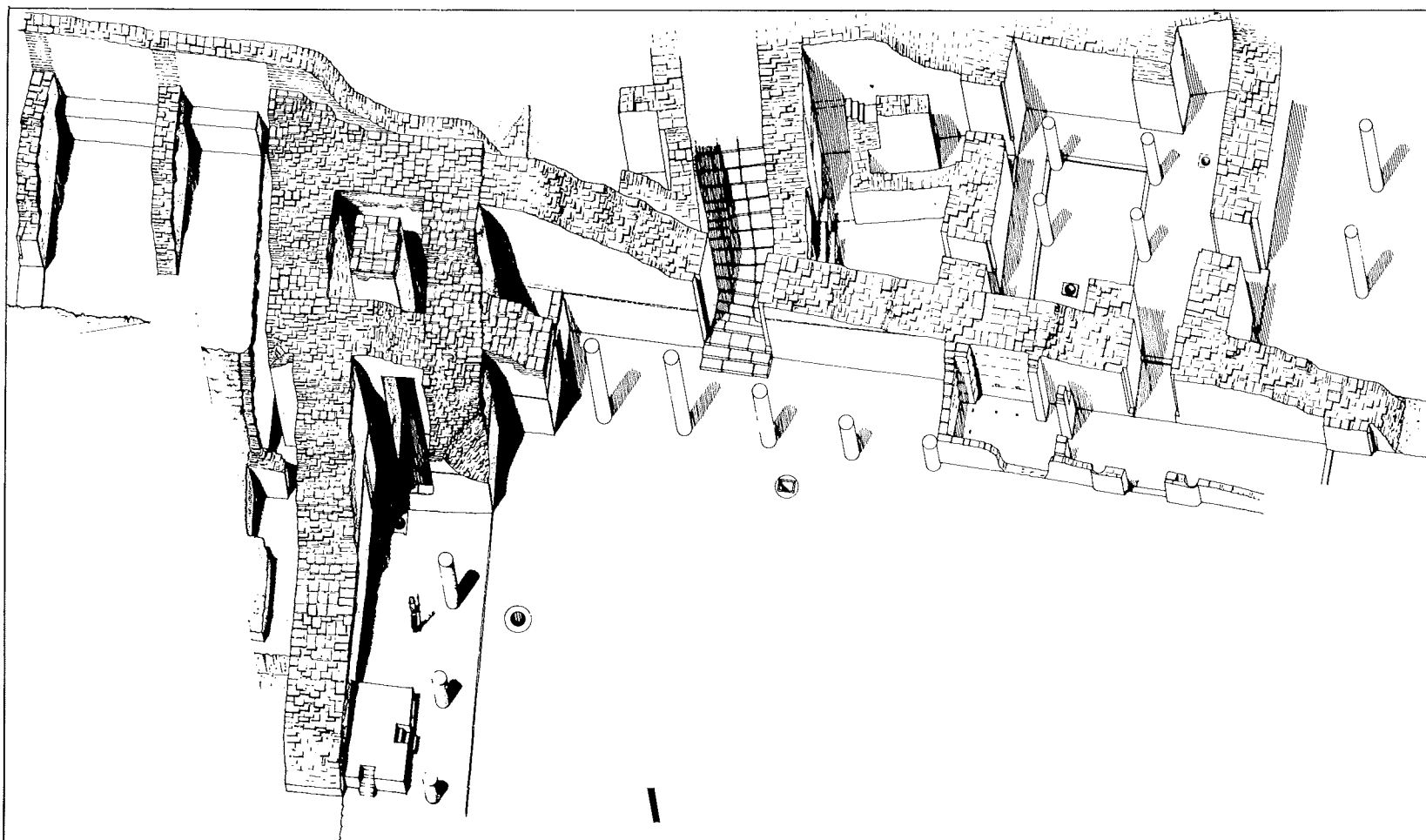
The main core was made of the Central Complex, which had at least the residential quarters, a guard quarter, and a storage quarter. We have excavated of it only a part of the Monumental Doorway, a very limited part of the stores in the South region of the Acropolis, and, lastly, a small section of a residential quarter<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> The archaeological and palaeographic data about the destruction of the Royal Palace G do not disagree with the only synchronism offered by the texts of the State Archives, between Iblul-II of Mari and Ar-Ennum of Ebla, and with the basic *terminus post quem* offered by the finding of Pepy I's alabaster lid, in the destruction level of the inner court of the Administrative Quarter in the Palace: A. Archi, 'I rapporti tra Ebla e Mari', *SEb* 4 (1981), 129-166 and P. Matthiae, 'Recherches archéologiques à Ebla, 1977: le quartier administratif du Palais Royal G', *CRAI* 1978, 229-236; Id., 'Tell Mardikh: Ancient Ebla', *AJA* 82 (1978), 540-543; Id., 'The Mature Early Syrian Culture of Ebla and the Development of Early Bronze Civilization of Jordan', *Studies in the History and Archaeology of Jordan*, I (Oxford, 1982), 77-89. The palaeographic elements in the texts apparently refer to the age of Lugalzagesi and Sargon, and were preliminarily studied by E. Sollberger, 'La paléographie des textes d'Ebla', *SEb* 5 (1982; publ. 1986), 177-184. A history of the problem is to be found in P. Matthiae, 'Sul problema della cronologia del Palazzo Reale G e degli Archivi di Stato di Ebla', *SEb* 5 (1982; publ. 1986), 67-76. A date around 2300 B.C. could be related with an eventual conquest by Sargon around the end of his reign, while a date around 2250 B.C. could be connected with an intervention by Naram-Sin by the beginning of his reign. Both possibilities are studied in detail by the writer in one of the Haskell Lectures, presented at the Oberlin College, 1981, which will be published soon.

<sup>2</sup> The Monumental Doorway opened in the eastern side of the Court of Audience. The guards quarter included at least the rooms L. 2834 and L. 2837, it stretched along the north side of the staircase of the Doorway, and it allowed them to control the entrance to the Palace. The area of the residential quarter was to the East of the tower of the Ceremonial Staircase. The southern stores discovered in 1982, include the rooms L. 3463, L. 3464, L. 3466, whose relation with the western area of the Monumental Doorway is so far unknown.



1. Tell Mardikh-Ebla, Royal Palace G, EB IVA, ca. 2300/2250 B.C.  
Left: Court of Audience; right: Administrative Quarter.



2. Tell Mardikh-Ebla, Royal Palace G, EB IVA, ca. 2300/2250 B.C. Court of Audience and Administrative Quarter, isometric view, from the West.

The second major sector of the Palace was the Administrative Quarter, whose function was closely related with the Court of Audience (Fig. 1, left). It was built South of the Monumental Doorway: it had an independent entrance, and included some rooms for the storage of the archive documents and of precious goods, and for the audience of ambassadors and messengers (Fig. 2). The Administrative Quarter had some rooms built below the East portico of the Court of Audience, and developed North and South of the central inner court with columns (Fig. 1, right). Only its southernmost rooms, which were probably stores, have not yet been completely brought to light<sup>3</sup>. It is probable, albeit not sure, that there is a relation between the Court of Audience and the North-West Wing, built behind the North façade of the Court.

The third major sector brought to light so far of the Royal Palace G is the Southern Quarter. It was singled out in 1982, and it probably had administrative, and only hypothetically sacred, functions<sup>4</sup>. A series of rooms were partially excavated in the Southern Quarter. Among them a two-ramp staircase, a court, and a hall with a mudbrick dais, built on stone foundations, while no door leading to the Administrative Quarter has been singled out thus far<sup>5</sup>.

## 2. *Finding and Finding-Places of the Tablets*

The cuneiform tablets of the State Archives were found, in different concentrations, in rooms of three different kinds: a) rooms where the tablets were originally

<sup>3</sup> The outer sector of the Administrative Quarter, below the eastern porch of the Court of Audience, included the vestibule L. 2875, and the main archive room L. 2769. In the inner area, the columned court L. 2913 had the trapezoidal store L. 2764 along the northern side, together with the two-ramp staircase L. 2700, leading to the upper storey, and to the eventual lodge of the court. The main door of the court L. 2913 led to the large room of audience L. 2866. A smaller door in the southern side of this last room led to some smaller rooms, probably used as stores—L. 2982 and, more to the East, L. 2984. Certainly West of L. 2982 there was a smaller room, closed to the West by the eastern façade of the large Court of Audience L. 2752.

<sup>4</sup> The presence of some rooms at the South-West feet of the Acropolis was ascertained in 1979: P. Matthiae, 'Campagne de fouilles à Ebla en 1979: les tombes princières et le palais de la ville basse à l'époque amorrhéenne', *CRAI* 1980, 94-99. The presence of a series of rooms with different functions, immediately to the South of a strong containment wall—M. 3117—at the feet of the Acropolis in the South area of the hill, was proved in 1982: P. Matthiae, 'Fouilles de Tell Mardikh en 1982: nouvelles recherches sur l'architecture palatine d'Ebla', *CRAI* 1983, 542-554. The room L. 3474 might have had a sacred function, as it has a peculiar dais or a pilaster with a stone base. Three complete tablets found on the floor of L. 3462 point to the administrative function of some rooms.

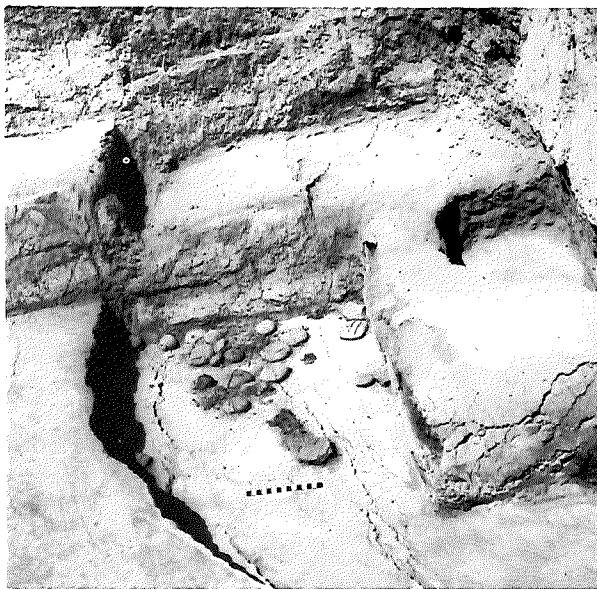
<sup>5</sup> The Southern Quarter has been followed for a West-East length of nearly 31.00 m., along the structure M. 3117, from the square EaIV10iii to the square EcIV9i. But it is also possible that the same containment wall appears 15.00 m. further to the East in the square EeIV9iii. Moreover, it is probable that the southern stores of the Central Complex in Ef/gIV9/10 were built on a kind of mudbrick platform, belonging to the inner sector of the prosecution of M. 3117 itself. This being the case, the rooms built at the feet of M. 3117 would have stretched for nearly 65.00 m. Anyhow, the rooms of the Southern Quarter so far identified are the two small rooms L. 3116 and L. 3158 North of the court (?) L. 3143, the small room near a two-ramp staircase L. 3462, the court L. 3471, and the room with the mudbrick dais L. 3474: cfr. P. Matthiae, art. cit.: *CRAI* 1983, 547-549, fig. 8.



3. The main archive room L. 2769, from the South (1976).



4. The main archive room L. 2769, from the West; in the background the jar bottom for clay lumps in place near the eastern wall (1976).



5. The north-west corner benches in the vestibule L. 2875, from the East, with some tablets in place on the floor (1976).



6. The western wall of the small trapezoidal store L. 2764, with the high benches, from the East (1976).

kept in a fix or provisional way; b) rooms where the tablets were consulted at the time of the destruction of the building; c) rooms where the tablets were suddenly left while they were brought from one place to the other. The rooms which were certainly devoted to the storage of the cuneiform documents are three: the main archive room L.2769 in the outer sector of the Administrative Quarter, below the eastern portico of the Court of Audience (fig. 3); the small archive store L.2712 at the North end of the eastern portico of the same Court (fig. 8); the northern trapezoidal store L.2764, in the inner sector of the Administrative Quarter (fig. 6). More than 14,700 inventory numbers of tablets and fragments were collected in L.2769; nearly 900 were found in the small archive room L. 2712, and more than 500 in the trapezoidal store L. 2764<sup>6</sup>. Also the outer vestibule L. 2875 of the same Administrative Quarter was partially used to keep some tablets: 650 inventory numbers were found scattered there.

As concerns the rooms where the documents were consulted, the only sure one is the room L.2586 of the North-West Wing, where the 40 first tablets and fragments were found scattered on the floor. It is quite likely that also the outer vestibule L.2875 was a consultation place (fig. 5): here the tablets were prepared for writing, and were also probably written there<sup>7</sup>. It is also possible that also a room of the Southern Quarter, L.3462, on whose floor three complete tablets were found in 1982, was a branch of the administration<sup>8</sup>. On the other hand, the slightly less than 100 fragments found in the North area of the inner columned court L.2913 of the Administrative Quarter, probably came from the nearby trapezoidal store. It cannot be totally excluded, however, that they were at least in part kept in the upper or lower portico of the court<sup>9</sup>.

Moreover, as concerns the carriage of the documents — which were quite heavy when they were rectangular of middle or middle-large size —, the documents were put on wooden planks. A lot of slightly more than 20 tablets, some of which were

<sup>6</sup> In the catalogue, different series of numbers were employed for the complete, or almost complete, tablets, for the large fragments with several columns of writing, for the small fragments and the flakes with a few or one line only of writing; the indication "inventory numbers" means that complete tablets and flakes even with one line of writing only are taken into account together, and on the same level.

<sup>7</sup> This hypothesis was already proposed by P. Matthiae, *Ebla. An Empire Rediscovered* (Transl. by Chr. Holmes; It. ed., Turin, 1977; New York, 1981), 156. It is supported particularly by the finding of a small steatite tool, with a rhomboid shape, whose surface was polished by use. This object could be used to cancel some lines or columns of writing through the pressure either of its edge, or of its face. More doubtfully some fragments of bone sticks can be considered to be styluses, as their points are lost.

<sup>8</sup> The function of L. 3462 is difficult to understand, but it probably was a passage between the court L. 3471 to the East, and the small rooms L. 3158 and L. 3116 to the West. Moreover, along its South-East and North-East walls they built the two ramps of the narrow secondary staircase which apparently connected the court L. 3471 South of the big containment wall, and the rooms — like L. 3118 — built over it.

<sup>9</sup> The highly fragmented condition of the tablets really leads us to exclude that the documents were originally put in the lower northern porch L. 2913. If the fragments found in L. 2913 were eventually proved to belong to tablets found in the trapezoidal store L. 2764, it could be maintained that they were originally kept in the northern store.



Tell Mardikh-Ebla, Royal Palace G, EB IVA



7. Detail of the high benches along the northern wall of the small trapezoidal store L. 2764, from the South (1976).



8. The small archive store L. 2712 below the eastern portico of the Court of Audience, from the top of the wall M. 2751 (1975).



9. The tablets in place along the northern and eastern walls of the main archive room L. 2769, from the South (1975).

apparently not complete, was found on one of these planks in the large Court of Audience L.2752 (fig 20), at a short distance from the Monumental Doorway<sup>10</sup>.

### 3. *Preservation Systems of the Tablets*

The tablets were kept in different ways in the various rooms of the Royal Palace G. Certainly these differences were linked to the destination of the rooms devoted to the preservation, but it is difficult to understand the exact reason for this difference. The cuneiform tablets were permanently kept on the planks of the wooden shelves of the main archive room L.2769, and temporarily preserved on the suspended shelves of the small archive room L.2712, on the high built mudbrick benches of the trapezoidal store L.2764 (fig. 7), and on the low mudbrick benches of the outer vestibule L.2875<sup>11</sup>.

The original position of the tablets on the suspended shelves and on the benches cannot be reconstructed, as the collapse of the high structures has partially or totally destroyed the mudbrick supports. Thus, the tablets fell down, and were scattered and often broken in the debris. The situation of the documents in the main archive room L.2769 is totally different. Here, the collapse of the mud bricks of the walls and of the wooden lattice of the ceilings sealed the tablets. These gradually slipped along the walls, as a consequence of the fire of the wooden shelves (figs. 14-16).

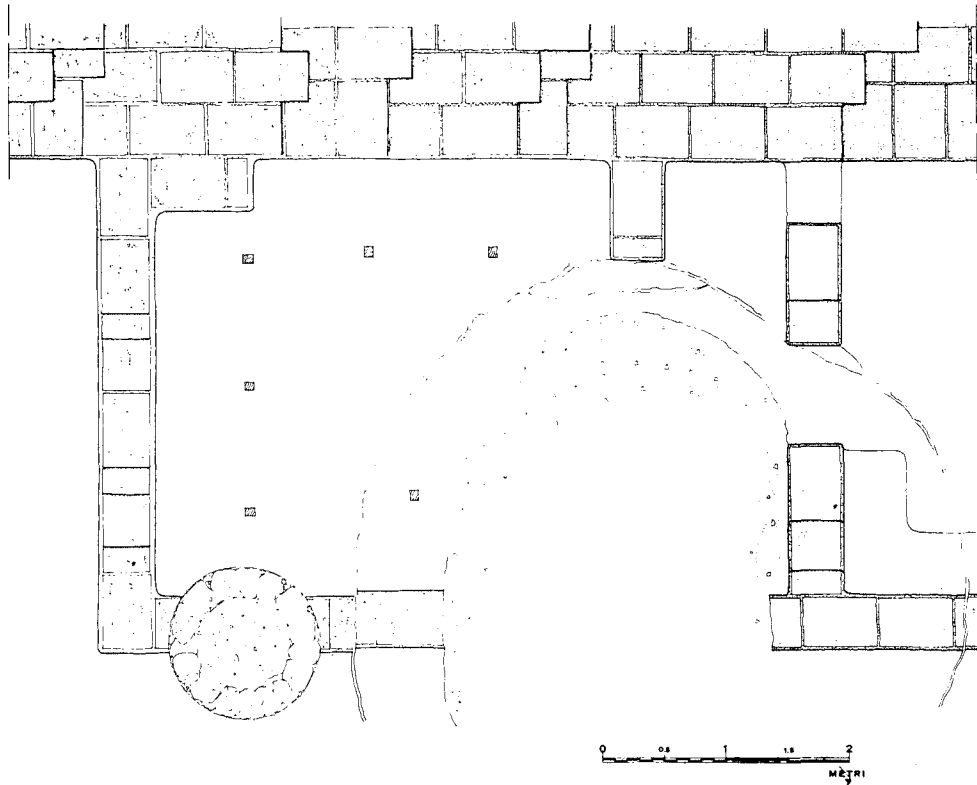
At the moment of the excavation, the main archive room L.2769 appeared to be damaged in its structure and in its floor by a partial subsiding of the rock layer below, which certainly took place at the time of the destruction of the building, as a probable consequence of the high temperature of the fire<sup>12</sup>. A peripheral damage was provoked by the excavation of a small well in the Late-Persian or Hellenistic age.

<sup>10</sup> Cfr. P. Matthiae, 'Le palais royal protosyrien d'Ebla: nouvelles recherches archéologiques à Tell Mardikh en 1976', *CRAI* 1977, 164, fig. 15. The tablets were found all together, but they were not all complete. This would lead us to believe that at the moment of the destruction of the Palace, when they were hastily left at the base of the Monumental Doorway, they were brought away to be destroyed.

<sup>11</sup> It is certainly possible to make further distinctions among the functions of the rooms where the tablets were kept in a larger or smaller concentration. In fact, the main archive room L. 2769, with its three walls covered with shelves, was undoubtedly meant for a durable preservation with some criteria of internal choice, or even of strict classification. The small archive store L. 2764, with its two suspended shelves was certainly used at the same time for a probably quite short preservation of a relatively restricted number of documents, and for the storage of other goods, even only of pottery and weights, for which see A. Archi, 'Considerazioni sul sistema ponderale a Ebla', *SEb* 7 (1984; publ. 1986), 45-76. In the trapezoidal store L. 2764 the benches were built as steps along the East and North walls of the room, and were probably closed by wooden shutters. The remains of one of these shutters, decorated with two male heads in relief, of a high quality, were found on the floor. Two small holes in the floor near the northern benches, were probably used to fix the shutters of these sorts of cupboards. The situation in the vestibule L. 2875 is totally different. This is a passage with low benches, where the documents had to be kept in a provisional, if not in a somehow casual way.

<sup>12</sup> The round, approximately regular, area of floor, which has subsided, has a diameter of nearly 5.00 m.; it has quite seriously damaged the South-West sector of the archive room, and it has destroyed a part of the West perimetrical wall: in the central part of the collapse, the floor was seriously damaged, and was broken into pieces.

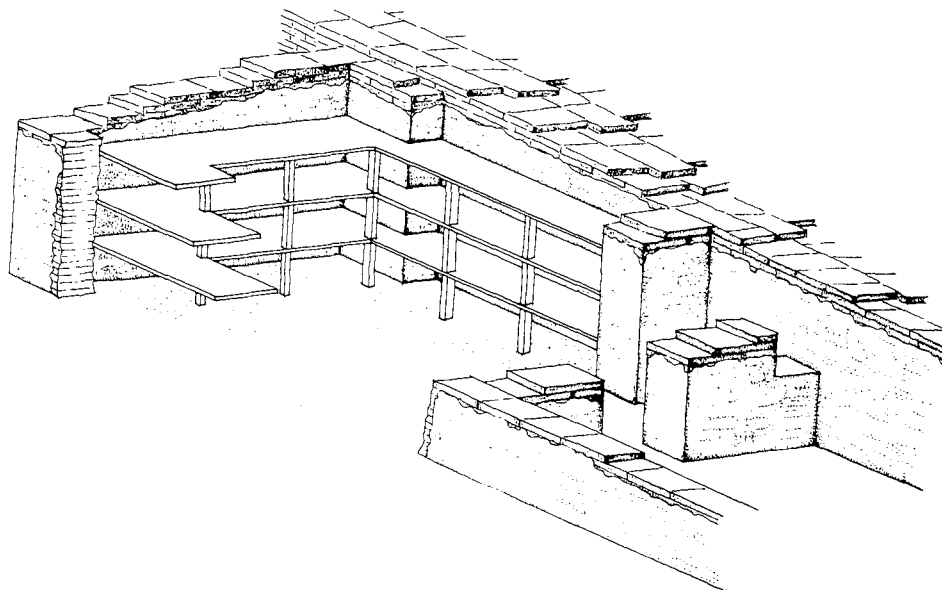
The main archive room was built with thin partition walls, only one brick thick (fig. 10). Its entrance was in the South wall towards the vestibule, and along the East,



10. Tell Mardikh-Ebla, Royal Palace G, EB IVA, ca. 2300/2250 B.C. Detailed plan of the main archive room L. 2769.

North, and West walls, there were wooden planks, which were reconstructed from the presence, at regular intervals, of holes in the floor and in the walls, where the vertical supports and the horizontal planks were fixed (fig. 11)<sup>13</sup>. The damage in the West area of the room does not allow us to reconstruct for certain a shelf along the whole of the West wall. In fact, the concentration of the tablets in the South and East parts of the room was quite smaller than in the North and East parts; in particular, to the West, there were not the middle-large and large tablets, which were found along

<sup>13</sup> The holes in the floor have a rectangular shape, and measure 6 by 8 cm. They are between 0.80 and 1.00 m. apart, with the exception of the West wall, where the distance is greater, m. 1.50. The protruding anta in the South area of the East wall of L. 2769 was certainly built in connection with the East shelves, like the anta in the North-East corner, which is related with the North shelves: these antae are ca. m. 0.80 deep, which corresponds exactly to the length of a complete brick plus one third of a brick.



11. Tell Mardikh-Ebla, Royal Palace G, EB IVA, ca. 2300/2250 B.C. Isometric reconstruction of the main archive room L. 2769, from the South-West.

the two other walls. The most likely hypothesis is that there were shelves also along the West wall, but on them only a few documents were kept at the moment of the destruction of the Palace G. This could be proved by the presence of one hole for a vertical support also near the West wall<sup>14</sup>.

#### 4. *Position of the Tablets in the Main Archive Room*

In the main archive room L.2769 each wall had three shelves, 0.80m. deep, and 0.50m. high; the shelf was 2.90m. long against the East wall, and 3.15m. long against the North wall. An organic reconstruction of the archivistic methods of preservation of the documents can descend only from a complete comparative consideration of the finding data of the tablets, of the reconstruction of the fragmentary texts, and of the reading of all the elements of the documents, including the prosopographic elements. Yet, we can present some sure preliminary observations.

In the first place, the shelves were primarily used to host horizontal rows of square tablets of middle-large size, set in a vertical position (fig. 14). These tablets are the monthly accounts of the distribution of textiles, and — in smaller amount — of

<sup>14</sup> The central position of the door in the South wall of L. 2769 leads us to believe that in the West wall, as in the East one, a protruding anta — completely lost for the subsiding of the floor — limited the West shelves.



12. Tell Mardikh-Ebla, Royal Palace G. Detail of the lexical tablets in place in the upper level, along the northern wall of the main archive room L. 2769, from the South (1975).

metals, which are one of the major cores of the State Archives<sup>15</sup>. In the second place, some rectangular tablets of particularly large size, were put directly on the floor below the shelves, along the North wall, partly in a horizontal, and partly in a vertical position against the wall (fig. 18)<sup>16</sup>. In the third place, the typical round tablets of small size at least in part were put below the lower shelf against the same northern

<sup>15</sup> The monthly accounts of textiles are the more squared and regular tablets, with quite a constant size. These are also the only documents which—notwithstanding the collapses and the slippings particularly along the East wall of the room—were found in such a position as to lead us to believe to the existence of a peculiar original placement on the shelves.

<sup>16</sup> These big tablets were nearly 36 by 33 cm. large. The two big tablets found on the floor leaning in a vertical position against the North wall of the main archive room, had one its columns horizontal, and the other one vertical. In fact, in this case, the position of the columns was not important, and even meaningless, as—being the tablets on the floor, the consultation in place of the documents has to be excluded. On the contrary, at least the readings of the first column, or perhaps of the second one, was possible in the tablets which were orderly placed on the upper shelves.

wall, in peculiar concentration within areas rich of ashes (fig. 17): almost certainly, some groups of small tablets were kept in wicker baskets, which were completely destroyed by the fire (fig. 19). In the fourth place, the greatest majority of the lexical and literary texts, which were collected in the upper level in front of the North wall, and were prevalently in a horizontal position, were probably put horizontally on the highest shelf to the North (fig. 12).

The position of the middle-large square tablets in the shelves was observed with great care and was thus ascertained for sure. These documents have an average size of 18/21 for 21/22cm., and have quite a relevant thickness of about 3/4cm., partly due to a swelling in the middle of the tablets, and partly to the width of the flat and smooth edges, which are usually 1.5/2.0cm. thick. Owing to this characteristic, the tablets can easily stay in an upright position, as they were in fact kept, grouped in parallel horizontal rows, side by side, with the faces parallel to the walls of the room<sup>17</sup>. It is possible to imagine that each row contained about fifteen tablets. At the moment of the destruction of the Royal Palace G, the collapse of the wooden structures of the charred shelves (fig. 13), provoked the slipping and the displacement of the tablets towards the centre of the room, but the relative positions of the documents were not disturbed too much. Obviously, the original placement of the tablets is totally lost in the details, for the slipping of the texts towards the centre of the room, and for the superimposition of the different rows at the moment of the collapse of the shelves.

Yet, the original criteria of preservation of the tablets were reconstructed for certain. In fact, the documents were ordered according to an exact and constant rule: in the first place, the tablets had the face of the *obverse* turned towards the centre of the room, and the *reverse* towards the wall (fig. 15). In the second place, they were oriented as to have the columns of writing in a horizontal position (fig. 16). In the third place, the first column of writing on the top was always the first column of the *obverse*<sup>18</sup>. The mention of the name of the month, which is present in a relatively small amount of monthly accounts of textiles, appears sometime on the edge between the first column of the *obverse*, and the last column of the *reverse*<sup>19</sup>. Owing

<sup>17</sup> Owing to their very regular rectangular shape, and to the flat surface of their thick edges, this kind of documents could stand in an upright position. Yet, it is probable that the tablets were slightly leaning against the back wall. The shape and the weight of the tablets prevented them from slipping down.

<sup>18</sup> Clear elements about this peculiar and regular position of the tablets—with the *obverse* turned towards the centre of the room, and the columns of writing set in a horizontal position—were given since 1977 in *Ebla*, op. cit., 158, plates after p. 80. The figures are not excellent, but are perfectly clear in the Italian edition, and are a documentation beyond any doubt for the observations on the position of the tablets. The opinion that in L. 2769 the tablets had the *reverse* turned towards the centre of the room, supported by G. Pettinato, *Ebla. Un impero inciso nell'argilla* (Milano, 1979), 45, 46, has no foundation and is, anyhow, wrong. S. Picchioni's considerations in 'La direzione della scrittura cuneiforme e gli archivi di Tell Mardikh-Ebla', *OrNS* 49 (1980), 242-243, note 60, which follow acritically that wrong opinion, have to be consequently corrected.

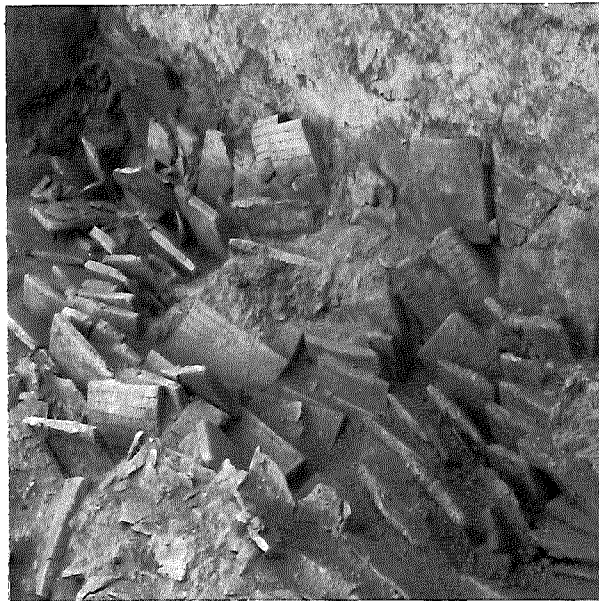
<sup>19</sup> A. Archi, whom I wish to thank, observed that the month name, when it was written on the edge of the tablet, and not in the colophon at the end of the *reverse*, was written perpendicular to the direction of



Tell Mardikh-Ebla, Royal Palace G, EB IVA



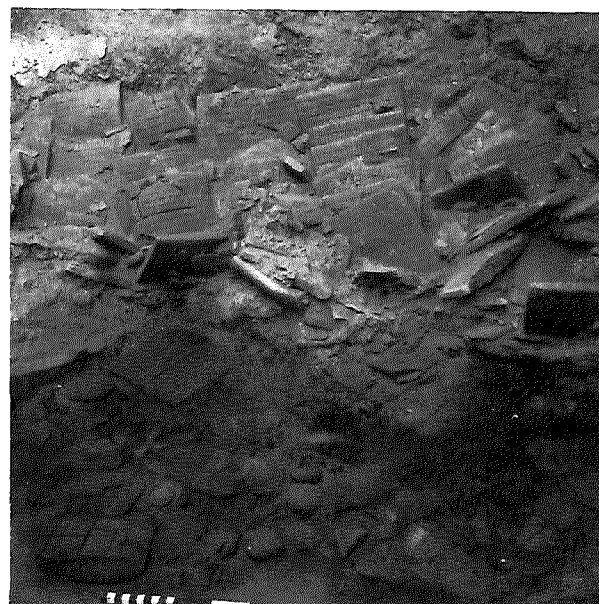
13. The upper and lower levels of the tablets against the northern wall of the main archive room L. 2769, from the South (1975).



14. The collapsed rows of tablets in the northern sector of the eastern wall of the main archive room L. 2769, from the South-West (1975).



15. Detail of the collapsed rows of tablets in the northern sector of the eastern wall of the main archive room L. 2769, from the West (1975).



16. Detail of the textile monthly accounts against the eastern wall of the main archive room L. 2769, from the West (1975).

to the original placement of the tablets on the shelves, the mention of the name of the month appeared always on the upper horizontal edge.

##### 5. *Consultation of the Tablets in the Main Archive Room*

These totally certain observations allow us to be sure that the consultation of the book-keeping accounts concerning the textile trade was quite easy in the main archive room, as the height of the shelves was double the size of the tablets. The choice of the documents in the shelves was certainly made on the base of the reading of the first column of the *obverse*, and, albeit in a few instances, of the name of the month.

Moreover, the placement of the tablets on the shelves has no relevance for the debated problem of the original orientation of the tablets during their writing and reading. In fact, the traditional orientation of the tablets, with the columns in upright position, when employed in shelves, would be totally irrational. In this way, deplacing slightly the tablets forward—namely “turning them on” so to say, in place, like the pages of a book—they would have read only the beginning of all the columns of the *obverse*, without a true reading<sup>20</sup>.

On the contrary, it is quite clear that only the horizontal placement of the tablets could allow them the complete reading of one column, with the usual reading, or with the unusual rotation of 90° of the reading direction. Only this reading could give sufficient data for the identification of the document<sup>21</sup>.

##### 6. *Functions of the Rooms of the Administrative Quarter*

The tablets were distributed almost exclusively in the rooms of the Administrative Quarter and in the Court of Audience. This event offers important data about the

the writing in the reverse and the obverse, in order to appear according to the traditional position to the person who eventually consulted the tablets, which were in their original position in the shelves.

<sup>20</sup> The reading of the first line—or even of the two or three first lines—of all the columns of the obverse could not offer any useful indication about the consulted documents, unless they were taken off the shelves. Thus, the evidence of the original position of the Ebla tablets in the shelves of L. 2769 is very clear, but it is not decisive at all. About the problem of the direction of the writing see recently M. A. Powell, ‘Three Problems in the History of Cuneiform Writing: Origins, Direction of Script, Literacy’, *Visible Language* 15 (1981), 424-31, 424-31, 437-38, who maintains that the cuneiform writing was written and read vertically down through ca. 2300 B.C. Cfr., also W. von Soden, ‘Die Waagerechte und die Senkrechte auf babylonischen Rollsiegelbildern’, *Boreas* 5 (1982), 27-32.

<sup>21</sup> The method of identification of the tablets in place—when the month name was not written on the edge, as it frequently happened—is, however, obscure. In fact, the first entries in a monthly account are not less anonymous than the following ones, even though sometimes some members of the royal family are mentioned just among the first entries. Statistically, the indication of the month name is more frequent in the last lines of the reverse in the textiles accounts, where the grand total appears (ca. 60 %), than on the edge (ca. 40 %): cfr. M. G. Biga, L. Milano, *Archivi Reali di Ebla. Testi*, 4 (Roma, 1984). We can propose that the inscription of the month name on the edge, instead of the end of the reverse, was a scribal innovation which was determined just by the needs of the preservation in the shelves of the archive room L. 2769.



Tell Mardik-Ebla, Royal Palace G, EB IVA



17. The lowest level of the tablets against the northern wall of the main archive room L. 2769, from the South-East (1975).



18. Detail of the large textile monthly accounts on the floor of the main archive room L. 2769 against the northern wall, from the South (1975).

functional purpose of the areas of these sectors of the Royal Palace G. The Court of Audience was the wide square where food and drink rations were delivered to the officials, the messengers, and the ambassadors, where the caravans for the distribution of the textiles and of the metal artifacts were organized and equipped, where the gold and silver incomes were delivered. It is probable that a part at least of the accounts were written directly within the Court of Audience, while the tablets concerning the rations were kept in the small archive store, and those concerning the textile deliveries and the receipt of metals were kept in the main archive room<sup>22</sup>. The juridical documents and the administrative texts concerning agriculture were prevalently collected in the vestibule to the Administrative Quarter. This room, moreover, was probably one place where the tablets were prepared for writing, and perhaps even written: in the corner of the main archive room near the entrance door to the vestibule there was a jar bottom with clay lumps ready for writing (fig. 4). The vestibule is particularly convenient for the compilation of the documents, for the presence of fixed low benches quite good as seats, and provided with hollows for the styluses, and for the closeness to the main archive room, where the quite large number of the lexical texts of the State Archives was kept at hand-reach.

Also the central inner columned court of the Administrative Quarter was perhaps used for this aim<sup>23</sup>. The large hall with two columns of the South sector of the Administrative Quarter probably had quite the same functions as the Court of Audience, in the periods when for climatic reasons they were obliged to use a roofed and walled room, or when, for privacy reasons, they needed a less public representance hall<sup>24</sup>. Two rooms in the North-West Wing and in the Southern Quarter,

<sup>22</sup> The functions proposed for the Court of Audience are deduced from the kinds of accounts kept in the two archive rooms L. 2712 and L. 2769, which were both built below the eastern porch of the Court itself. The distribution of the archival documents between the two stores probably depended on the presumed length of preservation of the documents. In the small archive store L. 2712 they kept for a relatively short time some tablets which were probably destroyed quite soon. In the main archive room L. 2769, the documents were kept for a longer time. It is easy to understand that the texts concerning food rations were kept for short administrative cycles, while the long monthly accounts of textiles, and the registrations of metal entries under the responsibility of high rank palace officials, were kept for long periods, even during the reigns of different kings. So, apparently, in L. 2712, there were only documents of Ibbi-Zikir's period, certainly belonging to his last years or months of reign, while by the end of Ibbi-Zikir's reign, in L. 2769, there were also account documents of Ar-Ennum and Ibrium, although it is probable that the last documents were the result of a choice.

<sup>23</sup> In this inner columned court, on both floors, or probably only on the second one, they kept some precious materials and goods, like the lapis lazuli from Afghanistan, and the stone vases of Egyptian pharaonic production: F. Pinnock, 'About the Trade of Early Syrian Ebla', *MARI* 4 (1985), 85-92; G. Scandone Matthiae, 'Vasi iscritti di Chefred e Pepi I nel Palazzo Reale G di Ebla', *SEb* 1 (1979), 33-43; Ead., 'I vasi egiziani in pietra dal Palazzo Reale G', *SEb* 4 (1981), 99-128. The very good lighting of this court was probably exploited in order to write the tablets.

<sup>24</sup> The monumental structure of the hall, L. 2866—which was 16 by 11 m. long—and the peculiar monumentality of the gate leading to the inner court, L. 2913, lead us to believe that it was the true audience room of the Royal Palace G. In this case, it is possible that the big rooms L. 2984 and

Tell Mardikh-Ebla, Royal Palace G, EB IVA.



19. Detail of the north-western corner of the main archive room L. 2769 with several tablets on the floor, probably originally kept in baskets, from the South-East (1975).



20. The tablets found on a wooden plank in the Court of Audience in front of the Monumental Doorway (1976).

where a few tablets — respectively about fourty and three — were found, are not directly related with the Administrative Quarter, and they probably were the places where the documents were consulted, and, thus, they certainly had an administrative function<sup>25</sup>.

Among the rooms devoted to the keeping of the tablets, only the main archive room had an exclusive function for the permanent keeping of the administrative, juridical, and lexical documents. The other rooms with a similar employ — namely the small outer archive store, and the inner nothern trapezoidal store — were temporary deposits for documents which were almost certainly kept for shorter periods. The function of the outer vestibule was strictly related to the main archive room, of which it was the antechamber. The preservation of the documents in this room was totally temporary, while here they probably also wrote and consulted the documents.

Sector	Room	Year	Quantity	Placement	Function	Final Purpose
Admin- istrative Quarter	L.2769 main archive room	1975/ 1976	ca. 14.750	wooden shelves	permanent preservation	tablets preservation: exclusive
	L.2712 small archive store	1975	ca. 900	suspended shelves	temporary preservation	tablets, weights, vases preservation: non-exclusive
	L.2764 trapezoidal store	1975/ 1976	ca. 535	high mud brick benches	temporary preservation	tablets preservation: non-exclusive
	L.2875 outer vestibule	1976	ca. 655	low mud brick benches	preparation/ preservation	passage, writing ? preservation
	L.2913 inner column. court	1977	ca. 90	floor	consultation ?	passage, storage
North- West Wing	L.2586 long northern room	1974	ca. 40	floor	consultation	administrative functions
Southern Quarter	L.3462 small room	1982	3	floor	consultation	
Court of Audience	L.2752 eastern porch	1976	ca. 25	wooden plank	carriage	multiple functions

Tell Mardikh-Ebla: Distribution of the tablets of the State Archives, 1974-1982.

In the architectural concept of the Royal Palace G, the Administrative Quarter and the Court of Audience complete and interpenetrate each other from the planimetric

L. 2982 — which were entered through a small door near the probable place of the royal dais — were used as stores, like the smaller rooms built behind the North façade of the Court of Audience, where a small door opened near the royal dais, which is well preserved here.

<sup>25</sup> About the three cuneiform tablets discovered in 1982 in L. 3462, see the preliminary news given by P. Matthiae, art. cit., *CRAI* 1983, 548-549.

and functional points of view, for the unitarian and indissoluble quality of their architectural and urbanistic connection, which is a spatial and political “centre”<sup>26</sup>. The polyvalence, and the spatial ambiguity of the Court of Audience — which is outside the Palace structure, being a square, and inside it, being a court — is an indicator of its “open” nature. According to ideological and political terms, it is sure that this connection is the central core — but not the only one — of the urban administration and of its archives.

### *Postscript*

The Haskell Lectures, held by P. Matthiae at the Oberlin College, Oberlin, Ohio in 1981 (note 1), have been published in Italian: *I tesori di Ebla* (Roma-Bari, 1984); the American edition will be published by Princeton University Press in a few months. Besides the volumes *Archivi Reali di Ebla. Testi*, 2, 3, 4, already appeared, administrative texts concerning textiles (p. 66) and literary texts (p. 64) from the archive room L.2769 have been respectively published by A. Archi, *Archivi Reali di Ebla. Testi*, 1. *Testi amministrativi: assegnazioni di tessuti (Archivio L.2769)* (Roma, 1985), and by D. O. Edzard, *Archivi Reali di Ebla. Testi*, 5. *Hymnen, Beschwörungen und Verwandtes (aus dem Archiv L.2769)* (Roma, 1984). The texts discovered in the Court of Audience on charred planks (p. 60) have been studied by E. Sollberger, *Archivi Reali di Ebla. Testi*, 8. *Administrative Texts concerning mainly Textiles (L.2762)*, Roma in press [P.M., 5-12-1985].

<sup>26</sup> About this problem see P. Matthiae, *Ebla*, op. cit., 76-79, and now Id., ‘Il Quartiere Amministrativo e gli Archivi di Stato di Ebla: struttura e funzioni’, in P. Fronzaroli (ed.), *The Language of Ebla and Semitic Linguistics*, Firenze 24-26/VI/1982 (Florence, in press).

## THE ARCHIVES OF EBLA\*

ALFONSO ARCHI (Roma)

How successfully can one apply modern archival principles to the study of the epigraphical documentation of Ebla in the third millennium B.C., and namely, to some archives recovered recently by an archaeological mission, and which thus used modern excavating techniques?

One of those fundamental principles is that: "The classification system must be founded on the original organization of the files, which corresponds along large lines to the organization of the administration which it expresses"<sup>1</sup>.

Naturally, we have kept the various archives distinct from each other, and each of these will be classified and published separately. But in this work of classification, which is still in progress and of which we intend to give an account in special inventories (which of course will be quite a different thing from the inventories compiled by the archaeologists, who must proceed in the extraction of the single pieces according to the practical problems imposed by the excavation), the difficulties we have encountered are not few. First of all, the single documents are dated only rarely, and if they are, the year names which they show (about thirty in all) have rather little value for us, because we are not in a position to establish their chronological sequence. So we cannot adopt any chronological order and the constitution of files and sections within each archive is made complex by the fact that it is not clear who wrote out the document and what its destination was. In fact, since the tablets are never sealed, do not show a title, address or other initial formulae (with the exception of a few documents and letters), have extremely brief colophons, and the name of the official who drew up the document or who supervised an administrative act is never written, it becomes impossible to identify the single units of Ebla's administrative organization. Sometimes they even omit the "key words" which are a valuable guide in arranging the documentary material coming from Mesopotamia.

Let's consider archive **B**, the one found during the 1975 season in room L. 2712, about 15 meters from the podium reserved for the royal throne in the Audience Court (fig. 1). It deals with 211 documents (recomposed from even more fragments), besides various minute chips. Of these, only two cover a period of more

\* Abbreviation: *ARET* = *Archivi Reali di Ebla. Testi* (Roma, 1981 ff.).

<sup>1</sup> S. Muller, J. A. Feith, R. Fruin, *Manuel pour le classement et la description des archives* (La Haye 1910) 32; quoted from G. Goossens, *RA* 46 (1952) 104 nt. 4.





1. The findspots of the Ebla tablets.

years. The first, TM.75.G.427, registers “rations” šc-ba, of flour for the Palace, SA.ZA<sub>x</sub><sup>ki</sup>, the workers, guruš, and the messengers; it is specified in the colophon that it deals with a “delivery for the palatial complex”, mu-DU é-en, for a period of seven years<sup>2</sup>. The other, TM.75.G.522, instead deals with the expenditure by the city of Armi for the king of Ebla, è en, and in fact, for the Palace, SA.ZA<sub>x</sub><sup>ki</sup>, for a period of two years and five months; however it does not specify what goods are involved<sup>3</sup>! All the other documents refer to periods which cover no more than a few months. Only when all the texts have been studied will it perhaps be possible to establish if the recipients in some cases were the same and if some documents can therefore be put in sequence.

The great majority of the tablets belonging to this archive register rations of cereals, bread, oil, and malt-bread for beer preparation. Many allotments are for the court, and that is for the king, queen, their children, the princes of other cities who were guests at Ebla, the Elders; other quantities are intended for the gods or given to the messengers sent even to cities like Mari or Nagar, thus as far as beyond the Euphrates: amphorae of almost two litres of fine oil, 2 sila i-giš-du<sub>10</sub>, constitute gifts for the sovereigns of Ursa’um, Tuba, Emar and Burman (TM.75.G.541). Other tablets instead deal with rations for the female servants, dam, assigned to the work of spinning and of grinding cereals. Finally, about twenty documents register the rations for the labor units situated in the suburban area, é-duru<sub>5</sub>, in the service of an “overseer”, ugula.

A few minor lots must be added to all this. Seven tablets deal with animal consignments, of which only TM.75.G.268 reaches a rather high share: 190 sheep. Eleven tablets register distributions of gold and silver to certain officials; thirty-three deal with allotments of objects made of prized woods, and three are reserved for oils and perfumes.

The registrations of archive **B**, then, seem to include all the cereal provisions for the Palace, of which a plurennial accounting was kept. Other foodstuffs, such as wine, however, were calculated in other archives. And since the quantities of animals for slaughter are also low with respect to the cereal quantities, it is evident that the auditing of meat provisions was dispatched only in part by this archive. In fact, tablets drawn up on the occasion of animal consignments are also preserved in archive **D**, and some registers of the large archive **C** confirm how the acquisitions of sheep for slaughter might be of various hundreds of head per month.

Essentially, **B** comprises only a documentation pertinent to the last months of the life of the Palace (with the exception of only two texts). And it all deals with material intended to be cancelled and destroyed by the Eblaic official themselves, as is proven by the fact that the documents preserved in central archive **C** show

<sup>2</sup> Published by G. Pettinato, *AfO* 25 (1974-1977) 2-28.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* 32.



different typologies from those in **B**. The deposits of precious metals in fact were transferred onto large monthly accountings, and the partial totals thus obtained, once totalled, were registered on small lenticular tablets which constituted the documentation for the annual bookkeeping. The same thing happened with the bookkeeping dealing with the animals. For cereals then, annual calculations were carried out of the quantities which flowed into the Palace on behalf of each head of the agricultural production sectors<sup>4</sup>.

Much more modest is archive **E**, which was preserved in a room, L. 2764, near the stairway which led to the inside of the Palace, which was a part of the administrative quarters, and to which one gained access through the portico L. 2875 and the court L. 2913. There, seventeen lenticular tablets dealing with the registrations of precious metals, as well as of ovines and draught animals, were recovered. To these must be added 215 fragments (and 960 chips), pertaining for the most part to the bookkeeping of barley consignments on behalf of the villages. All together, these fragments may have belonged originally to about a dozen of tablets. It seems likely that here were preserved the calculations relative to the agricultural production of the year in progress. And there are also two fragments of a list of productive units, é, TM.76.G.2055, 2063. But it is impossible to specify what part of the ovine property of Ebla might have been accounted for in these registers. In TM.76.G.921 it reads: "1985 (?) dead (= killed?) sheep, 311 sheep ... that Ibdulu ...", 1(?) *li-im* 9 *mi-at* 85 udu ug<sub>7</sub> 311 udu *a-li-im* lú *Ib-du-lu* ... It is certain that Ibdulu was one of the principal collectors of animals at Ebla<sup>5</sup>. Some other text, like TM.76.G.985, dealing with a kind of horses, seems to present a calculation covering more years: 80 BAR.AN TIL *áš-du* mu-ti-ma 4 mu [...]. But how is one to evaluate the fact that rare calculations dealing with precious metals give such high totals, such as in TM.76.G.2072 + 2073: "Total: 1973 kg. of silver", AN.ŠÈ.GÚ 4 *li-im* 1 *mi-at* 98 ma-na bar<sub>6</sub>: kù; or in TM.76.G.973: "208,68 kg. of gold", 4 *mi-at* 44 ma-na kù-gi 2 1/2? In short, missing are the elements to specify the function of an archive like this, an archive which includes documentation relative to more sectors of the economy, but which is detailed only in the accounting of cereal production, whereas as far as the raising of livestock and the circulation of metals is concerned, it is limited to giving rather high totals, evidently taken from partial calculations preserved in another place, or perhaps cancelled and destroyed.

Another small group of lenticular tablets, **A**, thirty-two in number, and some other small fragments, were found in L. 2586, to the North of the Audience Court, "They were scattered on the floor near the bottom of a jar fixed in the ground"<sup>6</sup>. Most of the texts register consignments of silver and gold objects, but three concern textile allotments, and another bread-rations. Further, one has to add a school-text

<sup>4</sup> See TM.75.G.2627, published by Archi, *Afo Beih.* 19 (1982) 182-184.

<sup>5</sup> Archi, 'Allevamento e distribuzione del bestiame ad Ebla', 2 (printed 1980; to be reprinted in *StEh* 6).

<sup>6</sup> On the Administrative Quarters, see P. Matthiae, *CRAI* 1978 (1978) 204-236.

which lists 73 personal names and a bulla with the logograms: GIŠ-PA GIŠ-ASAR(!?). The texts are all to be dated to the last king, Ibī-Zikir, and probably they were kept temporarily inside the storehouse.

A fourth small archive, **D**, was found in vestibule L. 2875, constructed under the east portico of the Audience Court, from which, turning north, was reached the main archive **C**, whereas proceeding east, the administrative quarters (court L. 2913 and adjacent rooms) were entered<sup>7</sup>. The tablets, mostly of small dimensions and lenticular in form, were arranged “on the floor and near its north-east and north-west corners”<sup>8</sup>, that is near the entrance of archive **C**. This part of the vestibule was certainly one of the places used for drawing up tablets, as is verified by the fact that precisely from here come some fragments of bone styluses and a stone sleeker. From this, however, must not be deduced that **D** served as a place where the tablets were deposited temporarily, perhaps to dry out, while waiting to be placed in archive **C**. If it were so, it would be peculiar that from a relatively high number of documents: originally about 100 (276 inventory numbers, including the fragments), there would be missing (with the exception of two texts) precisely those large squared-off tablets used for the monthly bookkeeping and which constitute the large part of the material filed in **C**. The fact that on a wooden table in the Audience Court, L. 2752, were found twenty-one tablets, **F**, of which only one (TM.76.G.536) is lenticular and which deals with the entries for 8,32 kg of gold in the king’s credit, whereas the others are all large monthly accountings (eighteen concerning the assignment of clothing and two the circulation of metals) seems to demonstrate that the documents of this type were perhaps drawn up, or in any case, verified elsewhere<sup>9</sup>.

**D** also (especially if the lists of consignments of animals and cereals are considered, but not with regard to the letters, as will be seen) seems to be an archive meant to collect a documentation of the administrative and economic activity for the year in progress. It is distinguished from **B** because it does not contain accountings of either food supplies for the court or assignments of wooden manufactures, and the recipients of precious metals are different from those in the analogous texts of **B**. Instead, it is not easy to define the province of **D** with respect to **E**, especially with regard to the accountings of precious metals. Tablet TM.76.G.118 shows a “totals of 470 kg of gold present (on hand) and 62.04 kg of gold issued”, AN.ŠÈ.GÚ 1 *li-im* ma-na kù-gi al-gál 132 ma-na è. The large quantities of metal in archive **E** seem to be instead the totals of the palace’s entries. However, other texts regard simple consignments to messengers<sup>10</sup>, or to princes

<sup>7</sup> Matthiae, *Ebla, an Empire Rediscovered* (New York 1981; Italian edition 1977) 154.

<sup>8</sup> Matthiae, *ibid.*

<sup>9</sup> From three tablets concerning textiles and the two very large tablets registering metals, several sections are missing. Three more economic tablets were found in 1982 in the Southern Wing of Palace G.

<sup>10</sup> TM.76.G.93, published by Archi, *StEb* 4 (1981) 82.

(TM.76.G.90: “0.47 kg of gold ... Dubuḫu-’Ada received; VI month”, 1 ma-na kù-gi 2 1/2 *Du-bu-ḫu-d’Ā-da* šu ba<sub>4</sub>-ti iti *i-ba<sub>4</sub>-sa*). Aside from some lists of fields, there are also lists of consignments of livestock, barley and cloth. The texts of archive E concerning barley and livestock instead seem to be yearly and monthly accountings.

In any case, it is certain that the documentation of D was sorted before being transferred to archive C. This is proven by the fact that of these 276 tablets and fragments, fully twenty-eight are letters or royal decrees. It is a very high proportion if compared with that offered by C, in which, on thousands of tablets and fragments, there are only fifty-two letters, decrees or political treatises. In reality, however, these letters in archive D present a chronological problem. The majority were written by a certain Ibbi-Zikir. It would be logical to think that he was the last king of Ebla, the son of Ibrium. In this case, the three letters (TM.76.G.248, 269 and 271) addressed to Dubuḫu-’Ada (this is the name of a Ibbi-Zikir’s son), must be messages from Ibbi-Zikir to his son (*en-ma I-bi-Zi-kir si-in Du-bu-ḫu-d’Ā-da*)<sup>11</sup>. Dubuḫu-’Ada is the recipient of yet three letters: TM.76.G.89, 117 and 235 (sent by different officials), and he therefore certainly held an important position at court during that period. Two other letters from Ibbi-Zikir are addressed to unknown addressees (TM.76.G.175 and 283). But from TM.76.G.247: “Thus Ibbi-Zikir to the king and to the Elders ...”, *en-ma I-bi-Zi-kir si-in en wa AB×ĀŠ-AB×ĀŠ* (and also from TM.76.G.199: *en-ma I-bi-Zi-kir si-in en*) it is clear that Ibbi-Zikir was not king. And therefore either these letters date from the period of Ibrium (but it would be strange for these documents to have been preserved for some years in a place of transit such as vestibule L. 2712), or else it must be hypothesized that this Ibbi-Zikir was a son of Dubuḫu-’Ada, who had received the name of his grandfather<sup>12</sup>. In this case, in TM.76.G.88 it would be the same king Ibbi-Zikir, together with his son Dubuḫu-’Ada, who wrote to his grandson: *en-ma en wa Du-bu-ḫu-d’Ā-da si-in I-bi-Zi-kir*.

Archive C served as the central archive and, as stated above, was adjacent to D. Here, together with the administrative documents, also preserved were those relative to the use of writing, that is lists of signs and unilingual (Sumerian) and bilingual (Sumerian-Eblaic) lexical lists. Some Sumerian lists (especially the “Names and Professions List”, and the “List of Geographical Names”) are copies of Mesopotamian examples; others were drawn up in Ebla and to some of them — as is known — were added equivalents in Eblaic. To these must be added a few literary

<sup>11</sup> For the genealogy of this prince, see *ARET* 4 no. 4 rev. I 12-16: *Du-bu-ḫu-d’Ā-da* 1 *dumu-nita I-bi-Zi-kir ma-lik-tum i-na-sum* “(textiles for) D., a son of I., the queen has given” (Ibbi-Zikir is not yet king; the text is dated to the IX month of the old calendar: *i-si*). TM.75.G.1419 obv. III 18-IV 2: *en wa I-bi-Zi-kir*, VII 10-12: *Du-bu-ḫu-d’Ā-da dumu-nita I-bi-Zi-kir*.

<sup>12</sup> One has to take in account that TM.76.G.90, translated above, and concerning Dubuḫu-’Ada, is dated to the VI month of the old calendar.

texts and incantations. C was therefore also the Palace library. Missing, however, are true and proper writing exercises. Only a few bilingual lexical lists seem to have been written by a not-very-expert scribe, and also a few other brief abstracts from these same lists can be considered an “exercise”. The concept of “exercise tablets” is too approximate in any case, and therefore must be used with caution<sup>13</sup>. Surely to be considered as “exercise” are the three tablets with the incipit: lugal-an-ki, of which example C stops at l. 4, while A at ll. 1-4 has a text in standard Sumerian, and then starts again from the beginning in syllabic Sumerian. These, however, and in particular C, were written by sure hands<sup>14</sup>. Also, the few literary texts in Eblaic, and namely small tablets with few cases, are probably exercises which preserve only some essential sequence of a myth. With regard to the administrative texts, in archive C was found a few rare drafts of documents<sup>15</sup>, and — a sole case — a tablet of medium size cancelled by the imprint of all five fingers of the scribe’s hand<sup>16</sup>.

The same criteria which were followed in preparing the inventory of the epigraphic material at the moment of discovery allow an approximate evaluation of the substance. In fact, distinction was made between “tablets” (a term applied only to entire, or largely preserved, texts)<sup>17</sup>, “fragments” (which, if coming from large tablets, may also contain ten or more columns)<sup>18</sup>, and chips (meaning small fragments with only a few cases or parts of cases). Consequently, the missing parts of the so-called “tablets” must be searched for among the “fragments” and “chips”. But also several “fragments” may make up an ancient tablet. Only in exceptional cases two pieces, classified as “tablets”, may join to form a sole tablet<sup>19</sup>. Now, from C come 1757 “tablets”, 4875 “fragments”, and many thousands of “chips”.

To give a precise idea of how these data must be evaluated, I will give an example using the bilingual lexical lists, for which the work of identification and of attribution of the fragments with the individual original tablets proves to be less difficult. Among the texts inventoried at the time as “tablets”, 30 lexical lists can be identified. Today, when the restoration of these documents can be considered concluded (only a few minute fragments are waiting to be put into their places), it is possible to state that the bilingual tablets of archive C were originally twenty-eight

<sup>13</sup> R. D. Biggs, *JCS* 20 (1966) 85, note 86.

<sup>14</sup> A = TM.75.G.1682; B = TM.75.G.2196; C = TM.75.G.2500. According to Pettinato, *OrAnt.* 19 (1980) 61 ff., it would be a mythological text concerning “the creation of the cosmos”! In fact, it is a list of epithets beginning with lugal “king”, while in ll. 2-4 a literary topos is quoted; l. 3: nu-sik a-a-gin, “like a father for the orphan” (M. Civil).

<sup>15</sup> For example, TM.75.G.1430, published by P. Fronzaroli, *SEb* 3 (1980) 65-78. Also an exercise is the list of proportions TM.75.G.1392, clarified by F. Pomponio, *apud* Pettinato, *Testi lessicali monolingui della Biblioteca L.2769* (MEE 3; Napoli, 1981) 270-271.

<sup>16</sup> The tablet is TM.75.G.10173.

<sup>17</sup> With the only exception of TM.75.G.2003-2008, that is fragments belonging to the lexical tablets TM.75.G.2000 and 2001.

<sup>18</sup> A collection of about 1000 “fragments” is published by Archi-M. G. Biga, *ARET* 3.

<sup>19</sup> For example: TM.75.G.2412 + 2427.

(reconstructed from 120 diverse pieces including so-called “tablets” and “fragments”). And we can estimate that the original number of the tablets kept in C was about 2100.

It was already been stated that it is not possible to place the documentation in chronological order. The names of years, about thirty and each generally mentioned only once, in any case prove that all these texts cover at least this span of time. This is confirmed by the fact that the documents which recorded deliveries (mu-DU) of precious metals on the part of the king and the “lords” or governors (lugal-lugal) and which probably must be considered annual accountings, are divided in this way among the kings of Ebla: one for Igriš-Ḫalam, nine for Arennum, and thirteen each for Ibrum and Ibbi-Zikir<sup>20</sup>. In total we obtain thirty-six years. However, it is certain that the great majority of the economic texts are to be dated to the age of Ibrum and Ibbi-Zikir, while some lots of special importance, such as those concerning politico-economic relations with Mari and some royal decrees, date back to Arennum.

Within the documentation, the following typologies can be established, evidenced by the very form of the tablets, at least with regard to those of large size. The largest group (543 tablets) is made up of accounts of clothing and cloth issued. Averaging ten or twelve columns to each side, almost square in shape and with unsmoothed corners, these tablets are the most typical of the Ebla archives. They contain allotments of pieces of clothing, usually of three different types for each assignee (probably a cape, a tunic and a girdle, *’à-da-um-TÚG aktum-TÚG íb-III-TÚG-GÜN*), sometimes added to or replaced by other clothing for members of the royal family, Palace officials, officials of foreign courts and their representatives<sup>21</sup>.

In the colophon is given the total number of clothing, which varies between 80 and 100 pieces (with some rather high points: 649 pieces in TM.75.G.1443; 578 in TM.75.G.1567; 414 in TM.75.G.1731), to which must be added the girdles, counted separately, and the quantities of wool to be spun. Then follows the administrative classification of the document: “issue”, è, and the name of the month. These documents were drawn up from month to month, as is deduced from the fact that all the names of months appear in the colophons. We do not know, however, if more than one text, at least in some cases, refers to the same month. In the colophon there is no indication in this respect (for example: “month x, 2<sup>nd</sup> tablet”). If, therefore, each tablet regards a different month, then this documentation should theoretically cover a period of almost 44 years, also considering the intercalary months. Sometimes some objects in precious metals are added to the clothing, even if special tablets were generally reserved to these. Five other texts, changing the categories described, present quantities comparable between them of both clothing and metal products. Finally, another 100 texts, small and lenticular in

<sup>20</sup> These data will be presented in a next article.

<sup>21</sup> For these kind of texts, see *ARET* 1 and 4.

shape, must be added which describe more categories, namely individual consignments (probably meant to be transferred to the monthly accountings), but also annual summaries of the production stored in the “wool house”, *al-gál é-siki*, as is *ARET* 1 36, for a total of 4042 pieces of clothing and 3267 girdles.

With this massive documentation, which is unparalleled in Mesopotamian archives, the extraordinary importance of the weaving industry to the Eblaic economy is made plain. The shipments of these fabrics, modest if taken individually but frequently repeated, constituted the system with which Ebla maintained politico-economic relations with the other Syrian states, and imposed the method and times of exchange of goods.

The medium and large-sized tablets concerning metals are 311, and to these must be added 378 of lenticular shape. Their classification is rather difficult. Sometimes the “key words” are not expressed, or must have appeared in the now-missing colophon, or else there are several, apparently contrasting, “key words” in one text, such as “delivery”, *mu-DU*, and “gift”, *níg-ba*. These same translations — not only the approximate ones such as “consignment” for *DÚB*, but also those which are certain, such as “price, purchase” for *níg-sa<sub>10</sub>* — are all only conventional. The fact is that it is not possible to state precisely the meaning of these administrative terms since the contexts of the operations which they define escape us. The texts which register the consignments of objects in precious metals to officials of the Eblaic court or those of other Syrian cities are only about thirty. For this sector, they are the equivalents of the tablets concerning the consignments of cloth. Similar to these in shape, they are different only in their larger dimensions, since on the average they contain twenty columns to a side, and seven of them even contain thirty columns and measure approximately 35 cm in width and slightly less in height. These also are dated only according to the month, but the only reason which may explain the disproportion of their number with respect to those concerning cloth is that in their case they contain annual accountings.

Another eighty tablets concern “deliveries” *mu-DU*, of silver and gold, prevalently not worked. Forty of these cover deliveries of silver (and sometimes also of cloth) on the part of the king (*en*) and of the “lords” (*lugal-lugal*, meaning the highest officials of the kingdom, whose number vacillates between twelve and fifteen), dated according to the month, but which surely refer to a whole year. These documents have undergone an evolution. Those of the age of Ibrium and Ibbi-Zikir open with the division of deliveries coming from the sector directly controlled by the sovereign (for Ibbi-Zikir, with whom the highest quotas are reached, there is an average of 500 kg of silver and 5 kg of gold, in part in objects, in addition to quantities of copper and bronze and thousands of fabrics); then follows the division of the “lords” (an average of thirty-two kg of silver), and last come the consignments on the part of the Syrian cities which recognized the Eblaic supremacy. In

contrast, the texts of Arennum do not always open with the section concerning the king, and in any case they do not include the tributes from the cities. The other forty texts cover only deliveries by cities or officials of minor rank. An additional ten documents then cover another “key word”, namely “gift”, *níg-ba*, which in these cases defines the tribute made by Ebla to other states, especially Mari<sup>22</sup>. Now, all these tablets have the same shape: they are smaller than the texts concerning the issues of cloth (*è*), are flat on the obverse side and convex on the reverse side and have smoothed corners<sup>23</sup>.

The other tablets of medium size regard consignments of metals for commercial missions or silver used for “purchases”, *níg-sa*<sub>10</sub>, of animals, wool or other goods.

The 378 lenticular tablets, parallel to the analogous ones concerning fabrics, record both individual consignments and annual balances on hand<sup>24</sup>.

For the agricultural sector, there are sixty-six medium and small-sized tablets, in large part covering the recording of cereals, primarily barley, *še*. The quantities are noted both according to places of production (the villages) and according to the officials responsible for the harvest of the product<sup>25</sup>. Other texts are dedicated to the production of oil. The medium-sized tablets are generally slightly smaller than those concerning deliveries (*mu-DU*) of metals, showing a writing rather less elaborate in style, and in general they are not perfectly preserved. Evidently less care was given to their compiling.

Completing this file are twenty-three tablets which list sowable lands or olive groves<sup>26</sup>, and another twenty-one with registers (by name or with the number of the members of each work squad) of “people”, *na-se*<sub>11</sub>, assigned to agricultural work or perhaps also to the artisan production<sup>27</sup>. They are all of medium-small size.

Sixty-four tablets concern the breeding of animals (ovines, bovines and equines)<sup>28</sup>. To these are added twenty-two texts regarding the consignments of sheep to the Palace. These are recognizable at first glance since they are flat on the obverse side and convex on the reverse, have smoothed corners and are larger (approx. 12 + 12 columns) than those reserved to “deliveries”, *mu-DU*, of metals<sup>29</sup>. They are divided into three sections, the first of which covers sheep offered to the gods by the court, the second those eaten at the Palace, and the last those consigned

<sup>22</sup> For example TM.75.G.1953 and 2592, published by Archi, *StEb* 4 (1981) 132-136, and pl. 35-36.

<sup>23</sup> *ARET* 2 no. 4 and 5; and the texts in *StEb* 4 (1981) pl. 35-43.

<sup>24</sup> TM.75.G.1809, 2104, 2069, published by Archi, *Afo Beih* 19 (1982) 173 and 181, fig. 1, 6-8.

<sup>25</sup> TM.75.G.2627, in Archi, *ibid.*, 182-184, and fig. 12-13; further: *ARET* 2 no. 18, 19, 20.

<sup>26</sup> Cf. *ARET* 2 no. 26, 27, 27a.

<sup>27</sup> Cf. *ARET* 2 no. 28.

<sup>28</sup> See the article quoted above in nt. 5.

<sup>29</sup> Four texts of this kind are published by Pettinato, *OrAnt.* 18 (1979) 87-215.

to messengers or officials destined to missions outside Ebla. The monthly totals are about 1000 head, with one highpoint of 2600 and another of 4640 animals (TM.75.G.10245 and 2598). All these texts can be dated to the last years of Ibbi-Zikir, as is deduced from the names of persons which appear in them. This shows that these documents must have been cancelled and destroyed from time to time, whereas smaller tablets showing only the monthly totals were filed<sup>30</sup>.

The administrative documentation is completed by forty-eight tablets of various subjects (for example, and "inventory", šid, of the carpenters' workshop, or that of the dowry of a princess, or even lists of cities and villages), and fifty-two documents, mostly introduced by the formula *en-ma*, "thus". The latter are letters from the sovereign to his officials, and of them to the king; in addition, there are royal decrees and international agreements which govern commercial relations with states such as *'A-ma-du*<sup>ki</sup> (= Hama?), and Mari, Nagar, Abarsal, in Mesopotamia<sup>31</sup>. These texts cover the reigns of practically all the kings of Ebla known to us: the copy of a letter sent to a king of Ḫamazi (in the area of the Tigris) is dated to Irkab-Damu<sup>32</sup>; and a letter from Enna-Dagan, king of Mari (the only one not written in Ebla), was probably meant for Arennum<sup>33</sup>. The majority of the decrees seems have been emanated by Arennum and Ibrium. As for the letters, it is certain that they were sorted before being filed in C.

On the whole, however, the documentation in archive C principally concerns the last three sovereigns, but we do not know if in a uniform manner for all the groups of texts. If, for example, the files of the assignments of clothing and the recording of the deliveries of metals seem to be complete enough beginning with Arennum, on the contrary in the sector relative to agriculture and the raising of livestock, where there are also included documents of Arennum, the documentation is interrupted, as is demonstrated by the fact that there are no more than five or six annual accountings for ovine holdings. In part this may be due to the diverse recording criteria adopted by the Eblaic administration over the course of time.

The archive is completed by twenty-five literary texts, the majority of which are incantations in Sumerian and in Eblaic<sup>34</sup>. Two Sumerian mythological texts (which are duplicates: TM.75.G.2657 and 2658, plus various fragments) mention Ama-ušumgal, a deity of Uruk, and the country of Aratta, and are parallel to a tablet from Abū Salābīkh (*IAS* 278). Then there is another myth, presumably of Mesopotamian origin. These three tablets, measuring approximately 16 cm to a

<sup>30</sup> See TM.75.G.1629, 1630, 2096, published by Pettinato, *OrAnt.* 16 (1977) 258-271.

<sup>31</sup> For the decrees, see TM.75.G.1766 = Fronzaroli, *StEb* 1 (1979) 3-16; TM.75.G.1452 = Id., *StEb* 3 (1980) 33-52; TM.75.G.1430 = Id., *ibid.* 65-78; TM.75.G.1444 = D. O. Edzard, *StEb* 4 (1981) 35-59. The political treaty with Abarsal, TM.75.G.2420, was published by E. Sollberger, *StEb* 3 (1980) 129-155.

<sup>32</sup> TM.75.G.2342, see Pettinato, *RBI* 25 (1977) 238 ff.

<sup>33</sup> TM.75.G.2367; see the interpretation of Edzard, *StEb* 4 (1981) 89-97.

<sup>34</sup> Most of the incantations are published by Pettinato, *Or Ant.* 18 (1979) 329-351. See now D. O. Edzard, *ARET* V (1984), and M. Krebernik, *Die Beschwörungen aus Fara und Ebla* (Hildesheim, 1984).



side, in shape and for the elegant and well-spaced writing are very similar to those of mythological subject from Abū Salābīkh. The remaining six tablets, all in Eblaic (two mention the Sun-god, <sup>4</sup>Utu, and Enlil) are small and of lenticular shape.

The sixty unilingual lexical texts are divided into two groups. The first reproduce, more or less faithfully, some Mesopotamian originals, in particular from Abū Salābīkh, but also from Uruk and Fara (ED Lu A, ED Lu E, Bird List, Fish List ...). The second shows a list of approximately 1500 words compiled in Ebla (and of which the preparatory drafts are also preserved), with the practical aim of providing it with a translation in Eblaic. The incipit of this list is: ŠÈ.BAR.UNKEN. One large tablet gives the final version.

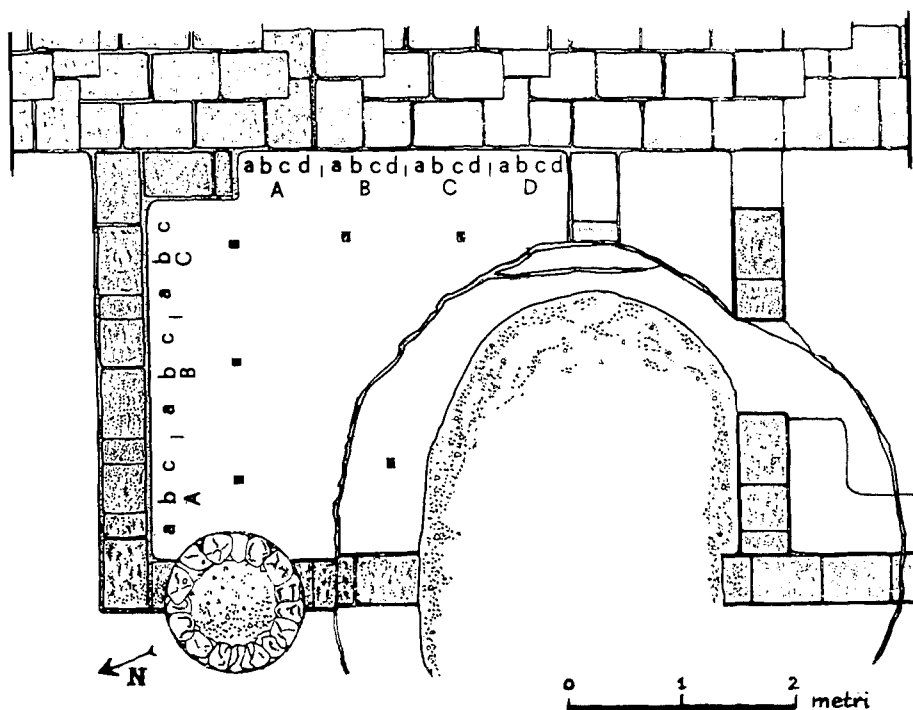
Of the thirty bilingual “tablets” (in reality these are reduced to twenty-eight, as was stated above), the one we shall call manuscript *A*<sub>1</sub> faithfully reproduces the Sumerian list, but stops after 1090 words, whereas *B*, written in smaller characters, offers instead the complete list. Manuscript *C* (which has very elegant signs) stops also after 1090 words. But another tablet, *A*<sub>2</sub>, which shows a minute writing and closed signs, completes the list. Finally, *D* is made up of five medium-sized tablets and gives no more than half the list (880 words). All the other texts are no more than abstracts of the great canonical list.

To what extent is it possible to reconstruct the original classification within archive *C*? With regard to the operation of excavation, P. Matthiae writes: “While completely emptying the archive room, we obviously took care to note the find-spot of every single tablet and fragment of a tablet in relation to the walls and the level”<sup>35</sup>. The tablets were arranged on wooden shelves approximately 80 cm deep, attached to the walls of the room. They were lined up with their obverse toward the outside, with the first column at the top. Therefore, the tablets were turned 90 degrees with respect to the reading angle we use<sup>36</sup>. Now, the burning of the wood due to the fire which destroyed the palace and the collapse of the east wall of the Audience Court caused a piling up of the tablets and the sliding of the upper levels toward the center of the room. This caused the breaking of many texts. If, therefore, we know from which sectors the documents came, today it is not possible to determine for many texts on which shelf have been placed. For example, the eleven tablets with incantations come from the N(orth) wall, sectors B and C, lev(els) 2 and 3 (which rested on the floor) (fig. 2)<sup>37</sup>. The mythological texts were together

<sup>35</sup> Matthiae, *Ebla*, cit., 152.

<sup>36</sup> Cf. Matthiae, *Ebla*, cit., 158. Pettinato, *The Archives of Ebla* (New York 1981; Italian edition 1979) 50, wrongly writes: “A look at one of the many photographs which show the tablets at the moment of discovery suffices to convince one that the preceding observations [Matthiae’s one] are erroneous. The tablets were, in fact, arranged not with the obverse toward the center of the room but rather with the obverse toward the wall and the reverse toward the center of the room”. Apparently the only epigraphist who saw the tablets in situ, is not able to quote any note taken on the spot. In fact, that photos show clearly that the larger tablet had the front face toward the centre of the room.

<sup>37</sup> Collecting the tablets, the spaces in front of the North and East walls were divided horizontally in



2. Ebla, Palace G. The plan of archive C.

with them; for example, the lenticular tablets TM.75.G.2192 and 2194 (myths) and 2195 (incantation) come all from NB lev. 2.

The unilingual lexical texts of Mesopotamian origin were found in the same sectors: NB and NC, but either “upon the files” (that is from levels upon the tablets till found arranged in files) or from lev. 1 and 2. Instead, the lexical texts belonging to the series with the incipit ŠĒ.BAR.UNKEN (which was composed at Ebla) come in part also from lev. 3 of NB and NC. The three lenticular tablets with the incipit lugal-an-ki (already mentioned above) were not collected together: TM.75.G.2196 together with 2500 comes from NBa lev. 2, 1682 from NC lev. 2. The text TM.75.G.1683, with a mathematical problem formulated by a scribe from Kish<sup>38</sup>, comes from NC lev. 2; TM.75.G.2198, registering the Sumerian numbers from 1 to 10<sup>39</sup>, from NBa lev. 2.

the sectors “a”, “b”, “c”, “d”, and “A”, “B”, “C”, “D”, as is seen in the plan presented in fig. 2, and vertically in levels 1, 2 and 3.

<sup>38</sup> Published by Archi, *StEb* 3 (1980) 63 f.

<sup>39</sup> Published by Edzard, *StEb* 3 (1980) 121-127.

Also the bilingual lexical texts—both the larger tablets (as  $A_1 = \text{TM.75.G.2000} +$ ;  $B = 2001 +$ ) and the smaller one—were found in front of the North wall, mostly in NB lev. 1 and 2. But for example, the five tablets which constitute manuscript *D* come from different sectors; that is  $\text{TM.75.G.1825} (D_5)$ : NA; 1448 ( $D_3$ ): NA lev. 1; 2284 ( $D_1$ ) NAb lev. 1; 1426 ( $D_4$ ) and 1774 ( $D_2$ ): NCA lev. 1.

Most of the international protocols, as also the decrees and the letters (incipit: *en-ma*)—either concerning inner matters or the relations with other states—were kept in the upper shelves of the North wall, on the left side. In fact, they were found in NA “upon the files” or in lev. 1 and 2. Here are some significant data. A document concerning Enna-Dagan, king of Mari,  $\text{TM.75.G.1913}$ : NA lev. 1. Protocols between Mari and Ebla, 2268 and 2290: NAb lev. 1 and 2. Letter to Ḥamazi, 2342: NAc<sup>40</sup>. Protocols between Ebla and  $\text{ʾĀ-du}^{\text{ki}}$  (a city to be localized East of the Euphrates), 2561, and between Ebla and Burman, 2587: NA on the floor (probably fallen down from the upper levels). Donation of king Irkab-Damu to Tiša-Lim, queen of Emar, 2396:NA; but a parallel text, 1986, comes instead from NB lev. 1. Also the letter of Enna-Dagan of Mari to Ebla, 2367<sup>41</sup>, together with a letter of Titinu to Tiabazu, 2094, comes from NB lev. 1 and 2. Allotments of villages, 1452<sup>42</sup> and 1470<sup>43</sup>: NA; 1625<sup>44</sup>: NAc; 1672: NB “upon the files”. Verdicts concerning patrimonial estates of the sons of Ibrium, 1444<sup>45</sup>, and of the sons of Irik-Damu, 2514: NA. Verdict for Ingar, 1766<sup>46</sup>: NAc lev. 2. Ordinances of Ibbi-Zikir, 1689: NB lev. 1; 2320: NA lev. 2. Among the letters from the king (surely Ibrium) to Ibbi-Zikir, 1531 and 1583 come from N, from the floor; a third one, 2366, was found instead near the other wall: EBd lev. 2. This is also the case of three letters of the king (Ibbi-Zikir) to his son Dubuḥu-ʾAda, 1391: EAb; 2039: EAc lev. 2; 2175: EAc. Also the protocol between Ebla and Hama, 2237, comes from the East wall: EAb; and also the document 1394 (= *ARET* 2 33): EAb. Noteworthy is that the tablet of the treaty between Ebla and Abarsal, 2420, was found near the West wall, alone among the other *en-ma*-texts.

Also several groups of administrative documents were kept in the shelves of the North wall. The twenty-two tablets registering the consignments of sheep for the nutrition of the Palace and the offerings to the gods, come from NA lev. 3 or from the floor (but  $\text{TM.75.G.2403}$  from lev. 2). Also the other records of cattle and sheep come from the sectors NA, NB, NC, mostly from lev. 2 and 3. The same is for the

<sup>40</sup> Published by Pettinato, see nt. 32.

<sup>41</sup> Interpreted by Edzard, *StEb* 4 (1981) 89-97.

<sup>42</sup> Published by Fronzaroli, *StEb* 3 (1980) 33-52.

<sup>43</sup> Archi, *StEb* 4 (1981) 9 f.

<sup>44</sup> Archi, *ibid.* 10.

<sup>45</sup> Published by Edzard, *StEb* 4 (1981) 35-59.

<sup>46</sup> Published by Fronzaroli, *StEb* 1 (1979) 3-13.

documents concerning the fields (*gána-kešda-KI*), the agricultural production and also several records of “people”, *na-se<sub>11</sub>* (but other *na-se<sub>11</sub>*-texts come from EA lev. 2, a fact which will be explained by further investigations). The texts concerning the “deliveries”, *mu-DU*, and the “gifts”, *níg-ba*, of raw metals or objects in precious metals, were collected mostly in NC, close to the East wall, and also in EA. But some “deliveries of the lords”, *mu-DU lugal-lugal*, were found in NA. The lenticular tablets registering amounts of metals come from the floor along the North wall (NA, NB, NC) and from EA. They were probably kept in baskets under the shelves.

The largest group of administrative tablets, that is those concerning textiles allotments, was disposed to the East wall, in the sectors EA, EB and EC, and in part also in the corner between the North and the East walls, including NC. With some exceptions; for example, TM.75.G.2270 and 2278 come from NAc; 2275 and 2279 from NAa lev. 1. The lenticular tablets come instead from the North wall, mostly from the floor in NA.

Only when the texts will be entirely studied, it will be possible to explain some of the facts here indicated, which seem anomalous.

## THE ADMINISTRATION OF CRAFTS IN THE EARLY ISIN PERIOD

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The texts from the Early Isin period are of special value for the student of the economic history of Ancient Mesopotamia since they shed abundant light on two areas of particular interest: the organization of crafts and the methods of archive keeping in the early second millennium B.C. The texts from this period are generally regarded as belonging to the so-called “leather-archive” published by V. Crawford in *BIN* 9, but a detailed study of them shows clearly that a variety of crafts is documented. Of this archive, 926 texts, all dated in the years Išbi-Erra (I.E.) 5<sup>1</sup> through Šu-ilišu (Š.i.) 3 (2013-1982 B.C.), are known at present. The texts represent the archive of a craft workshop and shed light on its activities. In this paper I will describe the activities of this workshop and attempt to reconstruct the composition of its archive.

The texts of the archive can be classified as records of five steps of transactions of the workshop: (1) the receipt of raw materials, (2) the issue of these materials to the craftsmen, (3) the manufacture, (4) the delivery of the finished products to the officials of the workshop, and (5) the disbursement of the finished products. Based on these records we can derive a schematic reconstruction of the workshop (see figure 1).

### 1. *Reconstruction of the activities of the workshop*

The materials used by the workshop were issued by several institutions and individuals, but the main provider was the é-kišib-ba, the central storage house in the city. Virtually everything used in the workshop could be issued by the storehouse: leather<sup>2</sup> and the products to process it<sup>3</sup>, bitumen<sup>4</sup>, and wool<sup>5</sup>. The fact that such large variety of products was delivered from the é-kišib-ba suggests that it was a central storage house where products, derived from different sources, were

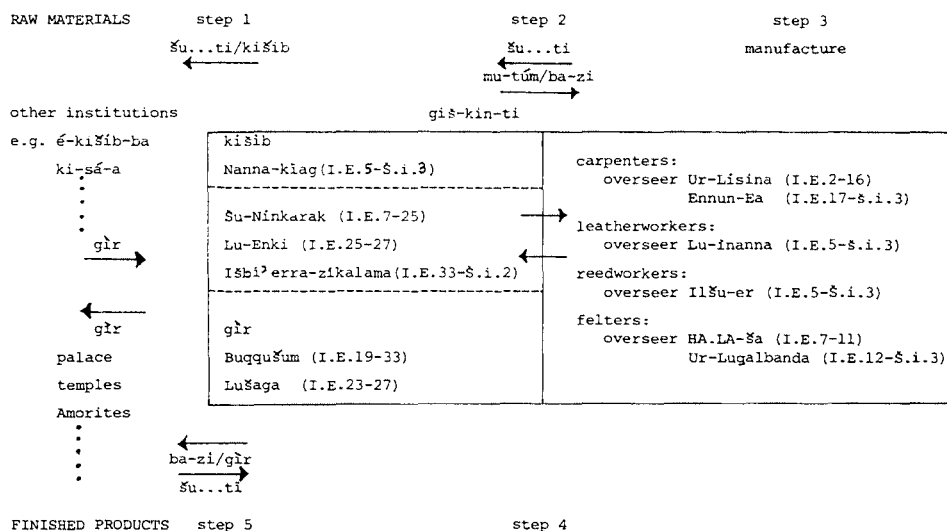
<sup>1</sup> For the chronology of Išbi-Erra's reign see my *The Early Isin Craft Archive* (forthcoming). The chronology established there differs from the one proposed by B. Kienast, *JCS* 10 (1965) 45-55, in that it assumes a larger gap in the beginning of the date-list published by T. Baqir, *Sumer* 4 (1948) 103-113. In general three years should be added to Kienast's numbers to arrive at the dates used in this paper.

<sup>2</sup> E.g. *BIN* 9: 69-70.

<sup>3</sup> E.g. *BIN* 9: 80-84.

<sup>4</sup> E.g. *BIN* 9: 493-498.

<sup>5</sup> E.g. *BIN* 9: 81,82.



1. Schematic reconstruction of the workshop.

kept<sup>6</sup>. In addition to the *é-kišib-ba* other institutions, such as the house of the weavers<sup>7</sup> issued goods to the workshop. Otherwise individuals delivered specific products; this is most often the case with skins. These were mostly delivered by *Šu-Eštar* who is attested from I.E. 10-26 in numerous texts<sup>8</sup>. From I.E. 20 on, four of *Šu-Eštar*'s subordinates delivered skins or acted as his conveyors: *Ku-Nanna* (I.E. 20-Š.i. 3)<sup>9</sup>, *Nanna-maba* (I.E. 20-30)<sup>10</sup>, *Šu-Mamitum* (I.E. 21-30)<sup>11</sup>, and *Šu-Šamaš* (I.E. 21-30)<sup>12</sup>. These men are not mentioned with a professional designation, but it seems that they were specialists in skinning of animals and preparing the hides for tanning.

At the receipt of these materials two officials of the workshop were present: one received them (*šu ba-an-ti*) and another certified the receipt with his seal (*kišib*). The latter function was always performed by *Nanna-kiag* who is attested from I.E. 10-Š.i. 3<sup>13</sup>. In the last text where he is attested he is accompanied by *Adad-bani*<sup>14</sup> which may indicate a change of person in charge of this office. Although the phrase

<sup>6</sup> Cf. W. F. Leemans, *RA* 48 (1954) 57-66.

<sup>7</sup> *é-uš-bar*, e.g. *BIN* 9: 524, NBC 5608, 5649.

<sup>8</sup> E.g. *BIN*: 40-53.

<sup>9</sup> Delivering: e.g. *BIN* 9: 3, 8, conveyor: e.g. *BIN* 9: 22, 90.

<sup>10</sup> Delivering: e.g. *BIN* 9: 4, 5 conveyor: e.g. *BIN* 9: 18, 57.

<sup>11</sup> Delivering: e.g. *BIN* 9: 7, 10, conveyor: e.g. *BIN* 9: 94, 95.

<sup>12</sup> Delivering: e.g. *BIN* 9: 9, 24, conveyor: e.g. *BIN* 9: 20, 101.

<sup>13</sup> E.g. *BIN* 9: 40-87.

<sup>14</sup> LB 1948, IV/-/Š.i. 3.

“sealed by Nanna-kiag” (kišib <sup>d</sup>Nanna-ki-ág) occurs very often, there are no receipt texts where Nanna-kiag’s seal is actually preserved. Two successive officials received the raw materials: Šu-Ninkarak (XIII/-/I.E. 10-III/-/I.E. 25)<sup>15</sup> and Lu-Enki (IV/-/I.E. 25-XII/-/I.E. 26)<sup>16</sup>. From I.E. 27 on the situation is not entirely clear. A comparison of the succession of officials in step 1 with those of step 5, where Lu-Enki is succeeded by Išbi’erra-zikalama, suggests that the latter was responsible for receipts as well as disbursements after that date.

The materials, once they had arrived in the workshop, were passed on to the craftsmen by the officials who received them: attested as such in the limited number of records of this step are Šu-Ninkarak<sup>17</sup>, Lu-Enki<sup>18</sup>, and Nanna-kiag<sup>19</sup>.

Four types of craftsmen were active in the workshop: carpenters, leatherworkers, reedworkers, and felters. Their attendance is recorded in a group of 117 texts which can be called “worker lists”. These texts, made up on a daily basis, list the names of the craftsmen, their profession, whether they are present, absent, or ill, and sometimes give a short notation about what their specific activity was that day. From these texts it is clear that the workmen were specialized in their craft since there are no transfers from one section of the workshop to another. Each section is supervised by an overseer (ugula) who kept his function for several years; for the carpenters Ur-Lisina was supervisor from I.E. 5-16, and Ennum-Ea from I.E. 17-Š.i. 3, for the leatherworkers Lu-Inanna is attested throughout the archive from I.E. 5-Š.i. 3, for the reedworkers Iššu-er for the same period, and in the felter section HA.LA-ša is attested from I.E. 5-11 and Ur-Lugalbanda from I.E. 12-Š.i. 3. While the overseers were present in the workshop every day, the craftsmen are only attested every other day in the worker lists. It seems that two teams of craftsmen were active on alternating days, which is a system not attested in the slightly earlier workshop at Ur under Ibbi-Sin<sup>20</sup>. The total number of workmen present on one day varied between fifteen and twenty. Reedworkers seem to be of the greatest number, followed by those working with leather, wood, and felt. Each type of craftsman worked with a specific group of materials; the carpenter with wood and glue, the leatherworker with skins and catgut (sa), tanning materials, dyes and oils, the reedworker with reed, bitumen and gypsum, and the felter with wool. Many products of the workshop were the combined effort of different types of craftsmen; thus leather boots were often lined with felt<sup>21</sup>, or beds were made with wood,

<sup>15</sup> E.g. *BIN* 9: 41-64.

<sup>16</sup> E.g. *BIN* 9: 65, 84.

<sup>17</sup> E.g. *BIN* 9: 147-149.

<sup>18</sup> E.g. *NBC* 6372.

<sup>19</sup> E.g. *BIN* 9: 13, *NBC* 17505.

<sup>20</sup> For a detailed analysis of the worker lists from both sites, see *The Early Isin Craft Archive*.

<sup>21</sup> E.g. *BIN* 9: 428, 469.

leather, and rope<sup>22</sup>. This can explain why these different crafts were located in the same building.

The craftsmen were not involved in the entire process of manufacture from the basic material to the finished product. This is especially clear from the activities of the leatherworkers. They received hides which had already been prepared for tanning: the hides were mostly dehaired (kuš a-GAR-kú-a) and the products and techniques to stop the decay of hides and to soften them before the actual tanning process are not attested<sup>23</sup>. Thus only the actual tanning process took place in the workshop. Four types of colored leather are obtained, each with a specific group of products: white (babbar) with alum (*allaharu*), black (gi<sub>6</sub>) with pomegranate (nu-úr-ma) and im-KÛ.GI<sup>24</sup>, green (du<sub>8</sub>-ši-a)<sup>25</sup> with copper (urudu), and red (ú-háb)<sup>26</sup> with alum (*allaharu*) and madder (ú-háb)<sup>27</sup>. The omission of the preparation for tanning, which was an ill-smelling industry, made it possible for the leatherworkers to work in the same building as the carpenters, reedworkers, and felters. The preparation for tanning was probably done outside the city walls, and the hides were delivered directly to the workshop by Šu-Eštar and his subordinates instead of being stored in the é-kišib-ba.

Just as the craftsmen did not always start from the basic materials, they did not always produce the entire finished product. Some products were, for instance, sent to the house of the goldsmiths to be used in objects such as thrones for deities<sup>28</sup>. All this shows a high level of specialization of crafts in Isin.

Step 4, the delivery of the finished product by the craftsmen to the officials of the workshop, is sparsely documented. It seems, however, that the same officials who supervised steps 1, 2, and 5, were in charge of this step too. The fifth step, the disbursement of the finished products, was supervised by two officials of the workshop: one issued the products (ba-zi), and the other acted as conveyor (gìr), which in this instance indicates that he supervised the transaction. The officials who received the raw materials, also issued the finished products: Šu-Ninkarak from

<sup>22</sup> E.g. *BIN* 9: 254, 255.

<sup>23</sup> For a description of leatherwork in Umma in the Ur III period, see M. Sigrist, *JCS* 33 (1981) 141-190. Although I disagree with Sigrist on the translation of certain terms, in general our opinions on the tanning process coincide. The preliminary stages for tanning as described by Sigrist, pp. 143 f. and 165-167, are not attested in the Isin texts.

<sup>24</sup> Literally "gold colored earth" but certainly to produce a black color, cf. *BIN* 9: 198, NBC 7178 and 9995 where the phrase im-KÛ.GI ba-gi<sub>6</sub> "blackened with im-KÛ.GI".

<sup>25</sup> For the identification of the color of this type of leather, cf. M. Stol, "Leder", in *RIA* (1983), 634 f., §21. Possibly du<sub>8</sub>-ši-a = *dušû* may refer to the color of the *dušû*-stone, either yellow or orange, cf. *CAD* D 200-202, but one cannot understand than the use of copper for its production.

<sup>26</sup> Cf. B. Landsberger, *JCS* 21 (1967) 170.

<sup>27</sup> For the translation "madder", Latin *Rubia tinctorum* for ú-háb = *hūratu*, see M. Stol, "Leder", §23. The product is a root that is used for coloring textiles and leather red.

<sup>28</sup> *BIN* 9: 28.



IV/-/I.E. 7 to III/-/I.E. 25<sup>29</sup>, Lu-Enki from II/-/I.E. 25 to IV/-/I.E. 27<sup>30</sup>, and Išbi'erra-zikalama from V/-/I.E. 33 to V/-/Š.i. 3<sup>31</sup>. The products were carried off by a number of conveyors, representing the destinations. At the end of the texts a general conveyor is named who represented the workshop. This was Buqqušum from I.E. 19-30<sup>32</sup>, and he and Lušaga from I.E. 23-27<sup>33</sup>. Sometimes one—mostly Buqqušum—or both sealed the tablet instead of being named<sup>34</sup>, or both the phrase *gîr PN* (*ù PN*) and the seal impression occur<sup>35</sup>.

The products were issued to a large number of institutions, some for use as such, some for further manufacture. Many of them were intended for the higher levels of society: most prominent among the customers were the palace, the temples, and foreign dignitaries.

## 2. *Organization of the archive*

Although the entire archive was excavated unsystematically and its archaeological context is lost, internal evidence of the texts enables us to reconstruct the methods of archive keeping to a certain extent. In figure 2 the number of preserved texts per year is listed for the entire archive, and for each of the five steps described above. For each the absolute number of texts is given, and in the second column the percentage that this number represents in the entire group of texts of that type. Thus the ten records of step 5 in I.E. 28 represent 2 % of all the records of step 5. For step 3, the account texts are listed separately from the worker lists, since they are entirely different types of records. At the bottom of the table the numbers of texts with an uncertain date, of undated texts, and of texts where the date is broken are listed. In figure 3 some of this information is put out as a line graph. Figure 3a records the percentages of the total number of texts per year, while figure 3b gives the same information for the records of steps 1 and 5, and for the worker lists. The graphs have no absolute value and do not indicate ups and downs in the activity of the workshop, but from the relative distribution of texts depicted in them the following information can be derived about the methods of archive keeping employed in this workshop.

The total number of texts varies greatly from year to year. The largest number of dated texts is from I.E. 13 (eighty-one texts), while from the years I.E. 5, 6, and 31 only one text is preserved. Crawford interpreted this as an indication that the texts

<sup>29</sup> E.g. *BIN* 9: 384, 397, 433.

<sup>30</sup> E.g. *BIN* 9: 371, 375, 407.

<sup>31</sup> E.g. *BIN* 9: 378, 444, 452. From I.E. 27-I.E. 33 no documents containing the name of the official are preserved.

<sup>32</sup> E.g. *BIN* 9: 373, 375, 411.

<sup>33</sup> E.g. *BIN* 9: 415, 429, 445.

<sup>34</sup> E.g. *BIN* 9: 345, 362.

<sup>35</sup> E.g. *BIN* 9: 373.

year	total		step 1		step 2		step 3				step 4		step 5		misc.	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	account	worker			#	%	#	%	#	%
I.E.																
5	1	.1	1	.5												
6	1	.1									1	3.4				
7	24	2.6	1	.5				17	14.5		1	3.4	5	1		
8	16	1.7	1	.5				9	7.7		1	3.4	5	1		
9	17	1.8			2	.4		7	6		3	10.3	5	1		
10	11	1.2	2	1				6	5.1				3	.6		
11	17	1.9	7	3.5	2	.4		5	4.3				3	.6		
12	27	2.9	12	6				2	1.7				13	2.6		
13	81	8.7	12	6	3	6.1	1	33	7	6	2	6.9	56	11.2		
14	45	4.9	5	2.5	1	2		10	8.5		1	3.4	28	5.6		
15	40	4.3	3	1.5	3	6.1		9	7.7		1	3.4	24	4.8		
16	62	6.7	15	7.6	11	22.4		1	.9		1	3.4	34	6.8		
17	19	2	6	3				1	.9				11	2.2	1	3.6
18	15	1.6	6	3	1	2		1	.9				6	1.2	1	3.6
19	53	5.7	10	5	1	2					1	3.4	40	8	1	3.6
20	17	1.8	5	2.5				1	.9				11	2.2		
21	30	3.2	12	6			1	33	2	1.7			13	2.6	2	7.1
22	53	5.7	21	10.6	2	.4							29	5.8	1	3.6
23	30	3.2	13	6.6	1	2	1	33					15	3		
24	15	1.6	9	4.5							1	3.4	5	1		
25	40	4.3	14	7	3	6.1					1	3.4	22	4.4		
26	24	2.6	7	3.5									16	3.2	1	3.6
27	10	1.1									2	6.9	8	1.6		
28	14	1.5	3	1.5							1	3.4	10	2		
29	2	.2											2	.4		
30	4	.4	4	2												
31	1	.1											1	.2		
32	4	.4	1	.5							1	3.4	2	.4		
33	45	4.9	5	2.5							1	3.4	29	5.8	10	36
S.i																
1	23	2.5	4	2	1	2							13	3.6		
2	11	1.2	1	.5									9	1.8	1	3.6
3	24	2.6	2	1	4	8.2							16	3.2	2	7.1
unsure	4	.4	1	.5									3	.6		
no date	117	12.6	10	5	14	28.6		36	30.8		7	24.1	42	8.4	3	28.6
broken	29	3.1	5	2.5				3	2.6		3	10.3	18	3.6		
total #	926		198		49		3	117			29		502		20	

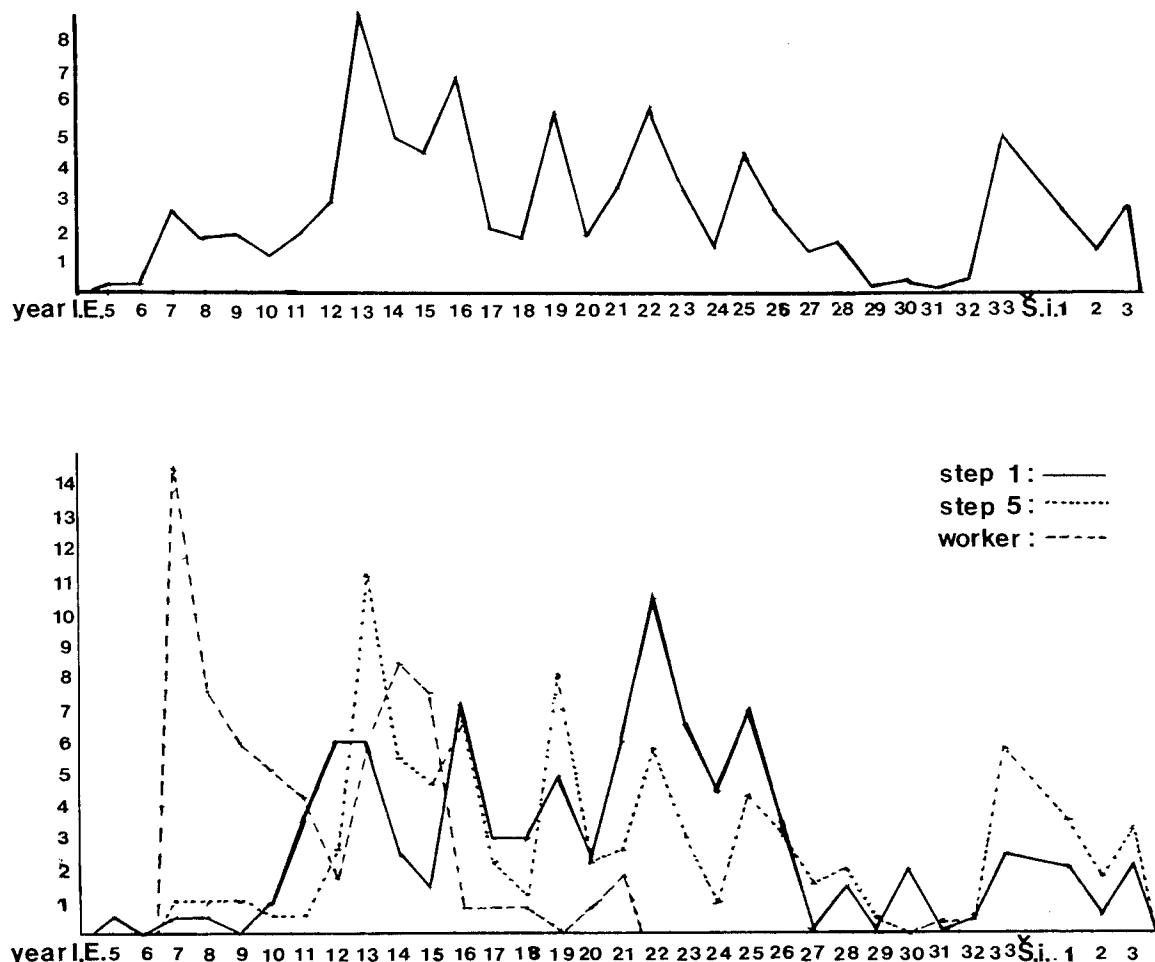
## 2. Chronological distribution of the texts of the archive.

do not represent a single large archive, but rather a series of small archives<sup>36</sup>. This distribution seems, however, more likely due to the accident of recovery, since the tablets were excavated by people who probably did not clear out entire archive rooms, and did not bother to collect fragments<sup>37</sup>.

The line graph of the total number of texts per year shows the same outline as the one for the records of step 5, which is logical since most texts of the archive are records of that step. The similarity of the graphs for steps 1 and 5 is, however, of special interest since it shows that these tablets were stored and recovered together.

<sup>36</sup> BIN 9: p. 16.

<sup>37</sup> It is remarkable that most recovered tablets from this archive are in good condition compared to similar tablets from other sites.



3. Top: line graph of percentages of the texts in the Isin archive per year; bottom: line graph of percentages of records of step 1 and 5, and of the worker lists per year.

If they had been kept in separate rooms or separate areas of a room, the distribution of recovered texts would have been dissimilar. This is the case with the worker lists which are best represented in the early years of the archive and disappear after I.E. 21 when the other texts are still abundant. This distribution shows that they were stored separate from the account texts.

From figure 2 it is clear that many records were not dated: a total of 117 texts which represents 12.6 % of the archive. The distribution of undated texts is, however, uneven over the records of different steps. Of the records of steps 2 and 4, 28.6 % and 24.1 % respectively are undated, while of the records of steps 1 and 5 only 5 % and 8.4 % respectively are undated. This contrast seems due to the

difference in use of these texts. The records of steps 2 and 4 were for internal use in the workshop only and could thus be very concise, while those of steps 1 and 5 record transactions with the outside and had to be more complete<sup>38</sup>.

The study of this archive also shows that two types of documents were kept in it: originals and copies. The large majority of records of step 1, 187 of the 198 texts, record receipts by the workshop (šu...ti). Of these 133 are called a copy (gaba-ri). These texts seem to have been drawn up by the administration of the workshop for its own reference, while the original tablets were kept by the issuing institution. On 142 of these records the phrase “sealed by Nanna-kiag” (kišib <sup>d</sup>Nanna-ki-ág) occurs, while none of them contains his seal impression. The phrase refers thus to the sealing of the original document which was not kept in the archive of the workshop.

The records of step 5 can be grouped under two types: the majority lists disbursements of finished products by the workshop (ba-zi), while only twenty-four texts record the receipt of the products by an outsider (šu...ti). Of both types of records the original tablet is preserved in the archive of the workshop. The disbursement texts are only called copies when they are “Sammeltafeln” listing several deliveries<sup>39</sup>. These texts were probably compilations from several individual disbursement texts, and thus they were called copies. On many of the preserved texts the seals of Buqqušum and Lušaga, officials of the workshop, are rolled<sup>40</sup>, which is another indication that these are the original tablets. The records of receipts by outsiders are never called copies, and on many of them the seal of the recipient is impressed<sup>41</sup>.

It is remarkable that the large majority of texts are written from the point of view of the workshop. The receipt texts record receipts by the workshop, and the disbursement texts issues by the workshop. One wonders about what types of text were kept in the archives of the other institutions, and why it seems that the workshop was the central point of most of the records preserved.

It is clear that the administration of the workshop kept careful records of all the materials it received and all the products it issued. Moreover, it is clear that in this period the person or institution that issues something kept the original record, while a copy can be made for the recipient. The seal of the official of the workshop or of the recipient of the products was probably applied to make the document official.

The study of this archive reveals thus that the crafts in the early Isin period were highly specialized and rigorously organized. Moreover, in the archive of the workshop different types of account texts—receipts and disbursements—were

<sup>38</sup> The same difference is clear from other elements in these texts. The records of steps 2 and 4 often omit to indicate elements such as names of officials, while those of steps 1 and 5 are more complete.

<sup>39</sup> E.g. *BIN* 9: 240, 307, 389.

<sup>40</sup> E.g. *BIN* 9: 350, 370, 421.

<sup>41</sup> E.g. *BIN* 9: 108, 109, 118.

stored together in chronological order, while other documents, such as the worker lists, were kept separately.

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## ZU DEN ALTBABYLONISCHEN ARCHIVEN AUS SIPPAR\*

JOHANNES RENGGER (Berlin)

Aus Sippar und Tell-ed-Dēr stammen nach der Zählung von Rivkah Harris reichlich 2000 Rechts- und Verwaltungsurkunden<sup>1</sup>. Unberücksichtigt ließ sie dabei allerdings die zahlreichen Briefe. Seitdem ist zusätzliches Material aus Sippar publiziert worden<sup>2</sup>, wobei ich die aus den neuerlichen irakischen Grabungen in Sippar und die aus den belgischen in Tell-ed-Dēr stammenden Texte unberücksichtigt lassen möchte<sup>3</sup>.

Die im Augenblick verfügbaren Texte — Urkunden und Briefe — befinden sich in folgenden Museen: im Britischen Museum, das wohl die umfangreichste Sammlung von Texten aus Sippar besitzt<sup>4</sup>, in Istanbul<sup>5</sup>, außerdem in Berlin, in Paris im Louvre, im University Museum in Philadelphia, in Yale und in einer Vielzahl amerikanischer und europäischer öffentlicher und privater Sammlungen<sup>6</sup>. Nur ein Teil dieser Texte stammt aus Grabungen: die Texte im Britischen Museum aus den Grabungen von Rassam<sup>7</sup>, die Texte in Istanbul aus denen von Scheil<sup>8</sup>. In beiden Fällen ergeben die

\* Dieser Bericht stützt sich auf Arbeiten, die im Rahmen eines Forschungsprojektes zur Wirtschafts- und Sozialgeschichte des Alten Vorderen Orients mit Unterstützung der Kommission für Forschung und wissenschaftlichen Nachwuchs der Freien Universität Berlin geleistet wurden. Die Stiftung Volkswagenwerk fördert das Projekt seit Herbst 1982 im Rahmen ihres Programms zur Förderung des wissenschaftlichen Nachwuchses (Mitarbeiter am Projekt: Dr. K. Butz). Beim abgekürzten Zitieren von Buchtiteln folge ich dem Brauch des CAD. Das Wort »Archiv« wird im folgenden im Sinne von »Gruppe zusammengehöriger Urkunden« oder »Dossier« gebraucht.

<sup>1</sup> R. Harris, *Ancient Sippar. A Demographic Study of an Old Babylonian City (1894-1595 B.C.)* (Leiden, 1975), 384 ff.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. etwa M. Stol, *BiOr* 33 (1976), 147 und W. Sommerfeld, *Der Aufstieg Marduks* (Kevelaer-Neukirchen-Vluyn, 1982) passim. — Beim Vergleich beider Arbeiten mit den Ansätzen bei R. Harris, a.a.O., wird deutlich, daß in vielen Einzelfällen die Herkunft bestimmter Urkunden aus Sippar kontrovers ist. Eine zusammenfassende Bibliographie der Sippartexte ist im Rahmen des oben genannten Projektes geplant.

<sup>3</sup> S. zuletzt F.N.A. Al-Rawi, *Sumer* 35 (1979), 196 f.; K. van Lerberghe, *AfO Beih.* 19 (1982), 280 ff., L. de Meyer, *Tell ed-Dēr II* (Leuven, 1978), viii.

<sup>4</sup> S. C. B. F. Walker, »Hormuz Rassam's Excavations for the British Museum at Sippar in 1881-1882«, in: L. de Meyer, ed., *Tell-ed Dēr III* (Leuven, 1980), 93 ff. und *CT* 52 (1976), Preface.

<sup>5</sup> F. R. Kraus, »Die Istanbuler Tontafelsammlung«, *JCS* 1 (1947), 117.

<sup>6</sup> S. dazu R. Harris, *Ancient Sippar*, xii.

<sup>7</sup> Im Britischen Museum u.a. unter den Sammlungsnummern 82-5-22 und A(bu) H(abbah) 82-9-18 registriert.

<sup>8</sup> Die Urkunden sind im wesentlichen publiziert von V. Scheil, *Sippar* (Kairo, 1902) und T. Friedrich, »Altbabylonische Urkunden aus Sippar«, *BA* 5/4 (Leipzig, 1906), 413 ff., die Briefe von F. R. Kraus, *AbB* 5 (Leiden, 1972), Nr. 207-278. Dazu gehören noch einige Briefe aus der Gruppe der unter »Lagaš« inventarisierten Briefe (135-155), und zwar mit einiger Sicherheit 145-147, 155.

Berichte der Ausgräber keine wesentlichen Anhaltspunkte für eine Zuordnung der Urkunden und Briefe zu bestimmten Fundstellen und damit zu Archiven. Eine beachtliche Zahl von Texten aus dem Britischen Museum ist nach Auskunft von Christopher Walker in Bagdad gekauft worden und stammt dem Vernehmen nach aus Tell ed-Dēr. Die Texte in den übrigen Sammlungen wurden allesamt im Handel erworben.

Eine systematische Durchsicht des Materials auf seine ursprünglichen Funktions- bzw. Archivzusammenhänge ist bisher noch nicht in einem wünschenswerten Umfang erfolgt. Trotzdem gibt es eine Anzahl wichtiger Arbeiten auf diesem Gebiet: Vor allem F.R. Kraus, W.F. Leemans, R. Harris, M. Stol, N. Yoffee, D. Charpin und W. Sommerfeld haben sich den Problemen der Sippar-Texte und möglichen Archivzusammenhängen gewidmet<sup>9</sup>. Ich selbst habe im Zusammenhang mit meiner Arbeit über das Priestertum in der altbabylonischen Zeit einiges zusammengestellt<sup>10</sup>, aber bei weitem nicht alles, was sich bei der Durcharbeitung des Materials ergab, verwerten können.

Die bisherigen Arbeiten haben die zahlreichen Briefe nicht oder nur zu einem geringen Teil berücksichtigt. Dies, obwohl sich besonders bei denen im Britischen Museum die Herkunft aus Sippar mit Hilfe der Sammlungsnummern 82-5-22 und AH 82-9-18 (CT 52 47ff.) zweifelsfrei feststellen läßt. Für die Briefe des Britischen Museums aus anderen Sammlungen, die ausschließlich aus dem Antikenhandel stammen, zum Beispiel die der Sammlungen 88-5-12 oder 91-5-9<sup>11</sup> lassen sich an Hand verschiedener Kriterien, vor allem auf Grund der Anrufung der Namen Šamaš und Marduk in den Grußformeln, eine Herkunft aus Abu Habbah-Sippar und Tell ed-Dēr mit hinlänglicher Sicherheit erweisen.

Die große Zahl der verfügbaren Texte und die eben geschilderten Sachverhalte bieten eine gute Voraussetzung — ja sie verlangen geradezu danach —, dieses Material systematisch nach archivalischen Zusammenhängen zu ordnen. Dieser Aufgabe widme ich mich seit einiger Zeit: Eine vollständige Verzettlung der Personennamen des gesamten altbabylonischen Briefmaterials aus Nordbabylonien im Rahmen unseres Projektes zur »Wirtschafts- und Sozialgeschichte des Alten

<sup>9</sup> F.R. Kraus, *Ein Edikt des Königs Ammišaduqa von Babylon* (SD 5; Leiden, 1958); W.F. Leemans, *The Old Babylonian Merchant* (SD 3; Leiden, 1950); R. Harris, *Ancient Sippar* (s. dazu die Rezension von M. Stol, *BiOr* 33 [1976], 146 ff.); N. Yoffee, *The Economic Role of the Crown in the Old Babylonian Period* (Malibu, 1977) (dazu die Rezension von D. Charpin, *JAOS* 100 [1980], 461 ff.); D. Charpin, *JA* 270 (1982), 25 ff.; W. Sommerfeld, *Marduk*.

<sup>10</sup> J. Renger, *ZA* 58 (1967) 110 ff. und *ZA* 59 (1968) 104 ff.

<sup>11</sup> Die Sammlung 88-5-12 wurde in Bagdad gekauft und soll aus Abu Habbah (Sippar) stammen, die Sammlung 91-5-9 und daneben die Sammlungen 92-5-6, 92-7-9 und 94-1-15 sollen aus Tell ed-Dēr stammen (s. dazu C.B.F. Walker in den oben Anm. 5 genannten Arbeiten). Einzelne Texte aus anderen Sammlungen, wie z.B. 92-5-16 und 1900-10-13, lassen sich mit 91-5-9 auf Grund von joins verbinden (s. *AbB* 7 134 bzw. 125). Nach mündl. Auskunft von H. Gasche und L. de Meyer befinden sich die Raublöcher, aus denen vermutlich diese Tafeln stammen, nur etwa 100 m entfernt vom Hause des galamaḫ Ur-Utu, das durch die belgischen Grabungen freigelegt wurde.

Vorderen Orients« hat dabei eine wichtige prosopographische Hilfestellung geleistet. Überdies wurden bei der bisherigen Arbeit zahlreiche Beziehungen zu Personen deutlich, die uns aus den Rechts- und Verwaltungsurkunden mit Titel und genauerer Datierung bereits gut bekannt sind.

Zum gegenwärtigen Zeitpunkt ist der größte Teil der Rechts- und Verwaltungsurkunden transkribiert und die meisten der darin enthaltenen Personennamen verzettelt<sup>12</sup>. Darüber hinaus werden sämtliche Texte auf Randlochkarten im Format DIN A5 (21 × 15cm) erfaßt. Dies erweist sich gegenüber der Benutzung eines Computers als sinnvoller. Die Lochkarten bieten auf ihrer Rückseite genügend Platz, um den gesamten Wortlaut einer Urkunde in verkleinerter Form anzubringen. Damit besteht jederzeit die Möglichkeit, bei den mit Hilfe eines bestimmten Lochcodes ausgeworfenen Karten sofort einen Überblick über den gesamten Kontext zu gewinnen. Bei Benutzung elektronischer Datenverarbeitung erhält man entweder nur einen Ausdruck von Belegstellen — eventuell mit minimalem Kontext —, worauf man sich die Texte dann einzeln zusammensuchen muß, oder aber man kann auf dem Monitor jeweils nur einen Text ansehen. Ein Ausdruck aller relevanten Texte durch einen angeschlossenen Drucker erfordert — gerade im Falle vieler Belegstellen — das erneute Sortieren der einzelnen ausgedruckten Texte, eine Arbeit, die bei Anwendung des oben geschilderten Systems von Randlochkarten ein für allemal getan ist.

Im Rahmen dieser Verzettelung sind nicht nur die Sippartexte, sondern alle Texte aus Nordbabylonien erfaßt. Dies schafft die Möglichkeit, mittels prosopographischer und anderer Kriterien Texte ungesicherter Provenienz bekannten Gruppen zuzuordnen. Auf der Basis dieser Verzettelung soll dann systematisch darangegangen werden, ursprüngliche Zusammenhänge zu rekonstruieren. Bei der bisherigen Beschäftigung mit dem Material aus Sippar ergaben sich für diese Aufgabe eine Reihe von Ansatzpunkten, auf die ich im folgenden näher eingehen möchte.

Die Feststellungen, die Christopher Walker im Vorwort zu *CT* 52 und in seinem Beitrag im dritten Band der Tell ed-Dēr-Ausgrabungen über die Herkunft der verschiedenen Sippar-Sammlungen im Britischen Museum gemacht hat, führen zu einem merkwürdigen Ergebnis: Unter den Texten, die dem Vernehmen nach aus Tell ed-Dēr stammen sollen — das sind vor allem die Sammlungen 91-5-9, 92-5-6, 92-7-9 und 94-15<sup>13</sup>, befindet sich ein sehr großer Teil der *naditu*-Briefe und Urkunden. Andererseits haben aber auch die Grabungen von Scheil in Sippar eine ganze Reihe von *naditu*-Texten ans Licht gebracht. Auch die an die Behörden von Sippar adressierten Königsbriefe stammen zu einem Teil ebenfalls aus dieser Gruppe, eindeutig aus den Grabungen Rassams in Sippar<sup>14</sup> aber nur sehr wenige (z.B. AbB 74ff. :

<sup>12</sup> Dankbar erwähne ich hier die Bereitwilligkeit einer Reihe Kollegen, eigene Umschriften von publizierten und unpublizierten Texten für unsere Arbeit zur Verfügung zu stellen: M. Gallery, K. van Lerberghe, M. Sigrist, M. Stol und W. Sommerfeld.

<sup>13</sup> S. oben Anm. 11.

<sup>14</sup> Z.B. AbB 7 46 (91-5-9 + 94-1-15) an Mardukmušallim, Nūratum, Abumwaqar, die Kaufmannschaft (*kārum*) und die Richter von Sippar.



Briefe des Abiešuh und Ammišaduqa an Mardukmušallim, Marduklamassašu und Sinbēlaplim)<sup>15</sup>. Andere Königsbriefe und die Behörden von Sippar (z.B. das *kārum* bzw. die Richter von Sippar) stammen aus Sammlungen, die im Handel erworben worden sind und über deren vermutete Herkunft aus den Aufzeichnungen<sup>16</sup> im Britischen Museum keine beweiskräftigen Schlüsse gezogen werden können. Ich möchte auf dieses Problem hier nur kurz hingewiesen haben, eine plausible Erklärung ist mir im Augenblick noch nicht möglich — dies muß weiterer Arbeit vorbehalten bleiben.

Der zeitliche Rahmen der Urkunden aus Sippar reicht von Immerum bis zu Samsuditana. Es fällt auf, daß die Urkunden aus dem Anfang der Hammurapi-Dynastie im wesentlichen Privaturkunden sind. Bei den Briefen besteht verständlicherweise weniger Sicherheit hinsichtlich ihrer Datierung. Eindeutig datierbare Briefe kennen wir aus der Zeit zwischen Samsuiluna und Samsuditana. Es ist nicht auszuschließen, daß sich unter den Briefen auch einige aus der Zeit Hammurapis befinden, wie dies bereits Ungnad in seiner Bearbeitung in *VAB* 6 angenommen hat<sup>17</sup>.

Schwieriger gestaltet sich die Aufgabe, den inhaltlichen Rahmen der aus Sippar stammenden Urkunden und Briefe abzustecken. Es besteht kein Zweifel, daß sich unter diesen Texten sowohl solche befinden, die Privatpersonen zuzuordnen sind, als auch solche, die institutionellen Haushalten oder einer »Behörde« zuzuschreiben sind. Daß Briefe und Urkunden, die auf den ersten Blick die äußeren Charakteristika eines Privatdokuments aufweisen, doch offizieller Natur sind, haben zahlreiche Untersuchungen der letzten Jahre zur Genüge gezeigt.

Das Erkennen ursprünglicher Archivzusammenhänge fußt vor allem auf der Prosopographie — mit all ihren Begrenzungen — (wenn z.B. Namen wechselweise in Kurz- oder Langform erscheinen: Etel-pī-Marduk/Etelpūm in *BE* 6/1 115:14), dem Beachten von Eides- und Datenformeln bei Urkunden und der Grußformeln bei den Briefen. Andere Kriterien treten hinzu, von denen jedes für sich allein kaum, sondern nur zusammen mit anderen zu einigermaßen sicheren Resultaten führen kann. Zu beachten sind:

(1) Orthographische Konventionen der Schreiber —

(2) Das Verwenden des Ventivs in Verbindung mit den in einem Brief erwähnten Ortsnamen, wodurch auf den Absenderort eines Briefes geschlossen werden kann<sup>18</sup>

<sup>15</sup> Briefe an Mardukmušallim, Marduklamassašu und Sinbēlaplim in *AbB* 7 47-50 (82-9-18).

<sup>16</sup> Nach freundl. Mitteilung von C. B. F. Walker. — Vgl. z.B. die von Samsuiluna und Abiešuh an Siniddinam, die Kaufmannschaft und die Richter von Sippar gerichteten Briefe (*AbB* 2 61 f., 64 f., 70 f., 74 und 78 aus den Sammlungen 98-5-14, 98-6-11, 98-7-9 und 99-6-10). In der gleichen Sammlung finden sich die Briefe des Abiešuh an Marduknāšir, die Kaufmannschaft und die Richter von Sippar (*AbB* 2, 66, 73, 79 und der Brief *AbB* 5, 155 aus Istanbul, der dort in der Lagaš-Sammlung inventarisiert ist).

<sup>17</sup> Vgl. A. Ungnad, *VAB* 6 Nr. 109-142. Beachte weiter Briefe des Sinmušallim an Marduknāšir und die Richter von Sippar (*AbB* 7 51, 91-5-9 »Tell ed-Dēr«) und des Abiešuh an Marduknāšir und die Richter von Sippar-Jahrurum (*AbB* 2 75, 98-7-11).

<sup>18</sup> Vgl. etwa *AbB* 1 102 (Absender sitzt in Babylon); *AbB* 7 154-156.

(3) Das Benutzen identischer Grußformeln bei gleichem Absendernamen (Sinnādīn-šumi)<sup>19</sup> —

(4) Das Verwenden von Anreden wie »mein Vater«, »mein Herr«, »mein Gebieter«, die auf hierarchische Unterschiede zwischen Absender und Empfänger schließen lassen —

(5) Darüber hinaus ist zu beachten, daß verschiedene, prosopographisch eindeutig zusammengehörende Texte vornehmlich in einer oder zwei Sammlungen zu finden sind, oder daß sie im Fall des Britischen Museums aus einer sogenannten »Collection« (z.B. 98-7-9<sup>20</sup>) stammen. So liegen z.B. die Urkunden der Iltani, Tochter des Königs Sinnuballit heute samt und sonders im Berliner Museum, zwei Urkunden aus anderen persönlichen Archiven aber, in denen sie lediglich als Zeuge auftritt, in Istanbul und in Philadelphia<sup>21</sup>. Ähnlich verhält es sich bei Utul-Ištar, dem *abu šābim*<sup>22</sup>. Besonders wichtig ist es aber, daß zwei Urkunden, die Utul-Ištar als verantwortlichen Beamten nennen, zu den von Edzard publizierten Texten aus Tell ed-Dēr gehören, die im Britischen Museum befindlichen dagegen aus der mutmaßlichen Tell ed-Dēr-Sammlung 91-5-9 stammen!<sup>23</sup>

Auf Grund der bisherigen Arbeiten ergibt sich für den inhaltlichen Rahmen der Archive aus den Texten aus Sippar unter Berücksichtigung der eben skizzierten Arbeitsmethoden folgendes — vorläufige — Bild:

#### *A. Offizielle Korrespondenz, Urkunden aus dem Bereich der Verwaltung*

Soweit Briefe betroffen sind, sind die entscheidenden Kriterien: der Absender (oft der König oder ein hoher Beamter) und das Nennen des Empfängers, der in einer großen Zahl von Fällen als »Behörde« oder Kollegium von Notabeln (z.B. die Briefe an Siniddinam, das *kārum* [die Kaufmannschaft] und die Richter von Sippar) ausgewiesen ist. Dazu gesellen sich inhaltliche Kriterien, sofern es sich um offensichtliche Verwaltungsanweisungen handelt. Bei den Verwaltungsurkunden ergibt sich die Zugehörigkeit zu einem der institutionellen Haushalte oft von selbst. Bei Rechtsurkunden, die aus dem Bereich der Verwaltung stammen, hilft in der Regel die Prosopographie. F.R. Kraus hat das am Beispiel des sog. »Leute-Vaters« Utul-Ištar vor langer Zeit gezeigt<sup>24</sup>.

Schwieriger gestaltet sich die Frage nach der Zugehörigkeit von Urkunden und Briefen zu bestimmten Verwaltungseinheiten.

<sup>19</sup> Absender Sinnādīnšumi, gleiche Grußformeln in *PBS* 7 91 und 92 und in *AbB* 7 114.

<sup>20</sup> S. oben Anm. 16.

<sup>21</sup> V. Scheil, *Sippar* Nr. 74; *PBS* 8/2 207.

<sup>22</sup> B. Meissner, *BAP* 4 und 74 (s. N. Yoffee, *Economic Role of the Crown*, 55).

<sup>23</sup> S. aber auch die Bemerkung von M. Stol, *BiOr* 33 (1976), 152 f., der es für möglich hält, daß Utul-Ištar nicht nur in Sippar, sondern auch in Dilbat und Kiš tätig war. Ähnlich auch D. Charpin, *JAOS* 100 (1980), 466 f. und 270 (1982), 27.

<sup>24</sup> F.R. Kraus, *Edikt* 98 ff. Die gleiche Textgruppe behandeln N. Yoffee, *Economic Role of the Crown* 12 f. und D. Charpin, *JA* 270 (1982), 25 ff.

Das Bild, das Rivkah Harris für die Zeit nach Hammurapi gezeichnet hat, legt es durchaus nahe, mit verschiedenen solcher Einheiten zu rechnen. Bezeichnungen, wie der von N. Yoffee<sup>25</sup> geprägte Begriff »bureau of agricultural affairs« geben Anlaß zu weiterer Untersuchung: Die mit dem Ausdruck »Büro« geweckte Vorstellung von einer Departmentalisierung der Verwaltung steht im Widerspruch zum Konzept der oikos-Wirtschaft. Die Analyse der Zuständigkeiten im Archiv des Lú-igi-sá<sup>26</sup> etwa mahnt hier zur Vorsicht und gibt Anlaß, dieser grundsätzlichen Frage der altbabylonischen Staatsorganisation und der wirtschaftlichen Aktivitäten des Palastes weiter nachzugehen.

Folgende institutionelle Archivkomplexe zeichnen sich für Sippar ab:

1). Eine Gruppe von Briefen nennt als Adressaten von Samsuiluna bis Abiešuh die Kaufmannschaft (von) Sippar und die Richter von Sippar als des Königs lokales Gegenüber<sup>27</sup>. Anhand der Urkunden läßt sich diese Feststellung auch noch bis in die Zeit des Ammišaduqa ausdehnen, wie dies F. R. Kraus kürzlich gezeigt hat<sup>28</sup>.

2). Ibbi-Enlil, der Katasterbeamte (*rabi sikkatim*), und die Opferschauer von Sippar-Jahrurum sind die Adressaten einer weiteren Gruppe von Briefen<sup>29</sup> der Könige Ammišaduqa und Samsuditana — alle im Berliner Museum. Ein Brief an den *wakil tamkarī* von Sippar-Jahrurum befindet sich in der BM collection 91-5-9<sup>30</sup>!

3). Die Briefe des Ammišaduqa — aus dessen 15. Regierungsjahr — an Mardukmušallim, Marduklamassašu und Sinbēlaplim stammen aus den Rassamschen Grabungen in Abu Habbah-Sippar (Sammlung AH 82-9-18)<sup>31</sup>. Wenn es sich bei den beiden erstgenannten tatsächlich um die »Leute-Väter« (*abbū šābim*) handelt, wie allgemein angenommen<sup>32</sup>, stellt sich erneut die Frage nach dem Verhältnis zu den Urkunden, in denen sie auftreten — diese stammen aus der mutmaßlichen Tell ed-Dēr-Sammlung 91-5-9. Außerdem besteht hier möglicherweise noch ein chronologisches Problem (Urkunden Ad 1-14; Briefe Aš 15: Amtsdauer von über 38 Jahren)<sup>33</sup>. Auf jeden Fall zeichnen sich deutlich die Verantwortungsbereiche des *abu šābim* — z.B. Utul-Ištar —, und die des *mu'errum* ab. Zu letzterem müssen wir wohl auch die

<sup>25</sup> N. Yoffee, *a.a.O.*, 31.

<sup>26</sup> S. Walter, *Waters for Larsa* (YNER 4; New Haven, 1970). Beachte, daß die Aktivitäten des Lú-igi-sá Ackerbau, Viehwirtschaft und eine Reihe anderer Arbeiten betreffen. Allerdings stammt das Archiv aus Südbabylonien und aus einer Zeit, die weit über 200 Jahre vor der Zeit des Utul-Ištar liegt.

<sup>27</sup> S. die Briefe an Siniddinam bzw. an Marduknāšir, die Kaufmannschaft und die Richter von Sippar (vgl. oben Anm. 16) und den Brief Mardukmušallim (oben Anm. 14).

<sup>28</sup> F. R. Kraus, in: A. Finet, ed., *Les pouvoirs locaux en Mésopotamie et dans les régions adjacentes* (Brüssel, 1982), 29 ff.

<sup>29</sup> *AbB* 6 26 f., 59-61, 97. Es scheint mir nicht ausgeschlossen, daß Ibbi-Enlil mit dem häufig belegten Schreiber gleichen Namens identisch ist (Belege bei R. Harris, *Ancient Sippar* 297, s.v. Ibbi-Sin). Das legen die in den Texten erwähnten Sachverhalte nahe.

<sup>30</sup> *AbB* 2 53.

<sup>31</sup> *AbB* 1 2, *AbB* 7 47 f. und wohl auch 49 f.

<sup>32</sup> M. Stol, *BiOr* 33 (1976), 149.

<sup>33</sup> Belege bei N. Yoffee, *Economic Role of the Crown* 56 f.

umfangreichen Personenlisten aus M. Birot, *TEBA* N°. 70 und 70<sup>bis</sup> und *CT* 6 pl. 15-18 (91-5-9) stellen.

4). Weitere Gruppen zusammenliegender Briefe zeichnen sich ab, lassen sich aber nur schwer einer bestimmten Verwaltungs- oder Haushaltseinheit zuordnen. Hierher gehören etwa die mit der Schafschur befaßten Briefe des Ammišaduqa an Ibnisin<sup>34</sup>.

5). Urkunden aus der Zeit des Sinmuballiṭ und des Hammurapi nennen Mitarbeiter, die von verschiedenen Personen gestellt wurden (in den Museen von Berlin, Kopenhagen, London und Paris)<sup>35</sup>. Ob diese Urkunden ebenso wie z.B. die zahlreichen gleichzeitigen Verwaltungsurkunden aus dem Berliner Museum zum Bereich der königlichen Verwaltung gehören oder zu der des Šamaštempels, bedarf der Untersuchung.

6). Neben den Urkunden aus dem Šamaštempel<sup>36</sup> — unter ihnen zahlreiche über Tempeldarlehen<sup>37</sup> — sind uns eine Reihe Urkunden aus der Verwaltung des *gagûm* erhalten<sup>38</sup>. Unter den Briefen finden sich bisher nur zwei, die ich einem der zahlreichen Priester und Verwalter des Šamaštempels oder des *gagûm* mit Sicherheit zuweisen kann<sup>39</sup>.

7). Zwar kennen wir viele Urkunden und Briefe, die militärische Angelegenheiten betreffen, und Urkunden, die Militärpersonen erwähnen. Aber eindeutige Umrisse eines Militärarchivs lassen sich noch nicht recht erkennen<sup>40</sup>.

Bei der weiteren Arbeit wird es zunächst darauf ankommen, die bisher eher hierarchische und diachronische Darstellung des Verwaltungssystems, das sich im wesentlichen auf die zeitliche Abfolge von Inhabern gleicher Ämter bezog, zu horizontalen Organisationsschemata auszubauen. Ein erfolgversprechendes Vorgehen hierbei scheint es mir zu sein, wenn bei bestimmten Urkundengruppen nicht nur nach der Leitperson, wie etwa dem schon erwähnten Utul-Ištar oder dem *wakil tamkarī*, Utušumundib, gefragt wird, sondern auch nach dem jeweiligen Urkundenschreiber oder anderen handelnden Personen. Es ergeben sich dann interessante Querverbindungen. So läßt sich der Schreiber Šumumliši mit einem gewissen Iddin-Ea, aber auch mit den *abbū šābim* Utul-Ištar und Mardukmuballiṭ und anderen

<sup>34</sup> *AbB* 2 48-52 (91-5-9 bzw. 94-1-15), *AbB* 7 32 (91-5-9), außerdem die adressenlosen Briefe *AbB* 7 160-164 (91-5-9), vgl. hierzu und zu weiteren zu diesem Archiv gehörigen Texten D. Charpin, *JA* 270 (1982), 29f.

<sup>35</sup> S. dazu M. Weitemeyer, *Some Aspects of the Hiring of Workers in the Sippar Region at the Time of Hammurabi* (Kopenhagen, 1962).

<sup>36</sup> Vgl. Harris, *Ancient Sippar* 204 ff.

<sup>37</sup> S. Harris, *a.a.O.* 207 und füge hinzu die Sammelurkunde *VAS* 9 136/137 — ohne Name des Gottes, aber mit dem gleichen verantwortlichen Beamten wie in *VAS* 9 128.

<sup>38</sup> Beachte vor allem *BE* 6/1 109 (Sd) ist die Etikette eines Tontafelbehälters, in dem u.a. Urkunden des *gagûm* aufbewahrt waren. Für andere Urkunden s. R. Harris, *JESHO* 6 (1963) 121 ff.

<sup>39</sup> Beide des Rapaš-šilli-Ea (Ham. 31-Si 25), uгуla lukur: *AbB* 1 129 (91-5-9) und T. Fish, *Letters* No. 908.

<sup>40</sup> Zum Militär in Sippar im allgemeinen s. R. Harris, *a.a.O.* 86 ff. — Beachte allerdings, daß die von ihr als Militärpersonen angesehenen *abbū šābim* und *dumu.é.dub.ba.a* nicht zum Militär gehören.

Beamten verbinden<sup>41</sup>. Der Schreiber Awēl-Sin erscheint vornehmlich in Urkunden des *wakil tamkāri* Utušumundib<sup>42</sup>.

## B. *Private Archive*

(1) Unter den sogenannten Privatarchiven fallen zunächst diejenigen der *nadiātum* auf. Sie lassen sich besonders leicht anhand prosopographischer und anderer innerer Kriterien zusammenstellen. Das gilt auch für die Bestimmung vieler Briefe, die sich nicht nur durch die typischen Namen der *nadiātum*, sondern auch durch besondere Grußformeln aussondern lassen. Die Archive der einzelnen *nadiātum* sind in vielen Fällen über verschiedene Sammlungen und Museen verstreut. Allerdings gibt es mehrere Fälle, in denen alle bisher bekannten Urkunden eines Archivs aus einer der großen Sammlungen stammen. Dies mag bei der weiteren Arbeit von Bedeutung sein<sup>43</sup>. Eindeutig aus Abu Habbah-Sippar stammen die von Scheil gefundenen Texte der *nadiātum* Narubtum und Mannatum<sup>44</sup>.

(2) Eine zweite Gruppe, die besonders ins Auge fällt, sind Briefe und Urkunden, die von Kaufleuten stammen. Unter den Briefen finden sich einmal solche, die von außerhalb an einzelne Kaufleute in Sippar von deren Geschäftspartnern gerichtet sind, wie etwa die Briefe aus Assur an Warad-Sin<sup>45</sup>. Andererseits kennen wir Briefe, die einzelnen Kaufleuten nach Orten außerhalb Sippars geschickt worden sind, und die diese dann später mit sich nach Sippar zurückgebracht haben<sup>46</sup>.

Aber nicht immer ist die Einteilung so einfach und so offensichtlich wie oben geschildert. Ein gutes Beispiel bietet das Archiv der *nadītu* Amat-Šamaš, der Tochter

<sup>41</sup> Belege bei R. Harris, *Ancient Sippar* 301.

<sup>42</sup> R. Harris, *a.a.O.* 297. Fünf Urkunden stammen aus der Sammlung 91-5-9 (»Tell ed-Dēr«), eine aus der Sammlung 88-5-18 (angeblich Sippar). In letzterer tritt Awēl-Sin als Pächter auf, ebenso in *TCL* 1 155. In *PBS* 8/2 2/9 (Quittung über den Empfang von Gerste) befindet er sich unter den Verwaltungsbeamten. Als Schreiber schließlich fungiert er auch in *TCL* 1 221. Verbindung zu Utul-Ištar stellen die Urkunden L. Waterman, *Business Documents* 19, *CT* 6 37c und *CT* 8 11c dar. Iddin-Ea (bekannt aus dem Utul-Ištar-Archiv; dazu N. Yoffee, *Economic Role of the Crown* 20) ist der Verantwortliche in *PBS* 8/2 219.

<sup>43</sup> S. etwa die Huzalatum, Tochter des Akšāja, betreffenden Texte in *CT* 8 31a, *CT* 47 9, 20, 25, 32f. und Waterman, *Business Documents* 40, die aus den Sammlungen 91-5-9, 92-5-16 und 94-1-15 (»Tell ed-Dēr«) stammen.

<sup>44</sup> Narubtum: T. Friedrich *BA* 5/4 No. 51 — s. dazu V. Scheil, *Sippar* 25, Friedrich, *a.a.O.* 445, R. Harris, *JCS* 16 (1962) 10f. — Mannatum, Tochter des Jamsi-El: V. Scheil, *Sippar* No. 35 (= *AbB* 5 207), s. dazu R. Harris, *a.a.O.* 10. Die dort zitierten Texte stammen alle aus der Khabaza-Collection des University Museum in Philadelphia. Harris erwähnt allerdings den Brief *AbB* 5 207 nicht.

<sup>45</sup> *PBS* 7 49, s. dazu W. F. Leemans, *Merchant* 32 mit Anm. 100 und S. 100f., *AbB* 2 155, *AbB* 7 76, 120. Aššur-asū (Absender in *PBS* 7 49 und *AbB* 2 155) kommt auch in *AbB* 2 141:11 (Absender Tatūr-Mātum) vor, die auch den Brief *AbB* 2 140 (an Warad-Sin [?]) geschrieben hat. Zu diesen und anderen Sippartexten, die sich auf Handelsbeziehungen nach Assur beziehen, s. C. B. F. Walker, »Some Assyrians at Sippar in the Old Babylonian Period«, *An. St.* 30 (1980) 15ff.

<sup>46</sup> S. dazu die Briefe der Amat-Šamaš an den reisenden Lú.dingir.maḥ (*AbB* 7 12-16, *AbB* 1 130). Gehören hierher auch die Briefe der Amat-Šamaš *AbB* 7 11 (Ekallātum erwähnt) und 17? Zu Lú.dingir.maḥ s. auch C. B. F. Walker, *a.a.O.* 16. Ein weiterer Brief des Lú.dingir.maḥ (an É.dim<sub>7</sub>.an.na.ma.an.sum) ist *AbB* 2 105.

des Warad-Enlil. Die meisten Texte dieses Archivs befinden sich im Vorderasiatischen Museum zu Berlin, eine einzelne Urkunde im Louvre<sup>47</sup>. Unter den Berliner Texten finden sich nun auch Urkunden ihres Vaters Warad-Enlil, in denen die Tochter in keiner Weise erwähnt wird<sup>48</sup>. Es liegt nahe, daß alle diese Texte in einer einzigen Raubgrabung gefunden worden sind, die Texte von Vater und Tochter ursprünglich also an einer einzigen Stelle aufbewahrt worden sind. Warad-Enlil selbst scheint zum Šamaštempel gehört zu haben: *TCL* 1 78 nennt ihn zusammen mit Šilli-Ninkarrak, einem Beamten des Tempels<sup>49</sup>.

Daß sich aber auch private Affären mit denen eines offiziellen Haushaltes vermischen können, veranschaulichen in besonderer Weise die Archive der beiden Königstöchter namens Iltani, den Töchtern des Sinmuballit beziehungsweise des Abiešuh. Urkunden, in denen beider Name erwähnt wird, sind ganz eindeutig offiziellen Verwaltungseinheiten zuzurechnen. Iltani, die Tochter des Sinmuballit und Schwester Hammurapis, nimmt offensichtlich Aufgaben wahr, die mit der Bereitstellung von Opfergaben in Zusammenhang stehen<sup>50</sup>. Bei Iltani, der Tochter des Abiešuh, scheint es sich eher um die Verwaltung eines umfangreichen Haushaltes zu handeln, der ihr als Mitglied der königlichen Familie unterstand, wozu sich ausführlich Rivkah Harris und ich mich selbst geäußert haben<sup>51</sup>.

Bei der Rekonstruktion der privaten Archive verdienen aber auch die Schreiber und die Zeugen besondere Aufmerksamkeit, weil dies — ebenso wie bei den offiziellen Archiven — interessante Querverbindungen zutage bringen und wichtige Aufschlüsse über die Lebensstrukturen in Sippar ergeben kann.

Die Arbeit an der Rekonstruktion der altbabylonischen Archive aus Sippar und anderen Orten Nord- und Südbabyloniens steht noch am Anfang. Die Ergebnisse, die solches Bemühen hervorbringen kann, sind sicher durch diesen Bericht und viele der Arbeiten, die darin zitiert werden, deutlich geworden. Daß die bisher angewandten Arbeitsmethoden und Kriterien für die Herkunftsbestimmung und die

<sup>47</sup> Belege bei R. Harris, *JCS* 16 (1962), 3.

<sup>48</sup> *VAS* 8 30, 36, 39/40, 41/42, 43/44, 46.

<sup>49</sup> Vgl. dazu auch R. Harris, *Ancient Sippar* 164 mit Anm. 55.

<sup>50</sup> Vgl. die Texte *VAS* 13 (mit Siegel der Iltani) und 15, die sehr wahrscheinlich mit *VAS* 9 14-18 zusammengehören.

<sup>51</sup> R. Harris, *JCS* 16 (1962), 6 ff., J. Renger, *ZA* 58 (1967), 164 f. Seitdem sind noch weitere Texte bekannt geworden, die ihren Herdenbesitz betreffen: *AbB* 6 13 wendet sich eine Königstochter wegen ihrer Herden an einen gewissen Ikün-pī-Sin. Ein Hirte (sipa) gleichen Namens erscheint in einem Brief des Abiešuh (*AbB* 7 46). Absender des Briefes *AbB* 7 74 (91-5-9), der von Viehherden handelt, ist ebenfalls Ikün-pī-Sin. Herden einer Iltani sind Gegenstand eines weiteren Briefes (*AbB* 7 139 [88-5-12], Ikün-pī-Sin nicht erwähnt). Ob mit diesen Briefen auch *AbB* 1 5 (92-7-9, »Tell ed-Dēr«; Absender Ikün-pī-Sin, behandelt u.a. das Dreschen von Gerste) zu verbinden ist, vermag ich nicht zu sagen.

Zuordnung von Texten zueinander ergänzt, erweitert und vertieft werden können, hoffe ich gezeigt zu haben<sup>52</sup>.

<sup>52</sup> Vgl. etwa den Schreiber Ipiq-Aja (Belege bei R. Harris, *Ancient Sippar* 297): Die meisten Urkunden, die er schrieb, betreffen Angelegenheiten der *nadiātum* Bēlessunu und ihrer Schwester Annabatum, Töchter des Ikūn-pī-Sin bzw. seiner Familie. In zwei Fällen schrieb er für Iltani, die Tochter des Āpil-ilišu (*CT* 2 5 und *JCS* 11 (1957) 23 Nr. 9), für die auch ein anderer Schreiber — Enlil-abum — eine Urkunde verfaßte (*CT* 4 49b). Enlil-abum selbst erscheint darüber hinaus als Schreiber in den Urkunden folgender *nadiātum*: Muhadditum (*CT* 45 10), Lamassī (*CT* 4 44b, *TCL* 1 73), Amat-Šamaš, Tochter des Warad-Enlil (*VAS* 8 89). Möglicherweise gehört hierher auch Enlil-abum, Sohn des Puzur-Šamaš (*TCL* 1 64; *VAS* 8 97/98, Urkunde der Amat-Šamaš, Tochter des Warad-Enlil).

## ALTBABYLONISCHE PRIVATARCHIVE BABYLONS

HORST KLENGEL (Berlin)

Vom Oktober 1907 bis September 1912 sind in dem »Merkes« genannten Teil des Stadtgebietes Babylons unter der Leitung von R. Koldewey Ausgrabungen durchgeführt worden, die bis in die altbabylonische Siedlungsschicht vordringen konnten. Der Dammbruch am Hindija ließ den Hilla-Arm des Euphrat zeitweilig trockenfallen, wodurch im Stadtgebiet Babylons der Grundwasserspiegel sank<sup>1</sup>. Die Grabungen konnten dadurch im Bereich der etwa 1 km langen und 400 m breiten, relativ hohen Hügelgruppe des »Merkes«, unter der der alte Stadtkern vermutet werden durfte, in größere Tiefe vordringen. Etwa 12 m unter der Hügeloberfläche wurde die altbabylonische Wohnschicht erreicht, damit aber zugleich der neue Grundwasserspiegel. Auch nachdem der Euphratarm bei Babylon wieder, wenngleich zunächst in geringerer Menge, Wasser führte, blieb das Grundwasser noch in der Höhe der altbabylonischen Schicht<sup>2</sup>. Die archäologischen Forschungen konnten hier noch über mehrere Jahre fortgesetzt werden; am 23. September 1912 wurden die Arbeiten im »Merkes«-Gebiet dann eingestellt<sup>3</sup>. Die Siedlungsreste altbabylonischer Zeit gerieten wiederum in das ansteigende Grundwasser; weitere Untersuchungen wären hier nur noch unter einem aufwendigen Einsatz von Motorpumpen möglich gewesen<sup>4</sup>. Diese Situation ist durch die in den *MDOG* veröffentlichten Berichte, die zusammenfassende Darstellung der Babylon-Grabungen durch R. Koldewey sowie die wissenschaftliche Publikation des Grabungsbefundes im »Merkes« durch O. Reuther allgemein bekannt. In diesen Veröffentlichungen wurde auch auf die Tontafelfunde hingewiesen, die in der altbabylonischen Siedlungsschicht gemacht wurden<sup>5</sup>.

Die Tontafeln fanden sich vereinzelt fast überall im untersuchten Gebiet, konzentriert aber an zwei Stellen, die etwas eingehender erforscht werden konnten. Es handelt sich um die Planquadrate 25 p 2 und 22 k 2, -1,20 bis -1,30 bzw. -1 bis -2 m

<sup>1</sup> O. Reuther, *Die Innenstadt von Babylon (Merkes)* (Leipzig, 1926; *WVDOG* 47), 6. Im folgenden: O. Reuther, *Merkes*.

<sup>2</sup> Nach dem Bericht von G. Buddensieg, *MDOG* 40 (1909), 13, lag am 3. März 1909 der Grundwasserspiegel noch bei -1,50 m, obwohl der Euphrat seit dem 19. Februar wieder in geringer Breite floß.

<sup>3</sup> G. Buddensieg, *MDOG* 51 (1913), 10. Die Einstellung der Merkes-Grabung erfolgte in Zusammenhang mit der Abreise O. Reuthers aus Babylon. Die Untersuchungen wurden später von der deutschen Expedition nicht wieder aufgenommen.

<sup>4</sup> O. Reuther, *Merkes* 6 ff. und 41 ff.

<sup>5</sup> Vgl. R. Koldewey, *Das wieder erstehende Babylon* (Leipzig 1925), 238 ff.; O. Reuther, *Merkes* 7 f.



unter dem von der Expedition festgelegten Nullpunkt des Stadtniveaus. Bei den Ausgrabungen in 25 p standen die Arbeiter zuletzt bis an die Knie im Schlamm; die Untersuchung des Raumes mit den Tontafelfunden mußte schließlich durch das Vortreiben eines Tunnels in die 12m senkrecht aufragende Grabungswand abgeschlossen werden<sup>6</sup>. Ähnliche Schwierigkeiten führten dazu, daß außer den beiden etwas besser erforschten Häusern eine ganze Reihe von Bauten nur angeschnitten werden konnten. Dennoch kamen an den meisten Grabungsstellen Tontafeln altbabylonischer Zeit zutage<sup>7</sup>. Man darf annehmen, daß bei großflächigeren Untersuchungen in einer größeren Zahl von Häusern Tontafelarchive bzw. Ansammlungen von Tafeln freigelegt worden wären. Der private Charakter dieser Bauten könnte durch die relativ dünnen Lehmziegelmauern, die auf Lagen gebrannter Ziegel aufsaßen, angedeutet werden<sup>8</sup>. Der Charakter der in ihnen gefundenen Tafeln scheint gleichfalls auf Privathäuser hinzuweisen. Es ist aber möglich, daß in diesem Wohnviertel unweit nordöstlich des Marduk-Heiligtums von Babylon auch Tontafeln archiviert wurden, die mit einer Amtstätigkeit eines Hausbewohners verbunden waren.

Nach dem Bericht O. Reuthers<sup>9</sup> lagen in 25 p 2 die Tafeln in zwei Zimmern zwischen den Scherben großer Tongefäße, in denen sie offenbar aufbewahrt worden waren. Andere hatten ihren Platz unter dem Lehmfußboden gefunden; bei der Erneuerung des Fußbodens waren ausgesonderte Tafeln in die Füllerde getan worden. Das Haus fiel einige Zeit danach einer Brandkatastrophe zum Opfer. Wie verkohlte Palmholzbalken und im Feuer gerötete Lehmbrocken zeigen, stürzte dabei die Decke des Hauses herab, wobei wohl auch die Gefäße mit den Tafeln zertrümmert wurden.

Was den zweiten Platz mit umfangreicheren Tafelfunden betrifft, 22 k 2 (nördlich des Istar-Tempels), so waren hier bis September 1912 acht Räume vollständig und vier weitere teilweise ausgegraben<sup>10</sup>. Auch hier weist der Befund auf eine Brandkatastrophe. Die Tafeln lagen teils unter dem Schutt der herabgestürzten Decke, teils in dem oberen Bereich des Brandschuttes selbst. Das spricht für die Aufbewahrung eines Teiles der Tafeln im Obergeschoß oder auf dem Dach; die Existenz eines Obergeschosses wurde von den Ausgräbern allerdings wegen der nur geringen Mauerstärke in Zweifel gezogen. Die Fundlage der Tafeln in -1 oder -2 m Tiefe bedeutet, falls die entsprechenden Eintragungen im Grabungsjournal korrekt sind,

<sup>6</sup> R. Koldewey, *MDOG* 38 (1908), 10.

<sup>7</sup> Nach den Tiefenangaben des Fundjournals, die allerdings nicht durchweg als sicherer Hinweis auf die altbabylonische Zeit zu werten sind (vgl. etwa den in 25 n 2 in nur 0,32 m Tiefe gefundenen altbabylonischen Brief *VS* 22, 87), wären allein für die auf Taf. 8 bei O. Reuther, *Merkes*, eingetragenen Grabungsstellen 10 als Fundplätze altbabylonischer Tafeln zu bezeichnen.

<sup>8</sup> R. Koldewey, *MDOG* 38 (1908), 9; O. Reuther, *Merkes* 41 ff.

<sup>9</sup> *Merkes* 7.

<sup>10</sup> O. Reuther, *MDOG* 49 (1912), 11.

nicht notwendigerweise eine wesentlich verschiedene Abfassungszeit der Texte. Soweit überhaupt sichere Datierungen vorgenommen werden können, stammen die Tafeln beider Lagerungen aus der Regierungszeit des Samsuiluna.

In der Merkes-Publikation O. Reuthers sind die Tafelfunde teilweise in den Planstreifen-Querschnitten notiert oder wurden in die Zeichnungen der Häuser eingetragen<sup>11</sup>. Das hilft bei einer Zuordnung der Tafeln nur bedingt, da die Fundnummern nur in wenigen Fällen auf die Tafeln selbst geschrieben worden sind. Eine Reihe besser erhaltener Tafeln wurden auch fotografiert, doch sind auf den Sammelfotos die Fundnummern nicht mit angegeben. So bleiben für die Zuweisung der Texte zu einem bestimmten Hausarchiv weitgehend inhaltliche, d.h. vor allem onomastische Kriterien.

Nach den Grabungsjournalen zu urteilen, sind in 25 p 2 insgesamt 181 Tafeln oder Tafelfragmente gefunden worden, in 22 k 2 etwa 250. Hinzu kommen einige vereinzelt Tafelfunde in anderen altbabylonischen Wohnhäusern. Auf der Grundlage der Fundjournalen können ungefähr 430 bis 450 Tafeln der Grabungen auf dem »Merkes« als einigermaßen sicher altbabylonisch erschlossen werden. Dabei sind nicht jene ungebrannten Stücke eingerechnet, die durch die lange Lagerung im Grundwasser zu einem unlöslichen Klumpen zusammengeklebt waren<sup>12</sup>.

Von diesen Tafeln sind nicht alle in das Vorderasiatische Museum Berlin gelangt. Das zeigen die Fotos von altbabylonischen Texten, die im Bestand dieses Museums nicht nachzuweisen sind, sowie ein Vergleich der im Grabungsjournal genannten und der im Museum vorhandenen Fragmente<sup>13</sup>. In VS 22 sind 92 Ganztafeln oder Fragmente ediert worden; in einer Nachlese konnten 19 weitere Texte zur Publikation (in AoF 11) vorbereitet werden, die allerdings in ihrer zeitlichen Zuordnung nicht immer gesichert und meist schlecht erhalten sind. Der noch verbleibende Rest sind mehrere Dutzend kleiner, oft nur noch wenige Zeichen enthaltende bzw. durch das Grundwasser fast unkenntlich gemachte Bruchstücke von Urkunden und Briefen sowie einige literarische Fragmente<sup>14</sup>. Bearbeitungen der Texte bzw. Bemerkungen zum Tafelinhalt werden demnächst in AoF 10 (1983) und 11 (1984) erscheinen<sup>15</sup>. Im folgenden seien nur einige Bemerkungen zum Problem der Archive angeschlossen,

<sup>11</sup> O. Reuther, *Merkes* Taf. 3-4 und 9. Die Angabe der Fundnummern für 25 p 2 ist dabei summarisch; einbezogen sind auch andere Fundobjekte.

<sup>12</sup> Vgl. G. Buddensieg, *MDOG* 42 (1909), 21 und O. Reuther, *MDOG* 49 (1912), 10.

<sup>13</sup> So ist z.B. auch der in *MDOG* 38 (1908), 8 abgebildete Text der Zeit Ammiditanas unter dem Berliner Material nicht zu identifizieren. Die Bezeichnung als »altbabylonisch« ist weder im Fundjournal noch im Museumsinventar stets zutreffend; sie schließt auch Texte der frühen Kassitenzeit mit ein, die von denen der spät-altbabylonischen Periode oft schwer zu unterscheiden sind.

<sup>14</sup> Einige lexikalische und literarische Fragmente aus Babylon, die sicher oder möglicherweise der späten altbabylonischen oder frühen kassitischen Zeit zugehören, werden gegenwärtig von J. van Dijk zur Edition in VS vorbereitet.

<sup>15</sup> Auf einige interessante Texte bzw. Textaussagen wurde kürzlich in den *Festschriften* für L. Matouš und I. M. Diakonoff hingewiesen, ferner im Band »*Gesellschaft und Kultur im alten Vorderasien*« (1982). Auf einige historisch oder topographisch interessante Informationen durch die Babylon-Texte wurde 1981 auf dem Baghdader Symposium aufmerksam gemacht.

wobei einige Texte einzubeziehen sind, die auf Grund ihrer Personennamen und Daten mit Sicherheit dem Tafelfund in 25 p 2 zugewiesen werden können und in *YOS* 13 publiziert wurden<sup>16</sup>.

Bei den durch Fundnummer für das Haus 22 k zu sichernden Tafeln gestatten die Personennamen keine Zusammenordnung mehrerer Texte. Alle datierbaren Tafeln dieses Fundplatzes stammen aus der Regierungszeit Samsuilunas, doch erweckt dieser Tafelfund einen wenig geschlossenen Eindruck. Was die der Fundstelle 25 p zugehörenden Tafeln betrifft, so handelt es sich bei ihnen um Texte der Zeit des Abi'ešuh und — in größerer Zahl — der Könige Ammiditana, Ammišaduqa und Samsuditana. Sie erwähnen mehrfach Angehörige einer bestimmten Familie, und zwar Ibni-Amurru<sup>17</sup> sowie den *tamkārum* Kurū<sup>18</sup>, beide Söhne eines gewissen, in den Texten nicht als agierende Person auftretenden Panigarra-abi. Kurū war mit Mindi-ila verheiratet<sup>19</sup>. Ibni-Amurru tritt in Verbindung mit Feldpacht und Darlehen auf, Kurū in Zusammenhang mit verschiedenen Geldgeschäften und dem Kauf einer Sklavin. Der in einem dieser Texte genannte Schreiber Šumma-ilum erscheint in dieser Funktion noch in einer Anzahl weiterer Urkunden<sup>20</sup>. Diese wiederum lassen eine Verbindung zu einem gewissen Etel-pī-Marduk herstellen, der in geschäftlichen Beziehungen zum Schreiber Nam.lugal.a.ni.du<sub>10</sub> stand<sup>21</sup>. So ließen sich durch Personennamen oder auch sachliche Bezüge die dem Hausarchiv 25 p zuzuweisenden Texte an Zahl über jene hinaus erweitern, die durch eine Grabungsnummer und eine damit ermöglichte Fundortbestimmung sicher als zugehörig festzustellen sind; der Archivzusammenhang wird dabei jedoch immer weniger einsichtig.

Eine weitere Gruppe von Tafeln läßt sich auf Grund des Namens des *abi šābim* Ibni-Šamaš zusammenstellen<sup>22</sup>. Dieser kommt auch in einem Text des Ibni-Amurru vor (*VS* 22 24), womit ein Kontakt zu den Texten der Panigarra-abi — Söhne gegeben ist. Ibni-Šamaš stand in enger Verbindung zu Marduk-mušallim, Sohn des Rīš-Nabium, der seinerseits wieder in zwei weiteren Texten auftritt<sup>23</sup>. Auf der Basis einer Personenidentität können auch andere Tafeln zu Gruppen geordnet werden,

<sup>16</sup> *YOS* 13, 365 (Gerstedarlehen, Zeit Samsuditanas): Morgan Library Collection); *YOS* 13, 428 (Silberdarlehen, Zeit Samsuditanas): Yale Babylonian Collection. Der in *VS* 22, 14:35 (Innentafel) genannte Schreiber Adad-napišti-ušur dürfte mit dem in *YOS* 13, 5:17 (Harvard Semitic Museum) erwähnten Schreiber dieses nicht häufigen Namens identisch sein (Datum abgebrochen; *VS* 22, 14: Ammiditana). Im Hinblick auf die engen Verbindungen Babylons vor allem mit Sippar und Kiš kann daraus ein Archivzusammenhang nicht gesichert werden.

<sup>17</sup> *VS* 22, 24, 25, 26, 27, 31, 55.

<sup>18</sup> *VS* 22, 19, 54, 66, 68, 70<sup>2</sup>, 73<sup>2</sup>, 91<sup>2</sup>; vgl. auch den Zeugen dieses Namens und Titels in *YOS* 13, 277 (Zeit Samsuditanas).

<sup>19</sup> *VS* 22, 54. Vgl. dieselbe Person in *VS* 22, 83?

<sup>20</sup> *VS* 22, 19, 20, 28, 31, 35, 39, 40.

<sup>21</sup> *VS* 22, 44, 45, 50. Diese Texte datieren aus den Jahren Samsuditana 18-21; der Name (»sein Königtum ist gut«) könnte noch auf die Regierung Ammišaduqa zu beziehen sein.

<sup>22</sup> *VS* 22, 33, 34, 37, 49, *YOS* 13, 428.

<sup>23</sup> *VS* 22, 38, 41.

wobei die Datierung in die Zeit des Samsuditana von vornherein ein Indiz für eine Zuweisung zum Hausarchiv 25 p zu sein scheint<sup>24</sup>.

Im Hinblick auf den Fundplatz 25 p sollte dabei jedoch zwischen einer jüngeren (Zeit Samsuditana) und einer älteren Tafelablage unterschieden werden. Dafür spricht nicht nur der archäologische Befund, sondern auch eine Erwägung zum Inhalt. Es treten relativ häufig *nadiātu* auf, und zwar — bis auf zwei *nadiātu* des Gottes Šamaš<sup>25</sup> — solche des Gottes Marduk, mit und ohne den Zusatz des Stadtnamens Babylon:

Iltani, Tochter des Musuku (Zeit Samsuilunas), Kauf eines Hausgrundstücks in der östlichen Neustadt (*VS* 22 8);

Muḥadditum, Tochter des Adad-šarrum (Zeit Samsuilunas), Retraktkauf eines in der östlichen Neustadt gelegenen Grundstücks (*VS* 22 4);

Azzanitum, Tochter des Nabi-ilīšu (Zeit des Ammiditana und Ammišaduqa), Besitzerin eines Grundstücks in der östlichen Neustadt (*VS* 22 12 und 17);

Bēltani, Tochter des Ilšu-nāšir (Zeit Ammiditana), zusammen mit Warad-Tašmetum Verkäuferin eines Grundstücks (*VS* 22 11)

Bēltani, Tochter des Marduk-muballit (Zeit Ammiditana), Kauf eines Grundstücks in der östlichen Neustadt von Tāb-Esagil, ebenfalls *nadītum* des Marduk von Babylon (*VS* 22 16);

Tāb-Esagil (*VS* 22 16, s. oben)<sup>26</sup>;

Iltani, Tochter des Baši-ilum (Zeit Ammiditana), Grundstückskauf in der östlichen Neustadt (*VS* 22 12);

in zerstörtem Kontext steht der Name der *nadītum* Mannaši, Tochter des Ani-ilum (Datum abgebrochen, wohl Samsuiluna), wohl Empfängerin eines Darlehens (*VS* 22 56)<sup>27</sup>

Bei den *nadiātu* des Marduk ist der Zusatz des Ortsnamens Babylon hier nicht vor der Zeit des Ammiditana bezeugt<sup>28</sup>. Im Hinblick auf die bislang noch zu geringe Zahl an Belegen für die *nadiātu* des Marduk von Babylon muß es noch dahingestellt bleiben, ob das zufällig ist oder aber eine ab dieser Zeit notwendige Unterscheidung

<sup>24</sup> Vgl. *VS* 22, 36, 51, 53, *YOS* 13, 365 und *VAT* 13201 *AoF* 11, 102 Nr. 11), alle aus der Zeit des Samsuditana.

<sup>25</sup> *VS* 22, 2: Iltani, Tochter des Kammanium (Zeit Hammurapis); *VAT* 19823 (*AoF* 11, 106 Nr. 18): Erišti-Aja, Absenderin des an Kukū gerichteten Briefes, wobei ihre *nadītum*-Eigenschaft aus dem erhaltenen Text nicht eindeutig hervorgeht (Zeit Samsuilunas). Als Adressatin erscheint E. in einem von Iltani gesandten Brief, s. A. Ungnad, *VAB* 6 (1914), 129. Zur (identischen?) E., Tochter Zimri-Lims von Mari und *nadītum* des Šamaš in Sippar, s. J. M. Sasson, *JCS* 25 (1973), 77 f.

<sup>26</sup> Die Preisung des Marduk-Heiligtums von Babylon war offenbar ein beliebter Name auch bei den *nadiātu*. Vgl. Tāb-Esagil, Tochter des Marduk-muballit, in *YOS* 13, 91 (Datum verloren); T., Tochter des Zababa-ḫāšir, in *TCL* 1 134 (*HG* 5 1153); ferner s. E. Szlechter, *TJA* S. 11 f. und dazu J. J. Finkelstein, *YOS* 13 S. 7 Anm. 25 und J. Renger, *ZA* 58 (1967), 174.

<sup>27</sup> Mannaši erscheint hier zusammen mit zwei Brüdern offenbar als Empfängerin eines Darlehens (?); genannt werden ihr Vater Ani-ilum sowie ihre Mutter Mār(at)-eršetim (Name im Register von *VS* 22 S. 13 zu ergänzen!).

<sup>28</sup> Der Beleg bei E. Szlechter, *TJA* S. 11 ff. (UMM H 41) datiert aus der Zeit des Ammiditana; aus derselben Zeit könnte auch *YOS* 13 91 stammen. *TCL* 1 134 (ohne Zusatz des Stadtnamens), eine Urkunde aus Kiš, ist in die Zeit Samsuilunas datiert.

von *nadiātu* Marduks in Kiš oder Sippar<sup>29</sup>. In zwei Texten werden auch Ehegatten von *nadiātu* des Marduk von Babylon erwähnt; sie hatten also gleichfalls die Möglichkeit, eine Ehe zu schließen<sup>30</sup>.

Die Daten der Texte mit den *nadiātu*-Belegen könnten auf eine Zugehörigkeit zum Hausarchiv 25 p deuten; sicher aus 22 k stammt nur der Brief mit der Nennung der Erišti-Aja, *nadītum* des Šamaš, der wohl der Regierungszeit des Samsuiluna zugehört. Die Texte mit Erwähnung einer Marduk-*nadītum* könnten vielleicht zu einer Gruppe zusammengestellt werden, trotz unterschiedlicher Datierung. Weiterhin ist von Interesse, daß gerade diese Texte mehrfach die östliche Neustadt Babylons als Ort nennen, in dem verkaufte oder vertauschte Grundstücke lagen<sup>31</sup>. Da bislang keine derartige Urkunde mit Nennung einer *nadītum* Marduks oder der östlichen Neustadt Babylons aus der Regierungszeit Samsuditanas überliefert ist, liegt die Annahme nahe, daß diese Gruppe von Texten sowie die mit ihnen durch Datum oder Personennamen zusammenzustellenden Nummern<sup>32</sup> zu den relativ sorgfältig im Füllschutt des Fußbodens von 25 p abgelegten Tafeln gehörten. Das würde auch erklären, weshalb gerade diese Texte verhältnismäßig gut erhalten geblieben sind. Tafeln, die auf diese Weise kassiert wurden, bedurften weder eines Durchstreichens noch Zerbrechens. Die als VS 22 21 und 55 edierten durchgestrichenen Tafeln datieren aus der Zeit des Samsuditana, d.h. stammen offenbar aus dem noch »aktuellen« Archiv. Dieses wird in den Tongefäßen im Zimmer selbst gelagert worden sein und könnte den Söhnen des Panigarra-abi gehört haben. Es befand sich noch dort, als bei dem Brand die Decke des Zimmers herabstürzte.

Es muß abschließend noch einmal betont werden, daß diese Indizien noch keine sichere Zuweisung der Tafeln zu Archiven gestatten. Im Hinblick auf die unzureichende Dokumentation des archäologischen Befundes ist daran zu zweifeln, ob diese Sicherheit jemals zu erlangen sein wird. Eine Verbindung zwischen den beiden Tafellagern im Hause 25 p kann bislang nicht sichtbar gemacht werden<sup>33</sup>; möglicherweise hat sie auch nicht bestanden. Die Hausbewohner, die die älteren Tafeln dem Füllschutt beigaben, gingen zweifellos davon aus, daß diese für die geschäftlichen Unternehmungen und Besitzansprüche der eignen Familie ohne Belang waren.

<sup>29</sup> Nach J. J. Finkelstein, *YOS* 13 S. 7, könnte es in Kiš eine Kapelle oder einen Tempel des Marduk gegeben haben; dasselbe sollte dann auch für Sippar gelten, für das *nadiātu* des Marduk bezeugt sind, s. J. Renger, *ZA* 58 (1967), 174. Vgl. dazu auch W. Sommerfeld, *Der Aufstieg Marduks* (Kevelaer/Neukirchen 1982), 91 Anm. 1.

<sup>30</sup> VS 22 12 und 16; vgl. zur Eheschließung von *nadiātu* des Marduk J. Renger, *ZA* 58 (1967), 174f., wonach *nadiātu* Marduks auffällig oft verheiratet waren.

<sup>31</sup> Dazu bereits H. Klengel, in: *Societies and Languages of the Ancient Near East*, Festschrift I. M. Diakonoff (Warminster 1982), 169 ff.

<sup>32</sup> VS 22 59, vgl. auch die in *MDOG* 38 (1908), 8 abgebildete Tafel, deren Herkunft aus 25 p 2, -1,20 m, gesichert ist, ferner *VAT* 19817 (*AoF* 11, 99 Nr. 9) aus der Zeit des Abi'ešuh. Der letzte datierte Text, der zu dieser Gruppe von Tafeln gerechnet werden könnte, stammt aus dem Jahr 11 des Ammišaduqa (VS 22, 17); er betrifft einen Grundstückskauf in der östlichen Neustadt. Die Beseitigung der Tafeln durch Einbringen in den Füllschutt müßte dann nach diesem Datum erfolgt sein.

<sup>33</sup> Sowohl in VS 22, 28 (Ammititana 8) als auch 31 (Samsuditana 24/25) erscheint ein Awil-Mišarum ugula-MAR.TU, doch ist der zeitliche Abstand für eine Identität der Personen zu groß.

## DELIVERY RECORDS FROM THE ARCHIVE OF THE KITITUM TEMPLE AT ISHCHALI

MARIA DEJONG ELLIS (Philadelphia)

### 1. *Introduction*

Because in recent years I have catalogued a number of collections of cuneiform tablets, I have become increasingly concerned with the problem of attributing to archives the many texts that in ancient times were parts of coherent archives but that since their discovery have been dispersed over modern collections. In many instances this dispersal has resulted in the disintegration of archival ties which we can only reconstruct using criteria inherent in the tablets themselves. When tablets are without any reliable indication of provenience it is possible to remain in ignorance even of their site or origin, let alone of the buildings that housed the institutions which produced them. Nevertheless, the texts can still provide information for the administrative operation of such institutions<sup>1</sup>. When tablets without certain provenience can be shown to deal with the same affairs as texts which have been carefully excavated and whose provenience can be located accurately within a single building, we are in much better condition to attempt to treat a group of texts as an institutional archive. This is the case of the archive of the Old Babylonian Kititum Temple of Ishchali, upon which I reported briefly in a different context in 1980<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> An example is provided by the texts recording flour distributions of the "house of the prisoners", dated to the reign of a king Rim-Anum, of uncertain provenience, not to mention chronological placement. On the chronology and placement, see D. O. Edzard's summarizing comments in *ZZB* 160-61, supplemented by A. Falkenstein's statements concerning the tablets found in Warka, 'Zu den Inschriftenfunde Uruk-Warka 1960-61', *BagM* 2 (1963) 38-40 and n. 180. On the texts and the extent of the archive, see most recently D. Charpin, 'À propos du *bīl asīrī* sous Rim-Anum', *RA* 74 (1980) 75-76, commenting on O. Loretz, 'Die *Asīrum*-Texte (1)', *UF* 10 (1978) 121-60, and also Charpin's review of the Rim-Anum texts published by Simmons in *YOS* 14 in *BiOr* 36 (1979) 193-94. The Free Library contains some thirty Rim-Anum texts, which will be published in my forthcoming volume on the Old Babylonian texts of that collection. One of these texts has some bearing on the king's historical placement; see my note 'On the Chronological Placement of King Rim-Anum'.

<sup>2</sup> "Old Babylonian Archives from Ishchali", paper read at the annual meeting of the American Oriental Society, 17 April 1980, published as 'The Archive of the Old Babylonian Kititum Temple and Other Archives from Ishchali', in *JAOS*; 'The Old Babylonian Kititum Letters: The Goddess Kititum Speaks to King Ibalpiel', paper read at the 27<sup>e</sup> RAI, Paris, 3 July 1980, to be published shortly; and the concise description of the temple and the archive recently published in *AJA* 87 (1983) 503-507. I must express my thanks to the American Philosophical Society and the American Council of Learned Societies, who supported parts of my work on this archive with grants-in-aid, and to the National Endowment for the

## 2. *Ishchali*

Tablets and other objects said to have come from the site of Ishchali, located in the basin of the Diyala River east of Baghdad, began to appear in the antiquities market in the late 1920's. Because of this, the site was included in the scope of the Diyala Region excavation project of the University of Chicago; it was excavated during two campaigns, in 1934-35 and 1935-36<sup>3</sup>. Several complexes of buildings were found at the site<sup>4</sup>. All yielded occupation levels of the Old Babylonian period, during which the site was part of the Kingdom of Ešnunna. Most of the dated tablets found in the excavation<sup>5</sup> were written in the reigns of the later kings of the Ešnunna dynasty. Tablets belonging to several different archives have been found at or have been attributed to the site<sup>6</sup>. One archive, known as that of Iššu-našir, of which the bulk was published by Lutz<sup>7</sup>, consists entirely of purchased tablets and has no known connection with excavated texts. Other archives, however, can be connected with specific buildings at the site through the discovery of tablets belonging to them in the controlled excavations, even though a great part of all of these archives consists of clandestinely-excavated tablets<sup>8</sup>. Of these archives the largest one known can be associated with the Kititum Temple. The archive as now available for study consists of some 300 texts which either are published or are in the process of being prepared for publication<sup>9</sup>, and of the Iraq government's share of the excavated tablets, which are in Baghdad, and for which only excavation records are currently available.

The number of tablets from the archive now extant is very small compared to many other archives from Mesopotamia, and we have to face the possibility that gaps in our information may make it impossible to reach a viable description of the

Humanities, which funded the project to catalogue the tablet collection of the Free Library of Philadelphia, during which the Ishchali texts were identified.

<sup>3</sup> Thorkild Jacobsen acted as site director at Ishchali; Henri Frankfort was the general field director for the project. A preliminary report on the first season of excavation was published by Frankfort in *OIC* 20 (1936) 74-100. See my note in *AJA* 87 (1983) 504 n. 56 for a resume of the current status of the publications dealing with the excavation. I must express my gratitude to Professor Jacobsen for graciously making copies of his notes on the temple and its excavation available to me.

<sup>4</sup> For plans, see *OIC* 20 (1936) 76 and 77, and *OIP* 72 pl. 96, reproduced in S. Greengus, *Old Babylonian Tablets from Ishchali and Vicinity* (abbr. *OBT*; Leiden, 1979) 10.

<sup>5</sup> According to Greengus, *OBT* 2, 280 tablets were excavated at the site; of these 142 are now in the Iraq Museum, Baghdad, and 138 are in the Oriental Institute, Chicago.

<sup>6</sup> For a summary, see Greengus, *OBT* 2-3 with notes 9-12.

<sup>7</sup> H. F. Lutz, *Legal and Economic Documents from Ashjāly*, *UCPS* 10/1 (1931).

<sup>8</sup> Greengus also discussed the specific archival attributions of the texts, *OBT* 4-13.

<sup>9</sup> The 55 excavated tablets from the Kititum Temple now in Chicago, as also those tablets the Oriental Institute acquired by purchase, were recently published in Greengus, *OBT*. A number of illegally excavated texts from the Kititum Temple now in the Iraq Museum were published by van Dijk in *TIM* 2-5, *passim*. For a discussion of which texts belong to the archive, see my article in *JAOS*, notes 24-27. The texts I found in Philadelphia, which I am currently in the process of preparing for publication, comprise the bulk of the known archive. For a status report on my project, see *AJA* 87 (1983) 505 n. 65.

institutional hierarchy and its archival practices<sup>10</sup>. Yet the combination of archaeological data, excavated texts, and texts which can be associated with them on internal evidence, makes it possible to learn quite a lot about the temple, its administration, and its archive.

### 3. *The Temple*

Before turning to the texts from the Kititum Temple archive which form the subject of this paper, I will briefly describe the temple, and its archive as it is now known. The temple itself was a large compound set on a raised platform<sup>11</sup>. It consisted of a large unit on the west side, composed of a cella, antecella, court, and subsidiary rooms; this unit in turn is set higher than the rest of the complex to the east, which consisted of a larger courtyard and subsidiary rooms. The temple is known from the tablets, and from dedicatory seal and brick inscriptions<sup>12</sup>, to be that of Kititum (a form of Ištar). It is commonly assumed that the building complex contained three shrines, of which the main shrine was dedicated to Kititum, while the two sets of rooms at the northeastern end of the building formed two separate small shrines<sup>13</sup>. This question is not one I can enter into here, but it should be noted that texts belonging to the administration of the *šangû* of Kititum were found in all areas of the temple<sup>14</sup>.

<sup>10</sup> For a discussion of the importance of the availability of a minimum number of texts for the formulation of valid archival studies, see T. Jones, 'Sumerian Administrative Texts: An Essay' in *Studies Jacobsen* (AS 20, 1976) 42. However, it should be noted already that comparison of our material with the sources for the Old Babylonian *šangû* available to J. Renger at the time of his study 'Untersuchungen zum Priestertum der altbabylonischen Zeit, II', *ZA* 59 (1969) 104-21, shows that our archive adds a whole new dimension to what we know of the *šangû*'s functions.

<sup>11</sup> For a photograph of that platform as it was found during the excavation, see *OIC* 20 (1936) 79 fig. 61. A composite plan of the temple was published as *OIP* 72 pl. 96 (see Greengus, *OBT* 10), and a reconstructed view of the town, focussed on the temple, appears in H. Frankfort, *Art and Architecture of the Ancient Orient* (Baltimore, 1954) as pl. 55.

<sup>12</sup> See *OIC* 20 (1936) 83. The seal is now published in H. Frankfort, *Stratified Cylinder Seals from the Diyala Region* (*OIP* 72; Chicago, 1955) as pl. 87 no. 317; for the legend see also p. 52 with n. 19. For the brick inscription, see Jacobsen, *OIP* 43 (1940) 116 and 138, reproduced by Greengus, *OBT* 1 n. 1.

<sup>13</sup> See Heinrich J. Lenzen, 'Mesopotamische Tempelanlagen von der Frühzeit bis zum zweiten Jahrtausend', *ZA* 51 (1955) 31, and more recently Ernst Heinrich, *Die Tempel und Heiligtümer im alten Mesopotamien: Typologie, Morphologie und Geschichte* (Berlin, 1982), especially 188-89 and pls. 252-53. It should be stressed that the published plan of the temple is a composite, that is, it incorporates information from various building levels without indicating the situation as it existed in any one period. Unpublished excavation notes yield the information that the "cella" of "Temple B", the anomalous "Langraum"-cella, was already covered with ashy debris and other evidence of domestic occupation at the time of the first reflooring in the oldest of the four major building levels of the temple. The "cella" area of "Temple C" was not excavated below the floor of Level I, the latest occupation level.

<sup>14</sup> No other candidates for deities whose cult might have been practiced in the building have been proposed. Other deities are mentioned in the texts of this archive, however. In the texts discussed below, Nanaja appears in conjunction with Kititum, while in another group of texts the *šangû* of Kititum appears as co-lender with the god Sin of Agaga. The deities most commonly invoked in the greetings formulas of the letters are Šamaš and Tišpak.



In the temple were found—or were said to have been found—a variety of objects. These objects include cylinder seals, items of sculpture, clay plaques, models, beads, and tools<sup>15</sup>, as well as cuneiform tablets. The way in which the tablets were made has resulted in very distinctive features of density and break patterns, and of the relative proportion of thickness to length and width; these can be easily felt when the tablets are handled. No single shape is common to the archive, but shapes are specialized for different types of document<sup>16</sup>.

#### 4. *The archive*

All the texts found in the temple clearly belong to a single administrative archive, regardless of where within the temple building they were found. That archive could be generally described as being that of the Kititum Temple, but the name of the incumbent *šangû*—or merely his title—figures so largely in the texts that we may equally well call in the archive of the *šangû*, insofar as the responsibility involved in ultimately always his. This is sometimes shown by the presence of his seal on tablets which do not otherwise mention him or his title at all. I cannot, therefore, follow Greengus<sup>17</sup> in separating the archive of the *šangû* of Kititum from that of the Kititum Temple. If there is a problem at all concerning the attribution of parts of the archive, it is connected with the question of whether or not some of the texts reflect private activity of the *šangû* rather than the exercise of public responsibility on his part. That is a vexing question to which in this case, as in the case of many other ancient archives<sup>18</sup>, no certain answer can as yet be found.

#### 5. *Historical Considerations*

The earliest of the Kititum Temple texts come from the reign of king Naram-Sin of Ešnunna. Also attested are texts which carry date formulae from all the known

<sup>15</sup> Seals: *OIP* 72 60-61 and pls. 86-87, catalogue nos. 900-937. Sculpture: H. Fankfort, *More Sculpture from the Diyala Region* (*OIP* 60; Chicago, 1943) 34-35 and pls. 73-74 and 77-81 nos. 333 (head of a man) and 335 (figure of a monkey). For clay plaques, see, for example, *OIC* 20 (1936) 91-95 figs. 69-73. See *AJA* 87 (1983) 504 n. 56 for the publication status of the various objects from the site.

<sup>16</sup> This section of the oral paper was illustrated by slides. It is unfortunately not feasible to reproduce them here. The types of documents included in the archive are described in some detail in my article in *JAOS*; for published exemplars, see Greengus, *OB* *passim*.

<sup>17</sup> Greengus, *OB* 4-6 and 12-13 had treated the archive of the SANGA <sup>d</sup>*Kititum* separately from that of the Kititum Temple, seeing them as two distinct entities. That, clearly, was not the case.

<sup>18</sup> On the problem as it applies to Mesopotamian archives see already B. Landsberger, *JCS* 9 (1955) 128 and n. 162. This problem is not limited to ancient Mesopotamia, but is inherent also in the archival practices of such diverse cultures as ancient Rome and modern United States. See Ernst Posner, *Archives in the Ancient World* (Cambridge, Mass., 1972) 155-56 on the practice of storing official archives with private records, attested for Roman Egypt. The practice of storing papers of past presidents in individual Presidential Libraries built in a location chosen by the erstwhile official, rather than in the National Archives or other appropriate place connected with the office rather than the person is of course well known.

years of kings Dannumtahaz and Daduša, and from the early years of the reign of Ibalpiel II. A father and his two sons succeeded each other in office as *šangû*. The father, Igmil-Sin, was *šangû* during the reign of Naram-Sin, while his son Inbuša was active as *šangû* during the reigns of Dannumtahaz and Daduša, and into the fifth year of Ibalpiel II. He in turn was succeeded in office by his brother Abizum. There was no overlap in service, and the distribution of the years of official tenure therefore has implications for the temporal placement of king Dannumtahaz, whose affiliations are not otherwise known. He, clearly, is not to be placed among the—mostly as yet anonymous—kings of the final years before Hammurapi's defeat of Ešnunna<sup>19</sup>, but must have reigned either directly before or directly after Daduša; for reasons which I explained at length elsewhere, I prefer to place him immediately before Daduša<sup>20</sup>.

#### 6. *The šangû in the texts*

In an attempt to see how the texts define the duties and activities of the *šangû*, and the lines of the administrative hierarchy in the temple, I organized the texts first by whether and how they refer to the *šangû*, and, within those categories, by content type<sup>21</sup>. Once this division had been made, it became clear that some activities were particularly associated with one or the other of the last two *šangû*'s. Whether this shows that different functions were exercised by the two younger *šangû*'s or is merely due to random patterns of preservation remains to be seen; I suspect the latter.

The texts which specifically mention a *šangû* fall into five groups. The first includes a large number of letters. These letters are usually addressed to the *šangû* by name, mostly to the *šangû* Abizum. When letters are written by the *šangû*, the name is usually not given.

A second group consists of lists of deliveries of jewelry and textiles given for the goddess. These tablets are all dated to the 30th day of the month in which they were written, and are not sealed. One tablet mentions the *šangû* Igmil-Sin; in the remainder the *šangû* Inbuša is attested. I will deal with these texts more extensively below.

A third group is represented by barley loans in which the lenders are the god Sin of the town Agaga and Inbuša the *šangû*, and by one silver loan from Sin of Agaga

<sup>19</sup> As was done most recently by Greengus, *OBT* 16 and n. 83 and chart on p. 19.

<sup>20</sup> See the detailed consideration of the evidence for chronological placement of Dannumtahaz as well as for the attribution of year date formulas to him and to other kings of the Ešnunna dynasty in my article 'Notes on the Chronology of the Later Ešnunna Dynasty' in *JCS* 37 (1985) 61-85.

<sup>21</sup> The description which follows is a general one. Since most of the texts are still unpublished, no text references have been given; the reader is referred to the catalogue of the text volume which is now in preparation and, pending its appearance, to the rather more detailed description of this archive in my article on the Ishchali archives in *JAOS*.

and Abizum the *šangû*. The relationship between Agaga, Sin of Agaga, and the storehouse (*našpaku*) of Agaga on the one hand and the Kititum Temple and the *šangû* of Kititum on the other needs to be investigated further. It should be noted here, however, that Inbuša's and Abizum's involvement with the goods of Sin of Agaga is contemporaneous with their tenure as *šangû* of Kititum; this is shown by the dates of the tablets, and by the occurrence of Abizum's "*šangû* of Kititum" seal on the silver loan tablet which mentions him<sup>22</sup>.

The fourth group consists of receipts of various commodities. There are also a number of texts which concern the temple administration's interest in the textile industry.

The fifth group includes depositions and other legal records, usually involving Inbuša, in certain cases in issues carried over from the time of his father, Igmil-Sin.

These texts all mention the *šangû* directly, either by name or by office. Many of the texts which do not, but which carry his seal, are records concerning animals, usually dead ones. The legends of the seals of Inbuša and Abizum read<sup>23</sup>:

(name of the *šangû*) / *šangû* of the goddess Kititum / son of Igmil-Sin / servant of king (RN)

Greengus discussed the possibility that the seal legend indicates that the *šangû* was a royal appointee<sup>24</sup>. For Inbuša we have two different legends; he is called the servant of Daduša on a seal that appears on tablets dated well into the reign of Ibalpiel II. We also have two seals on which he is called the servant of Ibalpiel. These two seals were in use at the same time<sup>25</sup>. The seal of Abizum servant of Ibalpiel occurs on tablets from Ibalpiel II's reign only.

Identifying fragmentary impressions of seals of which the legends so closely resemble each other posed somewhat of a problem. However, once complete forms of the various legends had been put together and the exact placement and shape of the signs could be compared, it became clear that at any one time at least two different seals of the *šangû* were in use. These seals had identical legends. That, plus the fact that they were often used by subordinate persons on texts which do not mention the *šangû* or do not show the exercise of responsibility on his part, means that we must, I think, refer to these seals as belonging to the office, rather than to the person, of the *šangû*.

<sup>22</sup> The barley loans which mention Inbuša are not sealed on the tablets. Only one fragmentary case has been preserved, and the seal on it cannot be identified prosopographically. On the formulation of the standard seal inscriptions of these texts, see below.

<sup>23</sup> The seal of their father Igmil-Sin is known only from an unpublished text in Baghdad, Ish. 34-T.85, excavated in the Kititum Temple. As cited by Greengus, *OB*T 5, it has a slightly different text, and reads: *Ig-mil*-<sup>dr</sup>EN ZU<sup>1</sup> SANGA <sup>d</sup>INNIN *Ki-ti-tum* DUMU <sup>dr</sup>X<sup>1</sup> [ ] ... The father's name is not legible; if there was a royal name it is not mentioned in the excavation notes.

<sup>24</sup> Greengus, *OB*T 5 n. 17, and compare 6 n. 24.

<sup>25</sup> None of the texts dated to Dannumtahaz which mention Inbuša the *šangû* belong to types which are customarily sealed.

A few texts mention not the *šangû*, but rather the temple itself or the goddess<sup>26</sup>, or can be connected with the archive on the basis of prosopography.

In any case it is quite clear that all the texts refer to activities by the temple personnel, including the *šangû*, and that the ultimate responsibility for all these activities rested with the *šangû*. Just what the tasks of the *šangû* himself consisted of cannot yet be seen clearly, but further study of the archive—and comparison of the scribal habits apparent in similar archives—may elucidate this matter. One point that needs to be studied more closely concerns the implications of the use in administrative texts of an official's title without personal name.

### 7. The delivery texts

Various economic concerns of the temple, including agricultural and textile production, are illustrated by different parts of the archive. I want to isolate here one activity illustrated by the texts which perhaps should be said to attest a recordkeeping function of the temple rather than an economic activity.

About twenty tablets attest new deliveries made to the temple. The texts are always dated to the 30th day of the month in which they are written, and with a few exceptions follow a standard format. The *šangû*'s involved are Igmil-Sin and Inbuša; the standardized format is found in the texts which name Inbuša, that is, the later texts, so that it is possible that the normalization is a chronological development. I will describe first the standard format, and then the exceptions that occur. The standard format is illustrated by the three texts of this group published by Greengus as *OBT* 90-92<sup>27</sup>; it should be noted however that my interpretation of the text formulation differs on a number of points from that implied by Greengus' transliteration of text 91<sup>28</sup>.

What we may call the colophon of the delivery texts follows the following format:

MU.TÚM GIBIL <i>ša</i> <sup>d</sup> <i>Ki-ti-tum</i> <sup>29</sup>	“New deliveries of Kititum (under the
NÍG ŠU <i>In-bu-ša</i>	control of Inbuša and his trustworthy
<i>ù eb-bu tap-pí-šu</i> <sup>30</sup>	colleagues”.
(Month), day 30 (Year)	

<sup>26</sup> The most striking of these texts are the two communications from Kititum to King Ibalpiel; see my paper for the 27<sup>e</sup> RAI, 1980.

<sup>27</sup> The texts of this group from the Free Library will be published in my text volume of Old Babylonian tablets from that collection.

<sup>28</sup> Greengus, *OBT* 69-70.

<sup>29</sup> Not a personal name Puzur-Kititum, as read by Greengus, *Ishchali* 69-70 and 88 (index).

<sup>30</sup> Ibbitappišu is not a personal name, as it was taken to be by Greengus, *OBT* 69-70 and 83 (index). (The other reference cited by him for this name, text 24:18, is based on a misreading; that line reads *I-ku-pi*-<sup>d</sup>EN.ZU', and Greengus himself does list it under that entry, p. 84.) For references to *ebbu* as used to describe trustworthy persons of some sort, very often in relation to the administration of fields or their produce, see *CAD* E 3b sub *ebbu* 2a, and *AHW* 180b sub *ebbu* 7. *Tappû*, “companion”, can carry the connotation of “fellow (judge)”, hence “colleague”; cf. *AHW* 1321b sub 1b.

Some variants occur; for example instead of GIBIL the Akkadian word *eššu* is several times spelled out, and once we get the ALAM sign instead of the GIBIL sign. *Ebbu* and *tappišu* both have variants as well. One notable variant reads *e-bu-tum* TAB.BA-*e-šu*.

The deliveries alluded to in the colophon fall into three categories: objects made of gold and silver, precious stones, and textiles. If all three categories are listed on one text, they always come in the order just given. For the precious metals, the texts give the name of the object, its weight, and the name of the donor; the weights of the metals are then totalled. The objects are always given in the same order: first those of gold, then those of silver. The order of items is also set. The most common shape designations are ŠU.GUR (*unqu*, “ring”) and *rīmu*, “bull figurine”. The precious stones listed are usually also given by specified donors, including, several times, members of the royal family. The names of some, but not all, of the objects as far as they are preserved can be found in the lexical lists.

The purpose for which the precious metals and stones are given is not stated directly in the texts, but one might expect it to be the adornment of the cult image or images. This is occasionally made clear in entries of the third subgroup, textiles, in which the items are sometimes described as being NÍG.BA DN. In these cases, the entries always occur in pairs: one item for Kititum, and one (but not necessarily an identical one) for Nanaja. As yet the descriptive terms are not always clear, nor, for that matter, are they always known from other texts. Certain items, TÚG.BAR.SI.MEŠ, “headcloths”, are almost always listed in quantity, and donors are never noted for them. Could that mean that these items come from the temple workshops?

The donors listed for the various objects include both men (including king Dannumtahaz) and women. Some names occur more than once, with either similar or different objects. It is noticeable that the identifications of donors are usually not very exact. The majority of the donors are women whose names are given, but also listed are individuals known only as the wife of so-and-so, and even a princess was known only by her rank and by her husband's name.

As for the administrative activities implied in the texts, I assume we must see the following. Every month — whether during the month or at the end of the month is not clear — items of adornment were given for the goddess; others may have come from the temple workshops. These items were accounted for on the 30th day of each month. The phrasing of the formula of accountability or colophon, discussed earlier, lead me to believe that we must see in this account a type of notarized attestation, made in the presence of trustworthy persons. These persons may have belonged to the temple administration, or they may have represented an extra-hierarchical inspection agency. It may be that the texts are the *šangû*'s copies of the official records, since otherwise we might have expected to find his seal on the tablet. But it is also possible that we are to deduce from the use made of the *šangû*'s seal as a sort of office stamp at a lower level in the hierarchy that the *šangû* himself

needed a different type of attestation of responsibility in the form of the trustees, whoever they may have been<sup>31</sup>.

Three of the texts differ from the standard format. Two of them are cumulative accounts, and it is presumably for that reason that they omit the word GIBIL from the colophon. The texts give us a sequence of month names, in one case Niggallim through Kinunu, and in the other Kinunu-Tamhiru-Nabrû; but because we don't know the order of the Ishchali months, we can't tell how many months are involved in each case. The first of these texts, dated to Daduša's first year, includes all types of objects; no text recording new deliveries is extant for any of the months mentioned. The second text, although apparently a cumulative account covering several months, possibly shows that the different types of object were kept track of separately: the cumulative text mentions garments only, yet a rather badly-damaged individual list giving the same personal name but mentioning both metals and textiles exists for one of the months included in the cumulative account.

One last, different, text is earlier in date; it reflects the activity of Igmil-Sin as *šangû*. The text records only gifts of metals, the total of which is described in much greater detail than is usual in the later texts. It gives the purpose for which the items were given as being for the *papāhim ša šubat* <sup>d</sup>*Kitītum*, the cella of Kititum's dwelling. The rest of the colophon follows the standard format.

Unfortunately not a single text of this group was found during the Chicago excavations of the temple, so that they cannot be associated with a specific part of the temple building. However, it may prove possible that some connection can be made with the precious objects, although all too few of those were unfortunately found during the excavation.

The light that these tablets shed on at least one aspect of the *šangû*'s responsibility and accountability, when taken together with the evidence yielded by other parts from the archive, and with such archaeological information as remains to us for the temple, should help clarify the position of at least one type of Mesopotamian chief administrator. This can then be compared with institutions for which more or other types of evidence remain.

<sup>31</sup> Other texts of the archive give an impression concerning certain persons that they are closely connected with either the *šangû*, or with the textile accounts, but there is no clear reason to connect any one of these with the nameless *ebbu*'s.

## TRANSMISSION DES TITRES DE PROPRIÉTÉ ET CONSTITUTION DES ARCHIVES PRIVÉES EN BABYLONIE ANCIENNE\*

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Le point de départ de cette enquête se trouve dans l'étude des textes de Kutalla. L'analyse des archives de Šilli-Eštar m'avait permis de montrer dans cinq cas qu'au moment où celui-ci achetait un terrain, le vendeur lui cédait également son titre de propriété, en l'occurrence le contrat attestant que lui-même (ou son père) avait acheté ce terrain quelques années, voire quelques dizaines d'années, auparavant<sup>1</sup>. J'avais alors recherché d'autres exemples d'une telle pratique. Il n'en existait que trois lorsque San Nicolo publia en 1922 son volume consacré aux «Schlussklauseln»<sup>2</sup>. Depuis soixante ans, la documentation s'est accrue de façon considérable, sans que le sujet ait toutefois retenu l'attention qu'il mérite.

Je voudrais montrer qu'il était de règle, lorsqu'un bien foncier changeait de mains, que le nouveau propriétaire reçût de son prédécesseur ses titres de propriété, non seulement lors d'une vente, mais aussi lors d'un échange, d'un héritage ou d'une dot. Les documents ainsi transmis étaient appelés *tuppāt* (ou *kanīkāt*) *ummātīm*. Il nous faudra pour terminer réfléchir aux incidences de cette coutume sur la formation et l'évolution des archives familiales en Babylonie ancienne.

### 1. La vente

Il est bien connu qu'en Babylonie ancienne le contrat de vente (*tuppi šīmātīm*, lit. «tablette d'achat») était rédigé du point de vue de l'acheteur, à qui il était remis; celui-ci le conservait comme titre de propriété. Or il est possible de montrer qu'au moment de la vente, le titre de propriété du vendeur n'était pas détruit, mais remis à

\* La présente étude a été le sujet de ma conférence à la IV<sup>e</sup> Section de l'Ecole pratique des Hautes Etudes en 1982-83; je remercie mes auditeurs pour leur active participation. Les matériaux de cette enquête avaient été rassemblés dès 1979 (voir *Archives familiales* ..., 1980, 159 n. a). En 1982 est parue dans les Mélanges F. R. Kraus (*Zikir šumim*) une étude de C. Wilcke comportant un long ex-cursus sur les *tuppāt ummātīm*. Les conclusions auxquelles j'étais arrivé de mon côté étant fort différentes, il ne m'a pas semblé inutile de les présenter ici.

<sup>1</sup> D. Charpin, *Archives familiales et propriété privée en Babylonie ancienne, étude des textes de «Tell Sifr»* (Paris-Genève, 1980) 156-159.

<sup>2</sup> San Nicolo, *Die Schlussklauseln* ... (Munich, 1922), 128. Voir aussi Cuq, *Etudes sur le droit babylonien* (Paris, 1929) 196.

l'acquéreur. Cette règle coutumière n'est jamais explicitement formulée, et ce sont surtout les exceptions qui permettent d'en connaître l'existence: il n'est le plus souvent question de la remise des titres de propriété que lorsque le vendeur se trouvait dans l'incapacité de les produire. Deux pratiques étaient alors possibles. Soit on ajoutait au contrat une clause particulière à ce sujet, soit on rédigeait un engagement de restitution des documents égarés. En dehors de ces indications négatives, il existe quelques documents qui prouvent de façon définitive que la transmission des titres de propriété était la règle. L'examen de ces cas va permettre de montrer que l'expression *tuppāt ummātim* (ou *kanīkāt ummātim*) servait à désigner les titres de propriété ainsi transmis.

Le contrat YOS 13 95<sup>3</sup>, qui date de l'an 10 de Samsuditana, rapporte l'achat d'un terrain<sup>4</sup> sis à Kiš par deux frères, à deux prêtresses-*ugbabtum* du dieu Zababa. Le scribe utilise le formulaire habituel, mais une clause particulière suit le serment: «<sub>3</sub> les *kanīkāt ummātim* <sub>4</sub> relatives à 1 1/2 *sar* de cette maison couverte, qui <sub>6</sub> ont été perdues <sub>5</sub> en l'an 28 de Samsuiluna, <sub>7</sub> qu'elles soient vues dans le panier à tablettes de Dān-eressa, <sub>8</sub> fille d'Awīl-Ea, <sub>9</sub> (ou) de Nīš-inīšu, fille d'Ili-erībam, <sub>10</sub> ou à quelque endroit qu'elles se trouvent, <sub>11</sub> et qu'elles soient produites, <sub>12</sub> elles appartiendront (alors) à Ina-Esagil-zērī et Marduk-muballiṭ, <sub>13</sub> les fils d'Awīl-Amurru, qui ont acheté le terrain». Il est clair qu'on fait ici allusion aux titres de propriété antérieurs, dont la perte remontait à près d'un siècle (92 ans exactement).

Dans certains cas semblables à celui qu'on vient d'étudier, plutôt que d'insérer une clause particulière sur le contrat de vente, on procédait à la rédaction d'un document séparé. Nous connaissons actuellement quatre textes de ce type, où l'on retrouve des formules analogues<sup>5</sup>.

Un premier document (CT 6 6)<sup>6</sup>, rédigé à Sippar en l'an 11 d'Amiṣaduqa, a trait à un champ de 15 *iqû*; celui-ci formait la part d'héritage de Šamaš-bani, et lui fut acheté par la religieuse-*nadītum* Aya-rīšat en l'an 3 d'Ammiditana. Après la mort d'Aya-rīšat, les frères de cette *nadītum* vendirent au majordome Ina-Esagil-zērī le champ qu'elle avait acquis. Ce dernier leur réclame alors les *tuppāt ummātim u sirdē* (1.23). Les frères déclarent que ces tablettes avaient été déposées dans le cloître, mais qu'à la mort de leur sœur ils n'ont pu les retrouver malgré leurs recherches<sup>7</sup>.

<sup>3</sup> Transcription-traduction par Wilcke, *Zikir šumim* (Leiden, 1982) 471-472, n° 14. Ce texte est manifestement un brouillon, puisque la liste des témoins a été laissée en blanc et qu'aucun sceau n'a été imprimé sur la marge gauche réservée à cet effet.

<sup>4</sup> Ce terrain a été lu É.AL.DU<sub>11</sub> par Wilcke dans *WO* 8 (1976) 270 et 279, et É.AL.E<sub>11</sub><sup>2</sup> dans *Zikir šumim* 471. Je suggérerais plutôt une lecture É.AL.BA.LÁ = *ruggubum*, «maison pourvue d'un toit»; une collation de l'original serait cependant nécessaire.

<sup>5</sup> Il ne s'agit pas de «certificats de perte», puisqu'un tel document devrait être remis à la personne qui a perdu les tablettes. Ici, au contraire, la personne qui a égaré ses titres de propriété s'engage à les restituer au cas où elle les retrouverait: la tablette était donc remise à l'acquéreur pour lui permettre de faire valoir ses droits sur ces tablettes.

<sup>6</sup> Transcription-traduction dans *VAB* 5, 281; voir en dernier lieu Wilcke, *Zikir šumim* 466-468, n° 11.

<sup>7</sup> R. Harris a tiré argument de ce texte pour montrer qu'un bâtiment particulier du cloître (*gagûm*) de



Le texte s'achève ainsi: «<sub>34</sub> à l'avenir, les *tuppāt ummātim* u *sirdē*<sub>35-36</sub> du (champ)<sub>37-41</sub> qu'à (nom des vendeurs)<sub>42</sub> le majordome Ina-Esagil-zērī<sub>43</sub> fils d'Etel-pî-Ea <a acheté><sub>44</sub> (lorsqu')elles seront vues et produites, <sub>45</sub> elles appartiendront à Ina-Esagil-zērī, fils d'Etel-pî-Ea, <sub>46</sub> acheteur des 15 *ikû* de champ».

YOS 13 203 est un document analogue, rédigé à Kiš au début du règne d'Ammišaduqa<sup>8</sup>. Le début du texte, manquant, devait contenir la description du champ vendu, «<sub>3</sub> que Amurru-na[...] <sub>4</sub> fils de Nabium[...] <sub>9</sub> a acheté <sub>5</sub> à Sîn-ib[...] fils de Gimil-Marduk, <sub>6</sub> Elmešum et Warad-Lahmi, <sub>7</sub> les fils de Nidnat-Sîn, <sub>8</sub> les petits-fils d'Awîl[...]. <sub>12</sub> Sîn-ib[...], Elmešum <sub>13</sub> et Warad-Lahmi <sub>14</sub> ont déclaré ceci <sub>10</sub> à Amurru-na[...] <sub>11</sub> fils de Nabium[...]: «<sub>15</sub> lorsque le palais [...], <sub>17</sub> nous ne cesserons de rechercher <sub>15</sub> [les *kanikāt ummātim*] <sub>16</sub> où qu'elles se trouvent, <sub>18</sub> (et) nous te les apporterons». <sub>19</sub> Voilà ce qu'ils ont dit. <sub>22</sub> Ils ne cesseront de rechercher <sub>20</sub> les *kanikāt ummātim* <sub>21</sub> relatives au champ de 7 *ikû* <sub>23</sub> [et ils les apporteront] à Amurru-na[...] (lacune à la fin de la face).<sup>rev.1</sup> Le jour où, dans le panier de Sîn-ib[...], <sub>2</sub> dans le panier d'Elmešum <sub>3</sub> et de Warad-Lahmi, <sub>4</sub> dans le panier de leur famille, <sub>5</sub> de leur frères et de leurs fils, <sub>6</sub> et où qu'elles se trouvent, [ces tablettes seront vues], <sub>7</sub> elles appartiendront à Amurru-na[...], <sub>8</sub> fils de Nabium[...], <sub>9</sub> l'acheteur [de ces 7 *ikû* de champ]». Cette tablette a été rédigée au moment de l'achat d'un champ de 7 *ikû* par un certain Amurru-na[...]<sup>9</sup> à trois individus. Il semble, d'après la 1.8 de la face, qu'il s'agit de deux frères et d'un cousin<sup>10</sup>. La situation est analogue à celle décrite en CT 6 6: les vendeurs ne peuvent fournir à l'acheteur les *kanikāt ummātim* relatives au champ vendu. On dresse donc un acte stipulant qu'au cas où ces tablettes seraient retrouvées, elles appartiendraient de droit à l'acheteur. Ainsi, aucun membre de la famille des vendeurs, chez qui ces tablettes pourraient se trouver, n'aura la possibilité de contester la propriété du champ à l'acquéreur, à qui fut remis le présent document.

Notre enquête se poursuit par l'examen de CT 45 102<sup>11</sup>. Ce texte, dont la face est

Sippar abritait les archives des *naditum* (JESHO 6 [1963] 153-4). Rien n'autorise en fait une telle conclusion: c'est dans la maison d'Aya-rîšat que ses frères n'ont pas dû retrouver les tablettes.

<sup>8</sup> Transcription-traduction par Wilcke, *Zikir šumim* 488-471 n° 13.

<sup>9</sup> La restauration du nom de l'acheteur 11.3-4 dans l'index d'YOS 13 (Amurru-nāšir fils de Nabium-nāšir) est très conjecturale.

<sup>10</sup> D'après les empreintes de sceaux, Sîn-ib[...] est fils de Gimil-Marduk, tandis que Elmešum et Warad-Lahmi sont fils de Nidnat-Sîn. Le fait que ces deux derniers sont frères explique qu'ils aient un panier à tablettes commun, distinct de celui de leur cousin.

<sup>11</sup> Je donne ici une transcription complète de ce texte, collationné au British Museum le 23.06.79. Je tiens à remercier J.-M. Durand pour ses suggestions concernant ce texte difficile. (...) <sup>1</sup> [x] *ap-lu\*-tim* x UM x [...] <sup>2</sup> *ša 7<sup>2</sup>/3* SAR [4 GIN É.KI.GÁL] <sup>3</sup> HA.LA <sup>1</sup>*bi-ik-k[um DUMU im-gur-<sup>d</sup>NA]NNA* <sup>4</sup> <sup>1</sup>DUMU.KI DUMU 30\*—*i\**—[...] <sup>5</sup> <sup>1</sup>DINGIR-*šu-na-šir* DUMU [...] <sup>6</sup> *ù ib-ni-<sup>d</sup>AMAR.UTU [DUMU šu-mi-ir]-<sup>si</sup>-ti* <sup>7</sup> DA ZÀ.È É *ši-[ki-i]-tim ša bi-ik-kum* <sup>8</sup> [K]<sup>1</sup> GEME<sub>2</sub>. <sup>4</sup>UTU DUMU.M[*i nu-úr-<sup>d</sup>UTU* <sup>9</sup> 2 *ši-na ah ha n[i<sup>2</sup> h]a-ra\*-tum* <sup>10</sup> *ù DA É na-ri-[im]* *ù* <sup>4</sup>UTU <sup>11</sup> *ù É 30-mu-ša-lim [DUMU] puzur<sub>4</sub>-30* <sup>12</sup> SAG.BI KI.GÁL *ni<sup>2</sup> [x x]-ta-i-šar\** ŠITIM<sup>2</sup> <sup>13</sup> ŠAG.BI 2.KAM.MA [...] *1*]i-ša ŠITIM <sup>14</sup> [*ù É 30-m*]u-[*ša-lim* DU]MU *puzur<sub>4</sub>-30* <sup>15</sup> [*1/2* SAR ZÀ].È É *š[i]-ki-i-ti*

assez mal conservée, a trait à l'achat d'un terrain nu de plus de 8 *sar* situé à Sippar-Amnānum (1.21), par deux frères, Qurduša et Warad-Ulmašitum, portiers du temple d'Annunītum<sup>12</sup>. Au moment de la vente, les acquéreurs réclamèrent aux vendeurs les *tuppāt ummātīm* (1.29). La fin du texte a disparu; il n'est donc pas possible de savoir si ces tablettes ont été transmises ou si elles étaient perdues. Mais ce document permet de prouver définitivement que les *tuppāt ummātīm* sont les titres de propriété qui doivent être fournis par les vendeurs. Voici la traduction complète de ce texte: «...<sub>1</sub> [...] de l'héritage ...<sub>2</sub> de 7<sup>2</sup>/<sub>3</sub> *sar* 4 *gin* de terrain nu, <sub>3</sub> part d'héritage de Bikkum fils d'Imgur-Sîn, <sub>4</sub> de Mār-iršitim fils de Sîn-i[...] <sub>5</sub> d'Išū-nāšir fils de [...] <sub>6</sub> et d'Ibni-Marduk fils de Šumi-iršitim; <sub>7</sub> jouxtant l'issue du terrain-*šikittum* de Bikkum, <sub>8</sub> (qui est) en commun (?) avec Amat-Šamaš, fille de Nūr-Šamas<sup>4</sup>, <sub>9</sub> dont les deux ... sont des fossés-*harrum*, <sub>10</sub> et jouxtant la chapelle des dieux Nārum et Šamaš, <sub>11</sub> ainsi que le terrain de Sîn-mušallim fils de Puzur-Sîn; <sub>12</sub> ayant pour petit côté le terrain nu de [...] Išar, maçon, <sub>13</sub> et pour second petit côté [le terrain de ...]liša, maçon <sub>14</sub> ainsi que le terrain de Sîn-mušallim fils de Puzur-Sîn; <sub>15</sub> 1<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> *sar*, formant l'issue d'un terrain-*šikittum*, <sub>16</sub> jouxtant Amat-Šamaš fille de Nūr-Šamaš <sub>17</sub> et jouxtant le terrain du *šangūm* d'Annunītum, <sub>18</sub> ayant pour petit côté la rue, <sub>19</sub> et pour second petit côté le terrain de Nūr-Šamaš <sub>20</sub> acquêt de Bikkum fils d'Imgur-Sîn; <sub>20</sub> (total) 8 *sar* 14 *gin* de terrain nu, <sub>22</sub> à Sippar-Amnānum, <sub>23</sub> qu'à Warad-Ullab fils de Warad-Ulmašitum <sub>24</sub> et à Warad-Ulmašitum fils de Sîn-išmeanni, <sub>25</sub> son frère, <sub>26</sub> Qurduša et Warad-Ulmašitum, <sub>27</sub> portiers du temple d'Annunītum, les fils de Taribuša, <sub>28</sub> ont acheté pour 16<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> sicles d'argent. <sub>29</sub> Ils leur ont réclamé les *tuppāt ummātīm*: <sub>30</sub> 2 tablettes (portant chacune sur) 3<sup>5</sup>/<sub>6</sub> *sar* de terrain nu, <sub>31</sub> (formant) la part d'héritage de Bikkum fils d'Imgur-Sîn <sub>32</sub> et d'Ibni-Marduk fils de Šumi-iršitim; <sub>33</sub> 1 tablette (portant) sur un passage de 1<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> *sar* menant vers un terrain-*šikittum*, <sub>34</sub> acquêt de Bikkum, <sub>35</sub> ainsi que sa *tuppi šurdē*. <sub>36</sub> Warad-Ullab et Warad-Ulmašitum [...]». La première partie

<sup>16</sup> [DA É GEME<sub>2</sub>]. <sup>d</sup>UTU DUMU.MÍ nu-úr-<sup>d</sup>UTU T.<sup>17</sup> [ù DA] É SANGA an-nu-ni-tum <sup>18</sup> [SAG].BI SILA R.<sup>19</sup> [SAG.BI 2.K]AM.MA É nu-úr-<sup>d</sup>UTU <sup>20</sup> š[i]-[ma]-at<sup>1</sup> bi-ik-ki DUMU im-gur-<sup>d</sup>NANNA <sup>21</sup> 8 SAR 14\* GÍN KI.GÁL <sup>22</sup> i-na ZIMBIR<sup>ki</sup>-am-na-nim <sup>23</sup> ša KI IR.UL.LAB DUMU IR-<sup>d</sup>ul-mā-ši-tum <sup>24</sup> ù IR-<sup>d</sup>ul-māš-ši-tum DUMU 30-iš-me-a-ni <sup>25</sup> a-hi-šu <sup>26</sup> 1<sup>qur-du-ša</sup> ù IR-<sup>d</sup>ul-māš-ši-[u]m <sup>27</sup> NÉ.DU<sub>8</sub> É an-nu-ni-tum DUMU.MEŠ [ta]-ri-bu-ša <sup>28</sup> a-na 16<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> GÍN i-ša-mu <sup>29</sup> tup-pa-at um-ma-tim i-ri-šu-šu-nu-ti-ma <sup>30</sup> 2 tup-pa-at 3<sup>5</sup>/<sub>6</sub> SAR 2\* GÍN É.KI.GÁL <sup>31</sup> HA.LA bi-ik-kum DUMU im-gur-<sup>d</sup>NANNA <sup>32</sup> ù ib-ni-<sup>d</sup>AMAR.UTU DUMU šu-mi-ir-ši-ti <sup>33</sup> 1 tup-pi 1/2 SAR ZÁ.É É šī-ki-it-tim <sup>34</sup> šī-ma-at bi-ik-kum DUMU im-gur-<sup>d</sup>NANNA <sup>35</sup> ù 1 tup-pi šu-ur-de-e-šu <sup>36</sup> [IR.UL.LAB] ù IR-<sup>d</sup>ul-māš-ši-tum (reste détruit).

<sup>12</sup> Il est remarquable de voir le SANGA d'Annunītum (l. 17) et deux portiers du temple de cette déesse (l. 27) propriétaires fonciers à Sippar-Amnānum; on sait en effet que c'est à Sippar-Amnānum que se trouvait le temple d'Annunītum (Harris, *Ancient Sippar* 14; corriger ses indications p. 180 en fonction de ce qui précède). On sait que la mission belge dirigée par L. De Meyer a retrouvé en 1975 à tell ed-Dēr la maison d'Ur-Utu, grand-chantre d'Annunītum à l'époque d'Ammišaduqa, ce qui confirme définitivement la localisation de Sippar-Amnānum à tell ed-Dēr.

du document est consacrée à la description du terrain vendu, qui se décompose en deux parties inégales :

— A : un terrain nu de  $7\frac{2}{3}$  sar 4 gin, dont les voisins sur les quatre côtés sont énumérés (11.2-14);

— B : un passage adjacent<sup>13</sup> de  $\frac{1}{2}$  sar (18 m<sup>2</sup>), dont le scribe indique également la situation cadastrale (11.15-20)<sup>14</sup>.

Les indications fournies par le texte permettent de reconstituer l'histoire de ces deux terrains. Le terrain A formait la part d'héritage de quatre individus dont les pères sont différents, sans doute quatre cousins (11.1-6). A la suite de tractations dont le détail n'est pas rapporté, deux de ces quatre héritiers se retrouvent propriétaires du terrain à égalité :  $3\frac{5}{6}$  sar et 2 gin reviennent à Bikkum, autant à Ibni-Marduk (11.30-32). Le terrain B a été acheté par Bikkum (11.7-8 et 33-35). Ce que le texte ne dit pas, c'est comment les terrains A et B sont passés des mains de Bikkum et Ibni-Marduk dans celles de Warad-Ullab et Warad-Ulmašitum, les vendeurs actuels. Au moment de la vente, les acheteurs leur réclament les *tuppāt ummātīm* (1.29). Tout l'intérêt du texte tient aux lignes suivantes, qui décrivent explicitement ces tablettes. En premier lieu, deux *tuppāt zittīm*; il s'agit de tablettes énumérant la part d'héritage dévolue respectivement à Bikkum et Ibni-Marduk, chacun d'eux ayant reçu une tablette individuelle selon la coutume de Sippar<sup>15</sup>. Puis la *tuppi šīmātīm* de Bikkum, soit le contrat de vente qui a été remis à celui-ci lorsqu'il acheta le terrain B, accompagnée de sa *tuppi šurdē*<sup>16</sup>. Ce document permet donc de prouver définitivement que les *tuppāt ummātīm* sont les tablettes antérieures concernant les divers transferts (par vente, mais aussi par héritage) dont a été l'objet le bien qui est à nouveau vendu. Ces tablettes, qui constituaient les titres de propriété de Warad-Ullab et Warad-Ulmašitum, devaient être remises par eux aux acquéreurs.

On peut enfin citer YOS 13 532<sup>17</sup>. L'affaire peut être ainsi reconstituée : à une date inconnue, un terrain fut vendu par les fils d'Alī-talimī à Nabium-iddinam. Ce dernier revendit le terrain à Iddin-Nabium, l'an 8 d'Ammiditana. Trente-neuf ans plus tard, Iddin-Nabium revendit à son tour le terrain à un certain Ibni-Marduk. On a donc affaire à trois ventes successives d'un même terrain. Lors de la dernière

<sup>13</sup> Comprendre ZĀ.Ē = *mūšûm*; pour *šikittum*, cf. AHw 1233b (corriger Wilcke, *Zikir šumim* 479, qui a cru reconnaître ici le nom *Ili-ki-it-ti*).

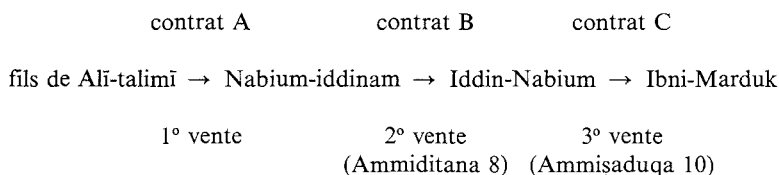
<sup>14</sup> Je m'abstiens de donner un schéma de ces deux parcelles en raison de quelques incertitudes. Il est certain que A et B forment un tout. Toutefois, si le voisin de A décrit l. 7 semble bien être B, en revanche, dans la description de B, A ne figure pas comme voisin, mais on trouve à la place la maison du sanga d'Annunitum. Il se pourrait donc qu'en fait le passage B donne accès à A, et soit en réalité le prolongement du passage cité l. 7. D'autre part, l. 10, il ne semble pas qu'on puisse restaurer des noms propres, d'où la lecture proposée; cette chapelle n'est cependant pas autrement connue.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. Harris, *Ancient Sippar* 363.

<sup>16</sup> Pour ce type de tablette, encore mal défini, voir Wilcke, *Zikir šumim* 479 et n. 65.

<sup>17</sup> Transcription-traduction par Wilcke, *Zikir šumim* 464 n° 10.

vente, l'acheteur réclama au vendeur ses titres de propriété. Manifestement, Iddin-Nabium fut en mesure de fournir son contrat (B), puisque la date de celui-ci est donnée. En revanche, le contrat concernant la première vente (A) resta introuvable. Iddin-Nabium prétendit sans doute ne pas l'avoir reçu, puisque Nabium-iddinam dut lui aussi s'engager à restituer le document perdu. On peut ainsi schématiser la situation :



On notera qu'ici l'expression *tuppāt ummātim* n'est pas employée; cela s'explique sans doute par le fait que l'acheteur ne réclame pas la totalité des titres de propriété antérieurs, mais seulement le plus ancien d'entre eux (supra, contrat A).

Les textes examinés jusqu'à présent ont été rédigés au moment d'une vente parce que la transmission des titres de propriété faisait difficulté. Ils permettent de prouver — en tant qu'exceptions — que cette transmission était de règle. Il existe cependant d'autres exemples où cette règle peut être démontrée positivement, en particulier lorsque le contrat de vente fait explicitement allusion à une transaction antérieure.

Tel est le cas de **BE 6/1 105**<sup>18</sup> : «<sub>1</sub> un terrain bâti non couvert de 1  $\frac{1}{2}$  *sar* <sub>2</sub> situé à Sippar-Yahrurum, <sub>3-4</sub> qui est décrit comme terrain nu sur la tablette antérieure qui le concerne, <sub>5</sub> à côté du terrain de Hungullum <sub>6</sub> fils de Nabium-ekalli, <sub>7-8</sub> qu'il a acheté aux fils du devin Iškur-mansum, <sub>9</sub> et à côté de la rue; <sub>10</sub> ayant comme petit côté la grand'rue des Isinéens, <sub>11</sub> ayant pour arrière le terrain du scribe Warad-Ibārī <sub>12</sub> fils de Warad-Mamu; <sub>13</sub> (terrain) qu'à Ili-iqīšam fils d'Alī-lūmur <sub>14</sub> Hungullum fils de Nabium-ekalli <sub>17</sub> a acheté pour  $\frac{5}{6}$  sicle d'argent, supplément inclus, <sub>15-16</sub> en l'an 29 d'Ammiditana. <sub>18</sub> A Hungullum fils de Nabium-ekalli, <sub>19</sub> Iltani, *naditum* de Šamaš, <sub>20</sub> fille d'Ibbi-Ilabrat, <sub>22</sub> a acheté (ce terrain) <sub>21</sub> avec l'anneau de son argent. <sub>23</sub> Pour son prix complet, <sub>24</sub> elle a versé 17 sicles d'argent <sub>25</sub> et a placé un supplément d' $\frac{1}{2}$  sicle d'argent. (Clause d'irrévocabilité, serment, témoins et date: 2/III/Ammišaduqa 17 + b)». L'objet de ce contrat est la vente d'une maison non couverte par Hungullum à Iltani. Le texte indique que le vendeur avait lui-même acquis ce terrain quelques années auparavant<sup>19</sup> alors qu'il était dépourvu de construction. Les précisions données aux 11.3-4 et 13-17 supposent que le scribe avait sous les yeux le précédent contrat, qui constituait le titre de propriété de

<sup>18</sup> Transcription-traduction dans Schorr, *VAB* 5, 92; voir aussi Wilcke, *Zikir šumim* 468 n° 12.

<sup>19</sup> On ne peut dire quel laps de temps exact sépare l'achat du terrain de sa revente, car la place de l'année Ammīšaduqa 17 + b n'est pas assurée. La plus-value de 10 sicles  $\frac{1}{3}$  opérée par Hungullum s'explique par le fait qu'il acheta un terrain nu et revendit le terrain bâti.

Hungullum. Elles pourraient paraître superflues. En fait, elles sont nécessaires, si l'on admet que l'ancien contrat est remis à Iltani par Hungullum. En effet, la description du terrain sur les deux tablettes ne correspond pas exactement; il s'agit d'un terrain nu d'un côté, d'une maison de l'autre. En outre, un des voisins a changé; dans le premier contrat, il s'agit des fils du devin Iškur-mansum. Entre-temps, le terrain a été acheté par Hungullum. Il fallait que le scribe signale explicitement ces différences entre les deux contrats, pour éviter toute contestation ultérieure sur l'emplacement et la nature de la parcelle vendue.

Une telle interprétation peut être confirmée par les archives d'un certain Alûm. Lorsque celui-ci acheta à Ikûn-pî-Šamaš une parcelle en l'an 6 de Samsuiluna, le contrat<sup>20</sup> mentionna explicitement que le terrain en question avait été antérieurement acquis par le père de l'actuel vendeur. Or on possède le contrat correspondant à cette transaction antérieure<sup>21</sup>. Il s'agit d'une tablette datée de l'an 29 de Rîm-Sîn, où l'on voit Ikûn-pî-Adad, le père d'Ikun-pî-Šamaš, acheter le terrain à Kibrî-Adad. Il est manifeste qu'en l'an 6 de Samsuiluna, Alûm reçut, non seulement le contrat établi à cette occasion, mais aussi le titre de propriété du vendeur, vieux de cinquante ans. Le cas est donc exactement semblable à ceux qu'on trouve à cinq reprises dans les archives de Šilli-Eštar de Kutalla<sup>22</sup>.

La lettre **UMBS 7 118**<sup>23</sup> confirme la généralité de cette pratique: «<sub>16</sub> relativement au fait qu'<à> Ilî-iddinam fils de Sîn-bêl-aplim <sub>17</sub> l'argent n'a pas été apporté, <sub>18-19</sub> j'ai réfléchi au fait d'écrire au représentant (?) de Sîn-išmeanni. <sub>22</sub> Qu'un homme de confiance prenne <sub>20</sub> 1 1/3 mine d'argent, prix du champ de 24 *ikû* <sub>21</sub> appartenant à Ilî-iddinam, qu'il vienne me trouver et <sub>24</sub> qu'il donne l'argent à Ilî-iddinam! <sub>26</sub> Je pourrai alors faire porter à mon père <sub>25</sub> le contrat de vente ainsi que les anciennes *tuppât ummâtîm*. <sub>27</sub> Fais-moi porter ta tablette, <sub>28-29</sub> afin que le contrat de vente du capitaine Sîn-išmeanni puisse être écrit!». D'après cette lettre, une transaction est en cours entre Ilî-iddinam et Sîn-išmeanni. Le premier s'apprête à vendre au second un champ de 24 *ikû*. Le prix n'ayant pas encore été versé au vendeur, le contrat de vente n'a pas encore été rédigé<sup>24</sup> et remis à l'acheteur. La difficulté vient de ce que vendeur et acheteur ne se trouvent pas au même endroit: le premier est près de l'auteur de la lettre, le second près de son destinataire. La procédure proposée par l'auteur de la lettre est simple: dès qu'Ilî-iddinam aura reçu son argent, lui-même, après avoir fait rédiger le contrat de vente (*tuppi šimâtîm*), le

<sup>20</sup> D. Owen, 'Cuneiform Texts in the Collection of Professor Norman Totten', *Mesopotamia* 8-9 (1973-74) 10-14 n° 26.

<sup>21</sup> D. Owen, *Mesopotamia* 8-9 (1973-74), 26-29 (A. 32101).

<sup>22</sup> Voir note 1.

<sup>23</sup> Transcription-traduction par Ungnad, *ABPh* 84-85, en attendant la nouvelle édition des lettres de Philadelphie par M. Stol dans *AbB* 11. Voir en outre le commentaire de San Nicolo, *Schlussklauseln* 128 ss.

<sup>24</sup> Pour le lien très étroit entre le versement du prix d'achat et la rédaction du contrat, voir *TCL* I 221 et M. Anbar, *RA* 69 (1975) 114, note à L. 7-11.

fera porter à son correspondant avec les anciennes *tuppāt ummātim*, c'est-à-dire les titres de propriété du vendeur. Si le vendeur et l'acheteur s'étaient trouvés réunis, la rédaction du contrat de vente aurait certainement été accompagnée de la même façon par la transmission de ces tablettes, mais nous n'en aurions rien su.

Que se passait-il lorsqu'on vendait une partie seulement d'une parcelle dont on était propriétaire? En dépit de ses mutilations, **CT 48 82** permet de répondre à cette question<sup>25</sup>: «<sub>1</sub> vu que sur la *tuppi ummātim* <sub>2</sub>  $18\frac{2}{3}$  sar de terrain drainé <sub>3</sub> sont inscrits, <sub>5</sub> et que Ahatum fille de Mār-...lim <sub>8</sub> doit recevoir <sub>4</sub> la *tuppi ummātim* <sub>6</sub> des mains de Warad-Sîn <sub>7</sub> et Lu-Nanna, les fils de Mannum-balum-Šamaš, <sub>10</sub> Ahatum étant acheteuse <sub>9</sub> de  $13\frac{2}{3}$  sar de terrain drainé (seulement), <sub>11</sub> l'excédent qui existe, <sub>12</sub> c'est Warad-Sîn lui-même, <sub>13</sub> ainsi que son frère Lu-Nanna <sub>14</sub> qui le mesureront par rapport aux  $13\frac{2}{3}$  sar; <sub>15</sub> (mais) ils devront livrer en totalité (les  $13\frac{2}{3}$  sar à Ahatum)». Le contexte immédiat de ce document est manifestement la vente d'un terrain de  $13\frac{2}{3}$  sar par Warad-Sîn et son frère Lu-Nanna à Ahatum. Les deux vendeurs doivent remettre à l'acheteuse la *tuppi ummātim* portant sur ce terrain (11.4-8). Mais la transaction antérieure rapportée par ladite tablette portait sur une parcelle de  $18\frac{2}{3}$  sar, dont présentement Ahatum n'a acheté que  $13\frac{2}{3}$  sar. Il existe donc un excédent de 5 sar (1.11) que les deux frères sont autorisés à délimiter eux-mêmes au sein de la parcelle entière, à condition qu'ils livrent bien la totalité des  $13\frac{2}{3}$  sar à Ahatum. Le présent document a donc été rédigé pour une raison fort simple: en transmettant à Ahatum la *tuppi ummātim*, les vendeurs se trouvaient dépourvus de tout titre de propriété pour les 5 sar qu'ils conservaient. Par la suite, Ahatum ou ses descendants auraient pu arguer de la *tuppi ummātim* où sont mentionnés  $18\frac{2}{3}$  sar pour exiger la restitution des 5 sar de différence. On avait vu précédemment l'établissement de certificats de perte des *tuppāt ummātim* pour garantir les droits de l'acheteur. Ici, à l'inverse, ce sont les vendeurs qui ont besoin d'être protégés. Nous avons dans cet exemple la preuve du caractère obligatoire de la transmission des *tuppāt ummātim*: il aurait en effet été plus simple que les vendeurs conservent leur titre de propriété, — mais alors ce sont les droits d'Ahatum qui auraient pu être menacés.

Un dernier texte illustre le lien obligatoire entre la vente d'une terre et la transmission des titres de propriété. Il s'agit de la lettre **UMBS 7 117**, dont le début a disparu<sup>26</sup>: «<sub>9-10</sub> Mon serviteur Iluni, le *šammallûm*, m'a dit ceci: '<sub>11-12</sub> Le juge Iddin-Irra a donné à la fille d'Ipiq-ilīšu  $\frac{1}{3}$  mine  $8\frac{1}{2}$  sicles d'argent comme prix de

<sup>25</sup> Mon interprétation, différant de celle offerte par Wilcke dans *Zikir šumim* 480 n° 20, je donne ici une nouvelle transcription de ce texte: <sup>1</sup> *aš-šum i-na DUB um-[ma-tim]* <sup>2</sup>  $18\frac{2}{3}$  SAR *me-[er-šu-um]* <sup>3</sup> *ša-at-ru-[ma]* <sup>4</sup> *tup-pi um-ma-tim* <sup>5</sup> *a-ha-tum DUMU-MĪ DUMU-x-li-im* <sup>6</sup> *i-na qá-ti ĩr-30* <sup>7</sup> *ú LÛ-<sup>d</sup>NANNA DUMU.ME ma-an-nu-ba-lum-<sup>3</sup>UTU* <sup>8</sup> *i-le-qú-ú* <sup>9</sup>  $13\frac{2}{3}$  SAR *me-er-[š]u-um* <sup>T.10</sup> *a-ha-tum ša-ma-a[t]* <sup>11</sup> *wa-tar-tum ša i-ba-aš-[ši-ú]* <sup>12</sup> *ĩr-30-ma* <sup>R.13</sup> *ú LÛ-<sup>d</sup>NANNA a-ah-[š]u* <sup>14</sup> *a-na  $13\frac{2}{3}$  SAR i-ma-da-d[ú-ma]* <sup>15</sup> *ú-ma-al-lu-ú* (6 témoins et date).

<sup>26</sup> Transcription-traduction par Ungnad, *ABPh*, 83 s. n° 117.

(son) terrain. <sup>13-14</sup> (Mais) Šumum-libši et Labištum ont placé un serment sur (ses) lèvres <sup>15-16</sup> et ont dit au juge Iddin-Irra que le terrain ne pouvait être vendu. <sup>17</sup> Nabi-Ilabrat, *šangûm* d'Annunītum, <sup>19-20</sup> a donné un autre terrain au juge Iddin-Irra(!) <sup>18</sup> pour une valeur de  $\frac{1}{3}$  mine et  $8\frac{1}{2}$  sicles d'argent. <sup>23</sup> Il (= Iddin-Irra) a donné <sup>21</sup> les contrats de vente scellés relatifs au terrain <sup>22</sup> au *šangûm* d'Annunītum Nabi-Ilabrat'. <sup>24</sup> Je viens de te faire porter  $\frac{1}{3}$  mine et  $8\frac{1}{2}$  sicles d'argent. <sup>27</sup> Donne <sup>25</sup> cet argent <sup>26</sup> au *šangûm* d'Annunītum Nabi-Ilabrat, <sup>28</sup> et les tablettes scellées ... <sup>29</sup> à ... (le reste a disparu)». L'affaire peut être reconstituée ainsi: dans un premier temps, la fille d'Ipiq-ilīšu vendit un terrain au juge Iddin-Irra. Les frères de la venderesse intervinrent, déclarant que la vente devait être annulée. L'explication la plus simple consiste à supposer que leur soeur était une *nadītu* à qui son père n'avait pas donné le droit d'aliéner sa dot<sup>27</sup>. L'acheteur devait cependant être dédommagé. C'est alors que le *šangûm* d'Annunītum, Nabi-Ilabrat, donna à Iddin-Irra un terrain d'une valeur équivalente à celui qu'il avait acheté. Pour que l'annulation de la vente fût effective, on pourrait penser qu'Iddin-Irra n'avait qu'à détruire sa *tuppi šimātīm* en présence de Nabi-Ilabrat. Or le texte indique qu'il a remis à ce dernier les contrats de vente portant sur ce terrain<sup>28</sup>. Ce pluriel ne se comprend que si, au moment de la vente, Iddin-Irra avait reçu, en plus du contrat, les titres de propriété de la venderesse. La vente étant annulée, il faut que la fille d'Ipiq-ilīšu récupère ses tablettes pour être en mesure de prouver ses droits sur le terrain en question. Une nouvelle fois, le lien apparaît très étroit entre l'objet possédé et les documents écrits qui s'y rattachent: l'annulation d'une vente oblige l'acquéreur à restituer à la fois l'objet vendu et les titres de propriété qui lui avaient été remis au moment de la vente.

## 2. L'échange

L'obligation de transmettre les titres de propriété n'était cependant pas limitée à la vente des biens-fonds; elle valait également pour les autres modes de transfert, à commencer par les échanges. Les échanges de terrains auxquels procédaient parfois leurs possesseurs avaient le plus souvent comme motif le désir de regrouper leurs propriétés dispersées pour en faire un ensemble d'un seul tenant<sup>29</sup>. Ces échanges donnaient lieu à la rédaction d'un contrat en deux exemplaires, conservés respectivement par chacun des contractants. Pour éviter que des contestations puissent surgir par la suite, il semble que les titres de propriété étaient échangés en même temps que les biens-fonds auxquels ils se rapportaient. Tel est du moins

<sup>27</sup> Voir Harris, 'The *nadītu* Laws of the Code of Hammurapi in Praxis', *OrNS* 30 (1961) 163-169.

<sup>28</sup> On corrigera le *CAD* N/1 170a, qui traduit les lignes 17-20 et résume les lignes 21-23 ainsi: «PN (the chief administrator of DN) reassigned the house to PN2 for  $28\frac{1}{2}$  shekels of silver (and gave a sealed sales document to PN2)».

<sup>29</sup> Voir *Archives familiales* ..., 100.

l'enseignement de CT 45 60. Cette tablette date du règne d'Ammišaduqa et provient de Sippar. Le juge Utu-šumundib et l'exploitant agricole du cloître Adad-mušallim avaient échangé deux champs. Pour une raison que nous ignorons, Utu-šumundib désira revenir sur cet échange. Un accord intervint alors devant l'Assemblée (*puhrum*) de la ville entre les deux parties. C'est le texte de cet accord, précédé du rappel de la transaction antérieure, que nous livre ce document<sup>30</sup>: «<sub>1</sub> Au sujet d'un champ de 12 *ikû* dans «le terroir des 9 *ikû*», appartenant <sub>2</sub> à Adad-mušallim, exploitant agricole de la Maison du Cloître, <sub>3</sub> le juge Utu-šumundib fils d'Ilšu-ibni <sub>5</sub> a parlé en ces termes <sub>4</sub> à l'exploitant Adad-mušallim: ' <sub>7</sub> échange avec moi <sub>6</sub> le champ de 12 *ikû* que tu as acheté dans le «terroir des 9 *ikû*» <sub>7</sub> et qui se trouve dans mon voisinage, <sub>9</sub> et je te donnerai en échange <sub>8</sub> dans le champ que j'ai acheté et qui se trouve sur l'autre rive de l'Euphrate, à l'ouest, <sub>9</sub> un champ de 12 *ikû*'. <sub>10</sub> Voilà ce qu'il lui a dit. En accord mutuel, <sub>13</sub> il (= Adad-mušallim) a donné au juge Utu-šumundib <sub>11</sub> le champ de 12 *ikû* qu'il avait acheté dans le «terroir des 9 *ikû*», <sub>12</sub> ainsi que ses tablettes d'achat, <sub>14</sub> et le juge Utu-šumundib <a donné> en échange à Adad-mušallim <sub>15</sub> dans le champ qu'il avait acheté sur l'autre rive de l'Euphrate, à l'ouest, <sub>16</sub> un champ de 12 *ikû*. <sub>17</sub> Pendant un an il a cultivé de champ, <sub>18</sub> (puis) le juge Utu-šumundib <sub>20</sub> a dit <sub>19</sub> à l'exploitant Adad-mušallim: ' <sub>21-22</sub> Je ne suis plus preneur de ton champ de 12 *ikû* qui se trouve dans le «terroir des 9 *ikû*» que j'ai reçu en échange: reprends-le! <sub>23-24</sub> (En revanche), c'est moi qui cultiverai le champ sur l'autre rive de l'Euphrate, à l'ouest, que je t'avais donné: <sub>25</sub> ne t'approche plus de mon champ!'. <sub>26</sub> Voilà ce qu'il lui a dit. <sub>27</sub> Adad-mušallim <sub>30</sub> a alors réclamé au juge Utu-šumundib <sub>28</sub> les tablettes du champ de 12 *ikû* qu'il avait

<sup>30</sup> <sup>1</sup> [aš-šum 2/3 GĀN A.ŠĀ ša] A.GĀR 1/3 3/18 GĀN ša <sup>2</sup> [d<sup>1</sup>ISKUR-mu-ša-lim] ENSI<sub>2</sub> ša É GĀ.GI.A <sup>3</sup> [d<sup>1</sup>UTU-ŠU.MU.UN.DIB] DI.KU<sub>5</sub> DUMU DINGIR-šu-ib-ni <sup>4</sup> a-na d<sup>1</sup>ISKUR-mu-ša-lim ENSI<sub>2</sub> <sup>5</sup> ki-a-am iq-bi um-ma šu-ma <sup>6</sup> 2/3 GĀN A.ŠĀ ši-ma-ti-ka ša A.GĀR 1/3 3/18 GĀN ša <sup>7</sup> a-na i-tu-ti-ia a-na pu-uh-hi-im id-nam-ma <sup>8</sup> i-na A.ŠĀ ši-ma-ti-ia ša BAL.RI <sup>17</sup>BURANUN.NA d<sup>1</sup>UTU.ŠU.A <sup>9</sup> 2/3 GĀN A.ŠĀ pu-ha-am lu-ud-di-na-ak-kum <sup>10</sup> an-ni-tam iq-bi-šum-ma i-na mi-it-gu-ur-ti-šu-nu <sup>11</sup> 2/3 GĀN A.ŠĀ ši-ma-ti-šu ša A.GĀR 1/3 3/18 GĀN-e <sup>12</sup> ū tūp-pa-a-at ši-ma-ti-šu <sup>13</sup> a-na d<sup>1</sup>UTU.ŠU.MU.UN.DIB DI.KU<sub>5</sub> id-di-in-ma <sup>14</sup> d<sup>1</sup>UTU.ŠU.MU.UN.DIB DI.KU<sub>5</sub> <sup>15</sup> i-na A.ŠĀ ši-ma-ti-šu ša BAL.RI <sup>17</sup>BURANUN.NA d<sup>1</sup>UTU.ŠU.A <sup>16</sup> 2/3 GĀN A.ŠĀ pu-ha-am a-na d<sup>1</sup>ISKUR-mu-ša-lim ENSI<sub>2</sub> <id-di-in> <sup>17</sup> MU.J.KAM A.ŠĀ šu-a-ti i-pu-uš <sup>18</sup> d<sup>1</sup>UTU.ŠU.MU.UN.DIB DI.KU<sub>5</sub> <sup>19</sup> a-na d<sup>1</sup>ISKUR-mu-ša-lim ENSI<sub>2</sub> <sup>20</sup> ki-a-am iq-bi um-ma šu-ma <sup>21</sup> 2/3 GĀN A.ŠĀ-ka ša A.GĀR 1/3 3/18 GĀN-e a-na pu-uh-hi-im <sup>22</sup> el-qū-ū ū-ul e-le-eq-qī lu-ur-ra-ak-kum <sup>23</sup> A.ŠĀ i-ta BAL.RI <sup>17</sup>BURANUN.NA d<sup>1</sup>UTU.ŠU.A <sup>24</sup> ša ad-di-na-ak-kum a-na-ku e-ep-pu-uš <sup>25</sup> a-na A.ŠĀ-ia la ta-sa-na-[aš] <sup>26</sup> an-ni-tam iq-bi-[šum] <sup>27</sup> d<sup>1</sup>ISKUR-mu-ša-lim E[NSI<sub>2</sub>] <sup>28</sup> tūp-pa-a-at 2/3 GĀN A.ŠĀ ši-ma-ti-šu <sup>29</sup> [š]a a-na<sup>1</sup> d<sup>1</sup>UTU.ŠU.MU.UN.DIB DI.KU<sub>5</sub> id-di-[nu] <sup>30</sup> [d<sup>1</sup>UTU.ŠU.MU.UN.DIB DI.KU<sub>5</sub> i-ri-iš-m[a] <sup>31</sup> [ū] d<sup>1</sup>UTU.ŠU.MU.UN.DIB DI.KU<sub>5</sub> <sup>32</sup> i-na pu-uh-ri-im ki-a-am iq-bi um-ma šu-[ma] <sup>33</sup> tūp-pa-a-ti-ka ša 2/3 GĀN A.ŠĀ ša ta-ad-di-nam <sup>34</sup> a-na KĀ.DINGIR.RA<sup>ki</sup> ū-ša-bi-il-ma i-na KĀ.DINGIR.RA<sup>ki</sup> ša[ak-na] <sup>35</sup> a-ša-ap-pa-ar i-na EZEN d<sup>1</sup>UTU i-le-eq-qū-nim-ma <sup>36</sup> tūp-pa-a-ti-ka ū-ta-ar-ra-ak-kum <sup>37</sup> i-na EZEN d<sup>1</sup>UTU tūp-pa-a-ti-ka ū-ul ū-ta-ar-ra-ak-kum <sup>38</sup> 2/3 GĀN A.ŠĀ i-ta BAL.RI <sup>17</sup>BURANUN.NA d<sup>1</sup>UTU.ŠU.A <sup>39</sup> ša ši-ip-ra-am e-pu-šu at-ta te-ri-iš <sup>40</sup> ki-a-am iq-bi d<sup>1</sup>UTU.ŠU.MU.UN.DIB DI.KU<sub>5</sub> <sup>41</sup> tūp-pa-a-at 2/3 GĀN A.ŠĀ A.GĀR 1/3 3/18 GĀN-e [ša na-a]d-nu-šum <sup>42</sup> ša d<sup>1</sup>ISKUR-mu-ša-lim-ma [a-na pu-uh-hi-ī[m id-d]i-in <sup>43</sup> i<sup>?</sup>-na<sup>?</sup> E[ZEN<sup>?</sup> UTU<sup>?</sup>] a-na d<sup>1</sup>ISKUR-mu-ša-lim ENSI<sub>2</sub> [É GĀ.GI.A] <sup>44</sup> tūp-pa-a-tim ū-ul i-na-ad-di-in-ma <sup>45</sup> 2/3 GĀN A.ŠĀ-šu ša BAL.RI <sup>17</sup>BURANUN.NA d<sup>1</sup>UTU.ŠU.[A] <sup>46</sup> ša d<sup>1</sup>UTU.ŠU.MU.UN.DIB DI.KU<sub>5</sub> ši-ip-ra-am i-pu-šu <sup>47</sup> d<sup>1</sup>ISKUR-mu-ša-lim ENSI<sub>2</sub> ša É GĀ.GI.A <sup>48</sup> i-ir-ri-iš (quatre témoins et date: 10/III/Ammišaduqa 17 + c).



acheté, <sup>29</sup> et qu'il avait données au juge Utu-šumundib. <sup>31</sup> Mais le juge Utu-šumundib <sup>32</sup> a dit ceci dans l'assemblée: ' <sup>33-34</sup> J'ai fait porter à Babylone tes tablettes portant sur le champ de 12 *ikû* que tu m'as donné, et elles se trouvent à Babylone. <sup>35</sup> Je vais écrire qu'on les prenne pour moi lors de la Fête de Šamaš, <sup>36</sup> et je te rendrai (alors) tes tablettes. <sup>37</sup> Si, lors de la Fête de Šamaš, je ne t'ai pas encore rendu tes tablettes, <sup>38-39</sup> tu pourras labourer le champ de 12 *ikû* (situé) sur l'autre rive de l'Euphrate, à l'ouest, que j'ai cultivé'. Voilà ce qu'il a dit. Relativement au juge Utu-šumundib, <sup>41</sup> les tablettes portant sur un champ de 12 *ikû* dans le «terroir des 9 *ikû*», qui lui ont été données, <sup>42</sup> appartiennent à Adad-mušallim: c'est en échange qu'il (les) avait données. <sup>43-44</sup> Si, lors de la Fête de Šamaš, il (= Utu-šumundib) n'a pas rendu les tablettes à Adad-mušallim, exploitant agricole de la Maison du Cloître, <sup>47</sup> Adad-mušallim, exploitant agricole de la Maison du Cloître <sup>48</sup> pourra labourer <sup>45</sup> le champ de 12 *ikû* qui se trouve sur l'autre rive de l'Euphrate, à l'ouest, <sup>46</sup> et que le juge Utu-šumundib a cultivé». En un premier temps, Adad-mušallim (= A) et Utu-šumundib (= U) avaient donc échangé deux champs de superficie égale; il s'agissait dans les deux cas d'acquêts, non de biens propres. Au moment de l'échange, A remit à U ses titres de propriété, à savoir ses tablettes d'achat <sup>31</sup>. On notera qu'U n'en fit pas autant, sans que cela donne lieu à une réclamation de la part de A. La raison semble être que le champ acheté par U était plus vaste, et qu'il n'en préleva que 12 *ikû* pour les donner à A (11.8-9): il devait donc conserver sa tablette d'achat pour prouver ses droits de propriété sur le reste du champ qu'il gardait <sup>32</sup>. La procédure semble avoir été parfaitement régulière, et ce n'est pas là-dessus que porte le débat. Un an plus tard, U fit part à A de son désir de revenir sur l'échange (dont il avait pourtant pris l'initiative). La restitution du champ de 12 *ikû* à A impliquait que U rende également les tablettes d'achat qui s'y rapportaient, ce qu'il ne pouvait faire dans l'immédiat. Un accord fut donc conclu devant l'Assemblée, fixant la Fête de Šamaš comme échéance avant laquelle U devait remettre à A ses tablettes pour que l'annulation de l'échange puisse être effective. La leçon à tirer de ce cas est donc double. La procédure ordinaire de l'échange supposait également l'échange des titres de propriété. De plus, on voit ici que la restitution des titres de propriété *conditionne* l'annulation de l'échange: si les tablettes ne sont pas rendues à A, celui-ci reste propriétaire du champ qu'il avait reçu de U. On ne peut rêver plus bel exemple de l'importance prise par l'écrit en matière de droit à la fin de la Première Dynastie <sup>33</sup>.

<sup>31</sup> La pluralité de ces tablettes peut s'expliquer de deux façons. Ou bien Adad-mušallim n'avait pas acheté le champ en question d'un seul tenant, mais avait procédé à plusieurs achats successifs de parcelles voisines; ou bien il reçut de l'ancien propriétaire son titre de propriété.

<sup>32</sup> Ici, la situation est donc l'inverse de ce que nous avons vu plus haut à propos de CT 48 82. On peut supposer que la tablette était transmise au nouveau propriétaire si la parcelle transférée occupait la plus grande partie du terrain, et qu'elle était gardée par l'ancien propriétaire dans le cas contraire.

<sup>33</sup> Cf. D. Charpin, 'Le geste, la parole et l'écrit dans la vie juridique en Babylonie ancienne', A.-M. Christin (éd.), *Ecritures, systèmes idéographiques et pratiques expressives* (Paris 1982) 65-73.

### 3. *L'héritage*

Les documents relatifs au partage qui s'effectue des possessions d'un défunt entre ses héritiers ne mentionnent généralement que certaines catégories de biens, telles que terrains, esclaves ou prébendes; les descriptions les plus exhaustives à cet égard se trouvent dans les textes de Nippur. Mais nulle part ne figurent d'indications concernant la transmission des archives du défunt. On pourrait imaginer que l'aîné en recueillait l'héritage. Je voudrais ici montrer que ces archives étaient divisées entre les héritiers de façon que les tablettes suivent un chemin identique à celui des biens auxquels elles avaient trait.

Très caractéristique à cet égard est le document «publié» jadis dans **RA 14 95** par le P. Scheil<sup>34</sup> et repris par W. F. Leemans<sup>35</sup>. On peut en résumer ainsi le contenu: Sîn-muballit avait acheté à son frère Enlil-issu une maison de  $\frac{5}{6}$  sar 4 gín sise à Ur. Ili-amtahar hérita cette maison de son père Sîn-muballit, mais un certain Sîn-rēmēnī lui en contesta la propriété. Ili-amtahar alla trouver les juges de Larsa, à qui il montra la tablette d'achat de son père; on lui confirma alors la propriété de cette maison.

Tout l'intérêt de ce cas vient de ce qu'on possède l'acte antérieur par lequel les trois fils de Sîn-muballit se sont partagé les biens de leur père<sup>36</sup>. Chacun des héritiers reçut  $\frac{1}{2}$  sar 6 gín d'une maison sise à Larsa et 18 gín d'une maison sise à Ur. Leemans a ainsi commenté ce partage: «... it is more likely that Sîn-muballit possessed one house in Larsa and another in Ur, and that his sons were given an equal share in those houses, and that no actual division took place»<sup>37</sup>. Si l'on additionne les trois parts, on obtient en effet une maison de  $1\frac{1}{2}$  sar 18 gín à Larsa, et une maison de  $\frac{5}{6}$  sar 4 gín à Ur. Or cette dernière superficie est précisément celle de la maison contestée à Ili-amtahar dans le procès examiné plus haut. Il apparaît donc que ces deux maisons n'ont pas été conservées en indivis par les fils de Sîn-muballit comme l'a suggéré Leemans; un accord dut intervenir entre eux, à la suite duquel Ili-amtahar obtint la totalité de la maison d'Ur, et reçut en même temps la tablette par laquelle son père avait acheté ladite maison à Enlil-issu.

Un tel cas est donc très instructif, puisqu'il permet de voir que la transmission de la tablette antérieure à l'héritier d'un bien avait à l'évidence pour but de le prémunir contre d'éventuelles contestations: il suffit à Ili-amtahar de montrer aux juges la tablette d'achat de son père pour faire valoir son droit contre Sîn-rēmēnī.

Cette pratique était encore plus nécessaire lorsque l'héritier n'était pas un descendant du défunt par le sang, mais quelqu'un qui avait été adopté, et dont les droits pouvaient être plus facilement remis en cause<sup>38</sup>. La transmission des titres de

<sup>34</sup> Scheil, *RA* 14 (1917) 95.

<sup>35</sup> Leemans, *BiOr* 12 (1955), 120b, texte D.

<sup>36</sup> Jean, *S et A* 166 = Leemans, *BiOr* 12 (1955) 119, texte C.

<sup>37</sup> Leemans, *BiOr* 12 (1955) 120a.

<sup>38</sup> L'authenticité du contrat d'adoption pouvait en effet être contestée, comme dans le cas traité en *CT*

propriété du parent adoptif à son héritier constituait, en plus de la tablette d'adoption, une garantie pour ce dernier.

On peut le constater aisément au vu d'un procès, AO 5429, publié par Thureau-Dangin<sup>39</sup> et repris avec une amélioration décisive par Schorr<sup>40</sup>. On peut ainsi résumer cette affaire. Narāmtani, religieuse-*nadītum* du dieu Šamaš, avait été adoptée par sa tante Nīš-inīšu, elle aussi une *nadītum*<sup>41</sup>. Parmi les biens que Narāmtani reçut de sa mère adoptive se trouvait un terrain que Nīš-inīšu avait acheté à un certain Išum-gamil. Le fils de ce dernier intenta un procès à Narāmtani. A cette occasion, nous voyons que Narāmtani avait reçu la tablette sous enveloppe constituant le contrat d'achat de Nīš-inīšu. L'héritage s'était donc concrétisé par la transmission du bien foncier *et* du titre de propriété correspondant.

Un deuxième exemple, plus complexe, est rapporté en CT 47 63. Cette tablette fut rédigée à Sippar en l'an 14 de Samsu-iluna, suite à la perte de ses archives par une *nadītum* nommée Amat-Mamu. Voici la traduction de ce document<sup>42</sup>: «<sub>1</sub> Héritage de Bēlessunu, *nadītum* de Šamaš, fille de Manium: <sub>2</sub> Amat-Mamu, *nadītum* de Šamaš, fille de Sîn-ilī, <sub>3</sub> est son héritière. (Suit la description des biens dont hérite Amat-Mamu: 4 champs formant un total de 43 arpents (11.3-16),

2 47; pour cette affaire, voir R. A. Veenker, 'An Old Babylonian Procedure for Appeal', *HUCA* 45 (1974) 8-9.

<sup>39</sup> RA 9 (1912) 21 ss.

<sup>40</sup> VAB 5 n° 317.

<sup>41</sup> Pour l'adoption d'une jeune *nadītum* par sa tante, également *nadītum*, voir Harris, *Studies Oppenheim* 124-125.

<sup>42</sup> <sup>1</sup> DUB ša be-le-su-nu LUKUR <sup>d</sup>UTU DUMU.MÍ ma-ni-um <sup>2</sup> <sup>1</sup>GEME<sub>2</sub>-<sup>d</sup>MA.MU LUKUR <sup>d</sup>UTU DUMU.MÍ 30-DINGIR <sup>3</sup> re-di-it wa-ar-ka-ti-ša (...) <sup>22</sup> mi-im-ma an-nu-um b[u]-šu<sup>1</sup>-ša wa-ar-ka-sà <sup>23</sup> šu-lu-ša [ša] i-na i-ga-ri-im za-aq-pa-at <sup>24</sup> iš-tu pé-e a-di KÙ.GI ša be-le-sú-nu DUMU.MÍ ma-ni-um <sup>25</sup> ir-šu-ú ù i-ra-aš-šu-ú ša GEME<sub>2</sub>-<sup>d</sup>MA.MU-ma a-pil-ti-ša <sup>26</sup> DUMU.MÍ 30-DINGIR (...) <sup>36</sup> iš-tu be-le-sú-nu ap-lu-sà an-ni-tam a-na GEME<sub>2</sub>-<sup>d</sup>MA.MU <sup>37</sup> DUMU.MÍ 30-DINGIR id-di-nu-ma MU.2. KAM i-pé-ru-ši <sup>T.38</sup> <sup>1</sup>GEME<sub>2</sub>-<sup>d</sup>UTU DUMU.MÍ i-lí-i-qi-ša <sup>1</sup>ni-ši-i-ni-šu DUMU.MÍ AN-pí-<sup>d</sup>UTU <sup>39</sup> DUMU.MÍ.MEŠ a-ah-he a-bi-ša a-na A.ŠA-am<sup>(sic)</sup> ša pi-i tūp-pi <sup>40</sup> an-ni-im ir-gu-ma-ma tūp-pa-at nu-du-ni <sup>1</sup>be-le-sú-nu <sup>41</sup> ša a-bu-ša id-di-nu-ši-im tūp-pa-at ap-lu-ut <sup>42</sup> <sup>1</sup>na-ra-am-tum a-ha-at a-bi-ša <sup>R.43</sup> ša ap-lu-sà id-di-nu-ši-im ma-li ŠA-ša ma-ši-a-at <sup>44</sup> ù tūp-pa-at DUMU.MÍ.MEŠ a-ah-he a-bi-ša ša ir-gu-ma-ši-im <sup>45</sup> <sup>1</sup>zi-im-ri-e-ra-ah ra-bi-a-an ZIMBIR<sup>ki</sup> <sup>46</sup> ù KAR ZIMBIR<sup>ki</sup> i-na KÁ <sup>d</sup>UTU i-mu-ru-ma <sup>47</sup> a-na pi-i tūp-pa-ti-ša mi-im-ma-ša an-ni-a-am ù-bi-ir-ru-ma <sup>48</sup> a-na be-le-sú-nu id-di-nu aš-šum GEME<sub>2</sub>-<sup>d</sup>UTU ù ni-ši-i-ni-šu <sup>49</sup> i-na la i-di-im ir-gu-ma-ši-im še-er-tam i-mi-du-ši-na-ti <sup>50</sup> ù tūp-pi la ra-ga-mi-im ù-še-zi-bu-ši-na-ti <sup>51</sup> iš-tu tūp-pi la ra-ga-mi-im ù-še-zi-bu-ši-na-ti <sup>52</sup> ù be-le-sú-nu a-na ši-ma-ti-ša il-li-ku <sup>53</sup> tūp-pi ap-lu-tim tūp-pa-at um-ma-tim ša A.ŠA-im ù É <sup>54</sup> ša be-le-sú-nu a-na GEME<sub>2</sub>-<sup>d</sup>MA.MU DUMU.MÍ 30-DINGIR id-di-nu <sup>55</sup> ù tūp-pi la ra-ga-mi-im ša DUMU.MÍ.MEŠ a-ah-he a-bi-ša šu-zu-ba <sup>56</sup> <sup>1</sup>du'en-dingir [a-na] ma-ša-ar-tim i-na É i-ku-un-pi<sub>4</sub>-30 a-hi-šu i-zi-ba <sup>57</sup> tūp-pa-tum ši-na i-na É i-ku-un-pi<sub>4</sub>-30 ih-lt-qá-ma <sup>58</sup> <sup>1</sup>30-DINGIR ma-har 30-iš-me-a-ni ù KAR ZIMBIR<sup>ki</sup> iš-ku-ma <sup>59</sup> <sup>1</sup>i-ku-un-pi<sub>4</sub>-30 ki-ma tūp-pa-tum ši-na hal-qá-a <sup>60</sup> [a-n]a 30-[iš]-me-a-ni ù KAR ZIMBIR<sup>ki</sup> iq-bi <sup>61</sup> [i-n]a qá-bé-e 30-iš-me-a-ni ù KAR ZIMBIR<sup>ki</sup> <sup>62</sup> tūp-pa-am an-ni-a-am ù-ba-al-li-tū-ma <sup>63</sup> tūp-pi ap-lu-tim tūp-pi (var. env. l. 66' tūp-pa-at) um-ma-tim ù tūp-pi la ra-ga-mi-im <sup>64</sup> ša GEME<sub>2</sub>-<sup>d</sup>MA.MU DUMU.MÍ <sup>1</sup>du'en-dingir it-ti be-le-sú-nu la-qi-a-at <sup>65</sup> i-na É i-ku-un-pi<sub>4</sub>-30 ù e-ma in-nam-ma-ra <sup>66</sup> ša GEME<sub>2</sub>-<sup>d</sup>MA.MU-ma DUMU.MÍ 30-DINGIR U<sub>4</sub>.KÚR.ŠÈ ša pi-i tūp-pi an-ni-im <sup>67</sup> <sup>1</sup>i-ku-un-pi<sub>4</sub>-30 DUMU-MEŠ-šu ù ni-šu-ut be-le-sú-nu <sup>68</sup> NITA ù MÍ ma-li i-ba-aš-šu-ú a-na GEME<sub>2</sub>-<sup>d</sup>MA.MU DUMU.MÍ 30-DINGIR <sup>69</sup> ù-ul i-ra-gu-um <sup>70</sup> MU <sup>d</sup>UTU <sup>d</sup>AMAR.UTU ù sa-am-su-i-lu-na LUGAL it-mu-ú (19 témoins et date). (Je remercie K. R. Veenhof pour les améliorations qu'il m'a suggérées).

maisons et terrains nus (17-19), esclaves (20-21) ainsi que deux haches (22)).<sup>23</sup> Tout cela, ses biens propres (et) son héritage, — son épingle<sup>43</sup> étant fichée dans le mur —, depuis la paille jusqu'à l'or, que Bēlessunu, fille de Manium,<sup>25</sup> a ou aura, (c'est le bien) de Amat-Mamu, son héritière, fille de Sîn-ilī. (Suivent aux lignes 26 à 35 les clauses réglant la situation tant que Bēlessunu reste en vie, en particulier les versements de grain, de laine et d'huile que doit lui faire Amat-Mamu).

«<sup>36-37</sup> Après que Bēlessunu eut donné cet héritage à Amat-Mamu, fille de Sîn-ilī, et que celle-ci l'eut nourrie pendant deux ans, <sup>38</sup> Amat-Šamaš, fille de Sîn-iqīšam, Nīš-inīšu, fille de Anum-pī-Šamaš, <sup>39-40</sup> les filles des frères de son père, portèrent plainte au sujet du champ décrit dans cette tablette. <sup>45</sup> Zimri-Erah, le maire de Sippar, <sup>46</sup> et le *kārum* de Sippar examinèrent à la porte de Šamaš <sup>40</sup> les tablettes de la dot de Bēlessunu <sup>41</sup> que son père lui avait données, les tablettes de l'héritage de Narāmtum, la sœur de son père, <sup>43</sup> dont elle avait la libre disposition, <sup>44</sup> ainsi que les tablettes des filles des frères de son père (= les deux tantes de Bēlessunu) qui élevaient une plainte contre elle. <sup>47</sup> Ils confirmèrent la possession de son bien selon la teneur de ses tablettes, <sup>48</sup> et le rendirent à Bēlessunu. Relativement au fait que Amat-Šamaš et Nīš-inīšu <sup>49</sup> ont porté plainte contre elle à tort, ils leur ont imposé un châtement <sup>50</sup> et leur ont fait laisser une tablette-de-non-revendication.

«<sup>51</sup> Après qu'on leur eut fait laisser une tablette-de-non-revendication <sup>52</sup> et que Bēlessunu soit morte, <sup>56</sup> Sîn-ilī mit en dépôt dans la maison de son frère Ikūn-pī-Sîn <sup>53</sup> la tablette d'adoption, les *tuppāt ummātīm* des champs et maisons <sup>54</sup> que Bēlessunu avait donnés à Amat-Mamat-Mamu fille de Sîn-ilī, <sup>55</sup> ainsi que la tablette-de-non-revendication que les filles des frères de son père avaient dû laisser. <sup>57</sup> Ces tablettes ont été perdues dans la maison d'Ikūn-pī-Sîn. <sup>58</sup> Sîn-ilī a fait une déposition devant Sîn-išmēanni et le *kārum* de Sippar, <sup>59-60</sup> et Ikūn-pī-Sîn a dit à Sîn-išmēanni et au *kārum* de Sippar que ces tablettes étaient perdues. <sup>61</sup> Sur l'ordre de Sîn-išmēanni et du *kārum* de Sippar, on a fait «revivre» la présente tablette. <sup>63</sup> La tablette d'héritage, les *tuppāt ummātīm* et la tablette-de-non-revendication <sup>64</sup> qu'Amat-Mamu, fille de Sîn-ilī, avait reçues de Bēlessunu, <sup>65</sup> dans la maison d'Ikūn-pī-Sîn ainsi que partout où elles seront vues, <sup>66</sup> c'est le bien d'Amat-Mamu, fille de Sîn-ilī. A l'avenir, selon le contenu de cette tablette, <sup>67</sup> Ikūn-pī-Sîn, ses fils, ainsi que les parents de Bēlessunu, <sup>68-69</sup> hommes ou femmes, autant qu'il s'en trouve, n'élèveront pas de plainte contre Amat-Mamu, fille de Sîn-ilī».

On peut reconstituer cette affaire en quatre phases. Au départ se situe l'adoption d'Amat-Mamu par une *naditum* plus âgée nommée Bēlessunu. A cette occasion fut rédigé un contrat d'adoption (*tuppi aplūtīm*), qui énumère les biens de Bēlessunu (immeubles et meubles) dont Amat-Mamu doit hériter, pourvu qu'elle verse une

<sup>43</sup> Pour ce geste symbolique, cf. Kraus, *BiOr* 16, 122b et *CAD* § 193b; aux références citées, ajouter le présent texte et CT 47 65a: 15. Cette clause ne se trouve que dans les contrats d'adoption d'une *naditum* par une de ses consœurs, toujours avant la clause *īštu pē* ...; elle est limitée dans le temps au règne de Samsuiluna.

rente à sa mère adoptive sa vie durant. Deux ans plus tard, deux cousines de Bēlessunu lui contestèrent la propriété d'un champ. La municipalité de Sippar examina les titres des deux parties. Bēlessunu apporta alors les siens, soit les tablettes relatives à la dot qu'elle avait reçue de son père, ainsi que les tablettes relatives à l'héritage qu'elle fit d'une tante qui l'avait adoptée. Elle gagna son procès, et ses cousines durent lui laisser une tablette-de-non-revendication (*tuppi la ragāmim*). Après la mort de Bēlessunu, les archives d'Amat-Mamu furent mises en dépôt chez son oncle. La liste de ces tablettes comprend le contrat d'adoption d'Amat-Mamu par Bēlessunu, la tablette-de-non-revendication, ainsi que les *tuppāt ummātim* des champs et maisons que Bēlessunu avait donnés à Amat-Mamu. Il ne peut s'agir ici que des titres de propriété de Bēlessunu, c'est-à-dire des tablettes relatives à sa dot et à l'héritage qu'elle fit de sa tante<sup>44</sup>. Ainsi, au moment où Amat-Mamu fut adoptée par Bēlessunu, elle reçut son contrat d'adoption qui constituait son titre de propriété sur l'héritage. Cependant, à la mort de sa mère adoptive, Amat-Mamu hérita non seulement des biens de Bēlessunu, mais encore des titres afférents à ceux-ci. Toutes ces tablettes furent mises en dépôt chez son oncle, où on les égara. Amat-Mamu se trouve alors dépourvue de tout titre écrit. On procéda alors à une reconstitution des documents perdus<sup>44a</sup>. Le texte de CT 47 63 se présente donc en trois parties: les lignes 1 à 35 reproduisent le contenu de la *tuppi aplūtīm*, les lignes 36 à 50 celui de la *tuppi la ragāmim*, et la fin du texte explique la raison d'être du présent document. On notera que les *tuppāt ummātim* n'ont pas été reconstituées; on était évidemment dans l'incapacité de le faire, car ces documents remontaient à la jeunesse de Bēlessunu, au moment où son père la dota et où sa tante l'adopta. Lorsque les archives d'Amat-Mamu furent perdues, Bēlessunu était morte (depuis un temps que nous ne pouvons apprécier), ainsi sans doute que tous les témoins des deux contrats en question<sup>45</sup>.

Je voudrais terminer en évoquant deux cas également complexes, mais plus tardifs, puisqu'ils datent du règne de Samsuditana. Il s'agit de deux contrats de vente, qui retracent l'histoire du terrain faisant l'objet de la transaction; les détails

<sup>44</sup> Wilcke a ainsi commenté ce texte: «in CT 47, 63 ... sind aber die *tuppāt ummatim* neben der *tuppi aplūtīm* und einer Klageverzichts-surkunde genannt. Darum ist mit einem engeren Begriff *tuppi ummatim* = Urkunde über Abmessung und Grenzen des Grundstücks und einem weiteren Begriff, der auch die Übertragung des Eigentums miteinschliesst, zu rechnen» (*Zikir šumim*, 480). En fait, il apparaît clairement que dans notre texte, les *tuppāt ummātim* ne sont pas un type particulier de document, mais une expression qui recouvre plusieurs tablettes de type différent en tant qu'anciens titres de propriété.

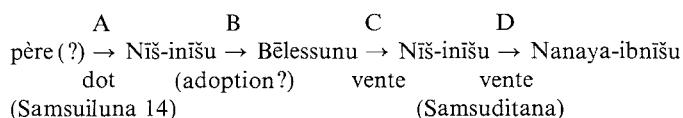
<sup>44a</sup> K. R. Veenhof me fait très justement remarquer que cette reconstitution est basée sur la déclaration des témoins antérieurs (en lisant l'enveloppe l. 65' [*tup*]-*pa-šu an-ni-a-am a-na pi-i ši-[bu-tim ú-ba-al-li-tú-ma]* «ils ont fait 'vivre' sa présente tablette selon la déclaration des témoins»). «Sa présente tablette» désigne bien évidemment CT 47 63; le possessif masculin -*šu* renvoie dans doute à Ikūn-pi-Sin (ou à Šin-ili?).

<sup>45</sup> On sait qu'en moyenne la longévité des *nadītum* était remarquable; voir Harris, *Studies Oppenheim* 122.

qui sont donnés par le scribe supposent que celui-ci avait consulté les tablettes correspondant aux étapes successives de l'histoire de ces terrains.

Le premier contrat, **YOS 13 90**<sup>46</sup>, porte sur une parcelle qui avait été initialement donnée comme dot (*nudunnum*) à une prêtresse-*ugbabtum* du dieu Zababa nommée Nīš-inīšu, en l'an 14 de Samsuiluna (phase A), soit 1736 selon la chronologie moyenne. Après la mort du frère (?) de Nīš-inīšu, une certaine Bēlessunu apparaît comme propriétaire du terrain; on peut penser qu'il s'agit d'une autre *ugbabtum* adoptée (phase B) par Nīš-inīšu, mais le texte ne précise par ce point. Il indique simplement que Bēlessunu vendit le terrain à une autre *ugbabtum*, Nīš-inīšu fille d'Ea-našir (phase C). La dernière phase (D) est constituée par la vente du terrain par cette Nīš-inīšu à un certain Nanaya-ibnīšu. Or le contrat précise que cette dernière vente est faite «conformément à la teneur de l'ancienne tablette scellée portant sur la dot»<sup>47</sup>, c'est-à-dire le document datant de l'an 14 de Samsuiluna. Cette tablette, vieille de 114 ans, est donc passée de main en main lors des différentes transactions qui se sont succédées (adoption, puis ventes). On peut ajouter que si le texte ne précise pas comment Bēlessunu est entrée en possession de ce terrain, c'est que son contrat d'adoption (*tuppi aplūtim*) ne fut pas transmis au moment où elle revendit le bien dont elle avait hérité.

On peut ainsi représenter la situation:



Un cas record est connu grâce à **YOS 13 96**. Ce contrat de vente de Kiš date des environs de l'an 10 de Samsuditana (soit 1614 selon la chronologie moyenne)<sup>48</sup>. Le texte commence par la description cadastrale de la parcelle vendue, mais a ceci de particulier qu'il donne le nom des voisins à trois reprises:

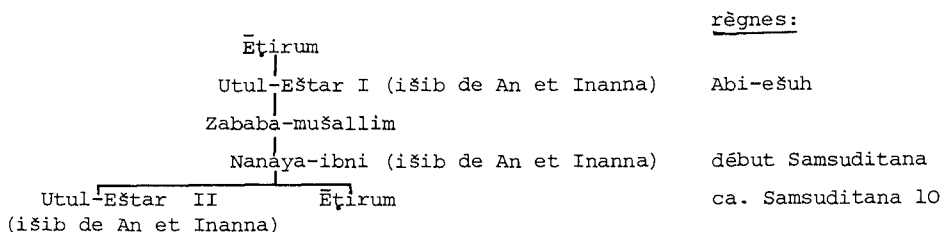
- 1) selon la teneur de la tablette de l'an 20 de Sīn-muballiṭ (1793);
- 2) selon la teneur de la tablette de l'an 1 d'Abiešuh (1711), lorsqu'Utul-Eštar I acheta le terrain à Marduk-našir;
- 3) les voisins actuels, les propriétaires de la parcelle étant alors les arrières-petits-fils d'Utul-Eštar I (voir schéma p. 137).

Un tel document suppose évidemment que le scribe avait sous les yeux les contrats antérieurs datant de 1793 et 1711; si exercée que fût la mémoire collective, elle pouvait difficilement retrouver le nom des voisins de ce terrain plus de 180 ans

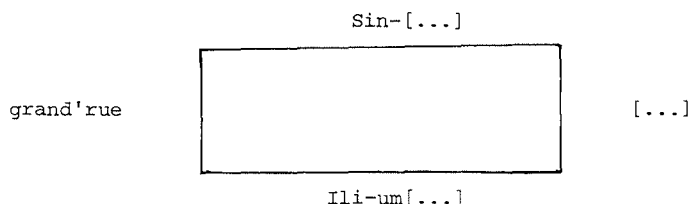
<sup>46</sup> Transcription-traduction par Wilcke, *Zikir šumim* 435 ss. et 477 n° 17.

<sup>47</sup> Une notation de ce genre s'explique par les restrictions à la vente qui pouvaient exister sur les biens transmis comme dot à une prêtresse. Voir note 27.

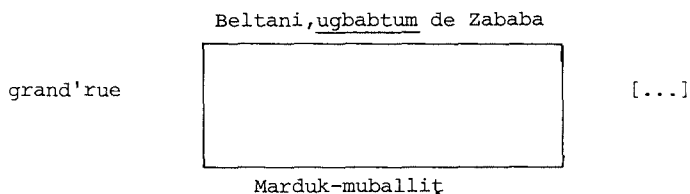
<sup>48</sup> Transcription-traduction par Wilcke, *Zikir šumim*, 475 n° 16.



1) Le cadastre en 1793: achat du terrain par un ancêtre de Marduk-nāšir:

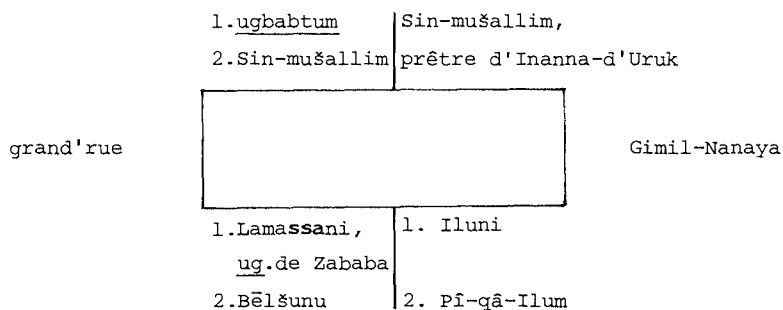


2) Le cadastre en 1711: achat du terrain à Marduk-nāšir par Utul-Eštar I:



3) Le cadastre vers 1610: le terrain appartient à Utul-Eštar II et Eṭirum:

(1. = ancien voisin; 2. = voisin actuel)



auparavant. Il faut donc admettre que Marduk-našir, qui avait dû obtenir ce terrain par héritage, avait reçu en même temps le premier contrat de vente; de plus, il dut céder cette tablette à Utul-Eštar I en même temps que le terrain lors de la vente qui eut lieu en 1711. Après quoi le terrain, ainsi que les deux contrats, furent transmis par héritage de génération en génération parmi les descendants de cet Utul-Eštar.

On a donc ici un exemple assez exceptionnel où l'on peut suivre la transmission d'un terrain et des tablettes qui s'y rapportent pendant près de deux siècles, par le jeu combiné des héritages et des achats.

Il apparaît donc que la coutume de la transmission des titres de propriété était générale en Babylonie<sup>49</sup> : on la trouve attestée de Sippar à Ur, et quelque soit le mode de transfert (dot, vente, héritage ou échange). Les titres ainsi transmis sont désignés à partir du règne d'Hammurabi par l'expression *ṭuppāt* (ou *kanikāt*) *ummātīm*<sup>50</sup>, dont l'usage est parfaitement clair, même si son étymologie l'est moins.

Von Soden a rangé les exemples de cette expression à *ummatum* sous la rubrique «etwa Stam-, Heimateinheit», en précisant «ein Besitzstandsurskunde?» (*AHW* 1414b). Une telle étymologie n'est guère satisfaisante, car l'usage qui est fait de ce terme ne renvoie nullement à une propriété collective. En outre, la graphie pleine *um-ma-a-tim* en *BE* 6/2 97 (citée par Wilcke, *Zikir šumim* 451 n. 49) montre bien qu'on a ici affaire au pluriel de *ummu* (lit. «mère»). L'acception particulière de *ummu* dans ce contexte est certainement «le point d'origine», «l'état antérieur», tout comme le sumérien *ama* dans l'expression *ama-ar-gi<sub>4</sub>*<sup>51</sup>. Les *ṭuppāt ummātīm* sont donc les anciens titres de propriété, quelle que soit leur nature (contrat de vente, dot, héritage ou échange) en tant qu'ils définissent le «statut antérieur» du bien transmis<sup>52</sup>. Leur remise au moment d'un nouveau transfert d'un bien avait deux buts essentiels : permettre de vérifier la légalité de la transaction<sup>53</sup>, et empêcher l'ancien propriétaire de contester par la suite les droits du nouveau en produisant son titre.

Quelles étaient les incidences de cette pratique sur la constitution des archives privées ? Il nous faut d'abord éviter d'avoir une vue unilatérale des archives familiales, dont l'histoire serait celle d'une accumulation progressive. En fait, une famille dont le patrimoine diminuait voyait ses archives diminuer d'autant : la vente

<sup>49</sup> Je ne prétends nullement qu'il s'agisse là d'un trait propre au droit coutumier paléo-babylonien, auquel j'ai volontairement limité la présente enquête. Voir par exemple P. Maidman, 'A Nuzi Private Archive: Morphological Considerations', *Assur* 1/9 (Avril 1979) 1-8.

<sup>50</sup> Cette expression ne désigne donc pas seulement les anciens contrats de vente, comme l'avait indiqué Harris, *JCS* 16 (1962), 1 n. 3.

<sup>51</sup> Voir mon article, '*Andurārum*: *ama-ar-gi<sub>4</sub>*, «retour au statut antérieur»', (à paraître). Une telle traduction est confortée par un passage de l'épopée de Lugalbanda : «les jours passèrent, les mois s'allongèrent, mu *ama-ni-ir ba-gi<sub>4</sub>* l'année revint à son point de départ» (ll. 259-260). Je remercie J.-M. Durand pour m'avoir signalé cette référence.

<sup>52</sup> La connexion que Wilcke a cru établir entre *ṭuppāt* / *kanikāt ummātīm* et ce qu'il a appelé «Quasi-Hüllentafeln» repose sur une méprise. Les «Quasi-Hüllentafeln» sont la forme particulière que prennent les titres de propriété en Babylonie à partir du règne d'Abi-ešuh : au lieu d'enfermer la tablette dans une enveloppe qui reproduit le texte du contrat et offre un espace supplémentaire pour les sceaux, on se mit à réserver directement sur la tablette une marge destinée aux empreintes de sceaux. Mais nous avons des références à des *ṭuppāt ummātīm* dès Hammurabi et Samsuiluna, à un moment où ce genre de tablettes n'existait pas encore.

<sup>53</sup> En particulier lorsqu'il s'agissait de dots, ce qui s'explique par les restrictions à la vente frappant cette catégorie de biens ; voir p. 129.



d'un champ s'accompagnait de la perte des tablettes correspondantes. En Babylonie, les gens pauvres n'ont pas d'archives, mais les gens ruinés, pas davantage.

Une autre conséquence est d'ordre méthodologique. On a vu qu'au moment des partages, les héritiers se répartissaient les tablettes correspondant à leur part. Lorsque nous retrouvons les archives d'un individu, il faut donc bien voir que les textes relatifs aux générations antérieures ne forment qu'une partie de ce qui a existé. Reprenons le cas célèbre de la famille d'Iddin-Lagamal à Dilbat; il est clair que les archives retrouvées correspondent à la quatrième génération de la famille. Il est donc très dangereux de vouloir reconstituer la politique d'acquisition foncière du grand-père à partir des textes conservés par une seule branche de la famille<sup>54</sup>. Dans cette optique, nous pouvons également mieux apprécier le cas du grand rassembleur de terre que fut Balmunamhe. Au vu de cet exemple, W. F. Leemans s'était demandé si la pratique de la transmission des titres était vraiment générale: «it is remarkable that in this archive none of the older records concerning the same objects are found, although these had to be delivered to the purchaser with the object»<sup>55</sup>. Grâce aux textes publiés récemment dans *YOS 12*, nous possédons sans doute l'explication de cette anomalie apparente: les tablettes qui nous sont parvenues ne formaient pas les archives de Balmunamhe, qui vécut sous Warad-Sîn et Rîm-Sîn, ni même celles de ses enfants, mais celles de ses petits-enfants, actifs pendant la période où Samsuiluna dominait Larsa<sup>56</sup>. On peut donc considérer ces contrats comme les titres de propriété conservés par ses héritiers après qu'ils se soient partagé le patrimoine constitué par leur grand-père<sup>57</sup>.

Cette coutume portait cependant en elle-même un grave défaut: son effet multiplicateur. Plus les années passaient, plus le nombre de tablettes transmises avec le bien augmentait. Or plus les tablettes étaient nombreuses, plus croissait le risque de les égarer. C'est sans doute pourquoi tous les textes rapportant la perte de *tuppāt ummātim* sont postérieurs à Hammurabi, même si ce phénomène peut également témoigner d'une importance croissante reconnue à l'écrit en matière de droit<sup>58</sup>.

Ma communication s'achèvera par un regret et un espoir. Le regret concerne un état de fait bien connu: à quelques exceptions près, les archives privées paléobabyloniennes que nous possédons proviennent de fouilles clandestines. Dès lors se trouvent dispersées des tablettes découvertes en un même *locus*, et dans le cas des

<sup>54</sup> Voir H. Klengel, 'Untersuchungen zu den sozialen Verhältnissen im altbabylonischen Dilbat', *AOF* 4 (1976), en particulier 67-78.

<sup>55</sup> *SLB* I/2, 7.

<sup>56</sup> Voir *BiOr* 38 (1981), 533 et 546-7.

<sup>57</sup> Après ma communication à Leiden, M. van de Mierop m'a fait justement observer que cette hypothèse pouvait être valable pour les contrats portant sur les biens-fonds, mais qu'elle expliquait plus difficilement la conservation des contrats portant sur les esclaves.

<sup>58</sup> Voir l'article cité supra note 33.

*tuppāt ummātīm* le lien qui les unissait est très difficile à renouer<sup>59</sup>. Quant à l'espoir, il a été suscité par les découvertes de la mission de Tell ed-Dēr, qui confirment l'importance du phénomène ici étudié<sup>60</sup>.

<sup>59</sup> C'est cependant parfois chose possible: voir ci-dessus le cas de Alûm p. 127.

<sup>60</sup> Voir l'article de K. van Lerberghe, 'New Data from the Archives found in the House of Ur-Utu at Tell ed-Der', *AfO Beih.* 19 (1982) 280-283, qui ne m'a été connu que peu de temps avant la Rencontre de Leiden. Je note pour mon propos, à la p. 280: «as far as the juridical texts are concerned, one is struck at once by the fact that some sale contracts of real estate from the period of Samsuiluna had been kept in the archive till the reign of Ammišaduqa, that is for more than 80 years. That these tablets remained valid as deed of ownership is shown by a sale-contract of the year Ammišaduqa 11 (Di 259) dealing with a real estate transaction of the year Samsu-iluna 20, which is cited in a «Sammel-urkunde» (Di 286). This is proved further by some of our letters giving an account of a lawsuit concerned with old family possessions where such titles of ownership play an important part (Di 212, 291)».

## QUELQUES REMARQUES CONCERNANT LES ARCHIVES RETROUVÉES DANS LE PALAIS DE MARI

JEAN MARGUERON (Strasbourg)

N'aurait-on pu attendre du célèbre palais de Mari qu'il apportât une contribution majeure au problème étudié pendant cette Rencontre? C'est pourtant un constat essentiellement négatif qui sera présenté, ce qui a peut-être de quoi surprendre au premier abord car, 15.000 à 20.000 tablettes, entières ou fragmentaires, retrouvées dans les ruines de la célèbre demeure de Zimri-Lim, de façon dispersée, c'est une découverte considérable et encore unique dans les annales archéologiques du Proche-Orient; unique, car à Ebla, pour une quantité de documents sensiblement identique, c'est la concentration qui apparaît comme le caractère primordial<sup>1</sup>, alors que le palais d'Ugarit a offert des archives dispersées comme Mari, mais en bien moins grande quantité.

Cette dispersion est un caractère remarquable qui devrait normalement permettre de définir l'emplacement des bureaux de l'administration à l'intérieur du palais, car une quantité aussi importante de textes implique nécessairement une organisation, donc un classement réalisé en fonction de principes que l'on peut penser facile de déterminer par l'analyse interne des lots recueillis et par la situation des trouvailles dans l'édifice.

A Mari il n'y a pas eu, à ce jour, d'étude consacrée à ce problème, du moins à ma connaissance. Pourtant depuis l'achèvement du dégagement des parties essentielles du palais du second millénaire par André Parrot en 1938<sup>2</sup>, le désir a toujours été vif chez les épigraphistes de trouver les raisons qui présidaient à l'organisation des archives. Aujourd'hui ce n'est malheureusement pas la solution espérée que je viens

<sup>1</sup> On peut donc légitimement espérer que la suite du dégagement du palais d'Ebla fournira de nouvelles séries tout aussi importantes, puisque les documents mis au jour jusqu'à maintenant ne couvrent manifestement qu'une petite partie des activités dépendant de l'administration du palais. Les perspectives sont donc exceptionnellement prometteuses, car si la partie encore enfouie du palais est aussi bien conservée que ce qui a été dégagé à ce jour, on peut espérer obtenir une image très précise de la répartition des différents services de l'administration royale dans une grande capitale syrienne du milieu du III<sup>e</sup> millénaire.

<sup>2</sup> A. Parrot, *Mission Archéologique de Mari, II. Le palais*, 3 vol. (abrégé ci-dessous sous la forme *MAM* II/1, 2 ou 3). Depuis 1938, des travaux ont parfois été réalisés dans le palais: en particulier à partir de 1964 afin de permettre l'étude du palais du III<sup>e</sup> millénaire. Au cours de ces recherches des indications très intéressantes pour notre propos ont été recueillies; il en sera fait état à l'occasion dans ce papier, même si elles n'ont pas encore fait l'objet d'une publication.

apporter; je veux simplement montrer que ce que l'on peut attendre d'une telle recherche est en réalité fort peu de chose.

Ce faisant je ne suis ici que le porte-parole de toute l'équipe de Mari, car les épigraphistes, et tout particulièrement J.-M. Durand et D. Charpin, ont fourni des renseignements essentiels pour cette communication.

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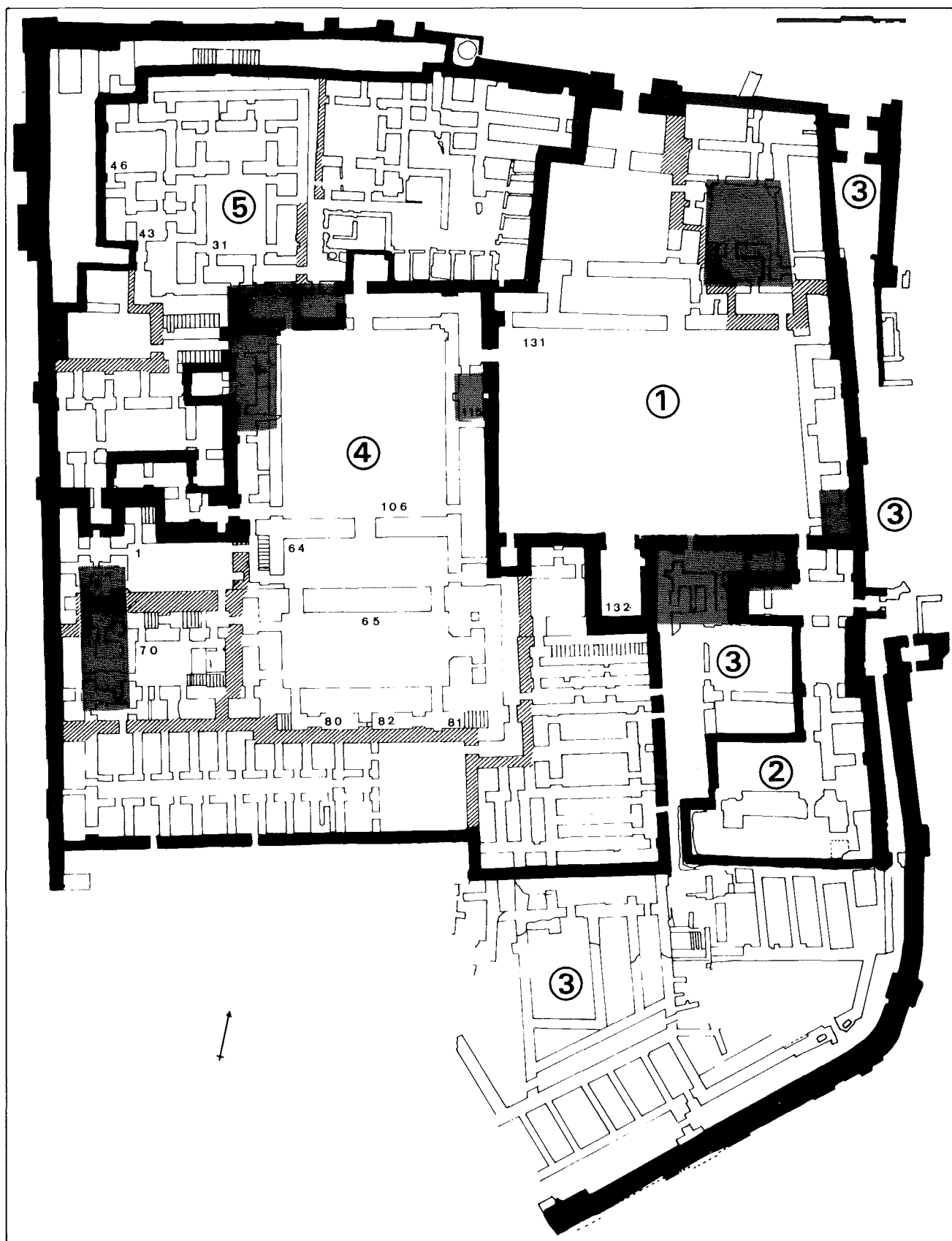
Avant d'examiner la question des archives, il me faut présenter très rapidement les caractéristiques du palais de Mari. En effet, une analyse récemment conduite de ce monument, remet en cause l'image traditionnelle des palais mésopotamiens<sup>3</sup> et certaines des caractéristiques nouvelles auront une réelle importance dans la question qui nous occupe (fig. 1).

Il apparaît tout d'abord que le palais de Mari n'est nullement le labyrinthe désordonné que l'on se plaît souvent à y reconnaître, mais bien plutôt un ensemble composé de quelques unités élémentaires dont le rôle est parfaitement clair. Une première unité forme l'entrée, ou secteur d'accueil, qui met en relation, comme une plaque tournante, tous les autres secteurs: au sud-est le quartier des Temples, au sud les dépendances économiques et surtout les réserves, au sud-ouest la Maison du Roi et au nord-ouest la Seconde Maison, peut-être domaine des Femmes<sup>4</sup>. Il paraît tout à fait remarquable que chacun de ces secteurs forme une unité autonome dont les relations avec les autres sont très peu nombreuses: une stricte organisation du réseau des circulations hiérarchise ces quartiers les uns par rapport aux autres et aucune anarchie n'existe derrière ce foisonnement de cours, de pièces et de couloirs. L'analyse montre en outre, comme corollaire à ce principe de cohérence de l'organisation générale, qu'il n'y avait aucune liberté dans les circulations: des postes de contrôle se trouvaient installés à tous les points névralgiques, en particulier à l'entrée de chaque grand secteur et, à l'intérieur de ceux-ci, chaque fois que des raisons de sécurité l'imposaient; cette surveillance continuelle implique que toutes choses devaient rester à leur place; bureaux et archives comme le reste. On peut donc penser qu'à chaque grand secteur, correspond une administration propre et que les pièces affectées au contrôle de la circulation ne pouvaient convenir comme salles d'archives<sup>5</sup>.

<sup>3</sup> J. Margueron, *Recherches sur les palais mésopotamiens de l'âge du bronze*, 1982 (abrégé ci-dessous sous la forme *Recherches* ...). Le palais de Mari y est plus particulièrement étudié au chap. XI, 203-379, étude qu'il faut compléter avec les chapitres de la deuxième partie.

<sup>4</sup> J.-M. Durand et J. Margueron, «La question du harem royal dans le palais de Mari», *Journal des Savants*, oct.-déc. 1980, 253-280.

<sup>5</sup> Il en est ainsi de la salle 115 où fut retrouvée la correspondance diplomatique. Or à l'époque de Zimri-Lim cette salle servait comme poste de contrôle pour l'admission dans la partie du palais réservée à la Maison du Roi et à la Seconde Maison, cf J. Margueron, *Recherches* ... 353, 488. C'était là un point névralgique, dont on voudra bien admettre qu'il n'était pas spécialement destiné à recevoir les



1. Les grands secteurs du palais de Mari: en 1) l'accueil; 2) les Temples; 3) dépendances et réserves générales; 4) la Maison du Roi avec le groupe officiel; 5) la Seconde Maison. En grisé les zones de concentration de tablettes de l'époque de Zimri-Lim.

Une caractéristique complémentaire qui complique cette organisation d'ensemble et l'articulation très rationnelle des grandes unités, touche à la présence d'un étage sur l'essentiel de l'édifice; les preuves de son existence sont données par les restes d'escaliers, les logements des poutres des plafonds à 4m de hauteur, plafonds qui forment aussi les planchers du niveau supérieur, et enfouis dans les éboulis à 2 ou 3m de hauteur des baignoires, de la vaisselle, des vases ou encore des fragments de dalles ou de plaques de plâtre provenant du revêtement des sols de l'étage<sup>6</sup>. Mais le fait de pouvoir déceler la présence d'un étage est une chose, la possibilité de préciser les différentes fonctions y afférant en est une autre et je n'oserais aller trop loin dans l'interprétation du niveau supérieur lorsque des indices précis manquent; pourtant si des centaines de tablettes apparaissent dans les éboulis comme dans la salle 71<sup>7</sup>, il ne me paraît guère hasardeux d'envisager la présence de pièces d'archives à l'étage (fig. 2).

Je voudrais encore évoquer le problème de l'école. L'interprétation du fouilleur de Mari pour les salles 24 et 25<sup>8</sup> a été parfois contestée, bien plus souvent admise: l'image d'une école palatine avec ses banquettes parallèles et ses barcasses remplies de jetons pour l'apprentissage du calcul, était, il est vrai, fort alléchante et surtout elle s'inscrivait dans une certaine logique, liée à la réalité d'une administration palatiale. Mais une analyse détaillée de ces deux salles conduit très vite à abandonner cette fonction. En effet, la largeur qui subsiste entre les banquettes, très souvent inférieure à la longueur d'un pied, même enfantin, les méthodes anciennes des scribes, l'absence de prise de jour directe et l'éloignement des sources de lumière sont des faits qui sont incompatibles avec un centre d'apprentissage de l'écriture<sup>9</sup>. D'ailleurs les documents cunéiformes retrouvés dans la salle 24 sont des archives conservées par Idinatum, le chef des marchands. Il ne peut donc plus être question d'une école mais tout simplement d'un appartement de deux pièces vouées à une fonction économique, sans doute de réserves alimentaires destinées à la Seconde Maison.

Il y a certainement eu à Mari un centre de formation des scribes; mais à ma connaissance aucune trace d'un tel centre n'a été repérée dans le palais et l'on peut envisager qu'il ait trouvé place dans un autre bâtiment de la cité, tout en restant sous la dépendance du Roi. Une chose est assurée: sa place n'était pas dans le groupe 24-25.

Cette nouvelle image du palais de Mari étant établie, on peut maintenant introduire la question des archives. On sait que dès le début de la seconde campagne, André Parrot découvrait le palais de Zimri-Lim et que les tablettes apparaissaient

archives de ce qui pourrait apparaître comme le secrétariat des affaires étrangères du roi. Cf ci-dessous p. 149.

<sup>6</sup> Pour une analyse détaillée de cette question cf J. Margueron, *Recherches* ... 288-308.

<sup>7</sup> A. Parrot, *MAM* II/1, 235-236.

<sup>8</sup> Cf en particulier A. Parrot, *MAM* II/1 188 sq.

<sup>9</sup> J. Margueron, *Recherches* ... 345-349.

immédiatement par centaines (salle 5). Jusqu'à la fin du dégagement de la demeure royale, les lots d'archives ne cessèrent d'affluer et avant la dernière guerre, lorsque l'on pouvait considérer comme connu pour l'essentiel le palais du début du second millénaire, le nombre des documents recueillis atteignait ou dépassait même 15.000. On comprend, dans ces conditions, que nous ne nous attachions pas ici à conduire une analyse exhaustive de ce matériel, mais qu'à l'aide de quelques exemples nous établissions ce que l'on est en droit d'attendre de la documentation de Mari dans la question de l'organisation des archives.

Deux pistes retiendront particulièrement notre attention : la question de l'homogénéité des lots et celle de l'emplacement des trouvailles. De la première, par l'étude de la composition interne des ensembles recueillis, dépendra la possibilité d'identifier les bureaux et les spécificités propres à chacun d'eux. De la réponse à la seconde on peut espérer une meilleure connaissance de l'organisation des bureaux dans l'ensemble du palais.

A priori on devrait s'attendre à constater une certaine homogénéité des lots, non pas selon des notions modernes de répartition des tâches, mais selon les principes anciens qu'il nous faudrait redécouvrir à cette occasion.

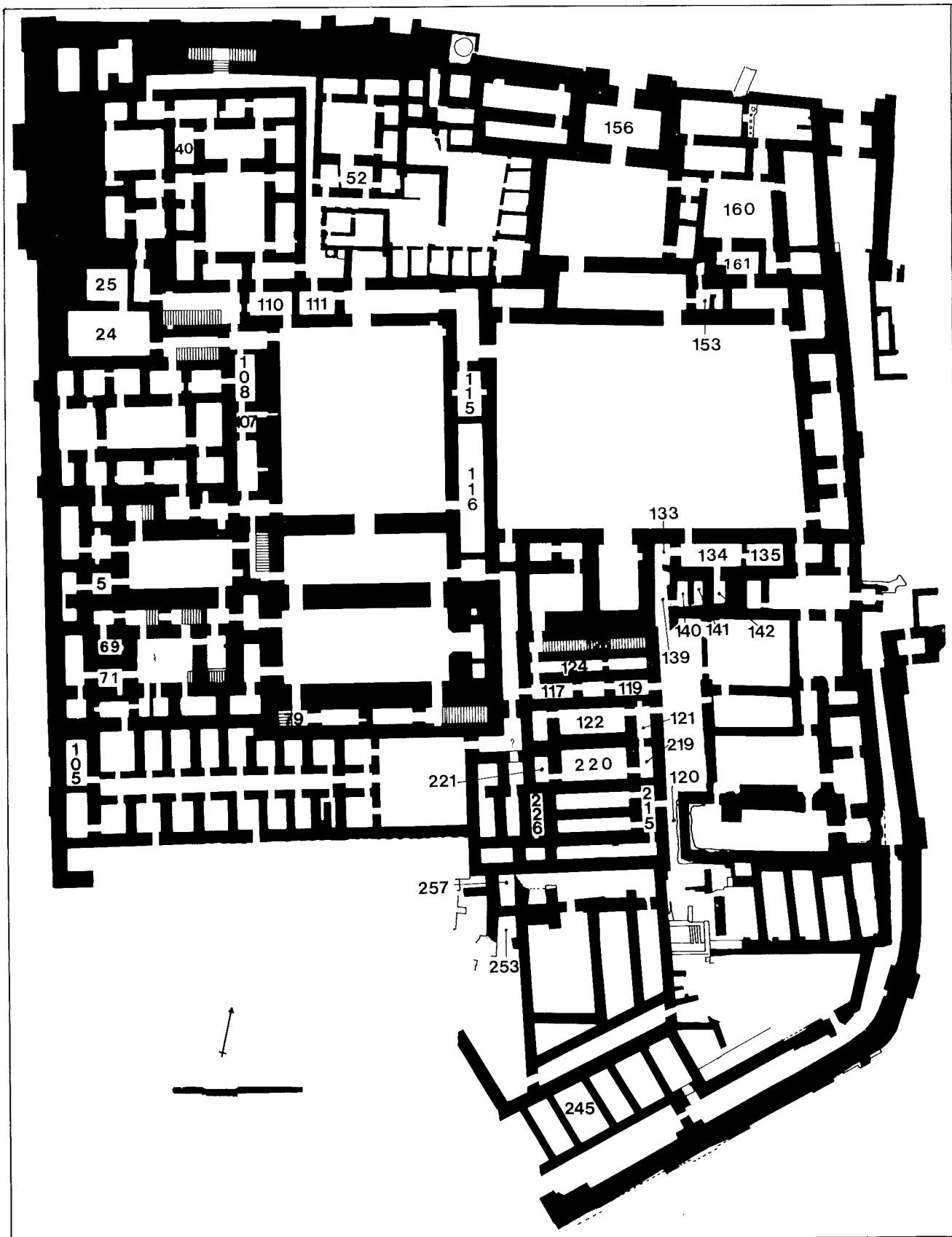
De fait, certains ensembles présentent une cohérence interne qui autorise une identification assez précise : on songera par exemple à la série recueillie dans la salle 5 où l'on peut voir sans difficulté des archives concernant la gestion de la Maison du Roi<sup>10</sup> ; de même le lot ramassé dans les ruines de la salle 110 et consacré en partie à la correspondance féminine, pourrait-il traduire la présence d'une zone d'archivage, voire de bureaux, consacrée à l'administration de la Seconde Maison<sup>11</sup>. Mais les choses ne sont pas toujours aussi claires.

Certains lots présentent une hétérogénéité tout à fait étonnante : on pense particulièrement à la salle 108 où furent retrouvés des lettres, des contrats, des documents comptables, des textes relatifs aux métaux, des fragments d'incantation et 32 modèles de foie. Il est difficile de comprendre une telle association et je ne pense pas que le problème soit réglé par la simple affirmation du caractère incompréhensible des motivations des archivistes antiques, même si l'on admet bien volontiers que leur démarche intellectuelle n'est pas forcément identique à la nôtre.

Une autre anomalie très fréquente concerne l'existence de lots chronologiquement très différenciés. C'est le cas de la salle 215 où l'on trouve à la fois des tablettes datées habituellement de la III<sup>e</sup> dynastie d'Ur et des documents de l'époque de Zimri-Lim. Comment admettre qu'un lot cohérent puisse ainsi compter des exemplaires appartenant à des époques éloignées de près de deux siècles, avec un hiatus complet pour les époques intermédiaires, à moins que l'on ait affaire à des tablettes de très grande importance, ce qui ne semble pas avoir été le cas ; de plus, le lieu de découverte ne se

<sup>10</sup> M. Birot, *ARM* 11 et 12, 1960 et 1964.

<sup>11</sup> G. Dossin, *ARM* 10, 1978.



2. Salles du palais de Mari citées dans cet article où ont été trouvées des tablettes.



satisfait pas de cette proposition, car il n'est guère vraisemblable que l'on ait choisi d'archiver des documents importants dans ce qui n'est qu'un vestibule de magasins.

Enfin, une recherche systématique des joins a été conduite par les épigraphistes de la mission entre 1982 et 1983 dans les documents inédits. Il sera rendu compte des résultats de ce travail dans les publications épigraphiques à venir, mais certaines conclusions peuvent être brièvement exposées ici, car elles concernent directement notre propos. Je reproduis la note rédigée à cet effet par J.-M. Durand et D. Charpin : «L'équipe des épigraphistes de Paris a procédé entre Novembre 1982 et Juin 1983 à une recherche systématique de joins à propos du corpus des textes économiques encore inédits. Cette enquête a délibérément laissé de côté toute recherche portant sur le corpus des lettres encore inédites, beaucoup plus considérable. D'autre part il faut signaler que les textes conservés dans les salles 5, 105, 134, 160, 111, 110 qui ont fait l'objet de publications (ARM 7, 9, 12, 21) n'ont pu être intégrés à la recherche systématique puisque les documents ne se trouvent plus à Paris. Ont été, d'autre part, exclus de la recherche les lots constituant les prochains volumes à éditer par Philippe Talon et Jean-Pierre Materné. Tout le considérable corpus des tablettes sur le métal attribué à Henri Limet, de même, n'a point été intégré à la recherche. On remarquera, cependant, que la numérotation par Georges Dossin de toute une fraction importante des tablettes de Mari en A (de A 1 à A 4500), en fonction de leur intérêt propre et indépendamment de leur provenance géographique, a pu permettre de faire des sondages fructueux pour des salles autrement inaccessibles. Un gros handicap vient cependant du fait que pour toutes les tablettes trouvées au début des fouilles, nous ne possédons plus que la cotation provisoire et millésime, sans indication de localisation. Dans certains cas assez nombreux, nul renseignement n'existe sur les tablettes en A.

Une première constatation générale est que l'on peut faire des joins entre des fragments trouvés dans n'importe quelle salle. Des cas limites sont atteints par trois fois lorsque des tablettes sont constituées par des fragments retrouvés dans trois salles différentes. Ainsi citera-t-on le cas d'une tablette constituée par un fragment de la s. 52, un de la salle 108 et un de la salle 160.

Une deuxième constatation est que la s. 108 et la s. 115 interfèrent sans cesse : 80 fragments appartenant à l'une ou l'autre de ces salles ont été rejoints pour former 40 tablettes. La s. 115 offre deux joins avec la salle 107, 3 avec la s. 52, 3 avec la s. 79, 9 avec la salle 135, 1 avec la salle 215. La s. 108 a 10 joins avec la s. 52.

Une troisième constatation est que l'existence même de certaines salles pourrait être mise en doute. Les archives de la s. 160 et de la s. 215 forment, en réalité, une seule et même archive, même au point de vue de l'aspect matériel des documents et de leurs conditions de préservation. La s. 52, de même, vu les 13 joins, au moins, qu'elle a en commun avec trois salles, devient suspecte».

Tirons les principales conclusions de ces observations. Aucune situation antique ne me paraît susceptible de rendre compte de la reconstitution d'une tablette à partir de

fragments retrouvés dans trois salles différentes, éloignées de plus de 60 et 80m les unes des autres; que 40 tablettes aient pu être reconstituées à partir de fragments provenant des salles 108 et 115, ne peut résulter non plus de mélanges réalisés dans l'Antiquité par la destruction de l'édifice, car ces deux salles se trouvent séparées par toute la largeur de la cour 106, soit par plus de 25m. Il faut admettre que ces mélanges ont été malencontreusement réalisés après la mise au jour des archives, soit sur le chantier même, soit lors de l'enregistrement, soit par la suite, et en particulier lors des transferts des différents lots de documents. Et parce que la salle 115 interfère avec au moins cinq autres salles (s. 107, 52, 79, 135, 215), il paraît vain de chercher à remédier à ces confusions.

L'étude portant sur les emplacements de découverte autorise-t-elle des conclusions plus sûres? Constatons d'emblée que les renseignements concernant la localisation précise, l'altitude et le degré de dispersion ou au contraire de concentration, ne sont ni fréquents, ni très précis quand ils existent. A l'occasion, des informations sont données dans la publication; ainsi apprenons-nous que le gisement de la salle 5 venait certainement de l'effondrement de l'étage<sup>12</sup>; dans la salle 71 plusieurs centaines de tablettes ont été repérées à 25cm sous la surface du tell et les fouilleurs les ont retrouvées jusqu'aux dalles du sol, soit sur une hauteur de 3,30 à 3,50m; mieux, nous apprenons cette fois qu'elles se trouvaient au-dessus de plaques de plâtre provenant selon André Parrot de la terrasse (comprendre de l'étage)<sup>13</sup>. Dans ces deux cas on peut être certain que les lots d'archives sont tombés de l'étage lors de la destruction de l'édifice.

Il est tout aussi assuré que d'autres lots avaient la même origine: je pense en particulier à ceux des salles 107, 108, 110 et 111, mais on pourrait sans mal allonger la liste et la première conclusion importante me paraît être qu'une partie des archives se trouvait installée à l'étage: conclusion qui précise le rôle de l'étage dans le palais, mais qui montre aussi les limites de notre enquête sur l'organisation des archives, car, il faut le reconnaître comme je l'ai dit précédemment, il n'est guère possible de connaître le fonctionnement de l'étage. Si nous voulions remplir un plan de l'étage, on n'y trouverait pratiquement que les emplacements des lots d'archives; aucune limite de secteurs, aucune organisation des appartements ne peuvent être connues avec un degré de certitude suffisant pour être assuré qu'une chambre de l'étage appartenait à tel ou tel secteur, surtout à proximité des limites des secteurs du rez-de-chaussée, ou pour obtenir une image cohérente de l'organisation de l'administration du palais.

Les archives retrouvées dans la salle 115 posent un autre problème<sup>14</sup>. Célèbres à juste titre puisqu'elles sont composées en grande partie de textes diplomatiques et des lettres que des gouverneurs expédiaient au Roi, elles ont grandement contribué à

<sup>12</sup> A. Parrot, *MAM* II/1 217.

<sup>13</sup> A. Parrot, *MAM* II/1 235-236.

<sup>14</sup> Cf ci-dessus n. 5.

l'accroissement des connaissances historiques sur le début du second millénaire en Mésopotamie et en Syrie. Elles présentent donc le caractère d'une assez grande homogénéité qui a conduit souvent à reconnaître dans la salle 115 une sorte de secrétariat des affaires étrangères et de l'administration du royaume, «la salle des archives diplomatiques» comme la désigne André Parrot, qui la considère comme «la réserve normale des documents de la chancellerie» «à la fin de la dynastie»<sup>15</sup>. La chose est bien établie, comme le montre le fait que lorsqu'un connaisseur de la documentation recueillie dans ce palais se présente afin de visiter les ruines actuelles, il demande toujours à être conduit à l'*École* et à la *Salle des Archives* : c'est là un signe bien réel de célébrité. Mais comme je l'ai signalé au début de ce papier la salle 115 apparaît comme ayant joué un rôle très précis dans les circulations de ce palais : c'est elle, en effet, qui surveille l'entrée de la partie de l'édifice royal occupée par la Maison du Roi et par la Seconde Maison, qui pourrait être celle des Femmes, ces deux ensembles étroitement accrochés au bloc officiel 106-64-65. L'importance de ce poste est telle que je serais bien étonné que l'on ait seulement envisagé de lui conférer une fonction secondaire aussi essentielle que celle de salle d'archives aussi importantes et dont on pouvait avoir besoin à tout moment ; le soin apporté par les usagers du palais à contrôler la circulation me paraît aller tout à fait à l'encontre d'une telle confusion.

Mais comment expliquer alors la présence de ces archives dans cette salle au moment de la fouille ? La découverte, au milieu des tablettes, d'étiquettes de panier au nom des serviteurs d'Hammurabi permet d'envisager une situation exceptionnelle, celle d'un dépôt momentané, dans cette salle, d'archives étudiées par l'occupant babylonien avant la destruction du palais.

Parmi les conclusions que l'on peut retenir de cette situation, il en est une qui intéresse notre propos au premier chef : les Babyloniens auraient modifié le système d'archivage du palais avant de détruire celui-ci et la situation retrouvée par la fouille ne serait pas celle qui existait lors du fonctionnement normal sous Zimri-Lim. Même si d'autres causes n'étaient venues compliquer la situation, on ne pouvait au moment de la remise au jour du palais espérer retrouver l'organisation d'origine.

Je voudrais encore faire part de certaines expériences de fouille qui permettent de préciser le problème général.

Lorsqu'en 1965 André Parrot étendit la zone de recherche engagée en 1964 pour dégager le Palais Présargonique, il procéda à l'enlèvement des niveaux qu'il avait étudiés en 1937 et 1938. En particulier il retrouva dans les salles 140, 141 et 142 un niveau plus ancien partiellement remblayé par un nouveau sol et modifié par des murs nouveaux dont l'un avait scellé un lot de tablettes datées de Iahdun-Lim et Sumu-Yamam<sup>16</sup>. Ce lot apparaît comme chronologiquement homogène et donc

<sup>15</sup> A Parrot, *MAM* II/1 80.

<sup>16</sup> Mur entre 142 et 143 qui est anormalement épais lors de la phase finale.

capable de dater avec précision le sol sur lequel il se trouvait. L'homogénéité de ce groupement contraste fort avec l'hétérogénéité des séries retrouvées avant la guerre dans le même secteur, ce qui conduit à penser que des confusions de sols ont provoqué des mélanges de lots différents et que cette erreur a été possible parce que les sols les plus récents étaient souvent en terre battue et donc plus difficiles à déceler.

En 1966, la fouille s'est étendue plus vers l'ouest, à l'emplacement de ce qu'André Parrot a considéré comme les ateliers du palais de Zimri-Lim<sup>17</sup>. Les observations que j'ai eu alors la chance de recueillir, m'ont engagé à proposer une nouvelle interprétation de ce secteur<sup>18</sup> et surtout à envisager une date de construction assez tardive dans l'histoire du palais, sans doute lors de la domination assyrienne. Diverses constatations faites durant la fouille apportent certaines lumières à notre problème.

Tout d'abord, il n'est pas évident à première vue que l'on doive trouver sur le sol de la salle 215 des tablettes datées de l'époque des Shakkanakku (associées comme nous l'avons vu à des documents de Zimri-Lim) alors que ce sol pourrait avoir été confectionné vers 1800; on serait assez tenté de penser que le groupe des tablettes Shakkanakku provienne d'un niveau inférieur à celui du dernier souverain de Mari.

D'autre part le nouveau nettoyage de la salle 220 et de sa voisine 221 a tout d'abord donné quelques tablettes de la phase ultime de la vie de l'édifice, ramassées derrière les grandes jarres appuyées contre les murs ou enchassées dans des banquettes: il peut s'agir de documents perdus accidentellement, peut-être aussi certains d'entre eux ont-ils servi à caler les jarres et dans ce cas on peut les assimiler à du matériel jeté au rebut. Mais la découverte la plus intéressante a eu lieu lorsque la fouille s'est enfoncée entre les fondations des salles de ce secteur, sur une profondeur d'environ 1,60m: en effet, on y a trouvé par lots plus ou moins importants, correspondant parfois à la valeur d'un panier, mêlées à la terre de remblai, quelque 140 tablettes appartenant aux règnes de Zimri-Lim, de Sumu-Yamam, de Iahdun-Lim et à l'époque des Shakkanakku. Il s'agissait là de textes qui avaient été volontairement jetés dans un comblement au fur et à mesure que des manœuvres venaient y ajouter de la terre: archives éliminées, archives mortes, ce sont pourtant celles qui sont parvenues jusqu'à nous. Il est bien évident que la nature de ce gisement rend cette documentation très différente de celle qui est retrouvée sur un sol d'occupation nettement défini.

Enfin durant les campagnes de 1980 et 1982 j'ai été conduit à reprendre la fouille de la salle 116<sup>19</sup> avant de l'éliminer pour procéder au dégagement de la salle aux piliers<sup>20</sup>; or, l'enlèvement de la banquette qui maintenait les grandes jarres a permis de retrouver une soixantaine de textes économiques de l'époque de la domination

<sup>17</sup> A. Parrot, *MAM* II/1 280-294.

<sup>18</sup> J. Margueron, *Recherches...* 268-273, 289-292, 335-340, 364-365.

<sup>19</sup> A. Parrot, *MAM* II/1 94.

<sup>20</sup> J. Margueron, *Mari, Annales de Recherches Interdisciplinaires* 2 (1983), 17-18, et 3 (1984), 31 sq.

assyrienne: une fois encore on se trouve en présence de tablettes jetées au rebut et réutilisées dans des constructions.

Ces observations sont confirmées par l'analyse des archives recueillies avant la guerre comme le montre la suite de la note de J.-M. Durand et D. Charpin: «L'analyse interne de la documentation a d'autre part conduit à penser qu'une partie des archives a dû être trouvée, non point sur un sol du palais de Mari, mais aussi, sous un sol ou dans une banquette. En ce qui concerne ce dernier cas, cela semble être sûr pour toutes les archives d'époque assyrienne de la salle 110, dont l'aspect encrassé par une matière blanchâtre, était exactement le même que celui des documents trouvés par la mission Margueron en 1982».

Finalement ces différentes observations conduisent à ranger les archives de Mari dans deux groupes:

1°) les archives de l'époque de Zimri-Lim, ou plutôt celles qui étaient conservées au moment de la destruction du palais; elles comprennent certains des documents de sa gestion propre et peut-être de quelques-uns de ses prédécesseurs, lorsqu'il lui a paru important de les conserver; celles-ci sont certainement en très petit nombre. Ces documents ont été retrouvés soit dans des éboulis venant de l'étage (salles 5, 71, 108 ...), soit sur des sols de la dernière phase de la vie du palais, très souvent en terre battue et qui, pour cette raison, n'ont pas toujours été très précisément définis; les archives de la salle 115 font partie de cette grande catégorie, mais comme nous l'avons vu, elles ont été certainement déplacées par les serviteurs du vainqueur de Mari; dans les autres cas il peut s'agir d'archives vivantes, mais les conditions de redécouverte ne permettent pas d'être plus précis; certaines d'ailleurs sont manifestement des documents abandonnés comme ces tablettes retrouvées derrière les grandes jarres de la salle 221.

2°) Les archives antérieures à Zimri-Lim: ce lot très important, composé de textes d'époque assyrienne, des règnes de Sumu-Yamam, Iahdun-Lim et de ceux attribués à l'époque des Shakkanakku, ne peut avoir trouvé place dans les salles d'archives de Zimri-Lim; leur contenu exclut dans la plupart des cas un tel conservatisme. Il faut donc admettre qu'on les a trouvées soit sur des sols antérieurs à ceux de la phase finale sans que l'on ait toujours compris que le sol le plus récent avait été dépassé, soit prises dans des banquettes ou installations du même genre, soit jetées dans des remblais. Dans tous les cas il s'agit d'archives mortes et, dans la question qui nous occupe, il convient de souligner qu'elles ne peuvent plus fournir aucune indication sur la place des bureaux, les conditions et les techniques d'archivage dans le palais de leur époque.

La dernière conclusion concerne les archives de Zimri-Lim. Nous avons vu que les serviteurs d'Hammurabi ont apporté un trouble que l'on ne peut plus évaluer maintenant. Mais on remarque qu'il existe quelques zones de grande concentration de documents (fig. 1).

La première se trouve dans la Maison du Roi; elle s'étend de la salle 5 à la salle 75

et l'on peut penser qu'il y avait là, à l'étage, toute une série de bureaux dépendant directement de la gestion royale; je ne pense pas qu'il faille attribuer au hasard le fait que ces bureaux se trouvent au-dessus des zones de service.

La zone de concentration suivante se trouve dans la Seconde Maison, à l'angle nord-ouest de la cour 106; les salles 108, 107, 110 et 111 ont fourni d'appréciables quantités de documents, dont la correspondance féminine et dans ce secteur, les bureaux se trouvaient certainement aussi à l'étage. Il existe encore dans cette Seconde Maison une zone à tablettes, mais de plus faible densité, avec les salles 24, 25 et 40.

La troisième zone de concentration se trouve dans le seul bloc organisé lié à l'entrée, c'est-à-dire, en 160 et autour; la présence de bureaux installés à l'entrée du palais n'est pas exceptionnelle en Orient puisqu'on la retrouve à Ugarit par exemple.

La dernière zone est située dans la partie sud et sud-est de la cour 131, de part et d'autre de l'entrée du secteur des temples, mais sans doute sans le moindre rapport avec lui, et au début du cheminement conduisant par le couloir 133-130-120 vers les réserves générales; que ce soit sur un ou deux niveaux on trouve certainement là des services voués à l'administration économique.

Ainsi chacun des grands secteurs qui composent ce palais était équipé d'un centre d'archives correspondant sans doute à la présence de bureaux spécialisés. Cela correspond à un ensemble parfaitement organisé. Je ne crois pas qu'il soit possible d'aller beaucoup plus loin pour le moment, mais lorsque tous les documents seront connus, peut-être pourra-t-on préciser la composition de ces bureaux et le rôle de chacun d'eux.

Ebla, tell ed-Der, parce que ce sont des fouilles en cours, réalisées avec des méthodes éprouvées, peuvent répondre brillamment aux questions que la recherche pose en ce moment et qui sont débattues durant ces Rencontres. Mari ne peut prétendre sur ce plan à la même efficacité, parce que lorsque la fouille du palais a été réalisée, on ne pensait pas à recueillir ce genre de renseignements. Une leçon de modestie se dégage de cette enquête; elle est nécessaire. La recherche avance aussi quand on sait reconnaître les limites d'une documentation. Et l'on peut aussi espérer que l'avenir permettra de dépasser le blocage actuel grâce à la mise en œuvre de nouvelles méthodes.

## TPOLOGIE DES LETTRES DES ARCHIVES «ROYALES» DE MARI

A. FINET (Bruxelles)

Un fait, a priori surprenant, frappe tout qui étudie les «archives royales de Mari». C'est qu'on y trouve, à côté de documents de l'époque de Zimri-Lim, d'autres qui appartiennent au règne antérieur, celui de Yasmaḥ-Addu. Or cet «interrègne assyrien» s'est établi par la violence et représente, théoriquement, un hiatus entre ce qui l'a précédé et ce qui va le suivre, c'est-à-dire des dynastes autochtones. Néanmoins, l'administration de Zimri-Lim a conservé — et vraisemblablement classé — des archives établies par l'usurpateur, que celui-ci n'a donc ni emportées ni détruites lorsqu'il a dû abandonner le palais de Mari, non sans en avoir emporté les richesses, à en croire Zimri-Lim (10 140). Il est vrai que plusieurs personnalités de haut rang ont accompli leur tâche sous les deux régimes et que le personnel subalterne a pu, lui aussi — et peut-être davantage — rester en place. La fin de la domination assyrienne n'a pas impliqué de rupture dans l'administration, guère en ce qui concerne le personnel et pas du tout en ce qui concerne les principes et les méthodes. Cette continuité explique pourquoi les spécialistes de Ḫammu-rabi n'ont pas eu de peine à distinguer entre les archives de l'un et l'autre souverain<sup>1</sup>, sans qu'on puisse d'ailleurs exclure, dans ce travail de tri, l'aide de l'administration de Mari.

En ce qui concerne la conservation, il faut distinguer entre les documents dits «administratifs» ou «économiques» et les «lettres». De l'époque assyrienne, les tablettes du premier groupe sont beaucoup plus rares dans les archives de Mari que celles de Zimri-Lim. Ceci tient à la valeur «ponctuelle» de ces documents; des relevés quotidiens sont transcrits sur des registres mensuels ou annuels et perdent vite leur valeur administrative. Ils sont réutilisés ou jetés. Il est donc normal que les tablettes administratives du règne de Yasmaḥ-Addu ne représentent que 10 à 15 % de celles du règne de Zimri-Lim.

Tel n'est pas le cas pour les documents du second groupe, les «lettres». Celles-ci peuvent conserver longtemps leur valeur «politique». Appartenant à l'un ou l'autre règne, elles étaient spécialement conservées dans une salle du palais, la salle 115<sup>2</sup>. C'est là aussi qu'ont été découvertes les étiquettes de paniers à tablettes datées

<sup>1</sup> Voir Fr. Thureau-Dangin, «Sur des étiquettes de paniers à tablettes provenant de Mari», *Symbolae Koschaker* (SD 2; Leiden, 1939), 119-120.

<sup>2</sup> Pour ce qui est de la localisation des tablettes, voir ci-dessus dans ce volume les observations de J. Margueron, «Quelques remarques concernant les archives retrouvées dans le palais de Mari». Pour la différence à établir entre «archives mortes» et «archives vivantes», voir la fin de la communication de

du règne de Hammu-rabi de Babylone, ce qui implique que le conquérant ne s'intéressait qu'aux «lettres», c'est-à-dire aux documents politiques.

Il faut remarquer, à ce propos, que quelle que soit la valeur politique de documents de ce type, les lettres de l'époque de Yaḥdun-Lim ou de Sūmu-Yamam ont été mises au rebut, soit par Yasmaḥ-Addu, soit par Zimri-Lim.

Au sens large, la «lettre» est un écrit que l'on adresse à quelqu'un pour lui communiquer une information. Nos lettres actuelles, comme d'ailleurs beaucoup de missives sur argile, sont placées sous enveloppe. Le propre des documents babyloniens, c'est que «l'adresse» figurait aussi généralement en tête du message lui-même. C'est précisément cette «adresse» qui permet le mieux d'identifier une lettre. Pourtant certaines tablettes qui portent en tête le nom du destinataire et celui de l'expéditeur, ne sont pas réellement des lettres. Ainsi lorsqu'un fonctionnaire des douanes atteste qu'un batelier s'est acquitté de la taxe, il en avise son supérieur par un document qui se présente comme une lettre; ce n'est qu'une pièce comptable, et si un double en est délivré au batelier, c'est un «reçu» (13 58-96, 98-100). Ainsi, toujours à propos de douane, lorsque le roi de Karkémiš délivre un «laisser-passer» à ses propres «chargés d'affaires», il le rédige sous la forme d'une lettre à Yasmaḥ-Addu (5 11).

C'est d'ailleurs sous cet aspect que se présentent encore aujourd'hui les «passeports de chargés de mission» délivrés par le gouvernement belge.

Je veux m'en tenir ici aux lettres qui sont véritablement des messages.

J'examinerai d'abord les documents de la période assyrienne, puis ceux de l'époque de Zimri-Lim.

#### A. PÉRIODE ASSYRIENNE

##### 1. *Lettres adressées à Yasmaḥ-Addu*

C'est évidemment le genre de missives que l'on s'attend à trouver essentiellement dans les archives dites «royales». Le vice-roi de Mari reçoit beaucoup de lettres de son père; ce n'est pas souvent pour le féliciter et il lui est fait obligation, à maintes reprises, de s'en faire lire la teneur en présence de ses «ministres», nommément désignés, et de ce fait co-destinataires du message.

Son frère, Išme-Dagan, lui écrit fréquemment, le plus souvent lorsqu'il est encore vice-roi d'Ekallātum, mais aussi après son accession au trône. Il lui donne des nouvelles des opérations militaires qu'il dirige ou lui prodigue des conseils de conduite, notamment à l'égard du roi, leur père. Son beau-père, Išḫi-Addu, le roi de Qatna, lui écrit à plusieurs reprises; c'est surtout pour se plaindre de ne pas voir

D. Charpin présentée à Strasbourg (Colloque CNRS n° 620) en juin 1983 sous le titre «Les archives d'époque assyrienne dans le palais de Mari», à publier dans *MARI* 4 (1985).



arriver chez lui les troupes mariotes qui lui sont promises. Le roi de Karkémiš, Aplahanda, est en relations commerciales avec lui (5 5-13). Nous avons conservé une lettre que Sūmu-Epuḫ, roi de Yamḫad, lui envoie pour le féliciter d'une victoire (5 21).

Le roi de Talḫayum lui écrit à quatre reprises au moins (13 139-142). De nombreux fonctionnaires lui font rapport (5 22-33, 34-88; 2 13, 44, 52, 97, 131). Sa sœur Zibbatum lui écrit par deux fois, en l'appelant familièrement Abbā (10 107, 108; *ARMT* 16/1 s.v.). D'autres correspondantes l'assurent de leur dévouement (10 1-3).

### 2. Lettre adressée par un fonctionnaire à un collègue

Je n'en ai relevé qu'un seul exemple (5 34): il s'agit d'une requête adressée par Tarīm-Šakim à Ikūn-pī-Sin. Il voudrait savoir qui est responsable de son éviction du voyage de Yasmaḫ-Addu à Agadé, qu'il ressent comme une disgrâce.

### 3. Lettres adressées à des dames de la Cour

Parmi les documents du volume 10, il en est plusieurs dont l'attribution à l'une ou l'autre période est impossible actuellement. Du moins sommes-nous sûrs pour Akatiya de son appartenance à la période assyrienne; les trois lettres qu'elle a reçues — dont une de Yasmaḫ-Addu — ont été versées aux archives du palais (10 171, 172, 178).

### 4. Copies de lettres

L'administration garde un double des lettres — ou de certaines lettres — que Yasmaḫ-Addu envoie à son père (1 108-120; 2 11; 5 16-19), à son frère (4 86-88; 5 1-4) ou à son beau-père, le roi de Qatna (5 18-19). Nous avons aussi la copie d'une lettre qu'il adressait à Ḫammu-rabi de Babylone (5 14).

Un document encore inédit (A 2705) adressé par Yasmaḫ-Addu à Išḫi-Addu de Qatna, porte, au bas du revers, la mention *a-na A-ad-da-a*. Il y est question de l'envoi de troupes; le roi d'Assyrie, qui recevait donc une copie, était ainsi tenu au courant de la teneur exacte de la missive que le vice-roi de Mari adressait à son beau-père. Inversement, Šamši-Adad faisait tenir à son fils le brouillon d'une lettre que ce dernier devait envoyer à Qatna en temps opportun: «la réponse à sa tablette que je t'ai fait porter, fais-la écrire sur une tablette avec toutes sortes d'amabilités et fais-la lui porter, *ana zīm awâtīm*, selon les circonstances» (1 24). Quant à la lettre 1 3, c'est un instrument de propagande destiné à être diffusé par le clergé, et dont une copie était conservée aux archives.

### 5. *Lettres interceptées*

Le document de ce genre le mieux connu est la missive furibonde du roi de Qatna à Išme-Dagan. Ce dernier, en contrepartie de 2 chevaux valant 20 mines d'argent, n'a envoyé que 20 mines d'étain à Išhi-Addu, à peine le dixième de leur valeur! (5 20). M. Dossin notait (*ARMT* 5, p. 128): «cette lettre destinée à Išme-Dagan et retrouvée dans les Archives de Mari n'est donc pas parvenue à son destinataire. Il est à supposer que Iasmaḥ-Addu, après l'avoir lue, aura jugé prudent de la retenir». C'est l'hypothèse la plus plausible, mais on ne peut pas exclure totalement la possibilité d'une copie faite et conservée à Mari, tandis que l'original était normalement acheminé en Assyrie.

On a retrouvé également un document, encore inédit, enfermé dans l'enveloppe M 2 (voir P. Amiet, *Syria* 37, 221) qui est une missive adressée conjointement par Samiya et les Anciens de Šubat-Enlil à un certain Muḥaddûm qui apparaît comme un «serviteur» de Yasmaḥ-Addu dans le seul texte où il est mentionné (5 28, 26). Il s'agit soit d'une lettre interceptée, soit d'une lettre reçue par un fonctionnaire «assyrien» et transmise aux archives. Dans l'un ou l'autre cas, il est bien étrange que ceux qui l'ont eue entre les mains ne l'aient point lue!

Faute de temps ou distraction?

## B. PÉRIODE DE ZIMRI-LIM

### 1. *Lettres adressées au roi*

Elles lui parviennent là où il se trouve. Dans sa capitale (par exemple, la plupart des lettres de Kibri-Dagan, le gouverneur de Terqa, vol. 3; 13 102-136; de même celles de Yaqqim-Addu, le gouverneur de Sagarātum, vol. 14) ou en déplacement, qu'il s'agisse d'une inspection, d'une visite officielle ou d'une campagne militaire (ainsi les missives de Baḥdi-Lim, 6 1-50, 58-80; celles de Mukannišum, 13 2-24; la plupart de celles de Yasīm-Sūmu, 13 25-46; celles de Šibtu 10 4, 6-14, 16-25). Comme il est invraisemblable qu'il aurait été dressé copie de cette masse de documents, dont certains sont anodins, c'est que les scribes attachés au service du roi retournaient les tablettes originales aux archives du palais. Ses fonctionnaires ou son épouse principale ne sont pas ses seuls correspondants. Il reçoit des messages d'Alep, de Yarīm-Lim (S. 115, 72-39 = *Syria* 50, 11), de Hammu-rabi (*Ugaritica* 1, 15-16), de rois vassaux (2 57-59, 62-64; 13 143-147), de chefs de tribus (2 61; 10 151), de ses filles ou de ses concubines.

### 2. *Lettres adressées par Zimri-Lim à ses fonctionnaires ou aux dames de la Cour de Mari*

Lorsque ces lettres sont adressées par Zimri-Lim à Mari, il est évident qu'il ne séjourne pas dans sa capitale (par exemple les missives, surtout d'allure économique,

adressées à Mukannišum, 18 1-21); ces tablettes, destinées aux services du palais de Mari, sont directement versées aux archives.

De rares missives du roi à ses fonctionnaires hors de Mari se retrouvent également aux archives. Ou bien elles y ont été reversées parce qu'elles étaient importantes, ou bien elles avaient été copiées avant d'être expédiées (3 66 — affaire d'argent; 13 97 — comportement du roi d'Andariq).

Le roi écrit aussi à son épouse Šibtu (10 120-138) pour lui donner des nouvelles d'ordre politique ou domestique et à Addu-dūri, sa mère (?; hypothèse présentée par Charpin-Durand au colloque CNRS n° 620 à Strasbourg; 10 142-150).

### 3. Copies de lettres envoyées par Zimri-Lim à l'«étranger»

Nous avons conservé un nombre suffisamment important de ces messages pour être assurés que le «ministère des affaires étrangères» de Mari en gardait copie.

A tout seigneur, tout honneur. Nous avons deux lettres de Zimri-Lim à Hammurabi de Babylone (2 67-68): elles sont mal conservées, mais il y est question de troupes. Le roi de Babylone est demandeur. Est-ce la raison pour laquelle aucune des ses missives à lui n'a été retrouvée jusqu'à présent dans les archives de Mari? Ses scribes les auraient-ils subtilisées après la conquête, négligeant ou oubliant celles qu'il avait adressées à Baḥdi-Lim (6 51, 53, 54) ou à Buqāqum (6 52), dont deux au moins (6 51, 53) attestent un échange de correspondance entre les deux souverains.

A son beau-père, Yarīm-Lim, le roi d'Alep, Zimri-Lim a dû envoyer de fréquentes missives dont nous avons conservé, outre des allusions, au moins deux copies. L'une a trait au commerce de joaillerie avec la région de Hazor (S. 115, 72-16 = *Syria* 50, 10-11), l'autre est une récrimination de Zimri-Lim contre l'interdit exprimé par le roi d'Alep concernant la livraison de céréales à Mari au départ d'Imār (A 1153 = *Voix de l'opposition*, 179-183).

Il écrivait aussi à ses vassaux, comme l'indique la lettre adressée au roi de Kaḥat (2 60) ou celle destinée à un prince du Moyen-Euphrate le mettant en garde contre les menées d'Uprapéens (S. 115, 72-17 = *Syria* 50, 9-10).

La chancellerie a gardé copie de l'une et de l'autre.

On a même retrouvé, lors d'un ultime ratissage de la salle 115, une tablette sous enveloppe destinée à Tiš-Ulme, roi de Mardamān (S. 115, 72-15 = *Syria* 50, 8-9). S'agit-il d'une copie conservée sous enveloppe pour échapper à la curiosité ou d'un message qui n'a jamais quitté Mari (M. Birot, *ibid*, 9, n. 1)? La seconde hypothèse me paraît la plus vraisemblable, étant donné les précautions prises avant de permettre l'accès aux archives.

Les missives que Zimri-Lim reçoit de ses vassaux ou de ses propres filles, épouses de vassaux et gages espérés d'obédience attestent l'existence d'une correspondance suivie de la part de Zimri-Lim, même s'il n'en a pas été tenu copie. En revanche, on en a gardé pour la lettre si piquante qu'il adresse à Gašera, la mère de Šibtu, rappelant que la jalousie est de tous les temps (10 139).

#### 4. *Correspondance entre fonctionnaires*

Le destinataire le plus fréquemment attesté est Mukannišum, preuve supplémentaire de l'importance de ses fonctions et, sans doute, du lieu où il les exerçait (13 53-57; 137-138; 18 22-37). Il lui arrive de recevoir des tablettes expressément qualifiées de copies établies à son intention (18, p. 103; S. 143, n<sup>os</sup> 107 et 152, inédits cités par O. Rouault).

Les dirigeants s'écrivent pour des «nécessités de service» ou pour attirer l'attention du roi sur l'un ou l'autre point (2 125; 3 65, 67, 82; 6 56, 57).

C'est Šūnuḫraḫālu dont les attributions sont mal définies, mais qui a, au moins, l'oreille du roi, qui est le plus souvent sollicité comme intermédiaire (2 132; 6 55; 14 6, 11, 29, 36, 59, 60). Les dames de la Cour font aussi appel à lui (10 29, 75, 78, 79). Ces documents qui, à nos yeux, revêtent un caractère plutôt confidentiel, ont néanmoins trouvé place dans les archives.

#### 5. *Correspondance entre fonctionnaire et dirigeant étranger*

La lettre 2 122 est envoyée par Meptūm, sans doute gouverneur du district de Hanat, à Aškur-Addu, le roi de Karanā; elle signale d'importants mouvements de troupes babyloniennes et demande que Zimri-Lim en soit informé au plus vite.

Le document que nous possédons est peut-être l'original transmis au roi de Mari par celui de Karanā, ou bien une copie directement acheminée à Mari par les soins de Meptūm — ce qui serait plus conforme aux réalités géographiques pour autant que Zimri-Lim ait séjourné à ce moment dans la capitale.

Un certain Ḥammi-ištamar, chef de tribu, écrit à Kibri-Dagan, gouverneur de Terqa, pour lui refuser l'extradition de citoyens de Terqa (2 94); il est probable que l'original aura été transmis à Mari pour être versé aux archives.

Ḥammu-rabi de Babylone écrit à Baḫdi-Lim, le gouverneur du district de Mari, et à Buqāqum, du district de Yabliya, alors que le roi Zimri-Lim est requis par la défense de Razamā (6 51, 52). Ces messages sont, à un détail près, la réponse identique du roi de Babylone aux mêmes informations que ces deux fonctionnaires mariotes lui avaient transmises, Buqāqum le qualifiant de «mon seigneur» (*bēlī*; 6 52, 16). Le roi de Babylone, dans un autre message à Baḫdi-Lim, lui demande de faire acheminer d'urgence les tablettes qu'il a fait écrire à Zimri-Lim et de lui fournir lui-même des renseignements sur l'ennemi (6 53). Toujours en rapport avec le siège de Razamā, il annonce à Baḫdi-Lim qu'il a envoyé un contingent à Zimri-Lim et demande des nouvelles (6 54). Par ces missives, il n'est pas interdit de croire que Ḥammu-rabi, dont on connaît l'astuce, s'assurait des intelligences dans l'administration mariote.

#### 6. *Lettres interceptées*

L'exemple bien connu est la lettre vengeresse et menaçante de Yarīm-Lim, le roi d'Alep, au roi de la ville de Dēr, sur le Tigre. Pour des raisons que nous ignorons,

mais qui pourraient être en rapport avec la situation intérieure au Yamḥad, le document n'est pas allé plus loin que Mari (A 1314 = *Syria* 33, 63-69). Comme pour la lettre d'Išḫi-Addu à Išme-Dagan (5 20), on ne peut pas exclure totalement qu'il s'agisse d'une copie faite à Mari avant de laisser l'original continuer son chemin; l'hypothèse est, pourtant, peu plausible.

Un autre document peut-être subtilisé est le message que Šukru-Tešub d'Elahut adresse à Ibāl-Addu, le roi d'Ašlakkā (2 110), à moins que celui-ci ne l'ait fait parvenir volontairement à Zimri-Lim.

Cette enquête est essentiellement fondée sur les documents connus aujourd'hui. Leur nombre, par rapport à la totalité de la documentation épistolaire, est assez élevé pour permettre de tirer quelques conclusions générales crédibles :

a) Les lettres de fonctionnaires, surtout des gouverneurs de province, sont beaucoup plus nombreuses pour l'époque de Zimri-Lim que pour l'époque assyrienne. D'une part, leur conservation par l'administration de Zimri-Lim pouvait être ressentie comme moins impérative que celle de la correspondance d'origine royale; et, d'autre part, le vice-roi de Mari étant sous la coupe de son père — qui ne manquait pas de le lui faire sentir —, son autorité personnelle s'en trouvait affaiblie, et ses décisions, de moindre poids.

b) Il ne subsiste pratiquement rien de la correspondance échangée entre fonctionnaires à l'époque assyrienne. Était-elle versée aux archives de Mari ou transmise ailleurs? A-t-elle été éliminée?

c) En revanche la correspondance échangée entre le roi d'Assyrie et le vice-roi de Mari, ou entre celui-ci et son frère est très largement documentée.

d) La correspondance «féminine» est abondante, surtout pour l'époque de Zimri-Lim. On a l'impression que toute lettre adressée à une Dame de la Cour était automatiquement conservée.

e) La distinction que nous établissons entre correspondance «publique» et correspondance «privée» n'existe pas. Dès qu'un individu, homme ou femme, appartient à l'entourage du roi ou au monde des fonctionnaires, sa vie privée tombe dans le domaine public. On trouve, par exemple, dans les archives, les lettres — ou plus probablement les copies des lettres — d'un certain Samiya à chacune de ses deux filles qui ne cessent de se quereller et excèdent son cœur de père (10 166, 167). De même y trouve-t'on les suppliques reçues par le favori de Zimri-Lim, Šunuḫraḫālu, pour lesquelles leurs auteurs auraient souhaité sans doute plus de discrétion.

## “DOORBELLS” AT MARI A TEXTUAL-ARCHAEOLOGICAL CORRELATION

ABRAHAM MALAMAT (Jerusalem)

In antiquity, one of the most significant and widespread uses of seals and sealings was to define and limit responsibility<sup>1</sup>. By such means, an official responsible for some object—be it a jar of wine, a basket holding documents or even an entire store-room—could protect himself, for only as long as his seal remained intact was he to be held responsible for it. Breaking the seal entailed assumption of the responsibility, and anyone doing so became accountable. This is reflected in a passage in the Babylonian wisdom literature, where a young man entering royal service is advised: “guard his (the prince’s) seal ...; open his treasury, enter therein ..., but do not turn your eye to anything; do not let your mind consider anything stealthy—for eventually the matter will be investigated .... The prince will hear of it ...”<sup>2</sup>. It is in this spirit that we can better understand certain Akkadian documents, among them texts from the Old Babylonian period at Mari, touching upon the sealing of store-rooms and archives<sup>3</sup>. In one letter, *ARMT* 13 22, we read how a high palace official, Mukannišum, often mentioned in the documents, had been instructed by King Zimri-Lim to remove certain precious items from a particular store-room. However, the official actually in charge of that store-room told him that the items were not in his care, but rather in another store-room. When Mukannišum went there he saw that the door had been sealed with the king’s seal and he was reluctant to open it without royal permission. The king being out of town, Mukannišum turned to the queen<sup>4</sup>, who told him not to open the store-room

<sup>1</sup> Our present state of knowledge concerning ancient sealing practices is reflected in McG. Gibson and R. D. Biggs, eds., *Seals and Sealings in the Ancient Near East (BiMes. 6; Malibu, 1977)*, though much more study is required in this rapidly progressing field.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. R. H. Pfeiffer, in *ANET*<sup>3</sup>, 427a; and *BWL* 102-103, ll. 81 ff.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. *ARMT*, passim; the recent volume, *ARMT* 21, ed. by J.-M. Durand, 1983, includes several texts referring to sealed store-rooms in the Mari palace (Nos. 223, 253, 256, 257, 259); cf. D. Charpin, “Une inventaire générale des trésors du palais de Mari”, *MARI* 2 (1983), 211-214. Cf. also *CAD* K, *kanāku* (1b), *kunukku* (2a); and now *CAD* Q, 125b; as well as M. T. Larsen, “Seal Use in the Old Assyrian Period”, in Gibson and Biggs, *op. cit.* (above, n. 1), 95 and nn. 29-33; and the instructive article by W. Röllig, “Notizen zur Praxis der Siegelung in mittelassyrischer Zeit”, *WO* 11 (1980), 111-116.

<sup>4</sup> For Shibtu’s “lieutenancy”, see P. Artzi and A. Malamat, *OrNS* 40 (1971), 75-89; B. F. Batto, *Studies on Women at Mari* (Baltimore, 1974) 10 ff.; and O. Rouault, in *ARMT* 18 pp. 227 ff.

himself, but to have the woman responsible for it (probably one of the women-in-waiting) open it, take out the items and then reseal it herself<sup>5</sup>.

All this for a store-room; but archives in these early periods were little different, and the handling procedures for them were much the same. However, the fact that one tablet closely resembled any other one—despite what might be great differences in content—required the presence of someone who was literate, and this was not necessarily the same person as that responsible for the archive/store-room itself. Among the Mari texts, there are several letters which actually touch upon the opening and closing of archives *per se*<sup>6</sup>. In two letters, *ARMT* 10 82, and 13 14, we again read of Mukannišum, this time being instructed by the king to send him certain lists of personnel<sup>7</sup> which were kept in sealed baskets in a sealed room. Here, it was the princess Inib-šina who broke open the king’s seal. Igmilum, the official who knew the whereabouts of the required baskets, pointed them out to Mukannišum. Only then was Mukannišum able, together with another official, to take the baskets out and send them to the king—without breaking their seals. Oddly, in neither of these two letters, which complement one another in details, is there any mention of the resealing of the archive.

And finally, in a letter sent to Zimri-Lim by Shibtu, his queen (*ARMT* 10 12), she mentions his instructions to retrieve certain documents from an archive and to keep them in her care till he returned home. The queen sent three trusted officials<sup>7</sup>, Mukannišum and two others—along with the king’s messenger, who knew where the relevant baskets of tablets were. They went to a particular workshop, where the messenger pointed out the store-room in question. There, the three officials broke the seal in the doorway—which bore the imprint of Igmilum, the official mentioned in the previous letters—and removed the baskets, taking them to Shibtu’s apartments. The archive was then resealed by the queen (probably by proxy), and in a most revealing manner (ll. 33-35): “and the door of the room I sealed the cord (or thong—[gi]š/[ku]š *eb-li*) with my seal”<sup>8</sup>.

As interesting as these written sources may be, they still leave unanswered the question of the actual manner in which store-room and archive doors could be sealed. Is there any archaeological evidence which might shed light on this matter? Actual examples of sealed doors, sealed chests and the like have been found in

<sup>5</sup> And see the collations of this text by J.-M. Durand, *MARI* 2 (1983), 145, including a reading of the woman’s name as “Ma[nnu-kima/balu]-Eštar”, in both ll. 20 and 32.

<sup>6</sup> These were discussed initially by J. Sasson, Some Comments on Archive Keeping at Mari, *Iraq* 34 (1972), 55-67; and more recently by O. Rouault, in *ARMT* 18, 213 f., 228, 231 ff., 249 (n. 97).

<sup>7</sup> Concerning the terms *tēbibum* (in *ARMT* 10, 82, l. 15) and *ebbum* (in *ARMT* 10 12: 8 and 22), see now J.-M. Durand, *MARI* 2 (1983), 124 ff.

<sup>8</sup> This reading has been established in *ARMT* 10 pp. 40 and 254, superseding the earlier readings of Sasson, *op. cit.* (above, n. 6), 58; and W. Ph. Römer, *Frauenbriefe über Religion, Politik und Privatleben in Mari* (*AOAT* 12; Neukirchen-Vluyn, 1971), 85. For *ebli* associated with doorbolts and locks, see *CAD* E, 15b, and A. Salonen, *Die Türen des alten Mesopotamien* (Helsinki, 1961) 75, 86, 91. [See now J.-M. Durand, *MARI* 3 (1984), 260 note 3, for a collated reading [š]a *ep-tu*]

Egypt<sup>9</sup>, but this evidence is too remote for our purposes. Throughout the ancient world, however, sealings have been found—lumps of clay, usually not fired, and which have variously been denoted “bullae”, “jar-, sack- or basket-sealings”, “bouchons des jarres”, “cretuli” and so forth. The type most significant for us has been found in such widely scattered lands as the Sudan, Greece, Crete and Iran, and is generally of an age corresponding with the Old Babylonian period at Mari. On the reverse, such sealings bear the imprint of a peg or knob which had been bound with cords—and they have cleverly been interpreted by Enrica Fiandra as the sealings of doors<sup>10</sup>. About thirty such clay sealings were recently discovered during the 1980 season of excavations at Mari, in a large building east of the palace and in a level slightly earlier than the Old Babylonian palace itself, that is, from the end of the Shakkanakku period<sup>11</sup>. D. Beyer, the area supervisor who discovered them, has also been able to re-examine the published clay sealings from the palace, and has found that many of them—as I have suspected for some time—are also of this type<sup>12</sup>; in Parrot’s official publication, unfortunately, there are no illustrations of their reverses, and most were regarded as jar-sealings<sup>13</sup>. This new interpretation is very suggestive—especially since all the published clay sealings from the palace (except one) were found in room 29 and room 108 (and apparently also in the adjacent rooms 107 and 54—see plan, fig. 1)<sup>14</sup>.

Now, in room 108 there was an archive where about a thousand tablets were found—royal and official correspondence, legal texts, thirty-two clay livres of an earlier period and a copy of an historical inscription of Zimri-Lim<sup>15</sup>. And it is here also, in the doorway leading into the room, that we seem to have a feature which

<sup>9</sup> Cf., e.g., Otto Koenigsberger, *Die Konstruktion der ägyptischen Tür* (*Ägyptolog. Forsch.* 2; Glückstadt-Hamburg, 1936) esp. 45 ff., on the sealing of doors. For the most recent study of seals and sealings in Egypt, see W. Boochs, *Siegel und Siegel im alten Ägypten* (St. Augustin, 1982) esp. 30 ff. There is a vivid description of the use and resealing of a door on the Victory Stele of King Piye (Piankhy; 25th Nubian dynasty): “Breaking the seals of the bolts, opening the doors ... Closing the doors, applying the clay, sealing with the king’s own seal, and instructing the priests: “I have inspected the seal. No other king who may arise shall enter here”; see M. Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature* iii (Berkeley, 1980) 77.

<sup>10</sup> For the bibliography, see D. Beyer, *MARI* 2 (1983), 52, n. 12; and E. Fiandra, “The Connections between Clay Sealings and Tablets in Administration”, in H. Härtel, ed., *South Asian Archaeology, 1979* (Berlin, 1981) 29-43; eadem, *Bollettino d’Arte* 13 (1982), 1-18; cf. also J.N. Postgate, *Iraq* 42 (1980), 92 and Pl. XI:h. [See also A.M. Bisi in this volume, 296 ff. — Ed.]

<sup>11</sup> See J. Margueron, Mari: Rapport préliminaire ... 1981, *MARI* 2 (1983), 9-35, esp. 12; and D. Beyer, *Stratigraphie de Mari* ..., *ibid.*, 37-60, esp. 52 ff., and note his Fig. 4 on p. 45 and Pl. I:3, showing a cast from the reverse of one of the clay sealings, revealing the form of a cord-bound knob.

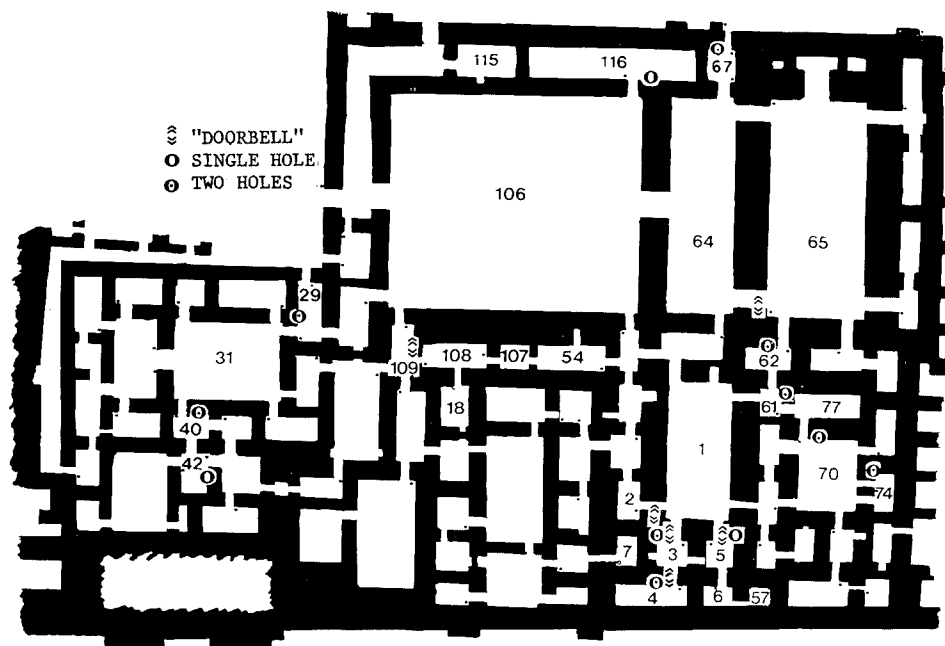
<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, n. 25 on p. 54 f. (and see n. 32, below).

<sup>13</sup> Cf. M.-Th. Barrelet-Clementel and G. Dossin, in *MAM* II/3, 156 ff. and Pls. XLVI-LII.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 156 (and 146); and cf. also *MAM* II/1, 101, concerning Room 107.

<sup>15</sup> The “antiquarian” nature of part of the archive in room 108 is further emphasized by Yahdun-Lim’s Disk Inscription, found in adjacent room 18 which, in the final phase of the palace, at least, could be entered only through room 108; see *MAM* II/1, 195.





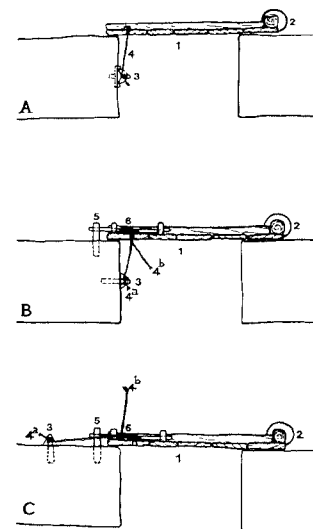
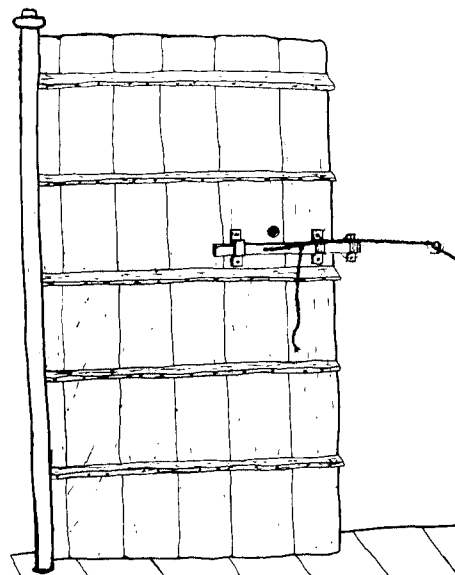
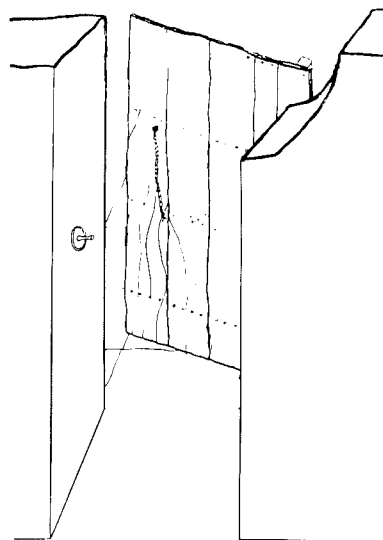
1. The western part of the Mari palace, showing the locations of the sealing installations.

provides a further clue as to how these sealings were truly applied. Following a tip by P. Amiet, the present excavator at Mari—J. Margueron—connected this feature with the door-sealing just mentioned<sup>16</sup>. This object (fig. 5)—which André Parrot “irreverently” (as he put it) called a “bouton de sonnette”, a doorbell button—is a pottery disk 11 cm in diameter, which a hole at the centre, 2.7 cm in diameter; it was found *in situ*, positioned on the doorpost opposite the side of the door-socket, about 1.15 m above the floor<sup>17</sup>. Since the actual door had been inside room 108, and not between the thick door-jambs, the centre of the disk was some 40 cm out from the door proper and thus could not have served as a catch for a doorbolt<sup>18</sup>. The manner in which this “doorbell” was apparently used can now be

<sup>16</sup> J. Margueron, *Recherches sur les palais mésopotamiens de l'âge du bronze I* (Paris, 1982) 492.

<sup>17</sup> *MAM* II/1, 102f. A similar feature was discovered recently on the wall (not on the doorjamb) adjacent to a door at Isin, in a context of about the same time as the Mari palace; see A. Spycket and E. Strommenger, in B. Hrouda, *Isin-Isān Baḥrīyāt II* (Munich, 1981) 57 and Pl. 20:2-3. The “doorbell” there was set into the plaster 70 cm above the floor and 14 cm from the doorway. It is made from the base of a pottery jar, 8 cm in diameter and pierced (after firing) by a hole 2.6 cm in diameter, the hole reaching 6 cm into the wall. The excavators assumed that it was related to the closing of the door, and this can now be extended to include the *sealing* of the door. I must thank Mlle. Spycket for providing data beyond that which appears in the above publication.

<sup>18</sup> As initially supposed by Margueron, *op. cit.* (above, n. 16) 491.



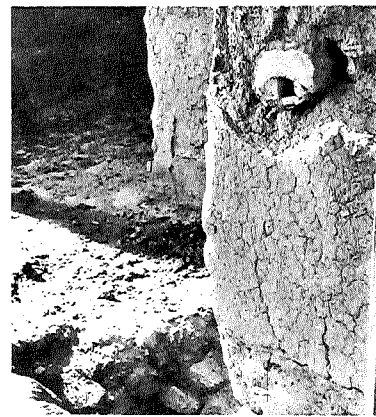
2. Schematic restoration of doorway 109-108. 3. Restoration of doorway sealed from "inside". 4. Schematic restorations of sealing installations: (A) as in doorway 109-108; (B) as in doorway 1-3; (C) as in doorway 31-29. *Legend:* (1) Door; (2) Socket; (3) "Doorbell" peg; (4) Cord (*a* for closing bolt, *b* for opening bolt); (5) Catch (in sigle or first hole); (6) Bolt mechanism.



5. The "doorbell" in the doorway to room 108.



6. Courtyard 70, showing the doorway to room 77.



7. The damaged "doorbell" in the doorway to ceremonial hall 65.

seen in the accompanying illustrations (figs. 3 and 4A). The “doorbell” apparently had served as an escutcheon for a wooden peg, which had been fastened into it, jutting out some 7-10 cm. The door was pierced at about the height of the “doorbell”, and a cord knotted at one end was threaded out through it. In sealing the door, the cord was stretched to the peg, where it could be wound around several times. The peg and the cord coiled around it were then wrapped in an envelope of soft clay, which was stamped with a seal. This appears to be the very manner in which Queen Shibtu sealed “the cord” in the doorway of the archive, as described in one of the texts cited earlier. Anyone seeking to open such a sealed door would have to break the clay sealing and release the cord<sup>19</sup>.

As we have noted, clay sealing were also found in room 29. Here, there is another feature which we can apparently also relate to the sealing of the door. Inside this room, as in a dozen others in the palace<sup>20</sup>, there are two holes in the wall next to the doorway, on the side opposite the door-socket (fig. 6). A parallel cited by Parrot for this phenomenon is in a temple within the 13th century BC ziggurat at Tchoga Zambil, near Susa in Iran<sup>21</sup>. There, two stone braces are mounted on the wall, pierced so as to support a large, sliding doorbolt. Thus, the bolt was mounted on the wall next to the door, and caught the back of the door when closed. This may have been the case at Mari, too, but the fact that there are at least three doorways in the palace (in rooms 5, 42<sup>22</sup> and 116) which have only a single hole in this location would negate such an arrangement. Rather, at Mari the bolts were probably mounted on the inner side of the door itself—the common practice throughout architectural history. If so, of the two holes in the wall, the one closer to the door would have been for the catch; but then the second hole, some 40-50 cm away, would be superfluous. Now—and especially in the light of the sealings found in room 29—we can posit for this second hole a function identical to that of the “doorbell”: it would have served to hold a peg or knob for a cord used in sealing the door (figs. 3 and 4C).

<sup>19</sup> The above description is based, inter alia, on the fact that no traces of a doorbolt were found in room 108, though there may well have been one there. In other doorways in the palace where bolt mechanisms are in evidence (see below), the closing cord of the doorbolt would have been used for sealing the door, in the same manner as described above (and see Fig. 4B). The possibility that the peg was not fastened permanently into the “doorbell”, but was tied to the cord and was inserted into the “doorbell” each time for closing (as supposed in *MAM* II/1, 102), is improbable for several technical reasons.

<sup>20</sup> See Margueron, *op. cit.* (above, n. 16), chart on p. 490, série a. We can now add to his list our example in room 29 (see *MAM* II/1, 163), one in room 61 (*ibid.*, 221; and see below), and a third in room 127, alongside a blocked doorway (*ibid.*, 73); but his “salle S-ext.” and “65-64” there are problematic and doubtful.

<sup>21</sup> Cf. now R. Ghirshman, *Tchoga Zanbil I. La Ziggurat (Mém. Dél. arch. en Iran 39; Paris, 1966) 30 ff.*

<sup>22</sup> The single hole in room 42 must also be added to Margueron’s list, in série a; see *MAM* II/1, 177; and Margueron, *loc. cit.* (above, n. 20).

But such a sealing was on the same side of the door as the bolt itself, that is, on the face of it, inside the room being sealed — which seems at first to be problematic. However, this difficulty is readily removed, along with the fallacy it involves: the room being sealed was not necessarily that in which the door was located, but rather could be the adjacent room, *beyond* the door<sup>23</sup>. Such a case can possibly be seen in ceremonial hall 65. Of the two main doors to this hall (see plan, fig. 1), one has traces of a “doorbell” in the doorjamb (fig. 7)<sup>24</sup>, and the other, it is presumed, could also have been sealed similarly. The only other means of access into the entire ceremonial hall complex was thus through room 62, where the door leading into the hall has a 2-hole arrangement. Thus, the sealing of this doorway, from within room 62 (along with the other two externally sealed doors), would have effectively prevented access to the entire complex of the ceremonial hall and its dependent chambers. Similarly with the two doorways leading into room 77 (see Plan, fig. 1): in both courtyard 70 (fig. 6) and room 61<sup>25</sup>, the relevant doors have the 2-hole arrangement, and these two sealed doors would in conjunction also have effectively prevented all unauthorized entry into room 77.

The first type of “doorbell”, found in the entry to room 108, is also found in several other doorways—the one opening into ceremonial hall 65, and those leading into rooms 3, 4 and 5. Significantly, in room 5 an archive of over 1500 tablets came to light, partly stored in jars stacked up against a wall; many of these records concern provisions for the king’s table<sup>26</sup>. What is so very interesting in rooms 3, 4 and 5 are the internal bolt arrangements—in addition to the “doorbells” in the doorjambs outside. Margueron has written that “Il est bien évident que les deux systèmes n’ont pu fonctionner en même temps”<sup>27</sup>, but there appears to be evidence to the contrary. Let us refer again to the doorway in the temple at Tchoga Zambil, where there is a large bronze nail jutting out from the doorjamb<sup>28</sup>, in a relative position identical to that of the “doorbells” at Mari. Obviously the nail there was of an identical function as the “doorbells”. Now this room in the temple,

<sup>23</sup> Contra Margueron, *op. cit.* (above, n. 16), 489 ff.

<sup>24</sup> *MAM* II/1, 119 and Pl. XXXII, 2—concerning which Parrot commented: “Nous ne voyons pas à quel usage précis tout cela pouvait servir”. This example, too, should be added to Margueron’s list, under série b, as should the one in the doorway to room 4 (cf. *MAM* II/1, 217); see *loc. cit.* (above, n. 20). Note also what appears to be the hole for a “doorbell” in the passageway to room 7, visible on the left in *MAM* II/1, 201, Fig. 233; in any event, room 7 certainly did not begin its career as the best preserved “w.-c. ... dans les annales de l’archéologie orientale”.

<sup>25</sup> For room 61, see above, n. 20.

<sup>26</sup> See M. Birot, *ARMT* 9 and 12; for the king’s table at Mari, see the recent treatment by R. R. Glaeseman, *The Practice of the King’s Meal at Mari* ... (unpublished Doctoral Thesis, University of California at Los Angeles, 1978). Actually, two separate archives may have been found in room 5, one of which could have originated in the second story of the palace, in the room above room 5; note that tablets were found here in the debris from floor level upward to a height of more than 2 m; see *MAM* II/1, 217 f. and Fig. 254.

<sup>27</sup> Margueron, *op. cit.* (above, n. 16), 491.

<sup>28</sup> Ghirshman, *op. cit.* (above, n. 21), 32.

and the one beyond it, formed a cul-de-sac and there must have been some means for opening the doorbolt from the outside, probably utilizing the cord which bound the door to the "doorbell" nail<sup>29</sup>. By analogy—and simple logic—at Mari too there must have been some means of manipulating the locks inside such dead-end suites as rooms 3-4 and 5-6-57, surely opening and closing the bolts from the outside by means of the cords running through a hole in the door<sup>30</sup>; and these cords could also have been used in sealing the door as well (see fig. 3B). Thus, the "deux systèmes" could very well have served as a single, integrated means for both locking and securing a door (though, of course, the alternatives in figs. 3B and 3C could not have been used at one and the same time).

The study of this and various other features throughout the palace complex at Mari is, unfortunately, often hampered by the paucity of published material on the earlier excavations<sup>31</sup>. It would be most interesting, for example, to be able to examine—at least in clear photographs—the doorways of such rooms as the "archive diplomatique" (room 115), where several thousand tablets of a most important nature were found.

In conclusion: the "doorbells" at Mari, unlike their modern counterparts, were not pressed to open doors. Quite the contrary, they were pressed—or rather, impressed—in order to close them<sup>32</sup>.

<sup>29</sup> The method employed for opening and closing the bolt must have been something like the locking system shown in Koenigsberger, *op. cit.* (above, n. 9), 60, Abb. 74.

<sup>30</sup> The locks at Mari undoubtedly differed considerably from those at Tchoga Zambil, but the technical aspects of this point are beyond our present scope. Suffice it to note that in the Bible there is at least one instance of the closing and locking of a door, apparently of a type having a bolt mechanism within, and which could be closed from without, and then opened from the outside only by means of a key: the judge Ehud, after assassinating Eglon, king of Moab, locked the door of the private royal chambers behind him; the king's servants thought the king had locked himself within (while relieving himself), but after much time had passed they became apprehensive and unlocked the door with a key—and found the body (cf. Judges 3; 23-25). In any event, the sort of lock involved in that episode obviously differed from that in evidence at Mari.

<sup>31</sup> The preliminary reports on the renewed excavations at Mari, currently appearing in *MARI* (see above, n. 11), indicate a decided and most welcome change in this respect.

<sup>32</sup> This study was prepared within the framework of a grant from the Fund for Basic Research, administered by the Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities. The drawings and reconstructions were prepared by R. Grafman, whose technical insights into the subject have been most illuminating.

The present article was finished, essentially, in April 1983; during the Leiden Rencontre (July 1983), it was brought to the author's attention that D. Beyer had read a paper covering much the same ground at the Mari Colloquium held at Strassbourg a week or so earlier (cf. the forthcoming Colloquium *Proceedings*, to be published in *MARI* 4). It is indeed gratifying to note that our conclusions concerning the "doorbell" concept are very close. Of course, Beyer—who had direct access to the Mari finds, both those discovered long ago by Parrot and those from the renewed excavations—was able to arrive at his solution empirically.

## ADMINISTRATIVE ARCHIVES FROM THE CITY OF ASSUR IN THE MIDDLE ASSYRIAN PERIOD<sup>1</sup>

J. N. POSTGATE (Cambridge, U.K.)

One of the very important achievements of Andrae's excavations at Assur was the rediscovery of the early history of Assyria, when during the second half of the 2nd millennium BC the city of Assur brought Assyria to the status of a great power, only to be reduced to obscurity once more by about 1000 BC under the pressure of Aramaean incursions. Much archaeological evidence was found for this period — temples, palaces, private houses and graves — and a great many cuneiform tablets as well. Not only did Andrae find many historical inscriptions and the library of Tiglath-pileser I<sup>2</sup>, but letters and legal and administrative documents were discovered in many parts of the city. These were mostly published by Ebeling, with substantial contributions from Schroeder and Weidner<sup>3</sup>, and although Middle Assyrian archives have been found since then at other sites, such as Tell Billa and Tell al-Rimah in Iraq and Tell Fakhariyah and Sheikh Hamad in Syria<sup>4</sup>, the Assur texts remain by far the most numerous and, coming as they do from the capital of the realm, the most important.

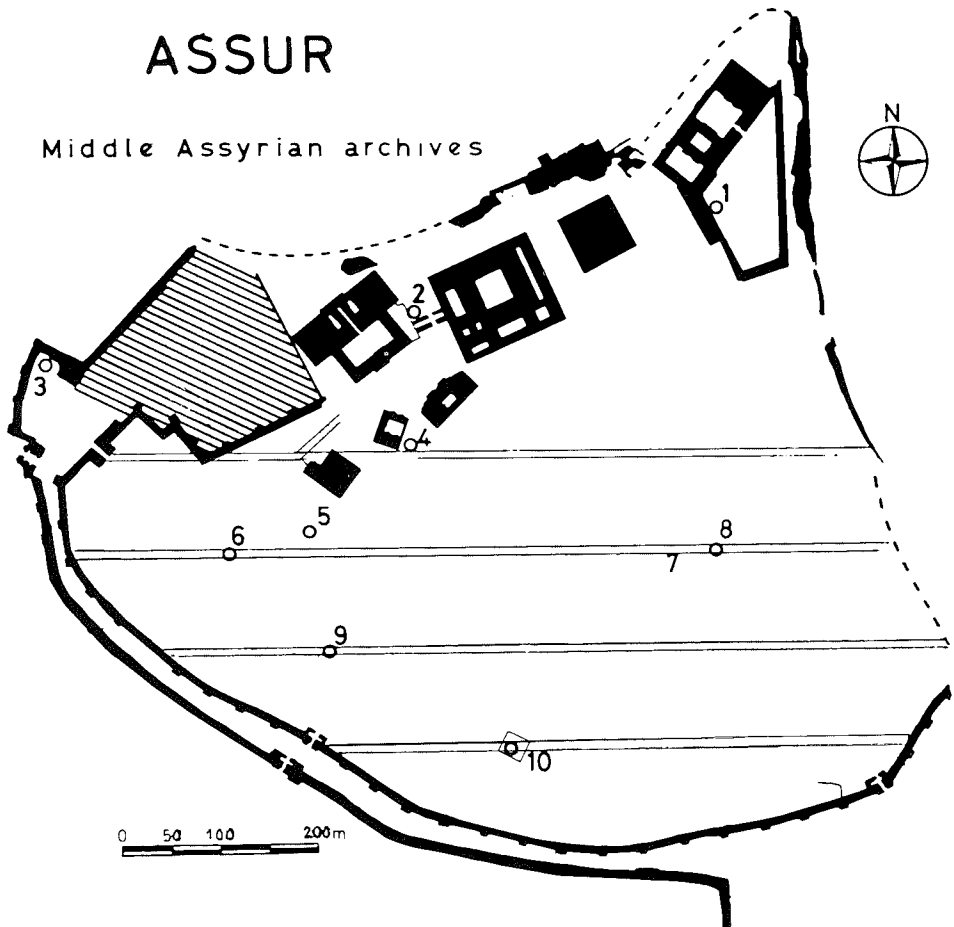
As we should expect with an excavator of Andrae's quality, the provenance of the tablets was generally carefully recorded, so that even today it is usually possible to discover from the excavation records from where each tablet came. However, when publishing their copies of the texts neither Ebeling nor Schroeder gave the provenance of the tablets, which is particularly unfortunate because many of them were found as complete archives, often kept in a jar, and the correct understanding of each legal or administrative document would often have been greatly assisted if it

<sup>1</sup> This text represents an updated version of a paper read originally at the *2nd International Symposium on Babylon, Assur and the Hamrin* (Baghdad, 1979). At Leiden the details of the individual archives were summarized only, and the main part of the talk was devoted to Archive 6 (Ass. 14327). This topic will be taken up again separately in connection with a full edition of this archive (see note 17 below).

<sup>2</sup> For Tiglath-pileser's "Library" see E.F. Weidner, *AfO* 16 (1952-53) 197 ff., but note that W.G. Lambert expressed doubts as to its status as a library in his paper at the 1983 R.A.I. at Leiden.

<sup>3</sup> E. Ebeling, *KAJ*; O. Schroeder, *KAV*; and many contributions by Weidner. For details, see C. Saporetti, *OMA* II 261-369.

<sup>4</sup> See P. Machinist, *Assur* 3/2 (1982) 76-8 for the texts from the provinces; for Dur-katlimmu see W.W. Röllig, *OrNS* 47 (1978), giving a provisional notice on some of the tablets, but many more have been discovered since then, and Prof. Röllig described their discovery at Leiden. Another recent find of Middle Assyrian tablets, at Tell Ali on the Lesser Zab between Nuzi and Assur, is described by B.K. Ismail, in H. Klengel (ed.), *Gesellschaft und Kultur im alten Vorderasien* (Berlin 1982) 117-120.



1. Plan of Assur with the findspots of Middle Assyrian archives.

could have been placed alongside the other documents with which it had been stored. This failure of the cuneiformist and the archaeologist to communicate—a failure which is not restricted to Assur, it must in all fairness be admitted—is now to a great extent compensated for by the several articles of Weidner in which information has been made available to the public about the exact provenance of most of the archives, and lists given of the texts, published and unpublished, which belong to them<sup>5</sup>. Taken with the tabulation of the evidence by Claudio Saporetti in his *Onomastica Medio-assira*, an invaluable piece of work without which this contribution would have been impossible, and with the texts newly published by

<sup>5</sup> The lists are principally in: *Vorderasiatische Studien: Festschrift für Prof. Dr. Viktor Christian* (Vienna 1956) 111-118 (hereafter: *Festschrift Christian*), but details are also to be found in various articles scattered through *AfO*.

H. Freydank in *Vorderasiatische Schriftdenkmäler* 19 and 21, we are now in a much better position to describe the archives recovered by the German excavators of Assur, and to consider what light they throw upon the city and the state in this era.

On this occasion it is evidently not possible to mention all the known archives and discuss each one at length, so I have selected the ten best attested groups of tablets from the city of Assur, omitting the important administrative documents known to come from Kar-Tukulti-Ninurta on the other bank of the Tigris. In each case I shall say what is known of their archaeological provenance, and then state briefly what can be reconstructed of the private or public establishments from which each archive originated. Wherever possible the section concludes with the evidence for the provenance, and with a list of the published tablets, or a reference to lists already given by Weidner<sup>6</sup>.

### 1. *The archive of Ezbu-lēšir*

In one of the Storerooms along the south-west side of the outer courtyard of the Assur Temple (Room 3'), the excavators discovered 10<sup>7</sup> pottery jars which had contained as many as 650 tablets. Three of these jars were themselves given inscriptions identifying their contents, of which two are worth quoting in full:

1. "Document-holder of the accounts of the brewers of the Assur Temple under the supervision of Ezbu-lēšir, the offerings-overseer of the Assur Temple, servant of Tiglath-pileser I".

2. "Of the victuallers and oil-pressers of the Assur Temple, under the supervision of Ezbu-lēšir, the offerings-overseer of the Assur Temple, servant of Tiglath-pileser I"<sup>8</sup>.

These two inscriptions tell us the sort of thing to expect from the tablets, but unfortunately only a very few of them are published. To judge from this very small sample, the archive was at least partly the record of the official activities of Ezbu-

<sup>6</sup> In the documentation of the provenance the most explicit reports are usually quoted from the excavators' preliminary notices in *MDOG*, but occasionally Weidner is evidently quoting from unpublished excavation records. In the listing of the tablets I have referred to earlier descriptions of the archive, where they exist, and then listed the tablets published since that description. Full lists incorporating the details in *Festschrift Christian* are to be found in C. Saporetti, *OMA* 2. No attempt has been made to list tablets which are unpublished or only cited in excerpts, since this information is available in *OMA* 2, and substantial fresh data can be expected from the work of Mr. Olaf Pedersén at Copenhagen (cf. on Archive 7). Nor have I generally attempted the attribution of tablets without their Fundnummer to a particular archive, although sometimes this can be done with considerable plausibility. Not included is Assur 21101 (cf. *Festschrift Christian* 115-6), the provenance of which is not known to me. It is disconcerting to think how much Fine's excellent study of the chronological ordering of the texts would have been assisted had the details of the individual Fundnummern been available to him.

<sup>7</sup> Weidner says 10 jars, but the number is given as 8 in A. Haller & W. Andrae, *Die Heiligtümer* (WVDOG 37), 48.

<sup>8</sup> For the Akkadian see *KAH* 2 No. 64 and *AfO* 10 (1935-36) 28<sup>213</sup>; for a translation and further bibliography, see A. K. Grayson, *ARI* 2, 42.



lēšir, who was in charge of the regular offerings (*ginā'ē*) of the Assur Temple in the reign of Tiglath-Pileser I, and of the officials and other employees subordinate to him. Thus the texts record how the offerings — mainly in cereals, fruit, honey, beer etc. — were redistributed among the temple personnel, but they also list the incoming offerings, and so must contain fascinating information about the lands and cities which acknowledged Assyrian supremacy during the reign of Tiglath-pileser I by sending regular offerings to the national shrine.

*Provenance:* A. Haller & W. Andrae, *Die Heiligtümer* [WVDOG 67] 48; E. F. Weidner, *Festschrift Christian*, 113, quoting *MDOG* 47 (1911) 37; *AfO* 16 (1952-53) 213.

*Tablets:* see *BiOr* 37 (1980) 68-70; since that review of *VS* 19 was written *VS* 21 has appeared, adding 8 certain numbers to the list:

Ass.	18767ac	= VAT 18066	= <i>VS</i> 21 21
	18771	16400	13
	18771m	18052	18
	18771w	16396(a)	2
	18771w	16396(b)	3
	18773ap	18065	14
	18775c	18054	8
	18782aa	18021	24

## 2. The archive of Mutta

In a pottery jar found in loose fill just north of the gate between the Old Palace and the Anu-Adad Temple were 112 tablets<sup>9</sup> forming an archive which comes from one single year and which, exceptionally, is virtually completely published. They belong to the little known time when Ninurta-tukulti-Assur ruled Assyria — between the high-spots of Tukulti-Ninurta and Tiglath-pileser — and they are the accounts of an administrative department responsible for the receipt and issue of sheep (and to a lesser degree, goats and oxen). The man responsible is a certain Mutta, known as a *ša kurultie* or *rab zāriqi*, and the clue to his function seems to come from the fact that virtually all the incoming animals are brought to the ruler as “interview-presents” (*nāmurtu*). When an official or an ambassador came to the palace, he brought with him a gift for the king, which often included one or more animals. Mutta’s job seems to have been to take these animals once they had been handed over, and see that they were fed and eventually disposed of as the king wished. Since the reign of Tukulti-Ninurta one imagines that the main royal palace was his New Palace in the northwest corner of the city; but at this moment

<sup>9</sup> Weidner states 112, citing *MDOG* 28 (1905) 26 (where however 113 are mentioned), of which 51 are in Berlin. For the possibility that there were in fact 114 see below.

Ninurta-tukulti-Assur was not in fact king, although he ruled in practice, and it is therefore quite conceivable that he held court in the Old Palace to the east of the Anu-Adad Temple. This would sufficiently explain why this little group of tablets was found here<sup>10</sup>.

*Provenance:* eE5IV. See E.F. Weidner, *AfO* 10 (1935-36) 1, quoting W. Andrae, *MDOG* 28 (1905) 26 “Nördlich dieses Tores wurde im lockeren grauen Schutt einer Füllung unter Lehmziegelabgleichung ein grösserer zerbrochener Topf mit 113 wohlerhaltenen ungebrannten Tontafeln angetroffen (6096)”; the exact provenance is not marked on the plan in W. Andrae, *Die archaischen Ishtar-Tempel* [WVDOG 39] 2 Abb. 1.

*Tablets:* Ass. 6096: of these 111 are listed and edited in *AfO* 10 (1935-36) 32-44, with 2 new copies in *VS* 19 Nos. 61 & 68, and substantial corrections and additions in V. Donbaz, *Ninurta-tukulti-Aššur zamanına ait orta Asur idarî belgeleri* (TTKY VI.19, Ankara 1976). The 112th is uninscribed, bearing only a seal impression (Ass. 6096 ap = VAT 9316, D. Opitz, *AfO* 10, 48 ff.); however, Ass. 6096 br (= A.584), published by Weidner after photo and again by V. Donbaz, *IAMY* 15-16 (1969) 222-9, does not appear to belong with the rest of the archive, to judge from its subject matter, while Ass. 12758 obviously does (*AfO* 10, 29-30; Donbaz under A.1812); one must suspect a confusion in the numbers, such as is occasionally attested on other occasions.

Ass. 6137a (= A.1041) and Ass. 6411 (= A.2622) have now been added by Donbaz, and clearly belong to the same archive, whether or not they were found in the same pot. Unlike Ass. 12758, they do at least come from the same excavation season.

### 3. *The Ubru archive*

This group of tablets is much less easy to describe than the first two. To begin with, they were not strictly found as one group: some, apparently mostly large administrative lists in poor condition, were found in the passages through the city-wall known as Poternen, while a little later a better preserved group of 58 mostly small tablets was found inside a pottery vessel, also not far north of the Tabira Gate. In all 26 of this latter group are now published, mostly dating to the reign of Tukulti-Ninurta I (ca. 1244-1208 BC), but it is difficult to decide from their contents why they should have been kept together. There are letters to a certain Ubru, who seems to have been in charge of the recruitment of soldiers, and after whom we have chosen rather arbitrarily to name the archive; there is another letter

<sup>10</sup> For discussion of the nature of this archive, see J.N. Postgate, *TCAE* 156-161, and J.-M. Durand & D. Charpin, in M.-T. Barrelet (ed.), *L'archéologie de l'Iraq* (Paris, C.N.R.S., 1980) 145-9.

written from Kalhu (Nimrud) about the welfare of some Babylonian prisoners-of-war being kept there, and there are other letters from high state officials to different subordinates. A group of at least 5 texts is concerned with issues of food, and 7 tablets mention sheep and cattle. Further general information is given by Weidner (*AfO* 13 112) on the basis of the excavation photos of unpublished tablets: there were 17 letters, some in envelopes, and 34 lists dealing with people, cattle, sheep, corn, vessels and bricks. The remaining 6 or 7 were “kleine Tafeln mit Siegelabdrücken ohne Inschrift” (p. 112). The only feature which unites the group is that they all belong to government administration, not private affairs, and there is no obvious reason why they should have been stored together, nor any hint as to why they were found near the gate.

*Provenance*: “zahlreiche Bruchstücke ungebrannter Tontafeln ... in den Durchgängen der alten Maueranlage in bB6I ...” (*MDOG* 33 (1907) 15). “In bB6I ... eine Sammlung von 58 meist kleinen, ungebrannten Tontafeln, in einem Tongefäss geschichtet ... Die mittelgrossen Stücke sind bisweilen enveloppiert und auf der Enveloppe gesiegelt und mit zwei Schriftzeilen gekennzeichnet, sie scheinen Listen und Summierungen von Leuten (šâbî) zu enthalten ...” (*MDOG* 33 (1907) 16). These data are repeated by Weidner (*AfO* 13 [1939-41] 111), with additional information from Andrae; according to Weidner, Ass. 11017/18/19 are numbers used only for the 57 tablets in the pot.

*Tablets*: Ass. 11017/11018/11019 (see Weidner, *AfO* 13 (1939-41) 111).

Ass.	11017[?]	= VAT 18046	= VS 19 29
	11017y	16359	VS 19 7
	11018a	16360	VS 19 2
	11018d	16363	VS 19 18
	11018g	16366	VS 21 11
	11018h	16367	VS 19 15
	11018l	16370	VS 19 7
	11019m	16371	VS 19 8
	11018n	16372	VS 19 31
	11018o	16373	VS 19 4
	11018p	8748	KAV 169
	11018q	16374	VS 19 13
	11018r	8743	KAJ 291
	11018s	8587	KAJ 93
	11018t	16375	VS 19 71
	11018x	8742	KAJ 292
	11018z	16377	VS 21 29
	11019a	8752	KAV 168
	11019b	8747	KAJ 15
	11019c	8745	KAV 201
	11019d	8751	KAJ 314
	11019e	8741	KAJ 293

11019f	8725	<i>KAJ</i> 228
11019g	8596	<i>KAJ</i> 316 (and <i>VS</i> 19.22)
11019h	8753	<i>KAJ</i> 313
11019i	8746	<i>KAJ</i> 301

No information seems to be published as to the Fundnummern of the remaining tablets found in the postern gate.

#### 4. *The archive of Samnuha-ašarēd*

In 1908 during the excavation of one of their east-west test trenches (Suchgraben) the Assur team found that the floor of a Neo-Assyrian house had been laid on a layer of tablets 20 to 40 cm. thick; they could well have come from an older house which lay beneath, and, not surprisingly, many of them were in poor condition. One report states that only two dozen tablets were found complete, as against more than 200 fragments.

Until 1976 only one tablet from this group had been fully published, but 15 more were made available in *VS* 19, and another 2 in *VS* 21. Rather surprisingly, in view of the conditions in which they were found, most of these are a single type of text and probably form a single archive. The key figure is Samnuha-ašarēd, and the texts record a whole variety of items which belong to the palace and have been issued under his authority: raw materials for making bows, bronze tools, spears, grindstones, harnesses for horses, garments, etc. Sometimes the issue is made on the instructions of the king—such as one case where some jewellery is presented by the king Ninurta-apil-ekur to his daughter, the high-priestess of Šala<sup>11</sup>—sometimes on someone else's instructions. Many tablets fail to state who makes the issue, but on several occasions it is Samnuha-ašarēd himself. Who then was he? Fortunately the texts tell us that he was an *abarakku*, conventionally translated “steward”: all large households had such an official, who was entrusted with the internal organization, and in particular with the control of goods and other property entering or leaving the establishment. Several “stewards” are found in the Mutta archive, when they brought sheep to the ruler while on their masters' business, and since Samnuha-ašarēd is in charge of goods belonging to the palace it is likely that he was the, or at least one of the, stewards of the palace, perhaps indeed the “chief steward”. On one ceremonial occasion he brought a sheep himself to Ninurta-tukulti-aššur<sup>12</sup>, and from the Assur Temple offerings archive we learn that his “house” served for the storage of corn, probably palace property<sup>13</sup>. Thus the evidence from other archives confirms that he was an official of some importance; probably he was the *limmu* of the same name. He seems to have had a long spell in office: the archive spans the

<sup>11</sup> *VS* 19 53.

<sup>12</sup> *KAJ* 205 1.

<sup>13</sup> B. K. Ismail, *Sumer* 24 (1968) 34: Ass. 18782 f., 3; 35: Ass. 18782o, 3.

time from Ninurta-apil-ekur (died ca. 1180) and Ninurta-tukulti-aššur (ca. 1179) until the reign of Tiglath-pileser (came to the throne in 1115) or possibly an earlier king: here as so frequently we must admit that the attribution of the Middle Assyrian eponyms or *limmus* to particular reigns is very uncertain, and the careful reconstruction of the different archives should do much to correct earlier suggestions<sup>14</sup>.

*Provenance:* eE6V (*MDOG* 38 (1908) 21-3, esp. p. 22); E.F. Weidner, *Festschrift Christian* 111.

*Tablets:* Ass. 13058

Ass. 12758                      A. 1812                      *AfO* 10 30  
[assigned by Weidner to this archive, but by its contents belonging to Archive 2, q.v.]

Ass. 13058ac	= VAT 18062 =	<i>Studies Diakonoff</i> , 64-75
ad	18030	<i>VS</i> 19 30
ar	18026	<i>VS</i> 19 54 <sup>a</sup>
b	18028	<i>VS</i> 19 72
be	18027	<i>VS</i> 19 63 <sup>b</sup>
cd	18025	<i>VS</i> 19 59
cd(?)	18014	<i>VS</i> 19 67
ds	18035	<i>VS</i> 19 53
ec	15400	<i>AfO</i> 10 30, Photo p. 50 <sup>c</sup>
eg	18034	<i>VS</i> 19 51
ei(?)	18031	<i>VS</i> 19 35
fb	18029	<i>VS</i> 19 64
fd	18011	<i>VS</i> 19 65
ft <sup>2</sup>		<i>MAOG</i> 3/1-2 37
hw	18022	<i>VS</i> 19 55
kl	19193	<i>VS</i> 21 19
o	18032	<i>VS</i> 19 43
r	18023	<i>VS</i> 19 34
tl	18024	<i>VS</i> 19 24
?	18091	<i>VS</i> 21 22

Ass. 14327[.]                      8824                      *KAJ* 129<sup>d</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Saporetti, *OMA* 2 316 gives ar = A.301!

<sup>b</sup> Saporetti, *OMA* 2 316 gives be = A.74!

<sup>c</sup> With wrong number (ac)! See Freydank, *AOF* 9 (Berlin, 1982) 61-3.

<sup>d</sup> Clearly, belongs with this archive from internal criteria as seen by Fine, *HUCA* 25 (1954) 114-5, but assigned to 14327 (Saporetti, *OMA* 2 278). There must be a wrong number somewhere, despite the comments of Saporetti, *OMA* 2 35 and 48; *Gli eponimi*, 121, s.v. Tahulu. Cf. note 14, and see now Freydank, *AOF* 9 (Berlin, 1982) 64-5.

<sup>14</sup> See below on Assur 14327[.] = *KAJ* 129. Weidner, *AfO* 20 (1963) 123, states that "Der Depotfund Assur 13058 enthält ältere Wirtschafts- und Rechtsurkunden bis hinauf zu Ninurta-tukul-Aššur, aber keine aus der Regierung Tiglatpileser I.". However, at least four *limmus* occurring in this archive are

### 5. *The domestic archive of Babu-aha-iddina*

Babu-aha-iddina is one of the best known personalities of the Middle Assyrian period, and Weidner has devoted an important article to this gentleman, whom he calls the “Chancellor of Shalmaneser I”. A letter written by him to the Hittite King was found at Boğazköy, and shows that he was closely concerned with the high affairs of state during the period of great Assyrian expansion in the 13th century BC<sup>15</sup>. In test trench 8I in 1908 a large Middle Assyrian house with unusually solid walls, founded on stone and over 2 metres thick, was encountered. Some 20 metres to the north lay the richest of all the graves found at Assur, containing two skeletons adorned with fine jewellery and accompanied by grave goods in gold, silver, ivory etc. (Gruft 45). Just above the east end of this tomb was found a group of about 50 tablets and fragments which clearly belong to the domestic archives of Babu-aha-iddina. The archive contains letters which throw fascinating light on the organization of a large household at this date, as well as administrative documents, and it is not necessary for me to describe these in greater detail since they have been discussed by both Ebeling and Weidner<sup>16</sup>. They show that the high officer of state employed a number of people to attend to the administration of his private affairs, as well as craftsmen of various kinds, and that he owned storerooms in different parts of the city. As far as we can tell, these texts are exclusively concerned with his private business, and not with the affairs of state; although at times these may have overlapped, his diplomatic correspondence and the archives relating to his activities as chancellor were evidently not kept in the same place as his domestic archives. The texts we have were presumably stored in his private residence—whether or not he used this also for his public activities—and Weidner makes the suggestion that the monumental building discovered in the test trench was indeed the house of Babu-aha-iddina. This seems very probable to me, and I would like to follow it up with another suggestion: that the rich grave above which the archive was found also belonged to Babu-aha-iddina, and contained the gentleman himself and his wife. This would certainly explain the great wealth of the tomb, and it seems an equally good hypothesis as Andrae’s, which connects it with the Ishtar Temple to the north-east.

*Provenance:* dE7IV, J. Jordan, *MDOG* 38 (1908) 40-43; Weidner, *Afo* 19 (1959-60) 35 “über den Ostende einer assyrischen Ziegelgruft in dE7IV, etwa 50 m. SW von der Westecke des Nabû Tempels ... 33 Tafeln und 15 Bruchstücke ...”.

assigned by Saporetto to the reign of Tiglath-pileser I (Aššur-šallimšunu, Erib-Aššur, Haburrāru [*pace* Weidner!] and Ikkāru, see *Gli eponimi medio-assiri* 152-4), and in this light it is probable that Tahulu (Saporetto, *ibid.*) should be placed here as well.

<sup>15</sup> See E. F. Weidner, *Afo* 19 (1959-60) 33-39 and H. Otten, *ibid.*, 39-46.

<sup>16</sup> A fresh edition of these texts by H. Freydank and C. Saporetto is in preparation, for inclusion in the series *Data Sets: Cuneiform Texts* (UNDENA).

Jordan, *ibid.* p. 43, “Im Schutt über der assyrischen Ziegelgruft in dE7IV fanden sich an zwei Stellen zum Teil gut erhaltene, kleine bis mittelgrosse, ungebrannte Tafeln”; it is not clear if these were all subsumed under Assur 14410, or whether there was a second group (perhaps cf. Archive 7 below?).

*Tablets*: see Weidner, *AfO* 19 33, with the following addition:

J. Rylands Library, Manchester G. 25, *Iraq* 35 (1973) 13-15

[For Speleers, *RIAA* No. 314 see under Archive 7 below; the tablet Ass. 160081 = *VS* 19 39 is a letter written by Babu-aha-iddina himself, but found in the outer courtyard of the Assur Temple (Weidner, *AfO* 19 38-9).]

#### 6. *The archive of the family of Assur-aha-iddina*<sup>17</sup>

Only about 50 metres to the west of the house just mentioned another important archive was found, comprising 83 tablets of which nearly 70 are now published. Unfortunately no details are available about the precise circumstances of the discovery, although if they had been kept together in a jar this would almost certainly have been mentioned. We can only say that in view of the contents of the texts, Weidner's idea that they had a close connection with the Babu-aha-iddina archive just discussed seems unlikely. For these texts quite clearly constitute the archive of one family: Assur-aha-iddina, his son and his grandson. Not many of the tablets go back to the grandfather (about 15), and little is known about him; but his son, Melisah, was the governor of the city of Nahur in the far north of Mesopotamia under Shalmaneser, and Urad-Šerua, the grandson, acted as an official under his father, and probably held the same or at least a similar position later. Consequently, some of the texts from the archive relate to their official activities as high officials in the northern provinces, and throw very important light on the system of provincial administration at this date: on the basis of this archive and of other contemporary sources, such as the texts from Tell Billa, we can see that the governorship could pass from father to son, and that the problem of administering newly conquered areas was met by assigning provinces to old-established Assyrian families, or “houses”. With Assur's age-old involvement in trade, it is no surprise to find that the governors were expected to regulate the relations with the central government and their own subordinates by formulating administrative liabilities as though they were commercial debts. Public and private affairs may not have been kept rigidly separate, and it explains why documents concerned with the family's public office in the north were found back at their home in Assur. No doubt they paid regular visits to the capital, and maintained their establishment and probably even their family in Assur. One of the few private

<sup>17</sup> By agreement with C. Saporetti, the writer is preparing an edition of this archive for inclusion in the series *Data Sets: Cuneiform Texts* (UNDENA). Sincerest thanks are due to Frau Dr. L. Jakob-Rost, for permission to collate the tablets in Berlin, including the few pieces which will be published in due course by Dr. H. Freydank, and which raise the number of identified tablets to about 75.

documents in the archive is KAJ 145 which records that Assur-aha-iddina has paid 5 talents of tin toward the purchase of a house at Assur: it is tempting to think that this may indeed have been the very building in whose remains the tablets were discovered.

*Provenance:* dA8I, “im Suchgraben 8I” (Weidner, *Festschrift Christian*, 113); “Etwa 50 Meter westlich von diesem Bauwerk [= Babu-aha-iddina’s house, JNP] kam der aus 83 Texten bestehende Fundkomplex Assur 14327 zutage” (*AfO* 19 [1959-60] 35).

*Tablets:* a complete list of the identified tablets of this archive will be given in my edition (see note 17).

#### 7. *A subsidiary archive of Babu-aha-iddina*

Somewhere in the 8I test trench “about 400 metres east of the monumental building” a group of tablets was found, although no exact details of their provenance are published. 15 texts are known, and they are mostly small administrative documents. As already observed by Weidner, some of them mention Babu-aha-iddina, and a closer inspection of the group as a whole reveals that at least 8 tablets mention either him or persons known to belong to his household. They deal with grindstones, metals and other raw materials, and textiles, and reflect activities similar to those documented in the other group; two tablets are an exception, since they relate to the purchase of some land by Babu-aha-iddina.

Clearly this group of texts came originally from an establishment of Babu-aha-iddina, and it is therefore likely that he owned another, probably subsidiary, building of some kind on the eastern side of the city. In the main archive a variety of storerooms—for bronze, spices, wood, etc.—are mentioned, and a letter talks of the “outer courtyard” (KAJ 178), a *bīt qāte* or “workshop” (KAJ 274) and a “barn which is at the top of the staircase” in which a variety of bronze items sent across from the palace were stowed (KAJ 303). In an old city like Assur houses were certainly close together and land not freely available even to the great families, and it is very likely that to accommodate his extensive private businesses Babu-aha-iddina found it necessary to acquire property in different parts of the city.

*Provenance:* the above section was written on the assumption that Weidner’s statement in *AfO* 19 (1959-60) 38 was correct: “... mehrere Texte des Fundkomplexes Assur 14445, der etwa 400 Meter südlich von dem monumentalen Gebäude” [i.e. Babu-aha-iddina’s house] “zutage kam”. However, Mr. Olof Pedersén kindly writes to me that “Archive 7 is no separate archive found as Weidner says, but found above the same grave as Archive 5, but excavated somewhat later ...”. Cf. perhaps on Archive 5, where it is noted that two groups of tablets were found there.



*Tablets:* Assur 14445: Weidner, *Festschrift Christian* 115, lists 15 tablets in Berlin and published in *KAJ*. The only other possible candidate is:

L. Speleers, *RIAA* No. 314.

This certainly, for prosopographical reasons, belongs to the archives of Babu-aha-iddina, and because it deals, like *KAJ* 123, with grindstones, I have placed it here rather than under Archive 5.

#### 8. *The 14th century legal documents*

Immediately east of the archive we have just discussed lay the house of the Incantation Priest from which so many of the important literary texts were discovered. To its east again, in the same test trench the excavators came on a collection of more than 130 well-preserved tablets lying 2.75 metres below the surface. Many of these were published in *KAJ* by Ebeling, a few more subsequently in scattered articles. Although I must state emphatically that I have not studied this entire group as an archive, it seems fair to say that these texts include the great majority of all the known legal documents from the Middle Assyrian period at Assur: most frequent are texts concerned with the purchase of land and with loans of tin and corn, but there are not a few documenting marriage, adoption, pledge, division of inheritance etc. As a whole the archive dates from relatively early in the Middle Assyrian period—according to Weidner principally the reigns of Eriba-Adad and Assur-uballit (ca. 1392-1330 BC)—and it certainly includes the separate archives of several different families. Many of the texts reflect the activities of Iddin-Kube and his son Kidin-Adad, and indeed Weidner even suggested that the entire collection of tablets may have belonged to this household, and if this were so we should expect their main house to have been situated in this part of the city. On the other hand, at least two other large family archives are represented: that this is not mere coincidence is shown by the fact that they seem to have held lands in the same few villages “across the river Šiššar”—which, with Nissen, I feel was probably the ancient name of the Tharthar. We could then suppose that Kidin-Adad had bought up the land-holdings of the other families, in which case any documents relating to their previous purchase of the land would have been passed on to him with the entitlement to the land. If this is indeed the correct explanation, it means that the family must have become exceedingly wealthy land-owners. However, without a careful re-examination of the whole group, and preferably the publication of the remainder, it would be premature to suggest that the tablets comprise a single family archive, since there could be other explanations of why they were found together<sup>18</sup>.

<sup>18</sup> An edition of some of these texts has already been published by C. Saporetti, *Assur 14446: La famiglia A* and *Assur 14446: Le altre famiglie* (Data Sets: Cuneiform Texts, Vols. 1 and 3; Malibu 1979).

*Provenance:* J. Jordan, *MDOG* 38 (1908) 43, "In iA8I lagen 2.75 m unter der Hügeloberfläche gut erhaltene, ungebrannte Tontafeln ..."; E. F. Weidner, *AfO* 20 (1963) 123, "... Fundkomplex Assur 14446, der in iA8I ..., östlich von dem berühmten "Haus des Beschwörungspriesters" geborgen wurde. Nach den Grabungsjournal waren es mehr als 130 mittellassyrische Rechts- und Verwaltungsurkunden. Davon sind 96 veröffentlicht, zahlreiche weitere befinden sich unpubliziert in ... Berlin".

*Tablets:* all Assur 14446: a list of 6 tablets in *KAV* and 90 in *KAJ* is given by Weidner, *Festschrift Christian* 114-5. The following additions can now be made:

Assur 14446 a	= VAT 18040	= VS 19 33
aa	18041	VS 19 37
ao	8923	<i>AfO</i> 20 122
b	18042	VS 19 38
bi	9013	VS 21 32
bs	9019	VS 21 31 (= <i>Aru</i> No. 53)
c	18043	VS 19 41
cx	8044	VS 19 60
d	8898	VS 19 36
dc	8899	VS 21 25
dd	9034	<i>AfO</i> 20 123

#### 9. *Admati-ili's family archive*

In test trench 9I the storeroom of a Middle Assyrian private house was found, still packed with a variety of pottery vessels, one of which held 54 tablets. Of this very well provenanced archive some 32 are now published. They form a mixed collection of transactions, mainly tin and corn loans, but including a few other interesting documents, such as the *pūru* tablets listing land-lots (*KAV* 125-9). There are two names which occur most frequently: one is Admati-ili, who figures twice in person, once as the grandfather of a person buying a slave-woman (in whose possession we should expect the tablet to have remained), and once as the father of Sin-nāšir, one party to a unique, though sadly broken, "mutual assistance" contract (*KAJ* 57). Two of Sin-nāšir's sons appear in *KAJ* 37, in which a certain Riš-Aššur lends corn to various persons. This same Riš-Aššur also lends tin in two other tablets from the group, and he is therefore the second candidate after whom the archive might be named. We cannot decide, on the basis of the published sample, whether his documents have been added to those of Admati-ili's family, or vice versa.

and 1981). For further comment on the association of archives from different families, see also J. N. Postgate, in *Societies and Languages of the Ancient Near East: Studies in Honour of I. M. Diakonoff* (1982) 308.

There are also a number of loan contracts from the same jar which seem to have no connection with either. One explanation of this is contained in the texts themselves: 4 of the loans (*KAJ* 16; 19; 31; and 71), all with different debtors and creditors, contain the phrase “he shall pay to the bearer of the tablet”. Thus we see that debts of this kind could be passed on from one person to another merely by transferring the tablet to a new owner, and this may explain how these apparently irrelevant documents ended up here.

*Provenance*: J. Jordan, *MDOG* 40 (1909) 20-21, “In eA9I ist ein altassyrisches [i.e. Middle Assyrian, JNP] Privathaus angeschnitten worden, dessen eine Kammer noch eine grosse Menge Tongeschirr sehr verschiedener Form und Grösse in dem Zustande enthielt ... Eine grosse Spitzflasche enthielt 54 ungebrannte Tontafeln, viele beschädigt durch Feuchtigkeit, meist kleinen Formates 3-8 cm, quadratisch und länglich, dick und schwach bikonvex ... In Mossul ist ein Bataillon Infanterie und zwei Schwadronen Kavallerie eingetroffen”; details also quoted in Weidner, *Festschrift Christian* 112.

*Tablets*: Assur 14886: after Weidner, *Festschrift Christian* 114-5, there are 25 texts in *KAJ*, 5 texts in *KAV*, and 1 in *AfO* 13 (1939-41) Taf. 7 (Assur 14886 i). Only one new tablet:

Assur 14886 p = VAT 8704 = *VS* 19 45

[clearly from this archive, though Ass. number new lost:

VAT 8715 = *VS* 21 12]

#### 10. *The archive of Zeru-iqiša*

The tenth and last archive consists of tablets found scattered on the floor of a large house in the south end of the city in the 10I test trench. Twenty-four of these texts are now published, and they show clearly that a certain Zeru-iqiša (full name, Adad-zeru-iqiša) lived here during the reign of Tukulti-Ninurta I. Several tablets indicate that he administered flocks of sheep belonging both to himself and to the palace, two texts refer to his purchase of a house in the city of Assur, others are tin or corn loans in which he is creditor. Rather as with the preceding archive, there are also some tablets which seem to belong to an entirely different family. Once again, there is no obvious explanation for this, and once again we must await the publication of the remainder of the documents in the hope that may provide a clue to why the two groups were found together.

*Provenance*: J. Jordan, *MDOG* 40 (1909) 22, “In fE10I sind jetzt auf dem Fussboden eines Zimmers des erwähnten altassyrischen Hauses ungebrannte Tontäfelchen gefunden worden ...”; C. Preusser, *Die Wohnhäuser in Assur* (WVDOG 64) 13, “Die ungebrannten Tontafeln, Ass. 14 987, die auf dem Fussboden in Raum 10 gefunden wurden, stammen aus der Zeit von

Tukultininurta I ...". For the archive in general, see also Fine 1952-53, 250-3.

*Tablets:* Assur 14987. See Weidner, *Festschrift Christian* 115, listing 23 texts published in *KAJ*. Only one new tablet:

Assur 14987 ad = VAT 8628 = *VS* 19 32

In conclusion, I should like to make one or two general points which emerge from the consideration of these archives and their provenances. Of the 10 archives, no less than 5 were found in the 10 m test trenches which were dug across the site from west to east at 100 m intervals. This must mean that many similar Middle Assyrian archives await discovery outside the limits of the test trenches. Also with regard to their distribution, it must be significant that the purely administrative groups (Archives 1-4) came from the temple and palace area which stretches along the north side of the city, while from the central and southern parts we have private archives which may or may not include documents from the public administration. We might go further, and point out that the two families known to have held high offices of state in the 13th century, Babu-aha-iddina and Assur-aha-iddina, lived not far from the public sector of the city. Whether their location in the western part of the city has any connection with the siting of Tukulti-Ninurta's new palace is less easy to say, but it is certainly a possibility worth considering that the large "houses" of the high state officials were clustered round the royal palace. Note also that Samnuha-ašarēd (Archive 6) was also a high official and lived towards the north side of the city, although rather later in time.

One final point which arises from the consideration of the archives as a whole is this. Usually Assyriologists have been obliged to reconstruct their family or administrative archives on paper, patching together one text from Paris, one from Yale, one from Baghdad, etc. Almost the only criterion available to us is the prosopography, but in the case of Middle Assyrian Assur the excavators' records have enabled us to include within the archives a number of tablets which no-one could have assigned to them on the basis of prosopography, because neither the principals in the transaction nor even its witnesses reappear in the rest of the archive. Obviously this offers the opportunity of making significant advances, because if we can only include in our study of an archive those texts which we should have expected to find in it, we shall never see in what ways our expectations need to be corrected—it is a circular and sterile procedure. We may not at first be able to supply satisfactory explanations for the presence of these unexpected documents, but we must at least make an attempt. Thus, in the case of Archive 8, I have suggested one reason why an apparently disparate group of legal documents should have been found together, and in Archive 9 it is possible, perhaps more convincingly, to offer an explanation of the presence of unrelated debt-notes, along lines already foreshadowed in the Old Assyrian commercial scene. Viewed in this

light, it is not unfair to say that of all Weidner's substantial contributions to Middle Assyrian studies, the mere listing of excavation numbers in *Festschrift Christian*, which alone has enabled the reconstruction of the different archives, is the most important.

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## ARCHIVE UND BIBLIOTHEKEN IN ḪATTUŠA

HEINRICH OTTEN (Mainz)

Das Thema des Kongresses dient auch einer Begriffsbestimmung beider Termini, und so scheint mein Referat mit der Benennung »Archive und Bibliotheken« gerade dieser Klarheit zu entbehren.

Es sei kurz rekapituliert: Mit »Archiv« wird Schriftgut und dessen Sammlung bezeichnet, das in Palast-, Tempel- oder Privatkanzeleien aufbewahrt ist und z. T. von den heutigen Archivaren genauer als »Registraturgut« angesprochen wird. Damit wären in unserem Falle etwa die 75 Täfelchen der Wirtschafts-Registraturen der altassyrischen Kaufleute von Ḫattuš angesprochen, von denen etwa 50 aus der Siedlung der Unterstadt stammen (mit Nennung von *Da-a-a*, *Šamaš-taklāku*), während der Rest als Streufunde anzusprechen ist<sup>1</sup>.

Wenn jedoch ganz allgemein bei den Tafelfunden von Boğazköy-Ḫattuša von »Archiven« oder gar »Staatsarchiven« gesprochen wurde<sup>2</sup>, so ist hier die besondere Situation der frühen Grabungen in Rechnung zu stellen. Denn bei den ersten großen Tafelfunden des Jahres 1906 am Westhang von Büyükkale und im Gebäude E der großreichszeitlichen Burg fanden naturgemäß die akkadisch geschriebenen — und damit sogleich verwertbaren — historischen Texte die größte Aufmerksamkeit: d.h. Teile der Korrespondenz zwischen Ramses II. und Ḫattušili III., Abschriften des berühmten Friedensvertrages zwischen beiden Ländern usw.<sup>3</sup>. Bereits 1905 hatte bei der ersten Begehung ein aufgelesenes Fragment mit dem Namen des nordsyrischen Fürsten namens Tette solche Assoziationen geweckt.

So lag, gerade auch in Parallele zum Tontafelarchiv von Tell Amarna, für den Ausgräber Hugo Winckler die Bezeichnung »Archiv« nahe, aber Emil Forrer konnte bereits 1922 darauf verweisen<sup>4</sup>, daß wir es bei den zahlreichen Urkunden vielfach mit Abschriften zu tun haben und er folgert (l.c. 182): »So wie die Tafeln uns vorliegen, haben wir es also nicht mit einem Archiv, sondern mit einer

<sup>1</sup> Vgl. H. Otten, *MDOG* 89 (1957) 68 ff.; 91 (1958), 73; *KBo.* 9 (1957).

<sup>2</sup> H. Winckler, *OLZ* 9 (1906) 625 ff.; A. Kammenhuber, *Altorientalische Sprachen (HdOr. I, 2/2, 1969)* 120, 129.

<sup>3</sup> Daß H. Winckler seinerzeit nach erster flüchtiger Durchsicht der Tafelfunde die Einleitung zahlreicher hethitischer Ritualanweisungen: *UMMA* m... als Hinweis auf »Schreiben, die meist aus Nachbarländern ... herrührten« (*OLZ* 9 [1906], 631 f.) glaubte werten zu können, gehört mit zu diesem Komplex.

<sup>4</sup> E. Forrer, »Die Inschriften und Sprachen des Hatti-Reiches« (*ZDMG* NF 1, 1958) 174 ff.

Bibliothek zu tun, die etwa um 1300 v. Chr. gegründet wurde und während der letzten 120 Jahre des Hatti-Reiches zugleich als Archiv gedient hat«.

Die Einzelheiten dieser Aussage sind heute — 60 Jahre später — teilweise (etwa in den Zeitangaben) revisionsbedürftig, im ganzen ist aber mit dieser Stellungnahme ein wichtiger Hinweis gegeben. — Nimmt man hinzu, daß ein wesentlicher Teil der Boğazköy-Texte liturgischen und allgemein religiösen Charakters ist, daß ferner in den Kolophonen vieler Tafeln des 13. Jahrhunderts nicht nur Titel und Verfasser des betreffenden Werkes aufgeführt werden, sondern daß auch der Schreiber (bzw. Kopist) sich mit Namen und Genealogie nennt, so wird deutlich, daß die Verwendung des Begriffes »Archive« für diese Tafelsammlungen und ihren Inhalt nach unserem Sprachgebrauch nicht ganz zutreffend ist<sup>5</sup>.

Es geht aber hier nicht so sehr um die Klärung der in der Orientalistik seit hundert Jahren umstrittenen Termini »Bibliothek« oder »Archiv«, sondern um einen wesentlichen Einblick in die Art des uns aus Boğazköy überlieferten Textmaterials.

Wir haben nämlich festzustellen, dass dieses nicht als Pendant zu den großen »Archiven« dieser Zeit, z. B. aus Ugarit, zu werten ist, etwa als Sammlung der politischen Korrespondenz, der gesiegelten Originale der Staatsverträge usw. Selbst ein »Archiv« wie das jetzt von T. Özgüç und S. Alp uns bekannt gemachte Tontafeldepot aus Maşat<sup>6</sup> findet in Boğazköy keine Entsprechung. Für die Briefsammlung, nämlich, wie sie in KBo. 18 (1971) veröffentlicht wurde, sei mit H. G. Güterbock festgestellt: »Die Fundlage in den Planquadraten Büyükkale p-q/10-11 ist sekundär, in einer Schuttmasse, die der phrygischen Schicht Ib als Untergrund diente (P. Neve, *MDOG* 97 [1966], 12 f.). Es wurden nur Bruchstücke gefunden; manche machten den Eindruck, absichtlich zerbrochen zu sein. Ähnliche Beobachtungen machten wir 1933: damals fanden sich in g-h/13, als Füllung hinter der Stützmauer zwischen den Gebäuden E und F, Bruchstücke von Tafeln, unter denen Orakelberichte die Mehrzahl bildeten, aber auch Briefe vertreten waren. Man möchte annehmen, daß diese ihrem Wesen nach ephemeren Tafeln schon von der hithitischen Kanzlei 'weggeworfen' waren, ehe sie als Füllmasse verwendet wurden; beweisen läßt sich das freilich nicht«.

Wenn also nicht »Archive« im engeren Sinne des Wortes, so darf man als charakteristisch für Inhalt und Ordnung dieser Tafelsammlungen, insbesondere für den großen Sammelfund zu Anfang der dreißiger Jahre in Gebäude A auf Büyü-

<sup>5</sup> Vgl. H. Otten, »Bibliotheken im Alten Orient« (*Das Altertum* I, 2, 1955) 67 ff., 78; J. Papritz, *Archivalische Zeitschrift* 55 (1959) 28 f.

<sup>6</sup> T. Özgüç, *Excavations at Maşat Höyük and Investigations in its Vicinity* (türkisch und englisch) (Türk Tarih Kurumu Yayınları 5. Dizi, Sa. 38; Ankara, 1978); T. Özgüç, *Maşat Höyük 2, A Hittite Centre northeast of Boğazköy* (Türk Tarih Kurumu Yayınları 5. Dizi, Sa. 38\*; Ankara, 1982); S. Alp, *Belleten* 41/164 (1977) 637 ff.; 8. *Türk Tarih Kongresi Bildiriler Kitabı 1. Cildi* (1978) 165 ff. = *Belleten* 44/173 (1980) 25 ff. (»Die hethitischen Tontafelentdeckungen auf dem Maşat-Höyük, Vorläufiger Bericht«).

kale eine Textgruppe heranziehen, die wir als »Tafelkataloge« — »Catalogue de tablettes« mit E. Laroche in seinem *Catalogue des textes hittites* (1971 = *CTH*) — bezeichnen.

Eine neue, umfassende Edition und Bearbeitung dieser Textgruppe ist seit einem Jahr in Vorbereitung, und im Rahmen dieser *Rencontre* scheint es angebracht, über ein erstes Ergebnis kurz zu berichten.

In der Anordnung seines *Catalogue des textes hittites* (1971) hat E. Laroche die etwa 40 damals bekannten Fragmente von Tafelkatalogen nach der typischen Einleitung der jeweiligen Zitationen zusammengefaßt:

Nr. 276 Type: DUB-X-KAM

Nr. 277 Type: x TUP-PU

Nr. 278 Type: x DUB UMMA/*mān*

usw.



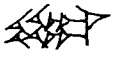




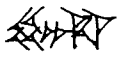
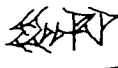
Dieses Ordnungsprinzip ergab sich ihm gewiß auch aus der Häufigkeit der entsprechenden charakteristischen Formulierungen, indem unter Nr. 276 immerhin 14 Nummern subsumiert werden konnten, unter Nr. 277 deren 10 (unter Berücksichtigung der Duplikate 4.A und 4.B). Für Nr. 278 dagegen konnte er lediglich ein einziges Textfragment benennen: *KUB* 30, 52, das er im gleichen Band unter Kap. 14, 'Débris de fichier' (S. 172 f.) in Umschrift vorlegte.

Dabei findet sich die aus heutiger Sicht höchst bedeutsame Charakterisierung von *KUB* 30, 52 in Bezug auf die (weitgehend nur bruchstückhaft erhaltenen) Tafelangaben für die Vs. I: »Aucun de ces titres ne se rapporte à un texte connu; mais il est probable qu'ils décrivent des documents archaïques: *UMMA LUGAL.GAL* et *UMMA tabarna* sont le début des N<sup>os</sup> 4 (= Actes de Hattusili I<sup>er</sup>) et 8 (Chronique du palais, règne de Hattusili I<sup>er</sup>?); cf. aussi *takku*, ligne 9«.

Dieses, von E. Laroche unter *CTH* 278 herausgestellte Formular findet sich in einigen weiteren, noch unveröffentlichten Fragmenten wieder, die gleichzeitig durch ihr Schriftbild zusammengehören, wobei die Zeichenformen AH, LI und URU allgemein als »alt« bezeichnet werden können (16./15. Jh.), während das graphische Bild von DA, ID, UZ und TAR die Niederschriften eindeutig auf etwa 1400 v. Chr. datiert, d. h. auf die seinerzeit von Philo Houwink ten Cate so bezeichnete Periode des »Early Hittite Empire (ca. 1450-1380 B.C.)«, vgl. die beigegefügte Tabelle (S. 187).

Wir hätten mit diesen Texten also den bisher zeitlich ältesten Tafelkatalog vor uns, der eine Tafelsammlung aus der Zeit vor Šuppiluliuma I. in Umfang und Ordnung aufzeigt. Erhalten ist von diesem Katalog der Anfang mit Kol. I, der untere Teil von Rs. III sowie das schriftfreie Ende von Kol. IV. Als Anordnungsprinzip wird deutlich, daß die Aufzählung mit Rechtsentscheidungen und königlichen Erlassen beginnt, wobei das Formular von Kol. I 5 ff. genau dem Bild von *CTH* 278 I 4' ff. entspricht, mit I DUB *UMMA taba[rna]* oder I DUB *UMMA*



Text	Nr. 1	Nr. 2	Nr. 4	Nr. 5
AH	 III 7'			 III 10
LI	 II 2'	 I 7'		 III 6
URU	 III 13'	 I 5'		 II 1'
DA	 I 9	 II 4'		 II 6'
ID		 I 5'		
UZ	 III 1'			 III 7
TAR		 I 7'	 2'	

1. Charakteristische Zeichen der älteren Tafelkataloge (Nr. 2 = KUB 30, 52; Nr. 5 = KUB 30, 68).

LUGAL.GAL—und aus dieser Folge kann man wohl gar auf eine chronologische Ordnung schließen neben der sachlichen Sequenz: Rechtsentscheidungen, königliche Erlasse.

Text 1 Vs. I

I DUB ŠA DI-NIM x[  
2 ku-iš-ki [

I DUB ḥa-an-ne-e[š-na-aš  
4 ku-iš-ki [

I DUB u[M-MA

6 *la-ba[-ar-*  
*LÚ.MEŠ x[*

---

8 I DUB *UM-M[A*  
*da-iš (-)x[*

---

10 I DUB *UM-M[A*  
*ta-me-eš-š[a-/-ka[t-*

---

12 I DUB *UM-MA[*

---

I DUB *UM-MA[*  
 14 *A-NA NÍG x[*

---

I DU[B

Das Ende der Kol. III bietet Ritualanweisungen verschiedener Beschwörer und Beschwörerinnen (SAL.ŠU.GI), auch hier mit dem Hinweis auf eine gewisse Ordnung<sup>7</sup>, indem eine Annanna, die Alte aus Zigazhura, zweimal nacheinander (III 8' und 12') als Verfasserin jeweils verschiedener Rituale genannt wird:

Text 1 Rs. III

x+1 reinigt<sup>?</sup>[

---

2' [... Anweisung des Ha]ttušili, Sohnes des Zuw[akip,  
 [... wenn zur] Zeit der Fackel (= Abendzeit) [

---

4' [... Anweisung der ... ]zi, der Alten, wenn[  
 [... folgenderma]ßen<sup>?</sup> behandle [ich]

---

6' [... Anweisung] des Apallanna, des Alten<sup>?</sup> [  
 [...] mit einem Rind und mit einem Mensch[en]

---

8' [... Anweisung] der Annanna, der Alten aus Zi[gazhura  
                   ]des [Schutzgott]es<sup>?</sup>, [der] Sonnengottheit[  
 10'               ]der H<sub>1</sub>annaḥanna, des/der[  
                   ]von Telipinu (und) Wal[za

---

12' Zwei Tafeln, Anweisung der Annanna, der Alten aus[  
       wenn er/sie die Sonnengöttin von Arinna anruf[t].

---

<sup>7</sup> Der Hinweis von E. Forrer, *MDOG* 61 (1921) 36 auf »nach Verfassern geordneten Katalogen« ist in dieser allgemeinen Aussage nicht korrekt.

14' Eine Tafel des Beschwörungspriesters des Wettergott[es . . .

(Ende der Kolumne)

Alle hier angeführten Personen: Ḫattušili, Apallanna, Annanna sowie die ihnen zugeschriebenen Rituale müssen in die Zeit vor 1400 gesetzt werden — das Onomastikon und die Götternamen bestätigen diesen Schluß.

Ein Text dieser Aufzählung, und zwar III 2' f. ist gar von dem gleichen Fundort, Gebäude A, Raum 5/6, bekannt (*KBo.* 21, 82 = *CTH* 734.9), dessen Kolophon lautet:

»Dritte Tafel des Ḫattušili, des Sohnes des Zuwakip[            ]

des Alten aus Zipatta (im) Lande Zalpuwa:

Wenn er/sie zur Zeit der Fackel König und Königin reinigt«.

Den Zeichenformen nach (*ID* I 4' ff., *DA* IV 21' und *UZ* IV 8') handelt es sich um eine Niederschrift aus der gleichen Periode, um 1400. Diese Tafel ist mit großer Wahrscheinlichkeit demnach identisch mit dem im Katalog genannten Exemplar und beide wären somit in die jüngere Tafelsammlung mit aufgenommen worden. — Das Gebäude A, in dessen Brandschutt die Tafeln auf uns gekommen sind, ist jedenfalls erst der jüngeren Großreichszeit zuzuordnen<sup>8</sup>.

Man ist versucht, die mittelhethitischen Katalogfragmente einer einzigen Tafel zuzuordnen, was allerdings nur mit Bedenken geschehen kann, da die Stärke der Randstücke unterschiedlich ist. Wagt man aber diesen Schritt, so böte die Kol. I mit etwa 20 Titeln Rechtsentscheidungen und königliche Erlasse, Kol. II Ende und Kol. III Anfang gäben eine Zusammenstellung der großen Festbeschreibungen, woran sich die Aufzählung von Ritualen und Beschwörungen anschlosse. In dieser Ordnung, mit insgesamt etwa 75 Titeln und einem Gesamtbestand von ca. 200 Tafeln ließe sich damit Umfang und Inhalt einer solchen Sammlung wiedergewinnen.

Wie gesagt, dieser letzte Schritt sei nur als Versuch gewertet. Als Ergebnis bleibt aber festzuhalten:

1) Neben den zahlreichen Tafelkatalogen aus dem 13. Jh. gibt es einige Kataloge, die durch ihr graphisches Bild in die Wende 15./14. Jh. zu datieren sind, nach Ausweis der Personennamen und nach ihren inhaltlichen Aussagen aber auch älteres Schriftgut umfassen mögen.

2) Diese mittelhethitischen Kataloge unterscheiden sich in ihrem Formular, u.zw. x *DUB UMMA* . . ., von den jüngeren Katalogen, vor allem auch durch das Fehlen jedes Kontrollvermerkes, wie etwa Feststellung der Vollständigkeit oder Hinweis auf ein 'vacat' einzelner Tafeln (»steht nicht aufrecht, haben wir nicht gefunden«).

3) Die Aufzählung des Tafelbestandes zeigt eine klare systematische Ordnung,

<sup>8</sup> Vgl. P. Neve, *Büyükkale, Die Bauwerke* (= *Boğazköy-Ḫattuša* 12, 1982) 90, 104 ff.

die mit Rechtsentscheidungen und königlichen Erlassen beginnend auch die von uns als »literarisch« bezeichneten Texte des offiziellen Kultes und der magischen Praxis mitumfaßt.

Wir sollten diese Zusammengehörigkeit von staatlichen Rechtsordnungen und religiös-kultischen Vorschriften demnach allgemein stärker in Rechnung stellen, wenn wir beim Suchen nach einem adaequaten Terminus vor der Frage stehen: Archive oder Bibliotheken in Ḫattuša.

## DIE KARRIERE DES SCHREIBERS TATTAMARU, SOHN DES ŠAĤURUNUWA

G. MAUER (Heidelberg)

Im hethitischen Schrifttum werden sehr oft auch Schreiber genannt. Insbesondere sind es die Kolophone, in denen Aussage über Tätigkeit, berufsmässige Gliederung und teils durch Patronymenangaben etwas über Schreiberdynastien enthalten ist.

Bekanntlich stellten die Schreiber von Hattuša keine in sich geschlossene Schreiberkaste dar, sondern fühlten sich auch den Beamten zugehörig, so wie sich umgekehrt die Schreiber aus den Beamten rekrutiert haben dürften<sup>1</sup>. Dieses Wechselspiel soll hier anhand einer prosopographischen Untersuchung aufgezeigt werden.

### 1. Forschungsstand

Der Ausgangspunkt für Tattamaru und Šaĥurunuwa stellt die im Jahre 1933 von A. Götze in Keilschrift edierte Urkunde *KUB* 26 43 mit Duplikat *KUB* 26 50 dar. Sie war bereits von E. Forrer, *Forschungen* 1/2 (Berlin, 1929) in Zusammenhang mit dem Tawagalawa-Brief herangezogen worden. E. Forrer sah in diesem Text eine Teilungsurkunde aus der Zeit Šuppiluliumas I. Dagegen wandte sich F. Sommer, *Die Ahĥijavā-Urkunden* (Abh München NF 6; München, 1932). 1945 erschien von V. Korošec, »Einige juristische Bemerkungen zur Šaĥurunuwa-Urkunde«, *Münchener Beiträge zur Papyrusforschung und antiken Rechtsgeschichte* 35 (= Fs Leopold Wenger, Band 2; 1945), 191-222.

E. Laroche gab in »Un point d'histoire: Ulmi-Tešub« (*RHA* 8 fasc. 48 [1947-1948] 40-48) eine vergleichende Übersicht der Zeugenlisten von *KUB* 26 43 und *KBo* 4 10. Darüberhinaus wurde sie noch des öfteren für Einzelheiten herangezogen<sup>2</sup>; eine vollständige Bearbeitung (einschliesslich Duplikat und den neu hinzugekommenen Anschlussstücken *KBo* 22 55 und 58) erfuhr sie aber erst durch F. Imparati, »Concessione di terre da parte di Tudhaliya IV« (*RHA* 32 [1974], 3-209). In diesem Beitrag wurde auch näher auf die verwandtschaftlichen Beziehungen Bezug genommen.

<sup>1</sup> Vgl. B. Landsberger, *Sam'al* (Ankara, 1948) 103 f.

<sup>2</sup> So beispielsweise bei E. von Schuler, *Hethitische Dienstanweisungen* (= *AfO Beih.* 10; Graz, 1957).

## 2. Das Textmaterial

### 2.1. Šaḫurunuwa

Der Name Šaḫurunuwa (s. Laroche, *Noms* Nr. 1076, den Nachträgen in *Hethitica* 4 [1981], 36, sowie Mašat Nr. 67, S. Alp, »Die hethitischen Tontafelentdeckungen auf dem Mašat-Höyük«, *Belleten* 44 [1980], 31) ist in einer Reihe von Texten bezeugt, die — falls die chronologische Einordnung der Mašat-Texte Richtigkeit besitzt — einmal in die Zeit (vor) Šuppiluliuma I. datieren und zum anderen in die Regierungen Muršilis II. bis Tudḫaliyas IV. fallen.

Eine Gleichsetzung von Šaḫurunuwa, Vater des Tattamaru, mit dem gleichnamigen König von Kargamiš, Sohn des Šarri-Kušuḫ und Vater des Ini-Tešub, wird man mit H. Klengel, *Geschichte Syriens im 2. Jahrtausend v.u.Z.*, Teil 1 (Berlin, 1965), 93<sup>46</sup> ablehnen. Somit bleiben für Šaḫurunuwa — abgesehen von unserem Text, Laroche *CTH*<sup>2</sup> 225 — folgende Belege:

*KBo* 4 10 — Vertrag mit Ulmi-Tešub. Šaḫurunuwa trägt in diesem Text die Bezeichnung GAL LÚ.MEŠ DUB.SAR.GIŠ. In der Einleitung dieser Urkunde werden Tudḫaliya und Puduḫepa erwähnt. Zudem ist der Schreiber Anuwanza noch aus weiteren Texten der Zeit Tudḫaliyas IV. bekannt.

*KUB* 49 103 — ein Orakeltext, in dem Šaḫurunuwa neben dem *tuhkanti* erwähnt ist.

*KUB* 30 54 — in diesem Katalog wird das Haus des Šaḫurunuwa neben Arma-ziti verzeichnet. Letztgenannter war Schreiber unter Tudḫaliya IV.

*KUB* 48 119 — ein Gelübde. In ihm sind Šaḫurunuwa und LUGAL-DLAMA als Heerführer genannt.

Schliesslich finden wir seinen Namen noch auf den Siegeln Tarsus 40, Boğazköy 3 15 — auf beiden sind die Zeichen für Oberschreiber und Königssohn vermerkt — *SBo* 2 9 und 78, in diesen nur mit dem Zeichen Königssohn versehen.

### 2.2. Tattamaru

Der Name Tattamaru (s. Laroche, *Noms* Nr. 1303 und den Nachträgen in *Hethitica* 4 [1981], 43) begegnet uns überwiegend in Texten aus der Zeit Hattušilis III. und Tudḫaliyas IV. Die Belege, die in die Regierung Hattušilis III. einzuordnen sind, sind:

*KUB* 26 92. In diesem Text werden auch Bentešina und Piḫaddu erwähnt. Ob allerdings Piḫaddu, der noch in dem Feldertext *KBo* 19 13 belegt ist, dem Gesandten Piḫasdu/Pikasta<sup>3</sup> des Bentešina gleichzusetzen ist, möchte ich zwar nicht aus inhaltlichen, so doch aus sprachlichen Gründen bezweifeln.

*KUB* 31 28 — ein Fragment, in dem ein gewisser Lupakki genannt ist. Inwieweit

<sup>3</sup> S. Houwink ten Cate, *BiOr* 30 (1973), 255.

dieser Lupakki dem *kartappu* UGULA LÚ.MEŠ von KUB 31 68 entspricht, oder ob es sich um einen anderen des gleichen Namens handelt, muss offen bleiben.

KUB 23 85 — ein Brief der von einer Königin verfasst wurde, d.h. Puduḥepa ist die Absenderin.

KUB 31 32 — Tattamaru wird hier neben einem Halpa-ziti erwähnt, der das Amt eines GAL LÚ.MEŠ UKU.UŠ ausübte.

In die Zeit Tudḫaliyas IV. sind einzuordnen:

KBo 4 10 — Vertrag mit Ulmi-Tešub (s.o.)

CTH<sup>2</sup> 225 (s.o.)

KUB 38 1 — ein Kultinventar.

Chronologisch nicht eindeutig festzulegen sind: KUB 23 29 und 106. Die Orakel KBo 23 122, KBo 24 26, KUB 49 11 und 14. In letzterem handelt es sich ebenso wie bei dem unter Šaḫurunūwa vermerkten Orakel um einen Feldzug in nördliche Gebiete. Schliesslich noch der Brief KBo 18 101, der nicht nur an Tattamaru gerichtet ist, sondern auch an ŠEŠ.MEŠ DUGUD »verehrte Kollegen«.

### 3. Anhaltspunkte zum Ansatz: Tattamaru, Sohn des Šaḫurunūwa

Aus CTH<sup>2</sup> 225 geht eindeutig hervor, dass Šaḫurunūwa der Vater von Tattamaru, Duwattanni und <sup>D</sup>U-manawa ist. In dieser Urkunde hat Šaḫurunūwa die Berufsbezeichnungen: GAL NA.GAD, GAL UKU.UŠ und GAL DUB.SAR GIŠ. Dies lässt darauf schliessen, dass er mehrere Ämter innehatte.

Ein weiterer Text, in dem sowohl Šaḫurunūwa und Tattamaru vorkommen, ist in KBo 4 10 gegeben. Sie fungieren beide als Zeugen, Šaḫurunūwa trägt dabei die Bezeichnung GAL LÚ.MEŠ DUB.SAR GIŠ, Tattamaru DUMU.LUGAL.

Die Zeugenliste von KBo 4 10 weist eine frappierende Übereinstimmung mit der von CTH<sup>2</sup> 225 auf. Allerdings mit dem grossen Unterschied, dass sie in CTH<sup>2</sup> 225 nicht als Zeugen auftreten. Dieses ist durch die Funktion als Teil der Vertragspartei von Tattamaru und Šaḫurunūwa in CTH<sup>2</sup> 225 bedingt. Allerdings tragen beide als Zeugen keinerlei verwandtschaftliche Bezeichnungen; Šaḫurunūwa ist aufgrund seines Berufsnamens zu identifizieren. Anders verhält es sich bei Tattamaru, der in CTH<sup>2</sup> 225 ohne jegliche Benennung erscheint. Seine Bezeichnung als DUMU.LUGAL, die ihn damit in die Nähe des Königshauses ausweist, kann zum einen darauf zurückgeführt werden, dass Šaḫurunūwa diesen Titel in einem Teil seiner Siegel führt, s.o., und zum anderen — nach KUB 3 85 zu schliessen — eine Nichte Puduḥepas zur Frau hatte.

### 4. Zeitliche Anhaltspunkte für Šaḫurunūwa und Tattamaru

Wie bereits oben erwähnt, datiert CTH<sup>2</sup> 225 aus der Zeit Tudḫaliyas IV. Der Vertragstext weist aber schon auf Lastenbefreiungen für <sup>D</sup>U-manawa unter Muwa-

talli zurück. Šaḫurunūwa muss somit schon unter Muwatalli Vater gewesen sein. lebte jedoch noch eine Zeitlang unter Tudḫaliya IV.

Daraus folgt, dass wir für ihn folgenden Ansatz treffen:

$x_1$  Jahre unter Muršili II.  
 23 Jahre unter Muwatalli  
 7 Jahre unter Urḫi-Tešub  
 25 Jahre unter Hattušili III.  
 $y_1$  Jahre unter Tudḫaliya IV.

d.h., Šaḫurunūwa erreichte ein Alter von  $x_1 + 55 + y_1$  Jahren. Er kann folglich nicht mit dem Šaḫurunūwa aus Mašat gleichgesetzt werden.

Tattamaru ist analog zu Šaḫurunūwa — wir geben ihm unter Tudḫaliya IV. allerdings mehr Lebensjahre als seinem Vater — dementsprechend anzusetzen:

$x_2$  Jahre unter Muwatalli  
 7 Jahre unter Urḫi-Tešub  
 25 Jahre unter Hattušili III.  
 $y_{1+2}$  Jahre unter Tudḫaliya IV.

d.h.  $x_2 + 32 + y_{1+2}$  Jahre.

##### 5. *Der Lebenslauf des Tattamaru*

Bei dem Versuch einer Rekonstruktion des Lebenslaufes von Tattamaru ergibt sich nachstehendes Bild:

Seine Geburt ist unter Muwatalli anzusetzen. Er ist der Sohn des Šaḫurunūwa, eines bedeutenden Beamten und Schreibers, der auch ein eigenes Siegel besitzt. Šaḫurunūwa hatte es offensichtlich verstanden, die richtige Partei zu wählen, nämlich die Linie Muršili-Hattušili-Tudḫaliya. Er brachte somit seine Familie unbeschadet durch die ganzen Disturbationen. Tattamaru hatte noch einen Bruder Duwatanni und eine Schwester <sup>D</sup>U-manawa, welche mit Ali-ḫešni verheiratet war. Seine Mutter bleibt im Dunkeln. Greifbar wird Tattamaru erst in Texten aus der Zeit Hattušilis. Die Periode davor, die auch die Absetzung Urḫi-Tešubs mitbeinhaltet, lässt kaum Aussagen zu. Es ist anzunehmen, dass Tattamaru genau wie sein Vater der Schreiberzunft angehörte und eine derartige Ausbildung in jenem Abschnitt genoss. Die Anrede in *KBo* 18 101 mag auch als ein Hinweis darauf verstanden werden.

Relativ wenig geben die Orakelanfragen her. Das Vorkommen seines Namens zeigt jedoch, dass er bereits zu einer Persönlichkeit aufgestiegen war. Was den Feldzug gegen den Norden angeht, so wird er eine beratende Funktion innegehabt haben, denn wäre er als Feldherr aufgetreten, müsste man mit einer Titulierung rechnen. Unter Hattušili ist dann seine Verheiratung mit einer Nichte Puduḫepas anzusetzen. Auch das Vorkommen seines Namens neben Bentešina, Piḫaddu und



Lupakki zeigt ihn im Kreise bedeutender Persönlichkeiten. Hier sei nochmals das Kulinventar *KUB* 38 1 angeführt, dessen hier relevanter Passus in Übersetzung lautet: “Jetzt aber haben sowohl die Leute des Palastes als auch die Untergebenen sie (d.h. die Götter) zu versorgen.” Diese Stelle muss sich auf eine Schenkung liyas an Tattamaru beziehen. Dass es sich dabei um den ererbten Besitz von Šaḫurunuwa handelt, ist auszuschliessen.

## THE PALACE ARCHIVES AT UGARIT\*

W.H. VAN SOLDT (Leiden)

Ever since the first tablet was unearthed in Ras Shamra — Ugarit in 1929 this important site has managed to attract the attention of the scholarly world. For more than 50 years a steadily increasing number of texts — especially ones written in the indigenous Semitic language of the ancient city — has guaranteed the continuing interest of biblical scholars, historians, archaeologists, Assyriologists, Hittitologists and others. The number of archives, not only within the walls of the royal palace, but also in private buildings has been so overwhelming and still is, that every new trench to be opened is almost bound to contain a new archive, a fact again exemplified by the 1979 excavations under the leadership of Mme Yon<sup>1</sup>.

All these archives have provided us with a wealth of material not only remarkable as to its quantity but even more with regard to its diversity: we count 7 languages for the texts from Ugarit, written in 5 different scripts<sup>2</sup>. At times 2 scripts could even be used for a single language, as e.g. in the case of Ugaritic, Hurrian and probably Akkadian<sup>3</sup>. The results obtained from a comparison of these two scripts — alphabetic and syllabic cuneiform — esp. in the field of phonology, are well-known, notably for a relatively isolated language as Hurrian<sup>4</sup>. Most of these texts have found their way into the various publications of the Ras Shamra Mission or into series as MSL and have given rise to comprehensive socio-economic, linguistic, historical and religious studies.

In spite of all these positive evaluations a few lacunae still exist, most notably on the archaeological level; esp. wanting are a comprehensive assessment of the stratigraphy of the site—more specifically of the various archives—, and an integral publication of all excavation plans with the indispensable lists of «points topographiques», still lacking for some of the most important archives as Rap'ānu and the

\* Abstract of the first part of my forthcoming doctoral dissertation. The study of the archives at Ugarit was made possible by a scholarship from the Netherlands Organization for the Advancement of Pure Research (Z.W.O.).

<sup>1</sup> See provisionally *La Syrie au Bronze Récent* (Extraits de la XXVII<sup>e</sup> R.A.I.; Paris, 1982), 9-16. Cf. for the excavation squares *Syria* 54 (1977), 154, fig. 1.

<sup>2</sup> Viz. Akkadian, Hittite, Hurrian and Sumerian written in syllabic cuneiform, Egyptian in hieroglyphs, "Cyprian" in a Mediterranean syllabary close to linear B, Hittite names on seals in hieroglyphs and Ugaritic (and Hurrian) in alphabetic cuneiform.

<sup>3</sup> Written in syllabic and alphabetic cuneiform. For the alphabetic Akkadian texts see *KTU* 506; Akkadian is used here in magic formulas in incantations.

<sup>4</sup> See e.g. Speiser, *AASOR* 20, 6f.

southern wing of the building on the Sud Acropole which also housed the library of the Hurrian Priest<sup>5</sup>.

Once sorted out the stratigraphy of the various buildings in which archives were discovered can be of invaluable help for the reconstruction of the way in which archives were organized: where tablets were written, where they were filed and which of them were kept for a long period of time as opposed to those which were soon disposed of.

Especially for the private archives found after the completion of the palace the mere attribution of a certain tablet to a particular archive helps to clarify the question as to the distribution of texts over the archives, e.g. whether archives combined many different languages and all sorts of genres or displayed a more or less rigid pattern by which certain genres and languages were unlikely to mingle with others, at least in comparable quantities.

Bound up with the intricate problem of stratigraphy is that of the dates to be assigned to the tablets from a particular archive. Many of the texts, esp. the legal texts dealing with the transfer of real estate, mention the name of the ruling king together with his patronymic, and the sequence of kings thus obtained for the 14th through the 12th century can be dated with enough certainty on the basis of the many synchronisms with the Hittite overlords. In particular the older kings Niqmaddu II, Arḥalba and Niqmepa' are now fixed with a margin of only a few years<sup>6</sup>.

Dependant on these dates in turn are those for the attested Ugaritic queens: the number of queens known to date almost equals the number of kings, and the dates for most of them can be reconstructed from the synchronisms<sup>7</sup>.

A last expedient for determining the date of a text is the name of the scribe who as a rule put his name at the end of the list of witnesses or, in case these are lacking, at the end of the text. Almost 50 scribes are known, some of them from quite a few

<sup>5</sup> For the house of Rap'anū and the "Quartier Résidentiel" see *AAS* 3, 1953, 140 f.; *Ugaritica* 3, 169 f., 227 f.; *AAS* 8/9, 1958/9, 133; *Ugaritica* 5, 1, 41 f., 607 f.; *CRAI* 1954, 98 f.; *Supplément au Dictionnaire de la Bible (SDB)*, Fasc. 53, 1249 f.; *UF* 11, 1979, 114 f. Esp. **Rap'anū**: *Ugaritica* 5, 41 f., 66 f., 638 f.; *Annuaire du Collège de France (ACF)* 57, 1957, 331; 59, 1959, 391 f.; 63, 1963, 309 f.; *CRAI* 1961, 233 f. **Drawings**: *Ugaritica* 3, 170, fig. 122; *AAAS* 20, 1970, plate I = *SDB* 52, 1211-1212; *UF* 11, 1979, 132 f., figs. 14, 15, 17; see also Saadé, *Ougarit, Métropole Cananéenne* (Lattaquié, 1978), 121, fig. 29. For the house of the "Hurrian Priest" and the rest of the "Sud Acropole" see *AAS* 13, 1963, 130 f.; *Afo* 20, 1963, 210 f.; *CRAI* 1962, 202 f.; *AAS* 14, 1964, 39 f.; *Afo* 21, 1966, 134 f.; *Ugaritica* 6, 91 f.; *Ugaritica* 7, 149 f.; *SDB* 53, 1269 f.; *UF* 11, 1979, 112. **Drawings**: *SDB* 53, 1271-2, Fig. 924; *UF* 11, 1979, 129, fig. 10; *Ugaritica* 7, dépliant 1.

<sup>6</sup> Based on the chronology proposed by Wente/Van Siclen, *Studies in Honor of George R. Hughes* (= *SAOC* 39; Chicago, 1977), 217 f. and Boese/Wilhelm, *WZKM* 71 (1979), 19 f., the approximate dates for the kings of Ugarit are as follows: Niqmaddu II (N-2), ?-1315; Arḥalba (Aḥ), 1315-1313; Niqmepa' (Np), 1313-±1263; 'Ammiṭamru II (A-2), ±1263-±1215?; Ibirānu (Ib), ±1215-±1200?; Niqmaddu III (N-3) and 'Ammurapi' (Ap) together, ±1200-±1175 B.C.

<sup>7</sup> A king's spouse became queen only after the queen mother had died. N-2: Piṣidqi (still alive under A-2; Aḥ:Kubaba; Np: Aḥatmilku; A-2: "Bittu Rabīti"; Ib: Tāriyelli (?); N-3 and Ap: ? Another queen, Ašdādā, most likely occurs in the unpublished text 22.02; the text cannot be dated.

records, and the majority can be dated by one or more synchronisms with kings or on prosopographical evidence<sup>8</sup>. In this way most of the legal texts, many of the letters and a number of the literary and lexical texts can be dated; more problematical are the economic and administrative texts which usually do not contain any reference to king, queen or scribe. For these we have to rely on prosopographical evidence alone<sup>9</sup>.

In order to be able to present a stratigraphy of the archives unearthed at Ras Shamra — Ugarit one has to accomplish four tasks:

a) As a matter-of-course one has to read through all archaeological literature on Ugarit published during the past 50 years and assemble information on the archives from sometimes differing versions of the same archaeological report<sup>10</sup>.

b) There is the necessity of drawing up a list of all so-called points topographiques or pts, mentioned in the literature. These points topographiques fix the place of an object horizontally as well as vertically: they are marked on detailed excavation plans and mentioned with their elevations in several publications<sup>11</sup>; unfortunately, these elevations are not given in relation to an imaginary zero level, but always related to the modern surface of the tell or, supposedly, one of the balks of the excavation square<sup>12</sup>. Therefore, one has to combine the excavation plans with the contour map as it was drawn by Spassof before the start of the excavations<sup>13</sup>.

Only thus can one be sure of the real elevations of the objects found in a certain room as compared to those from neighboring rooms and courts with a different surface level.

c) The next step is then to enter the dates obtained in the way described above in the vertical sequence set up for each room and court in combination with such archaeological features as e.g. floors.

Thus we are able to check the relation of an object to the floor of a room and, consequently, we can decide whether an object can have lain on the floor, a shelf or even on an upper storey.

d) The last step in this process comes when vertical sequences are drawn next to each other for all localities of a certain archive. By connecting on the drawing tablets

<sup>8</sup> All attested scribes will be discussed in my dissertation.

<sup>9</sup> As papponymy does not seem to have been common practice at Ugarit, the identity of two persons with the same name and patronymic can with some certainty be assumed. For studies on prosopography see e.g. Astour, *CRRA* 18 (München, 1970), 11 f. (to be used with caution!) and Heltzer, *Palestinskij Sbornik* 11 (1964), 3 f.

<sup>10</sup> For a detailed bibliography see *SDB* 53, 1287 f.

<sup>11</sup> Drawings with (legible) pts: **Central Palace**, *PRU* 3, plates 3, 6 and 10; *Ugaritica* 3, fig. 119; *Ugaritica* 4, 70, fig. 56 and dépliant 1. **Northern Palace**, *Syria* 47 (1970), 210, fig. 1. **Quartier Résidentiel**, *Ugaritica* 3, 170, fig. 122; *Syria* 54 (1977), 157, fig. 2. **Acropole**, *Ugaritica* 3, 252, fig. 216. **Ville Basse**, *Syria* 19 (1938), 198, fig. 2; 217, fig. 16. **Ville Sud**, *AAS* 11/12, 1961/2, fig. 1. **Sud Acropole**, *Ugaritica* 7, dépliant 1.

<sup>12</sup> A "zero level" is generally used as a reference point for soundings, cf. *Syria* 16 (1935), 166 and fig. 12; *Ugaritica* 4, 164<sup>1</sup>, 166, 420 and *Syria* 47 (1970), 1. See in general North, *ZDPV* 89 (1973), 118<sup>7</sup>.

<sup>13</sup> *Syria* 13, 1932, 13.

which can be joined, and those belonging together on prosopographical grounds as e.g. the tablets from the various 'dossiers' in the central palace archive<sup>14</sup>, sometimes a pattern becomes clear which helps to interpret the organization of the archive in question.

On the basis of the dates we can say something about the period during which the archive was in use, the probable date of its destruction, etc.

To make all this more tangible I will present the outcome of a study along these lines of one of the palace archives: the central archive<sup>15</sup>.

Fig. 1 shows the S. part of the royal palace, the rooms grouped around courts IV, V, and VI. The central archive was located in the rooms bordering court IV to the N. (rooms 30 and 31), to the E. (room 64) and to the S. (esp. room 66); in addition, many tablets were recovered from courts IV and VI and the narrow passage connecting these two. In order to establish the relation between the tablets found in the rooms and the ones from court IV I have divided the latter arbitrarily into 3 parts corresponding to the respective wings; since many texts have also been found in the NE part of court VI this is equally divided in 3.

In view of its abundance in texts the passage connecting the 2 courts has received a special siglum (IV/VI).

The results obtained from such a division are promising: tablets from the 3 different wings are generally of the same nature as those from adjacent court sections. Thus we find that the N. wing (rooms 30,31, court sections IV-2, IV/VI, VI-1 and VI-3) contained 85 pct of all the legal texts found within the archive, and that more than 80 pct of these dealt with domestic affairs; in fact, more than 60 pct of all such documents recovered from Ras Shamra comes from this area. By far the most prominent subject of the texts is land transfer initiated or witnessed by the king, which immediately explains their inclusion in the palace archives<sup>16</sup>.

A small minority of texts from this wing deals with administrative affairs.

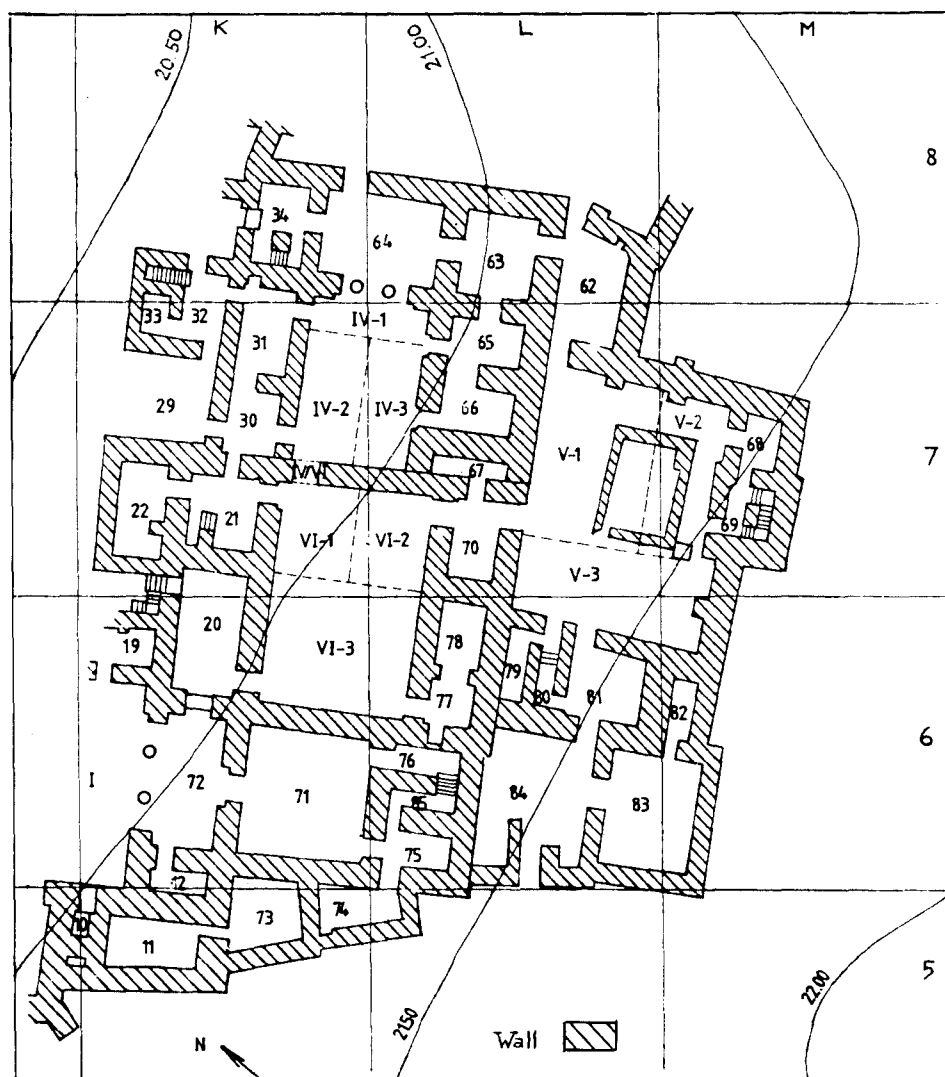
Totally different is the material from the E. wing: not only are the legal texts here only a minority but also this section is completely void of texts dealing with land transfer. Administrative texts are abundant and we further encounter a considerable number of letters, especially from Karkemiš in the days of 'Ammitamru II, and a few belonging to the correspondence of the queen<sup>17</sup>.

<sup>14</sup> See for this designation Nougayrol, *PRU* 3, 29 f.

<sup>15</sup> See for the palace in general: *Syria* 20 (1939), 286 f.; *Syria* 28 (1951), 6 f.; *AAS* 1 (1951), 8 f.; *AAS* 2 (1952), 4 f.; *Syria* 31 (1953), 16 f.; *CRAI* 1939, 306; 1949, 436; 1950, 257 f.; 1952, 234 f.; *PRU* 3, XI f.; *SDB* 52, 1217 f. **Drawings:** *Syria* 28 (1951), 15, fig. 7 (1949); *AAS* 2 (1959), fig. 1 (1951) = *CRAI* 1952, 236; Saadé, *Guide*, plan (1952) = *PRU* 3, plate 1; *Syria* 31 (1954) 17, fig. 1 (1953); *CRAI* 1955, 250, fig. 1 (1954); *AAS* 7, plate 1 (1955); *Ugaritica* 4, dépliant 1 (1960). **Central Archive:** *AAS* 2 (1952), 13 f.; 3 (1953), 119 f.; *Syria* 31 (1953), 28 f.; *CRAI* 1952, 237 f.; 1953, 228 f.; *PRU* 3, xxiii f.; *PRU* 2, viii f.; *SDB* 52, 1223 f. **Drawings:** *PRU* 3, plate 10 and *Ugaritica* 4, 166, fig. 119. My thanks are due to Douglas Kennedy without whose help the study could only insufficiently have been done.

<sup>16</sup> These texts were almost all published in *PRU* 3 and *Ugaritica* 5. A few texts remain unpublished.

<sup>17</sup> Published in *PRU* 3.



1. Central Archive, S, SW a.o.

The S. wing, on the other hand, almost totally lacks letters but includes many administrative texts. Interesting here is a group of tablets all found together in room group 66 and dealing with land sales to queen Tāriyelli<sup>18</sup>; they differ markedly from the land transfer texts from the N. wing.

We will now examine the stratigraphy of the respective wings; first we'll consider the N. wing.

<sup>18</sup> *Ugaritica* 5, 261 f.

2. Central Archive, N. wing.

Appearing more or less as a railway diagram Fig. 2<sup>19</sup> gives a simplified vertical section of all rooms and court sections somehow related to the archive rooms 30 and 31. The surface levels indicated at the top are taken from the Spassof contour map<sup>13</sup>. The floor level, drawn as a dashed line in room 30, has been inferred from the destruction level observed and recorded for room 64<sup>20</sup>. This floor level seems generally correct since very few tablets have deeper elevations; in fact, only 2 administrative texts from court VI, section 3, lay considerably lower<sup>21</sup>.

It becomes clear that in the rooms considered the archive rooms proper (30 and 31) many of the tablets were found at levels not far above the floor — in 30 50 pct, in 31 57 pct if we take the layer belonging with the floor ca. 50cm.

Contrary to this the surrounding areas all have their tablets at much higher levels; for the N. wing we get an average of ca. 2.20m above floor level. Moreover, judging from the many joins and prosopographical associations<sup>22</sup> among the texts we can regard them as one group, distinct from the tablets found in 30 and 31, although connections with these are attested<sup>23</sup>.

In view of these facts it seems unescapable to conclude that the upper group had once lain on an upper storey, the walls of which probably had collapsed upon the general destruction of the palace.

Why so many tablets were found outside rooms 30 and 31 and at such high levels instead of in the courts at floor level remains an enigma<sup>24</sup>.

For an assessment of the distribution of the tablets the dates are very helpful: it can be seen that in rooms 30 and 31, esp. at the lower levels, nearly all dated texts are from the reign of 'Ammittamru II, from the latter half of the 13th century<sup>25</sup>. The group from higher levels referred to above, however, shows a wide variety of dates, ranging from N-2 to N-3, a time difference of 150 years. Also, among this group we find the many 'dossiers' already isolated by Nougayrol in PRU 3.

This distribution is hardly coincidental and suggests that our proposed upper storey may have served as a file for texts no longer directly needed but still important enough for preservation, particularly those dealing with land transfer. How exactly the file was organized remains beyond our grasp: storage according to king or dossier is imaginable.

<sup>19</sup> For the abbreviated names of the kings see note 6.

<sup>20</sup> AAS 2 (1952), 13 and PRU 2, viii: tablet 16.394 (KTU 2.31, a letter?) was found at -2.90 m in a thick layer of ashes originating from the same conflagration that had destroyed the oven in court V (dated in the reign of Ap).

<sup>21</sup> RS 16.288 (= KTU 4.228) at -3.50 m and RS 17.74 (= KTU 4.266) at -3.80 m.

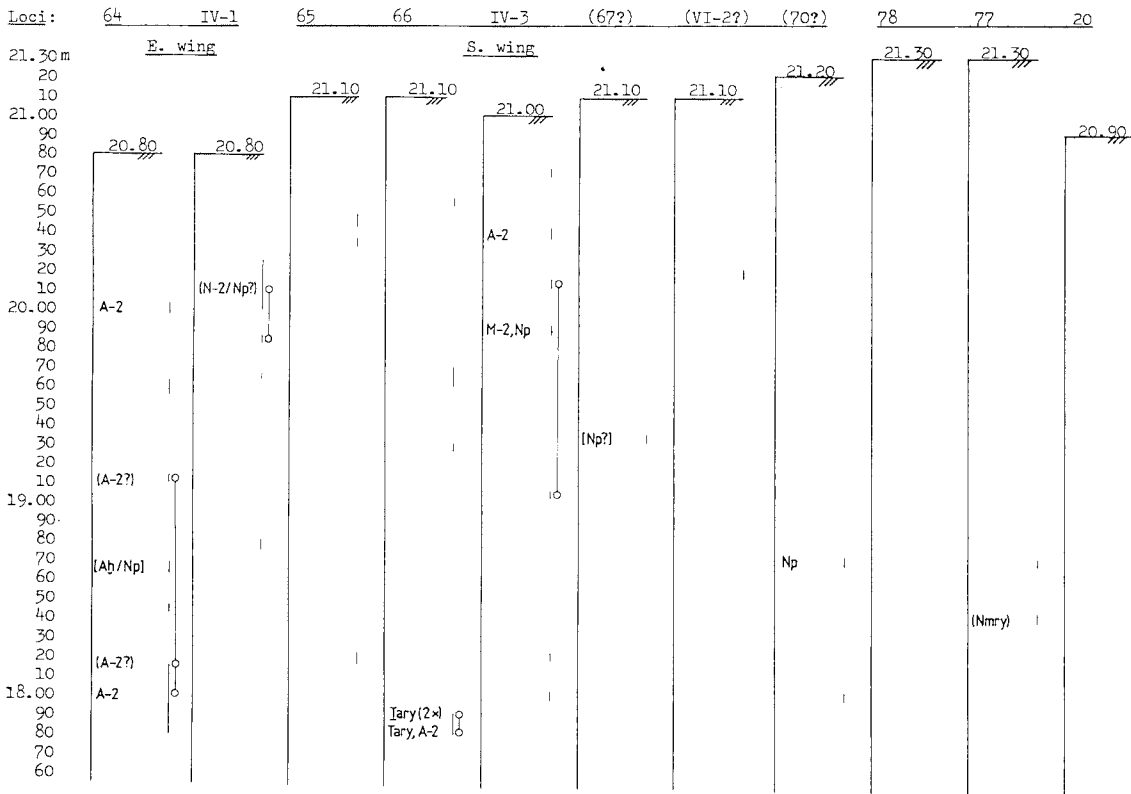
<sup>22</sup> Above all the 'dossiers' isolated by Nougayrol (see note 14).

<sup>23</sup> Cf. the two texts concerning Ama/utarunu (PRU 3, 124f.), 15.147 from room 31 at -3.00 m and 16.162 from IV/VI at -1.20 m.

<sup>24</sup> One would have to assume that upon the destruction of the palace the courts had first been filled with debris and that the upper parts of the walls — which might have supported the hypothetical tablet shelves — had subsequently collapsed on top of this debris.

<sup>25</sup> See note 6.





3. Central Archive, E. and S. wings.

Why, finally, the texts from the ground-floor level in 30 and 31 were all from the time of A-2 and not a later king is a mystery, other evidence suggests that the palace with its archives remained in use through the reign of the last king 'Ammurapi'<sup>26</sup>.

The other wings of the central archive show fewer interrelations and are therefore only mentioned in passing; for the rooms 64 and 66 we again note a cluster of tablets close to the hypothetical floor level of the N. wing, whereas texts found outside these archive rooms lay at higher elevations; also, the distribution pattern observed in the

<sup>26</sup> Comparative evidence shows that in archives containing documents of ephemeral importance as administrative texts, the period just before the destruction is usually overrepresented. Therefore, if rooms 30 and 31 were in use as scribal offices only and not as storage rooms, one would expect tablets from the reigns of Ap, N-3 and possibly Ib. The fact is, however, that at ground-floor level no texts from before A-2 have been recovered. See in general K. R. Veenhof, *Spijkerschriftarchieven* (Cuneiform Archives), inaugural address (Leiden, 1982).

N. wing seems to hold for the E. and S. wings as well: A-2 (and T̄ariyelli<sup>27</sup>) texts at ground-floor level, older texts higher up.

I have not gone into the question of the distribution of the different genres or the matter of the private archives. I hope this one example suffices to show what one can do with the archives at Ugarit through a detailed study of the archaeological and textual material.

<sup>27</sup> T̄ariyelli was either the wife of A-2 or Ibirānu. She is not to be identified with 'Ammit̄tamru's mother Aḥatmilku, as will be shown in my dissertation.

## UGARITIC IN CHANCERY PRACTICE

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The analytical techniques collectively known as “diplomatic” have a long and distinguished pedigree in the fields of history and jurisprudence. For medieval European studies their application was originally and primarily to problems of source authentication and historical reconstruction: which archival materials could be proved reliable and how might these be employed to recover the past? With transfer of the analysis to oriental studies, and especially to the chanceries of Byzantium and the Muslim world, these aims remained paramount. In recent years, however, concern with court hand, writing materials and watermarks has been supplemented, though not replaced, by attention to matters literary and linguistic. An increasing tendency to regard the chancery document as belonging to a sub-system of literature has entailed consideration of such phenomena as formulaic composition and discourse grammar. While the original problems of authenticity and historical plausibility are not in serious danger of being neglected, a growing preoccupation with the text itself, with literary structure and taxonomy, is certainly evident<sup>1</sup>.

As a discipline no longer exclusively ancillary to history and jurisprudence, “diplomatic” may thus be defined as the study of chancery format and language. Where, as at Ugarit, it is a question of several formats and more than one language, the analysis is complicated by such factors as selection of code and register, the role of a lingua franca, and the general cultural problem of symbiosis. Apart from the incidence of Sumerian and Hurrian lexis attested for the scriptorium, it appears that within the chancery itself Akkadian was the language of international relations and Ugaritic confined to domestic use<sup>2</sup>.

Where the latter is in fact found in records of international correspondence, these are invariably assumed to be translations or at least paraphrases of documents originally composed in Akkadian. That assumption must of course deal with the curious fact that we have so far only one (partial) instance of a single document in both languages<sup>3</sup>. While that may be nothing more than an archaeological accident,

<sup>1</sup> In another context, but nonetheless welcome, cf. M. Liverani, ‘Memorandum on the approach to historiographic texts’, *OrNS* 42 (1973), 178-94.

<sup>2</sup> See B. Kienast, ‘Rechtsurkunden in Ugaritischer Sprache’, *UF* 11 (1979), 431-52.

<sup>3</sup> See M. Dietrich and O. Loretz, ‘Der Vertrag zwischen Šuppiluliuma und Niqmandu’, *WO* 3 (1966), 206-45.

it might seem that criteria for distinguishing language allocation tend to be one or more of three kinds: (a) intelligibility (i.e. “external” vs “internal”: Ugaritic could only be understood at home); (b) category (i.e. “epistolary” vs “administrative”: Ugaritic was of limited lexical viability); (c) context (i.e. “royal” vs “private”: Ugaritic lacked the prestige deemed essential to palace use).

While each may be conceded a degree of sociolinguistic feasibility, none of these criteria accounts adequately for the actual fabric of Ugaritic when it does appear. Besides the perennial problem of “translation” and putative “original”, there is also the particular difficulty of identifying a genuine calque, as contrasted with a paraphrase or approximate rendering that could as well be the product of polygenesis as of historical diffusion. In other words, the mimetic process is nearly always ambivalent. Within the more or less constant parameters of a given format, certain features are not merely formulaic but also inevitable. From the point of view of linguistic analysis, one could distinguish between the introductory and concluding formulae of a chancery document (thought to be of low information value) and its “body” or content (of high or at least distinctive information value). But the differential yield is often disappointing, first, because even a formula (or its absence) may be significant, and second, because the “message” conveyed in such discourse as this may be stereotype.

Crucial in this context is the role of the chancery scribe, as well as the existence of school-texts, no less abundant in Ugarit than elsewhere amongst the residue of scribal activity<sup>4</sup>. But however strong the argument for derivation from a paradigm (here, an international or even local form of Akkadian chancery practice), the factor of substratum (here, a West Semitic language) cannot be ignored<sup>5</sup>. On the other hand, the very availability of a lingua franca is likely to influence the scribe’s use of his native tongue. Here the problems are the familiar ones related to koine and diglossia, richly illustrated for example by evidence from the Norman chancery of medieval Sicily, where scribes employed with eccentric versatility Arabic, Greek and Latin<sup>6</sup>.

For Ugarit, as for Palermo, it is safer to eschew a psycholinguistic analysis. One must, instead, make do with extrapolation of a formulary, that being the only tangible evidence both of dependence upon an earlier model and of creative adaptation to a new medium. This exercise requires assembly and scrutiny of data under the following rubrics: (a) sequence of components in a given chancery

<sup>4</sup> See J. Nougayrol, *PRU* 3 (1955), xxxviii-ix; A. Rainey, ‘The Scribe at Ugarit’, *Proc. Israel Academy* 3 (1969), 126-46; M. Heltzer, *Internal Organization of the kingdom of Ugarit* (1982), 157-61; J. Krecher, ‘Schreiberschulung in Ugarit’, *UF* 1 (1969), 131-58; J. Nougayrol, ‘L’influence babylonienne à Ugarit’, *Syria* 39 (1962), 28-35.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. C. Kühne, *Die Chronologie der internationalen Korrespondenz von El-Amarna* (AOAT 17; 1973), 5-12; S. Gevirtz, ‘On Canaanite rhetoric: the evidence of the Amarna letters from Tyre’, *OrNS* 42 (1973), 162-77.

<sup>6</sup> See J. Wansbrough, ‘Diplomatica Siciliana’, *BSOAS* 47 (1984), 10-21.

specimen (e.g. protokoll, body, eschatokoll); style characteristic of the documentary type (e.g. diction, syntax, rhetorical figures); lexicon appropriate to the genre (e.g. technical terminology). Now, what might these data tell us about the use of Ugaritic? First, and in my opinion foremost, they must indicate a concerted effort to create a chancery tradition. That is a literary impulse, in which the scribe figures as stylist. Second, and more generally, they exhibit response to a political and cultural challenge, met by the intention to extend, wherever possible, the local idiom at the expense either of another such or of a secondary language, even if this latter were an acknowledged *lingua franca*<sup>7</sup>.

One of the well known collection of tablets found in the “oven” which figured in the “last days of Ugarit”, RS 18.147 appears to be a letter of foreign provenance addressed to the local ruler<sup>8</sup>. Although a total of 25 lines of writing has been detected, only the obverse (lines 1-14) is patient of decipherment, both the lower edge (lines 15-17) and the reverse (lines 18-25) being too eroded to reveal more than traces<sup>9</sup>. Divided by three horizontal (scribal) lines, the extant portion of the tablet contains what are clearly conventional formulae (lines 1-8) and the beginning of a message (lines 9-14), itself formulaic in character:

1. <i>ṯm. pgn. abk</i>	Message of PGN your father
2. <i>l. mlk. ugrt</i>	To the king of Ugarit
3. <i>r. g. m</i>	Saying
4. <i>yšlm. lk. ilm</i>	May it be well with you, may the gods
5. <i>ṯgrk. ṯšlmk</i>	Protect you (and) preserve you
6. <i>ḥnny. 'mn. šlm</i>	Here with me (all) is well
7. <i>ṯmny. 'm. bny</i>	There with my son
8. <i>mnm. šlm. rgm. ṯṯb</i>	Whatever well-being (there is) send word
9. <i>ky. lik. bny</i>	For my son has sent
10. <i>lḥt. akl. 'my</i>	Messages about food to me
11. <i>midy. k. ṯbnny</i>	Because of my distress, in accordance with our friendship
12. <i>w. bny. ḥnkt</i>	And let my son thus
13. <i>yškn. anyt</i>	Prepare ships
14. <i>ym. yšrn</i>	Sea-going (that) he will despatch

This document, twice edited, has also been the object of speculation concerning the identity of its originator. Extrapolating from a series of letters in Akkadian, Astour

<sup>7</sup> Cf. S. Parker, *Studies in the grammar of Ugaritic prose texts* (Diss. Johns Hopkins University, 1967), 1-7.

<sup>8</sup> *PRU* 5 (1965) 61 = *KTU* (1976) 2.46; cf. C. Virolleaud, *PRU* 5, 79-134 (nos. 59-113); C. Schaeffer, *Ugaritica* 4 (1962), 31-45.

<sup>9</sup> Dimensions 8.1 × 5.7 × 2.6 cm; see plate *Ugaritica* 5 (1968) 721 (fig. 40); I have to thank my colleague Prof. Dennis Pardee of the University of Chicago for allowing me to examine his collation of the tablet, made in Aleppo, December 10, 1980. Though, as will be seen, my interpretation differs from his on several points, I am very grateful for his unstinting encouragement and advice.

suggested that PGN was the ruler of Alashiya<sup>10</sup>. In support of that conjecture it may be said that neither general context (famine and fleet) nor specific mode of address ("father" and "son") is conclusive. For Alashiya documentation has been found in both Akkadian and Ugaritic<sup>11</sup>, but as in the case of Tyre, no single specimen in both<sup>12</sup>. To pursue an argumentum e silentio would in the circumstances be futile, but not perhaps amiss to recall evidence for the use of Ugaritic beyond the confines of Ugarit<sup>13</sup>.

Thanks to a number of studies published during the past decade, it is now possible to examine in some detail the epistolary forms emanating from Ugarit<sup>14</sup>. Recognisable calques, analogies and parallels tend also to support the hypothesis of a West Semitic or East Mediterranean chancery style, though the evidence of a document such as RS 18.147, if it is indeed a translation prepared in Ugarit, would be ambivalent. It is also possible to trace the West Semitic paradigm eastward to the chanceries of Mesopotamia, as well as to project it westward for the entire Mediterranean. In both Bresslau's magisterial work on the Latin chanceries of the West and Dölger's on Byzantium, the perpetuation of ancient Near Eastern models may be observed<sup>15</sup>. By way of experiment, but also in the interests of a general nomenclature, the extant portion of RS 18.147 might be described as follows:

Line 1: *intitulatio*. *abk* is Pardee's conjecture and plausible.

Whatever the etymology of *thm* (neither Ullendorff, *Or NS* 20 [1951], 271, nor Dahood, *VT Suppl.* 29 [1977], 96 n. 57 is persuasive), its function here is as Akkadian *umma* (cf. Berger, *UF* 1 [1969], 218).

Line 2: *inscriptio*. For the syntax, see Loewenstamm, *AOAT* 204 (1980), 87 n. 25a and 256-60; Kristensen, *UF* 9 (1977), 144-6.

Line 3: *Botenformel*. *rgm* may be imperative (cf. Akkadian), but possibly perfect = declarative, infinitive or participle (cf. Hebrew), see Westermann, *Grundformen der prophetischen Rede*, (1968), 71-82.

<sup>10</sup> See M. Astour, 'New evidence on the last days of Ugarit', *AJA* 69 (1965), 255; cf. *Ugaritica* 5, 80-9 (nos. 21-4) and P. Berger, 'Die Alašia-Briefe', *UF* 1 (1969), 217-21; apud F. Gröndahl, *Die Personennamen der Texte aus Ugarit* (Rome, 1967), 312 PGN is ungedeutet!

<sup>11</sup> E.g. Kühne, *op. cit.* 85-93; E. Lipiński, 'An Ugaritic letter to Amenophis III concerning trade with Alašiya', *Iraq* 39 (1977), 213-7; cf. *UT* 119 with marginal index in Akkadian.

<sup>12</sup> E.g. J. Hoftijzer, 'Une lettre du roi de Tyr', *UF* 11 (1979), 383-8; D. Arnaud, 'Une lettre du roi de Tyr au roi d'Ougarit', *Syria* 59 (1982), 101-7.

<sup>13</sup> E.g. P. Craigie, apud G. Young (ed), *Ugarit in Retrospect* (Winona Lake, Indiana, 1981), 107 n. 26.

<sup>14</sup> E.g. S. Ahl, *Epistolary texts from Ugarit* Diss. Brandeis University, 1973; F. Knutson, *RSP* II (1975) 198-214; A. Kristensen, 'Ugaritic epistolary formulas', *UF* 9 (1977), 143-58; D. Pardee, 'A new Ugaritic letter', *BO* 34 (1977), 3-20; T. Finley, *Word order in the clause structure of Syrian Akkadian*, (Diss. University of California at Los Angeles, 1979).

<sup>15</sup> H. Bresslau, *Handbuch der Urkundenlehre* (Berlin, 1958<sup>3</sup>); F. Dölger, *Byzantinische Diplomatik* (Ettal, 1956).

Lines 4-5: *invocatio*. Owing to mention of the deities, to be distinguished from the following formula. See Loewenstamm, *op. cit.* 362-4, 433-8; Kristensen, *art. cit.* 150-3.

Lines 6-8: *salutatio*. Worthy of note is the concluding phrase *rgm ttb*, which would seem to depend upon an Akkadian Vorlage, see Kristensen, *art. cit.* 153-5, and Parker, *Grammar* 27.

Lines 9-11: *narratio*. Conjunctive *ky* is analysed by Parker, *Grammar* 74, and Pardee, *BO* 34 (1977), 7-8; it is tempting to interpret the particle here as transition marker, comparable to *ht/wht* in similar position, see Parker 76 and 73, resp. (pace Knutson, *RSP* II, 208-9). For *lht* (with postposition of *ky*) see Pardee, *loc. cit.* Line 11 is a now familiar crux and my reading is conjectural. Pardee (*art. cit.* 7 n. 39 and refs) has since proposed (in private communication) *midy. rǵbny* = "great is my famine", but with appropriate caution. My own interpretation, offered in the same spirit, requires (1) recognition of the rare (so far, a hapax) preposition *mn*, with assimilation before *alef* (cf. Parker 55-7), (2) acknowledgement of Ugar. *id* (cf. Heb. *eyd* and Parker 66-7 n. 26), (3) reading, instead of *w* or *r*, the comparative particle *k* (cf. Parker 50), (4) reading, instead of *ǵ*, the sign *z̄* = *ṭ* (see Dietrich et al, *UF* 7 (1975) 103-8, esp. 107), and finally (5) interpreting *-ny* as 1st pers. dual (Parker 18-9).

Although in my opinion the above makes rather better sense of the syntax than previously adduced readings, the lexical problems are of course as formidable as the paleographical ones: Ugar. *id* as "distress/calamity" requires a Heb. cognate (I am indebted to my colleague M. Geller for the suggestion), and Ugar. *ṭb* in the sense of "friendship/treaty relations" depends upon a special chancery (!) usage in Aramaic and Akkadian (for which see Moran, *JNES* 22 (1963), 173-6 and refs; cf. *UT* 19.1028 s.v. *ṭbn*).

Lines 12-14: *petitio*. *hnkt* is analysed by both Pardee, *loc. cit.* and Parker 25, 40-1 nn. 33-8, as an anticipatory demonstrative pronoun, whose referent must be *anyt*. Though plausible, the argument would be more persuasive were *hnkt* in initial position in line 12. While there is also an eccentric plausibility about Gordon's "levy" (*UT* 19.787), I am inclined to see there an adverbial particle along the lines of Ar. *hunāka*, and hence agree with the translation of Virolleaud and Astour (cited Parker 40 n. 33; see also Aartun, *AOAT* 21/1 [1974], 70). Both reading and root of *yšrn* in line 14 are problematic: cf. Heb. *širyōn* = armour, but also Aram. *šra* = release/despach (cf. *UT* 19.2484).

## OBSERVATIONS ON THE “LIBRARY” OF THE AMARNA ARCHIVES\*

PINCHAS ARTZI (Ramat Gan)

The “library” of the Amarna archives contains 25 tablets and fragments, 6,5 % of the existing corpus of 380 documents. The texts, arranged in the sequence of a “Lehrgebäude” can be divided into two groups.

### 1. Scholarly documents

(see for comparison with the Ugaritic corpus J. Krecher, *UF* 1 [1969], 131 f.)

#### 1.1. *EA* 350

Local; *u-a-i* exercise; shows fundamental similarity to the Ugaritic *u-a-i* exercise, even in its sectional arrangement: *cv* series are followed by *cvc* signs and (remains) of word (or PN?) exercise; see J. Nougayrol, *AS* 16, 29 ff.

#### 1.2. *EA* 355

Local; cylinder-seal shaped, axially perforated; wearable. As the former, this text shows similarity in arrangement and literary form to the Ugaritic *u-a-i* text mentioned above; but in addition to the features pointed out under 1.1 there is—like in Ugarit—a (clear) acrostic arrangement cf. *AS* 16, 30b. The form of the EA document and the repetition of signs in each line (but without fixed number; the decisive factor is the size-space relationship!) lead R. Borger to suggest, in *HKL* 3, 101, that this document is an amulet (with “Geheimschrift”; cf. E. Weidner, *RIA* 3, 185).

#### 1.3. *EA* 348 (\*+) 379

Local; *Sa* Syllabary fragments (see *MSL* 3 (1955), 8: FI; 9: NR). These fragments, indirect joins (cf. 1.4), belong to the Ugaritic *Sa* redaction, J. Nougayrol *Ugaritica* V (1968), 200 ff., F.e; the groups 120-121-122 (Haddock's system, *MSL* 3) are missing in both Amarna and Ugarit MSS. See *MSL* 14 (1979) 165-166 for a discussion of the (peripheral) diffusion of *Sa*

\* Short version of the paper delivered at Leiden; the full text will appear in “Bar Ilan Studies in Assyriology” (provisional title), in preparation. The material presented is part of a research conducted with the help of the Israel Commission for Basic Research.



texts; on p. 166 the notation "Knudtzon EA 459" should be corrected to "959" (= EA 348).

#### 1.4. *EA 351 + ... 352 + ... 353 + ... 354 + ... 373*

Local *Diri*-fragments; join suggested by M. Civil. Professor Civil kindly informs me (letter, 25.8.1983): "The tablet[s] EA 351 + (I offered to Gurney the suggestion that all the frags. you list [= R. Borger *HKL* 3, 101 — P.A.] could be part — but not necessarily immediate physical join — of the same tablet, a suggestion that cannot properly be checked because EA 351 has been lost or misplaced) is unmistakably part of *Diri* (now we know better its Western branches thanks to Ugaritic texts) [cf. J. Krecher *UF* 1, 137 — P.A.]. EA 351 + is included in its proper place *MSL* 15". Professor Civil added a draft showing the suggested position of fragments EA 351, 352, 353, 354 and 373. [The position of (1.3) EA 348\* + 379 is similar: no direct physical join].

As the result of the statement cited above the former definition of fragments EA 351 + 2 + 3 + 4 as "ea vii, appendix" (cf. *HKL* 3, 101) has to be changed; cf. again *MSL* 14, 165-6.

#### 1.5. *EA 374*

Local; "An-list" fragment; see A. F. Rainey, *Amarna Tablets 359-379 (AOAT 8; 1978)*, 50-51.

The fundamental similarity to the Ugaritic An-List(s) was pointed out by J. Nougayrol, *Ugaritica V* (1968), 216, 226, 229.

#### 1.6. *EA 368*

Local; Egyptian — Akkadian/Sumerian "practical vocabulary" fragment, cf. Rainey, *AOAT* 8, 48-48. It is the first instance of a "non-cuneiform" language — Egyptian — occupying the 'left side' of a multilingual glossary.

As the 'Afeq "practical vocabulary" fragment of Canaan testifies, the sphere of Mesopotamian (—Ugaritic) influence reaches that far: see A. F. Rainey, *Tel-Aviv* 4 (1977), 137-140. This glossary is arranged according to Sumerian terms followed by Akkadian and West Semitic equivalents.

See on the Ugaritic form of 'glossenkeil', appearing in this vocabulary before the local, Canaanite, word, P. Artzi, *Bar Ilan Annual* 1 (1963), 34 no. 5 (table drawn by Shalom-Selim Levy).

## 2. Literary texts

### 2.1. *EA 340*

Local; fragment of (a) historical-literary royal story/stories; re-edition by the present writer in preparation.

2.2. *EA 341*

Fragment of an Akkadian version of the Hittite-Hurrian Kešši story/epic.  
Local or foreign? (cf. Ünal, *RIA* 5, 578; C. Kühne, *AOAT* 17 (1973), 138).

2.3-5 *EA 356, 357, 358 (the “Triad”)*

EA 356: Adapa; new edition: S. A. Picchioni, *Il Poemetto di Adapa* (Budapest 1981).

EA 357: Ereškigal and Nergal; cf. E. von Weiher, *Der Babylonische Gott Nergal* (*AOAT* 2 (1971), 48 ff.

EA 358: “The King and the Evil Portending, Ominous Sign in his House”, P. Artzi, in Nissen-Renger, eds., *Babylonien und seine Nachbarn*, 1 (Berliner Beiträge zum Vorderen Orient I, 1; Berlin, 1982), 317-320.

As suggested in the article cited above, the “Triad” is the MSS of a Babylonian scholar and teacher; cf. Kühne, *AOAT* 17 (1973) 138.

2.6. *EA 359 (and 375?)*

First tablet of *šar tamḥāri*, a royal epic tale; see Rainey *AOAT* 8, 6 ff.

## ARCHAEOLOGY AND THE KUYUNJIK ARCHIVES

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This is a provisional report on research into the archaeological provenance of the tablets and other inscribed objects listed in the catalogues of Bezold (1889-99), King (1914), and Lambert and Millard (1968). The sources I have used are not primarily the ancient texts themselves, but modern archival records of various kinds; some of these are unpublished. Ultimately the content of the different Nineveh archives will be established, as far as possible, by systematic philological publication and analysis. In the mean time some progress is possible<sup>1</sup>.

It is well known that, although the K of the "K Collection" has to stand for Kuyunjik, name of the main mound at Nineveh (fig. 1), many tablets bearing K numbers were not in fact found there. There are several explanations for this. Sometimes tablets from different Assyrian sites may have been mixed together before reaching London. Sometimes K numbers were applied to inscribed objects regardless of provenance. And sometimes, it seems, pieces of inscribed clay acquired by the British Museum before about 1860 were stored and confused with the numerous Assyrian tablets which, though excavated in the 1850s, remained unnumbered until the 1870s or later; then they all got K numbers together, regardless of provenance. Only the numbers K 1-278 (with a few exceptions caused by subsequent renumbering) were allocated in the 1850s; we can be sure that the great majority of tablets bearing these low numbers were found during Layard's 1851 excavations in the South-West Palace at Kuyunjik, notably in the area of Rooms XL and XLI<sup>2</sup>. Items with higher K numbers may derive from the South-West Palace, or the North Palace, or elsewhere. Occasionally, with Assyrian tablets numbered in other ways, we have better information. For instance, the group numbered 48-11-4 (which signifies official receipt into the British Museum collections on 4 November 1848) includes one Middle Assyrian piece (280) whose provenance is given by Layard as Nimrud((ICC, 79); the letters 48-11-4, 282-3, together with 48-7-20, 116-9, which seem to include some of the latest Assyrian state letters to survive, evidently correspond to the "several small oblong tablets of dark unbaked clay" which were found in 1847 in or close to the throneroom area of the South-West Palace at Kuyunjik<sup>3</sup>. An unpublished report from H. Rassam suggests that most of the 83-1-

<sup>1</sup> I am indebted to Messrs I. L. Finkel and C. B. F. Walker for advice on various points.

<sup>2</sup> A. H. Layard, *Nineveh and Babylon* (London, 1853) 344-7.

<sup>3</sup> A. H. Layard, *Nineveh and its Remains* II (London, 1849) 124.

18 Niveveh tablets were found in the area of Room LIV in the South-West Palace. Similarly, most of G. Smith's DT group, apart from those bought in Babylonia, came from the North Palace at Nineveh, but most of the S or Sm group from the South-West Palace; yet we can seldom specify, at present, in which of the two palaces a particular piece was found. There is more information of this nature, to be given in a fuller publication elsewhere. The present paper reviews, in general terms, some of the major Nineveh archives.

Our earliest archives, in a sense, come from the late Ubeid, Uruk, and Early Dynastic periods, in the form of seal-impressions and one numerical tablet<sup>4</sup>. As the amount of early deposit excavated at Nineveh is relatively small, these finds suggest that the site was an important one, with administrative structures and archives of some complexity, at various times before the Agade period. It is from the Agade period itself, however, that we have our first inscribed sealing<sup>5</sup>. There are also scraps of commemorative Agade inscriptions on stone (*EAK*, 2), possibly foundation records from the Ishtar Temple complex. A copy of one of these texts will have been available to Shamshi-Adad I who, after an Old Assyrian hiatus, refers in his own foundation record to Manishtushu's work at the site (*EAK*, 9-12). The Ishtar Temple foundations excavated by Thompson, and ascribed by him to Ashur-resh-ishi I<sup>6</sup>, probably belonged to Shamshi-Adad I's building. On or close to one of its original pavements were the remains of an Old Babylonian archive (BM 134533, 134535-9, and possibly BM 134534, 134825); it concerns agricultural matters, and one letter (134536) mentions the important city of Nurrugum.

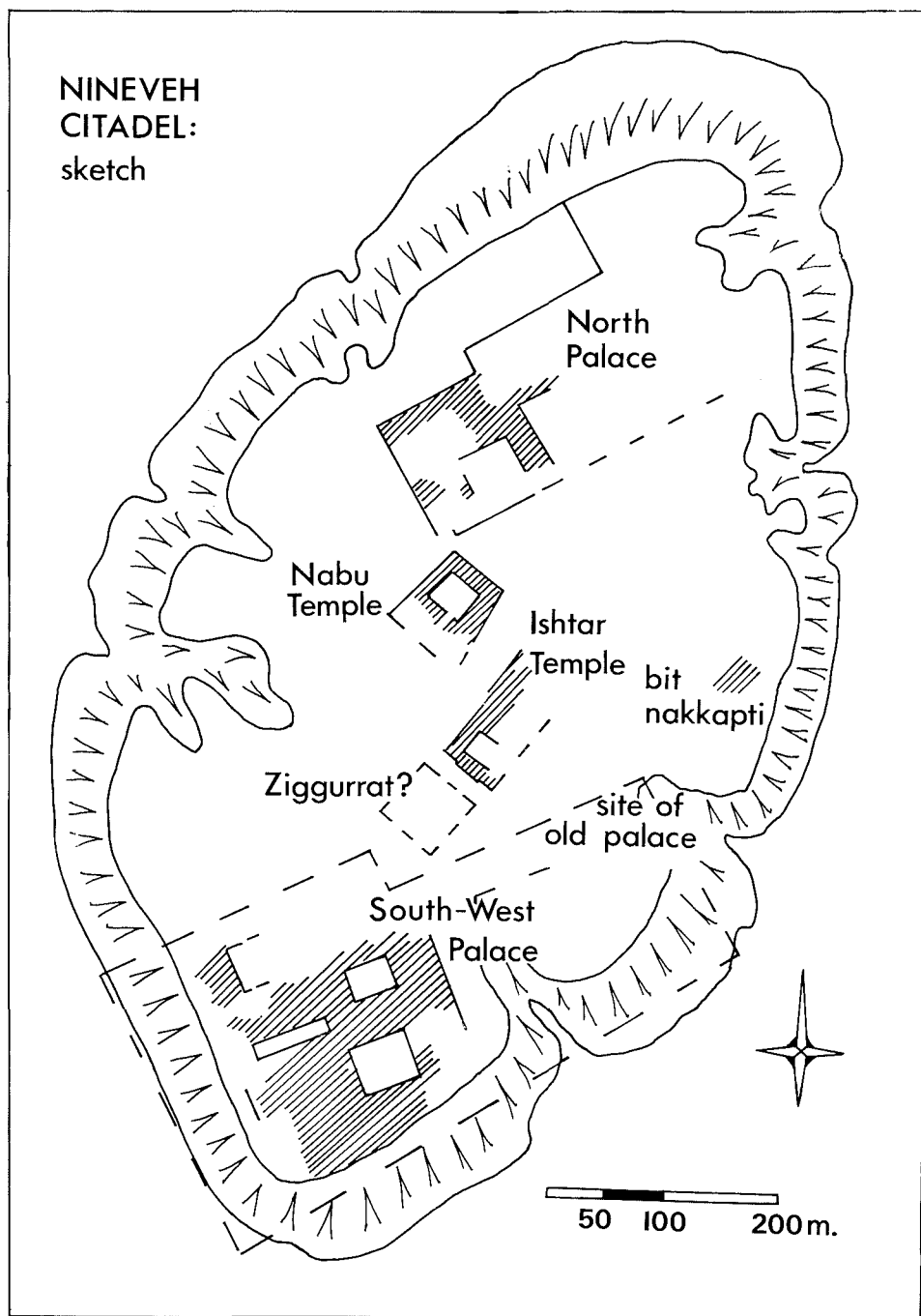
By the reign of Ashur-uballit I (1363-28 BC), if not earlier, Nineveh was in the hands of the kings of Ashur and remained so, in principle, until the fall of the Assyrian empire in 612 BC. This is a period of over seven centuries during which there was, so far as we know, continuous occupation. Public buildings were not infrequently built or restored, and there are therefore many inscribed bricks, foundation documents — notably terracotta tablets, cylinders, and prisms — and architectural fittings of which the wall-knobs and rosettes from the Ishtar Temple, some catalogued as vase or dish fragments (e.g. 56-9-9, 128-199), deserve a mention. Normally these will have been found in the ruins of the buildings for which they were originally designed, and are not really archives.

There are at least two exceptions, however. One is the Nineveh prism of Sargon II, put together from many fragments, some of which were certainly found in the South-West Palace at Nineveh. Tadmor argued that this prism, the text of which refers to a

<sup>4</sup> D. Collon and J. E. Reade, 'Archaic Nineveh', *BagM* 14 (1983) 33-4.

<sup>5</sup> R. C. Thompson and M. E. L. Mallowan, 'The British Museum excavations at Nineveh, 1931-32', *AAA* 20 (1933) pl. LXVI, no. 1.

<sup>6</sup> R. C. Thompson and R. W. Hamilton, 'The British Museum excavations on the Temple of Ishtar at Nineveh, 1930-31', *AAA* 19 (1932) 64-5, pl. XC.



1. Sketch plan of the Citadel of Nineveh with the main buildings.

building at Ashur, was a rough draft<sup>7</sup>. If so, it was probably transferred from Khorsabad to Nineveh with the remainder of Sargon's state archive. The other much more important exception comprises the seventh-century foundation cylinders and prisms listed by Lambert and Millard (1968,92) as coming from the "House of Sennacherib's Son", together with other such pieces whose provenance is not specifically recorded. The "House of Sennacherib's Son" area lies within the walls of Nineveh, a little to the north of Kuyunjik. Thompson, the excavator, refers to about three hundred pieces which were found there, scattered "usually in sporadic patches of rubble about two to three feet below surface" — possibly in fill that had been used to level ground<sup>8</sup>; the Chicago fragments published by Piepkorn<sup>9</sup> probably derived from the same area. The texts range in date from Sennacherib to Ashurbanipal, and were written for several different buildings; it is clear that they were not originally intended to be placed where they were eventually found. This strange archive might be explained as a relic of one of Nineveh's royal scriptoria, as such foundation documents must have been produced in large numbers very fast, for burial at regular and frequent intervals in the brickwork of walls; for instance, the walls of Sennacherib's Nineveh were about 12 km. long, and there must be at least several hundred prisms buried in them. There were pitfalls between the manufacture and deposition of such a document. First, there might be scribal or other errors bad enough to invalidate it (certainly there were occasional difficulties over precise dates<sup>10</sup>: these might not all be recognized before the object was fired in the kiln. Secondly, some must have broken during firing. Thirdly, the content of texts needed periodic updating, to delete old or accommodate new information, a process which may have involved the rejection of existing stock. Furthermore, with mass production, the scribes may have sometimes produced more items than were actually required. So we should expect that, somewhere at Nineveh, there would be a dump of unwanted foundation documents, and it could be that Thompson found material from this. It may be relevant that, among the few tablets from the same area, there is one (BM 134557) which reads like the prologue to an Ashurbanipal prism<sup>11</sup>; it is not a piece of Ashurbanipal "library" calligraphy, however, but looks more like a tablet made for some practical purpose such as copying or dictating from.

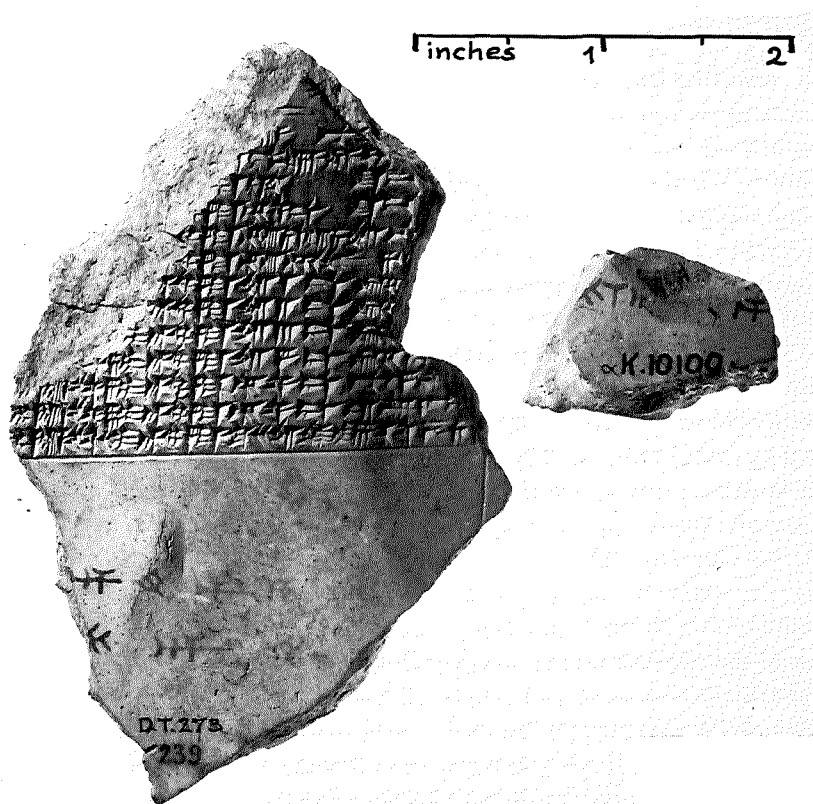
<sup>7</sup> H. Tadmor, 'The campaigns of Sargon II of Assur: a chronological-historical study', *JCS* 12 (1958) 92.

<sup>8</sup> *AAA* 20 (1933) 78. See also R. C. Thompson, 'A selection from the cuneiform historical texts from Nineveh (1927-32)', *Iraq* 7 (1940) 85-6.

<sup>9</sup> A. C. Piepkorn, *Historical Prism Inscriptions of Ashurbanipal I* (AS 5; Chicago, 1933) 3, n. 12.

<sup>10</sup> At least, some dates seem to have been partially erased.

<sup>11</sup> A. R. Millard, 'Fragments of historical texts from Nineveh: Ashurbanipal', *Iraq* 30 (1968) pl. XXV, The copy is more elegant than the original.



2. DT 273 and K 10100, with traces of an Ashurbanipal colophon in ink.

More conventional Nineveh archives, consisting mainly of cuneiform tablets, date in their final form, so far as we know, from the seventh century but may occasionally have incorporated older material. We know of about fifty Nineveh texts, in the British Museum, which may be classed either as Middle Assyrian or, at any rate, as significantly earlier than the seventh century in appearance. One of the most remarkable is the Tukulti-Ninurta epic the major pieces of which (BM 121033), and probably others, were found in the area between the Ishtar and Nabu Temples, where Thompson mistakenly thought there had been a palace of Ashurnasirpal II<sup>12</sup>; he based this conclusion on the large amount of Ashurnasirpal debris which he found there, mainly built into later houses, and which almost certainly derived from the

<sup>12</sup> R.C. Thompson and R.W. Hutchinson, 'The site of the palace of Ashurnasirpal at Nineveh, excavated in 1929-30 on behalf of the British Museum', *AAA* 18 (1931) 79-93, pl. XXXIX.

neighbouring Ishtar Temple. The probability that there was a library in the temple seems high; one may imagine that this was the source from which Ashurbanipal's scribes copied the Ishtar hymn of Ashurnasirpal I (80-7-19, 152 + ). Some other early fragments came from this general area, and probably also from a little to the east, in the vicinity of the old palace and Sennacherib's *bit nakkapti* (in the 1905-4-9 collection). Whether Ashurbanipal's library, however defined, included Middle Assyrian originals remains uncertain. One liver omen text (K 205) could well have been found by Layard in the South-West Palace, and the great god-list (K 4349 + ), put together from many fragments, seems a fair candidate; but we do not really know where they were found or who had owned them. One Middle Assyrian incantation (Rm 376) is in fact recorded as coming from the area of the Kidmuri Temple at Nimrud.

Another library at Nineveh would have been that in the Nabu Temple, a building founded by Adad-nirari III. This site was found in a ruinous state<sup>13</sup>. There are in the British Museum pieces which either derived from it or were destined for it, since they bear Ashurbanipal's specific Nabu Temple colophons (Hunger, 1968, nos. 327-8, 338-9), but only two (BM 121103, 128071) are known to have been found in that vicinity. It might be interesting to investigate whether the same scribes were responsible for both the Nabu Temple and the "Ashurbanipal library" texts.

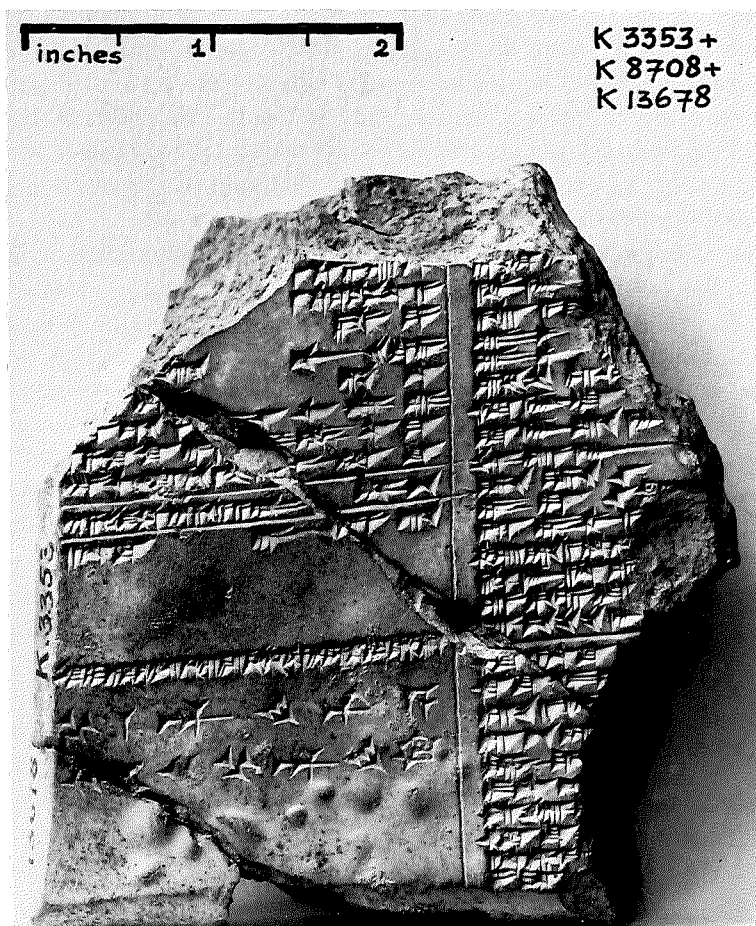
Most of the Nineveh tablets emerged from the South-West Palace. This was built by Sennacherib as a royal and official residence incorporating government offices, and remained in use long after his death; Ashurbanipal was one king who restored or refurbished part of it. It has sometimes been thought that tablets with Ashurbanipal colophons, if found in the South-West Palace, cannot have belonged there originally, but must have been moved there from Ashurbanipal's own North Palace. In practice, however, the South-West Palace during Ashurbanipal's reign was just as much his property as the North Palace: tablets from either of them, like bricks, might legitimately bear Ashurbanipal palace labels.

In the South-West Palace different categories of tablets were frequently found jumbled together, though we need not imagine that this was how the Assyrians themselves kept them. In any case most of the scholarly "library" texts written in royal scriptoria, together with some other official documents, are or were distinguished from the remainder by their clay. Unbaked, this is a fine red colour; it looks like the dense fossil clay which is exposed in geological strata beside some Assyrian rivers and streams<sup>14</sup>. Since clay tablets naturally turn red on baking, it is sometimes very difficult to decide whether these Kuyunjik pieces were deliberately

<sup>13</sup> R. C. Thompson and R. W. Hutchinson, 'The excavations on the Temple of Nabu at Nineveh', *Archaeologia* 79 (1929) 103-8, pl. LXIII.

<sup>14</sup> J. E. Reade, *Assyrian Sculpture* (London, 1983) 16, fig. 13.





3. K 3353+, with Ashurbanipal colophon added subsequently.

baked or not. Some of them were indeed so effectively baked during the conflagration of 612 BC that the job might as well have been done professionally, but there are others in which one can see a whole range of colours and densities, from a relatively soft red to the hard green of vitrification. On the whole it seems likely that the “library” texts, unlike many of the Middle Assyrian ones and of course all the foundation documents, were not baked originally. The same applies to the royal letters, many state documents, and the private archives; these generally are made of any one of a wide range of inferior clays, only baked if at all in 612.

While scholarly texts were widely distributed in the South-West Palace, it seems plain that the great mass of them were found on the floor in or near Rooms XL and

XLI, as recorded by Layard<sup>15</sup>, and that subsequent excavators were mainly finding those which Layard's tunnels had missed. G. Smith, who noted many in the nearby corridor XLIX, which was not connected to rooms XL-XLI by a door, thought that they must have been stored on an upper storey, so that different parts of single tablets fell into different areas<sup>16</sup>, but his evidence is inconclusive in view of later disturbance of the site. Rooms XL-XLI had sculptured panels round their walls, but this would not have precluded their use for tablet storage.

On some occasions scholarly texts may have been acquired and copied indiscriminately, but many of them must have been collected for genuine use and reference. For instance, it has been remarked that a high proportion of the Kuyunjik Collection consists of omen texts of one kind or another, and it may be that the proportion would have been less high in a temple library. The interpretation of omens was an important state activity, and it would obviously have been convenient for scholars serving the state to be able to refer to a central comprehensive collection of the relevant literature. Traditionally individual scholars would have had their own reference libraries, and these must be the source of some of the pre-Ashurbanipal scholarly texts from the South-West Palace. With Ashurbanipal, in contrast, a central reference library was deliberately built up. One possibility is that tablets bearing the simplest colophon, with only the king's name and a few titles (Hunger 1968, no. 317), were made or acquired for reference in this way. It is intriguing that two of them (K 10100, DT 273: fig. 2) have the colophon in ink rather than as part of the inscribed text, and even when the colophon is inscribed it is liable to be crudely scratched, or added in what may be a different hand (e.g. K 3353 + : fig. 3). Here they may be a link with the processes of donation or confiscation recently discussed by Parpola (1983).

The South-West Palace also produced a wide range of official documents and private archives, which Parpola and Kwasman are classifying. We can be sure, from their dates of excavation, that many of these were found, not in the area of Rooms XL-XLI but in rooms well to the south. Layard also noted many sealings from Room LXI<sup>17</sup>. Whereas the official documents seem to cover most of the seventh century, the private ones (so far as I have ascertained) belong to archives from the first half of it only. This observation, if substantiated, may relate either to the purpose for which the texts were retained, or to a change in the way in which the building was used. On the other hand, it should be emphasized that the part of the South-West Palace systematically cleared by the excavators was only the sculptured area planned by Layard. The existence of a vast outer courtyard, that must have been surrounded by more government offices and residences, was not recognised in those days; and there must be plenty more tablets awaiting excavation there.

<sup>15</sup> A. H. Layard, *Nineveh and Babylon* (London, 1853) 344-7.

<sup>16</sup> G. Smith, *Assyrian Discoveries* (London, 1875) 144.

<sup>17</sup> A. H. Layard, *Nineveh and Babylon* (London, 1853) 153-4.

The North Palace (so far as we are familiar with it) was built by Ashurbanipal in the late 640s, apparently on the site of another existing royal palace. It has produced at least three distinct types of document. First there is the archive found in 1853 by H. Rassam in Room C. Rassam stated, of these tablets, that “the largest of these, which happened to be in better order, were mostly stamped with seals”<sup>18</sup>, and we can pin down two of them (K 309a and K 329), both of which belong to the otherwise extensive archives of men who were royal officials under Ashurbanipal and later. There is no clear evidence that Rassam found here, as he later believed, the famous Deluge and Creation tablets (K 3375, K 5419c); he may have assumed that, because they were regarded as belonging to Ashurbanipal’s library, and he had found Ashurbanipal’s palace, therefore he had found them. H. Rawlinson indeed was so unimpressed by Rassam’s tablets that in 1854 (4 October, unpublished letter, copy in British Museum) he was urging the next supervisor of the excavations, W.K. Loftus, “the chances are also that somewhere in the North Palace you will light upon the Hall of Records, and if such should be the case, I recommend you to lay on some extra gangs immediately, to disinter the tablets”.

Yet, though Rassam may have been mistaken, this palace did produce scholarly texts of great interest. Many probably came from Loftus, the records of whose work are largely lost, but Smith found more in 1873-4, especially at the south corner of the building, and it is through his records, and those of Rassam’s 1878-82 expeditions, that we may one day begin to build up a picture of the North Palace library. It is necessary to bear in mind, however, that the south corner of the North Palace is suspiciously close to the Nabu Temple. At this stage I can offer two observations on the scholarly tablets attested as coming from this northern area. One is that the clay of some of them is not the rich red of the bulk of the Kuyunjik tablets of this kind, but a shabby disintegrating light brown, much more like the material of Babylonian tablets. The other is that the colophons, so far as noted, are long ones: I have yet to find an example of the colophon which only gives the royal name and titles. It may be, given Ashurbanipal’s literary aspirations, that the North Palace tablets really reflect the kind of literature he thought he should have around him. Alternatively, they were the best or completest sets of tablets in the royal collection. Another possibility is that some of them were those he had copied in his own hand.

There is, so far as I know, just one official letter attested as coming from the North Palace, and single finds are automatically suspect. Nevertheless this is a letter of which Ashurbanipal in person is likely to have seen a copy, for it came from his brother Shamash-shum-ukin (1904-10-9, 42). It was therefore written before Ashurbanipal began work on the North Palace, and could have belonged to an archive of exceptional state letters concerning matters on which the king could not delegate responsibility.

<sup>18</sup> H. Rassam, *Asshur and the Land of Nimrod* (New York, 1897) 31.

Our picture of the various Nineveh archives will always remain an impressionist one; we shall never have the precision of Flemish painting. Much can be done, however. Questions that Parpola has asked of the official documents<sup>19</sup> need to be asked of the scholarly texts too. We should be better able to distinguish the work of individual scribes; to understand the significance of the different types of colophon; to identify, with the help of physical criteria such as size and type of clay besides more traditional techniques, the different sets of tablets, not merely the different series and divergent traditions. These classificatory procedures, besides generating hundreds more “joins”, should tell us much more both about sources and about the content of the original archives. Then we may be better equipped to consider what the archives meant to those who compiled them and what more they may contribute to our understanding of the ancient world.

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 Parpola 1983 — S. Parpola, ‘Assyrian library records’, *JNES* 42 (1983) 1-29.

<sup>19</sup> S. Parpola, ‘A note on the Neo-Assyrian census lists’, *ZA* 64 (1975) 104, n. 13.

## THE ROYAL ARCHIVES OF NINEVEH\*

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As a general notion, the “royal archives of Nineveh” (and like terms) are well known to every Assyriologist. But what does one actually know about them? Strangely, as soon as one is to tell something concrete about them, these archives rapidly vanish into thin air. Did they really exist, or are they a product of imagination only?

The problem with the Ninevite archives is that we know next to nothing of the findspots of the tablets making up the so-called Kuyunjik collection<sup>1</sup>. And even worse, the little we do know makes it clear that the original setup of the tablets had been badly disturbed already in antiquity<sup>2</sup>. Accordingly, it has not been possible to break down the material into originally distinct units by tablet provenance, and for all practical purposes the whole lot has remained a monolithic conglomeration of tablets without a more definite provenance than the two excavated palace complexes and their environs<sup>3</sup>.

\*. Special abbreviations: *AD* = G. Smith, *Assyrian Discoveries* (London, 1875); *ARINH* = F. M. Fales (ed.), *Assyrian Royal Inscriptions: New Horizons* (Oriens Antiqui Collectio 17; Rome, 1981); *ALN* = H. Rassam, *Asshur and the Land of Nimrod* (Cincinnati and New York, 1897); *CEN* = R. C. Thompson and R. W. Hutchinson, *A Century of Exploration at Nineveh* (London, 1929); *N&B* = A. H. Layard, *Discoveries in the Ruins of Nineveh and Babylon* (London, 1853); *N&R* = A. H. Layard, *Nineveh and Its Remains* (New York, 1849).

<sup>1</sup> The term “Kuyunjik collection” as used in this article refers to the totality of tablets catalogued in Bezold, *Cat.* (and its supplements), however inexact it may be in this usage (cf. below, n. 13). It should not be confused with the term “K collection”, which is below used to refer to tablets bearing museum numbers prefixed with the letter K.

<sup>2</sup> Bezold (*Cat.* 5, xvi) thinks that “when the city of Nineveh was pillaged ..., the tablets were taken from the Library and were purposely broken into pieces, the fragments being scattered about both inside and outside the Library Chamber”; L. W. King (*Cat. Suppl.*, xii<sup>2</sup>) notes that “fragments from the South-West section of the Library have been recovered over a wide area. Some, evidently kicked by the feet of fugitives when the palace was in flames, were found scattered around the main exit on the west, and they extended for some distance on to the paved terrace which overlooked the Tigris beyond the palacefaçade on this side”. Finally, the great tablet horde discovered by G. Smith in the Inner Court VI of the SW Palace (cf. *AD*, 93) makes it likely that an attempt to rescue at least parts of the royal libraries was made by the Assyrian aristocracy at the time they were escaping from the falling city. Many examples of tablets found in clearly secondary loci could be quoted from the data given in Lambert and Millard, *Cat.*, 2nd Suppl. (1968), 89 f.

<sup>3</sup> The statement “for all practical purposes” has of course to be understood in the light of the preceding footnote and notes 13-15.

The lot has, ever since the days of Layard, been seen to primarily consist of two types of text: library texts, and texts that do not well fit under this category (letters, astrological reports, oracle queries, legal documents, census returns, tribute lists, etc.) and hence called "archival"<sup>4</sup>. The fact that the bulk of these latter texts clearly pertain either to the administration of the Assyrian empire or the person of the king has led to seeing in them "the archives of the empire"<sup>5</sup>, "state" or "royal archives"<sup>6</sup>, and the like<sup>7</sup>. Nobody has bothered to draw up a list of all the texts attributable to these assumed archives, but Weidner's remark that "at least one half of the total number [of integer tablets in the Kuyunjik collection] belongs to the *Staatsarchiv*"<sup>8</sup> indicates that at least he was inclined to assign virtually all non-literary Kuyunjik texts to the "state archives"<sup>9</sup>.

The existence of a sort of state archives in Nineveh is certainly not to be doubted. However, one should be extremely cautious in putting an equal mark between these (hypothetical) archives and the heterogeneous mass of extant "archival" texts. As regards the latter, it should be borne in mind that the label "archival" attached to them is rather arbitrary. There is no evidence, other than a certain likelihood, that any of them were ever kept in any sort of separate archives. By contrast, it is unequivocally clear from the excavation reports that a very considerable number of "archival" texts of all types were found mixed up with masses of "library" texts in what appeared to be their original place of deposition<sup>10</sup>. As a similar mixture of "archival" and "library" texts is also observable in apparently secondary archaeological contexts<sup>11</sup>, it has in fact been suggested that many if not most of the Kuyunjik "archival" texts actually had formed part of the royal libraries<sup>12</sup>. Furthermore, it should be realized that the artificial lumping together of all Kuyunjik "archival" texts by text category (letters, legal documents etc.) rather

<sup>4</sup> See, primarily, Weitemeyer 1955, 12f. and 49ff. (but cf. Wiseman, *OLZ* 1962, 373f.). In the present article, the label "archival" is used in the sense defined by Weitemeyer; however, to underline its partial arbitrariness in the case of the Kuyunjik material, it will be consistently enclosed in quotes.

<sup>5</sup> Layard, *N&B*, 344.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. Schroeder, *OLZ* 1920, 206f. ("Staatsarchiv", "Staatskanzlei"); Weidner 1952, 197f. ("Staatsarchiv"); Postgate, *StPohl* SM 3 (1974), 3 ("the archives of the Assyrian kings at Nineveh"), etc.

<sup>7</sup> E.g., "government archives" (Waterman, *RCAE* IV, 11).

<sup>8</sup> Weidner 1952, 198.

<sup>9</sup> Weidner (loc. cit.) puts the total number of integer Kuyunjik tablets (i.e. ones left after the reduction of all possible joins) at about 10,000 maximum. The total number of all non-literary Kuyunjik texts (excluding royal inscriptions) known to the present writer is about 5,500.

<sup>10</sup> See Layard, *N&B*, 345f.

<sup>11</sup> Rassam, *ALN*, 31. To judge from the position of the "lion-hunt room" and the fact that it lacked *apkallu*-flanked doorways, so characteristic of Neo-Assyrian libraries (cf. *N&B*, 343 and 461; M. Mallowan, *Nimrud and Its Remains* I, 234f.; Reade, *BagM* 10 [1979] 38f.), it appears unlikely that this room was the original depository of the tablets. Cf. also Lambert and Millard, *Cat.*, 2nd Suppl. 90 on tablet finds in the area of the Ištar temple (Room X: letter to king + lexical texts, certainly not in original context).

<sup>12</sup> King, *Cat. Suppl.*, xiii; cf. Weidner 1952, 197, and Wiseman, *OLZ* 1962, 374.

than by provenance creates a distorted impression of uniformity that has nothing to do with reality. It has been pointed out, for instance, that some texts in the Kuyunjik collection are not from Kuyunjik at all but were actually discovered in other Assyrian sites<sup>13</sup> and that some of those texts that assuredly are from Kuyunjik do not originate in the palaces but temple archives<sup>14</sup>; some texts, like a group of letters to Šîn-šarru-iškun found in the throne-room of the SW palace<sup>15</sup>, are unlikely to have ever become “archival” in the proper sense of the word. While the total number of texts assuredly not fitting with the concept of “state archives” may not be large, their unquestionable presence in the corpus of “archival” texts calls for caution and underlines the likelihood that the corpus actually consists of many distinct groups of tablets differing from one another both in respect of provenance and “archival status”.

As regards the supposed, “once-real” state archives on the other hand, it is necessary to keep in mind that under the Sargonid kings a large part of all official documents and records were drawn up on materials other than clay: wax-covered writing boards<sup>16</sup>, papyrus<sup>17</sup> and leather<sup>18</sup>. There is every probability that exacty

<sup>13</sup> See Deller, *Or.* 35 (1966) 190 ff. and *StPohl* SM 10/2 (1981) T 173 ff. on K 296, 382 and 418 (= *ADD* 640-642), all probably deriving from Layard's digs in Calah; Wiseman, *JNES* 27 (1968) 248, for literary “K” texts from Nimrud; and below, n. 41, for the Sherif Khan tablet Rm. 2.21. It is of course well known that some 100 tablets in the Kuyunjik collection are not from Assyria at all but come from various sites in Babylonia (Babylon, Uruk, Baghdad), see Weidner 1952, 198 and note also K 1297, 1377 and K 13113. Enormous amounts of literary and scientific texts were of course transferred to Nineveh from other Assyrian and Babylonian cities already in antiquity, see Parpola 1983, 10 ff.; Millard, *Cat.*, 2nd Suppl., ix; Schott, *ZDMG* 88 (1934) 324 ff.; Weidner, *AfO* 14 (1941/4), 178, etc.

<sup>14</sup> See Postgate, *Iraq* 32 (1970) 158 (no. 25), also *ibid.* Nos. 4, 9-10, 12, 16. The Nabû-ušabši letter (BM 121053) found in the Nabû temple as well as the astrological report and letters found in the Ištar temple (BM 123358, 123359 and 134556, see Lambert and Millard, *Cat.*, 2nd Suppl.) most likely come from secondary contexts, cf. notes 2 and 11.

<sup>15</sup> Reade, *ARINH* (1981), 167. To precisize somewhat, the group comprises six Babylonian letters (*ABL* 412, 469, 815, 1089, 1365 and 1366), all except *ABL* 412 coming from Uruk. The addressee is in all cases (except *ABL* 412 coming from Uruk. The addressee is in all cases (except *ABL* 815, addressed to Urukeans residing in Nineveh) certainly Šîn-šarru-iškun. If these letters were found in (or near) the throne-room, does it mean that they only slightly predate the fall of Nineveh? If so, Uruk stayed under Assyrian control much longer than hitherto assumed.

<sup>16</sup> Cf. *CAD* L 157a and *ABL* 160:8f., 163:8, 784 r. 1(!), *CT* 53 258:11, 481:4', 534:9', 602:8' and especially 930 + 967:20. These passages not only make it patent that writing boards (*lê'u*) were widely used in administrative bookkeeping but they also conclusively prove that *lê'u*-type administrative documents were routinely sent to the palace (*ABL* 99 and 784, *CT* 53 20 and 930+) and kept there for further reference (*ABL* 121 + *CT* 53 164). Since writing boards were re-usable and also relatively expensive (cf. Parpola 1983, 8), it is probable, on the other hand, that such documents were removed from the palatial archives as soon as the information they contained had become useless. As a matter of fact, the ephemeral nature of most routine administrative records may have greatly encouraged the use of “recyclable” writing materials in administrative bookkeeping.

<sup>17</sup> Cf. *CAD* N/2 201a (s.v. *nîāru*), especially *ABL* 568 r. 19 (the scribe of the palace receiving two scrolls of papyrus as tribute from the west). Cf. also notes 19-20 below.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. *ABL* 685 r. 15 ff. (“I have drawn a picture of the fortress on leather [*mašku*] and sent it to the king”) and *CT* 53 914:10'. See also n. 20.

the kind of documents that were liable to be stored in state archives (international treaties and correspondence<sup>19</sup>, war diaries and sketches made during military campaigns<sup>20</sup>, architectural and engineering plans and other documents relating to military, administrative and economic planning<sup>21</sup>, etc.) were largely written on such materials, which of course means that much if not most of the contents of these archives is now irretrievably lost. A further thing to be kept in mind is that even though the Assyrian system of government was strongly centralized, the practical management of different sectors of administration was taken care of by different administrative "departments", not all of which were located in the capital<sup>22</sup> but certainly all had scriptoria and archives of their own<sup>23</sup>. Thus it is possible, and

<sup>19</sup> Cf. Layard, *N&B*, 153: "In a chamber, or passage, in the south-west corner of this edifice [= Room LXI of the SW Palace], were found a large number of pieces of fine clay bearing the impressions of seals, which, there is no doubt, had been affixed, like modern official seals of wax, to documents written on leather, papyrus, or parchment. ... The greater part of these seals are Assyrian, but with them are others bearing Egyptian, Phoenician, and doubtful symbols and characters". The seal-impressions and the physical layout of the chamber are described in detail *ibid.* 154-159 ja 460-462. There can be no doubt whatsoever, as already pointed out by Layard (*ibid.* 159 and 460), that the chamber in question, whose entrance was flanked by *apkallu* figures (cf. above, n. 11), had served as a depository for public documents written on papyrus and/or parchment. The finds include a piece of clay bearing the impressions of royal Egyptian (Shabako II) and Assyrian signets and thus almost certainly originally attached to a treaty between the two countries. In addition to treaties, this archival chamber can be imagined to have contained a large collection of letters from all parts of the empire, cf. my remarks in *ARINH*, 123 and 132.

<sup>20</sup> See J. Reade, *ARINH* (1981), 154 and 162.

<sup>21</sup> See Postgate's analysis of the Sargonid (inscribed on uninscribed) clay bullae or "dockets" sealed with the royal signet ring, in *StPohl SM* 3 (1974), 19-28. Note also passages such as *ABL* 497:ff and *CT* 53 41:11 ff. referring to sketches of cultic objects and statues, sent to the king. The material on which these sketches were executed is not known and may have been clay (though this is very unlikely), but it is completely excluded that e.g. the artists and builders responsible for the royal sculptures and building projects could have prepared their sketches on clay (see above note 18).

<sup>22</sup> On the concept of administrative "departments" and the locations of the different offices see, fundamentally, J. N. Postgate, *op. cit.* 230 ff. Postgate states that "we do not know the titles of the officials who looked after these various departments", but I believe we in fact do. The officials in question are listed, together with their scribes, e.g. in *ADD* 1036, a document detailing shares of tribute, and include, after the "treasurer" (LÚ.AGRIG/*mašennu*) and the "head of the accounting department" (GAL.NIG.ŠID), men in charge of various sectors of the palace economy (LÚ.GAL.MU, GAL.TÜG.UD, GAL.Ī.MEŠ, GAL.<sup>85</sup>*amri*, [GAL].SUM!.NINDA, LÚ *ša* IGI É.GAL, LÚ.GAL *batqi*, LÚ.GAL *urâte*, GAL.GEŠTIN, etc.). Numerous texts issued by these officials (or the respective departments) are included in the corpus of Ninevite administrative documents. It thus seems likely that memoranda on the activities of these departments were routinely stored in palatial archives, but it is abundantly clear that the departments themselves were independent units in no way connected with the latter, which probably formed "departments" in their own right and were managed by an official entitled the "scribe of the palace" (*ṭupšar ekalli*).

<sup>23</sup> Note, e.g., the archives of the "wine department" at Nimrud (J. V. Kinnier Wilson, *CTN* 1 [1972]) as well as the "horse department" archives from the same city to be published by St. Dalley and Postgate (*CTN* 3). Cf. also *ADD* 1036, referred to in n. 22. Incidentally, it is important to make a clear distinction between "archives" (= the place where documents are deposited for further reference) and "scriptoria" or "chanceries" (= the place where documents are produced) when assessing the provenance of the Kuyunjik material. Clearly, the excavated "departmental" archives also functioned as scriptoria, but this cannot have been the case with the "Chambers of Records" (Layard, *N&B*, 343 ff.) in which a great



even probable, that there never existed in Sargonid Assyria a central State Archive which would have served as a depository of all important public documents. Rather, we have to reckon with several different, mostly specialized, archives of varying sizes and contents and at least partly differing in functions.

What, then, is the relationship between these once real archives and the extant "archival" texts from Kuyunjik? It is not possible within the limits of the present paper to undertake a scrutiny of all the 5,500 or so non-literary texts in the Kuyunjik collection in order to establish their various archival backgrounds, and it is questionable whether such an undertaking would in the end lead to any really substantial and uncontroversial results. In contrast to the earlier version of this paper presented in Leiden, I will also not survey the Kuyunjik "archival" corpus systematically by text type, chronological coverage and the quantity in which each text type is extant, because such a survey would be largely meaningless from the viewpoint of the present problem and would in any case mainly repeat well-known facts only<sup>24</sup>. Instead, I would like to focus attention on two limited segments of the Kuyunjik collection whose peculiar chronological structures caught my eye after the Leiden Rencontre. If the conclusions drawn below are correct, the segments in question would prove a clue of major importance in establishing a pattern according to which the place of origin and archival status of the great majority of non-literary Kuyunjik texts can be determined. The picture thus resulting in surprising and has certain interesting implications, which will be briefly discussed below.

It is generally assumed that the museum numbers in the Kuyunjik collection are of little or no avail in determining the provenances of the tablets. This is certainly true as regards the 16,794 (+ ca. 5,000 uncatalogued) tablets bearing K numbers, which mainly derive from the tablet finds made by Layard and Rassam in 1849-1854 and, despite the fact that they originate in two different palaces and even outside Kuyunjik, were hopelessly mixed together in the museum<sup>25</sup>. As to the

number of the Kuyunjik "archival" texts were discovered. They were simply too far from daylight and too small to serve as a chancery while at the same time functioning as a depository of the thousands of tablets found in them. The same also applies to "Papyrus Room" of the same palace (n. 19). It is possible, of course, that the almost vacant room (No. XXXIX) adjacent to the two "Chambers of Records" functioned as the office of the "palace scribe" and thus as a sort of chancery.

<sup>24</sup> A systematic survey of the whole material would serve little purpose beyond establishing that the bulk of the material must originate in "royal archives", a fact that has been long known and is clear from even a superficial acquaintance with the texts. By contrast, it would leave as unclear as ever the questions of how many royal archives are involved, where this or that archive was located, how the extant texts were distributed between these (possibly several) archives, and what text groups can be assuredly regarded as being from royal archives and what not. If it is these very questions that I propose to tackle in this paper.

<sup>25</sup> It is not easy for an outsider to form a clear picture of what actually happened in the museum, but it seems evident that the K tablets were still unnumbered as late as 1870 (cf. simply G. Smith, 3 R). Contrary to what is sometimes alleged (e.g., Waterman, *RCAE* 3, 10), the K collection by no means exclusively consists of tablets discovered by Layard but also includes thousands of tablets found by

subcollections (Sm, DT, Rm, etc.), the situation is different but in general no better. While the subcollections do represent separate consignments of tablets entered separately in the museum collections, it is generally not possible to learn much of their archaeological backgrounds, and the scanty information that happens to be available suggests that they too generally consist of material found in different places (mainly the N and SW Palaces) and lumped together before shipment to England<sup>26</sup>. This is confirmed by structural analysis of the collections themselves: when the tablets they contain are classified by text type, date and the quantity in which each type is represented, the results do not significantly differ from the picture resulting from a corresponding analysis of the K collection. There are, however, two exceptions to this rather depressing pattern: the **83-1-18** and **Rm 2** subcollections.

The former consists of 900 tablets, of which about two thirds (65 %) — an unusually large portion considering the Kuyunjik collection as a whole<sup>27</sup> — are “archival”. Even more surprising, however, is the chronological structure of this “archival” part of the collection: only 1 % of the texts dates from the reign of Sargon. This is quite anomalous in the total context of the Kuyunjik collection, and even more so when the tablet totals of the different text types represented in the 83-1-18 collection are compared to the corresponding Kuyunjik totals:

Text Type	Date	Kuyunjik Total	83-1-18 Total	% of Kuyunjik Total
Assyrian Letters	Sg.	1,087 <sup>28</sup>	3	0.3
	Ash./Asb.	864	168	19.4
Babylonian Letters	Sg.	230 <sup>28</sup>	0	0.0
	Ash./Asb.	763	104	13.6
“Reports” ( <i>RMA</i> Type)	Sg.	1	0	0.0
	Ash./Asb.	529	97	18.3
“Queries” ( <i>AGS/PRT</i> )	Ash./Asb.	315	66	20.9
Legal Texts	Sg.	13	3	23.1
	Sn.	120	25	20.8
	Asb./Ash.	150	41	27.3
	post-645	67	1	1.5
	altogether	810	102	12.6
	(incl. undatable)			
Administrative Texts	Sg.	30 <sup>29</sup>	0	0.0
	altogether	470	32	6.8
	(incl. undatable)			
In all		5,069	572	11.3

As can be seen, the relatively small subcollection ( $\frac{1}{30}$  of the whole Kuyunjik collection) alone contains about  $\frac{1}{10}$  of all Kuyunjik “archival” texts<sup>30</sup>. Texts from the reigns of Esarhaddon and Assurbanipal are very strongly represented: they

make 93.9 % of all datable texts. Another striking feature in the collection is the *consistency* by which individual text types are percentually represented in it: no matter whether letters (Assyrian or Babylonian), astrological reports, oracle queries and reports, legal or administrative texts are concerned, texts from the reigns of Sennacherib and Esarhaddon/Assurbanipal consistently make about 20 % of the corresponding overall Kuyunjik totals. Texts from the reign of Sargon, on the other hand, are equally consistently and conspicuously lacking in all text categories where meaningful comparisons can be made<sup>31</sup>. The oddness of the situation may be visualized by the following example. About 50 % of all Kuyunjik and 83-1-18 "archival" texts are letters, and almost 50 % of all these letters date from the reign of Sargon. If the 83-1-18 collection contained proportionally as many Sargon as Ash./Asb. letters, the former would number no less than 220— $\frac{1}{4}$  of the whole subcollection. As it is, the collection only contains three such letters—70 times less than expected!

What does all this mean? Before suggesting an answer, it has to be made quite clear that the peculiar (chronological) structure of the 83-1-18 collection cannot be accidental but must be related to the specific archaeological background of the collection. The size of the collection (900 tablets) is large enough to make the individual tablet samples statistically significant, as illustrated by the fact that all major text types are well represented in it. Furthermore, it is evident that the collection represents the results of an entire digging season, most probably the one

Rassam. Cf., e.g., K 3375 (= Thompson, *Gilg.* pls. 45-52) and K 5419c (= *CT* 13 1), the discovery of which is described in Rassam, *ALN*, 31. As will be shown below, several texts with low K numbers (e.g., K 466 = *ABL* 87) actually derive from the North Palace and hence from the excavations of Rassam.

<sup>26</sup> See Smith, *AD*, 94-102 for the DT collection and *ibid.* 134-152 for the Sm collection; Rassam, *ALN* 199 f. and 221-229 for the Rm collection; *ibid.* 255 ff. for the 79-7-8 collection, 291-306 for the 80-7-19 collection, and 363 ff., 391 ff. and 412 ff. for the 81-2-4 through 83-1-18 collections. My knowledge of the backgrounds of the Bu and Ki subcollections is mainly based on Thompson and Hutchinson, *CEN*.

<sup>27</sup> The total of all Kuyunjik texts and fragments is about 30,000, of which "archival" texts and fragments (ca. 5,500) make about 18 %.

<sup>28</sup> These (still provisional) figures are based on my forthcoming edition of the correspondence of Sargon. The Asb./Ash. figures include some undatable or not certainly datable letters.

<sup>29</sup> This figure only includes texts certainly dating from the reign of Sargon. Since the majority of Kuyunjik administrative texts are undated, the total number of Sargon texts must be considerably higher.

<sup>30</sup> To simplify somewhat, I have omitted from the above analysis some minor text groups like treaties, royal grants and edicts, prophecies, etc. These genres are also represented in the 83-1-18 collection and agree with the rest of the collection both as regards their date (Ash./Asb.) and relative quantity.

<sup>31</sup> Legal texts from the reign of Sargon make up only 1.6 % of the total number of Kuyunjik legal texts; thus, they clearly constitute a "special case" not directly comparable with the other groups where Sargon texts are well represented. Moreover, at least four of the Sargon legal texts (*ADD* 248, 350, 391 + and 392) originate in Calah, and two of these (*ADD* 350 and 391 +) belong to the 83-1-18 collection. They can have been brought to Nineveh at any time, e.g. in the reign of Sennacherib.

of fall 1882<sup>32</sup>. It is thus excluded that the tablets contained in it could derive from a single small archaeological “pocket” in a previously untouched area, as also indicated by the numerous joins to tablets found in various earlier and later excavations<sup>33</sup>. Since the K collection and the subcollections which incorporate tablets found in excavations carried out in **both** (N and SW) palaces exhibit chronological structures sharply deviating from that of the 83-1-18 collection, only one logical conclusion seems to be left: the 83-1-18 collection predominantly if not exclusively consists of tablets found in the area of one palace only. Specifically, the “archival” texts of Sargon II on the one hand, and those of Sennacherib, Esarhaddon and Assurbanipal (down to about 645 BC) on the other, appear to have formed separate archives located in two different palaces.

Rassam's *Asshur and the Land of Nimrod* contains nothing definite about the background of the 83-1-18 collection, although it does give the impression that since 1880 the efforts of the excavators had increasingly concentrated on the SW Palace, which continued to yield more tablets than the North Palace<sup>34</sup>. The 83-1-18 collection itself does not contain any inscriptional evidence which would definitely point to either SW or N Palace<sup>35</sup>. Fortunately, the provenance of the collection can be established with almost absolute certainty as the *SW Palace* through an analysis of another subcollection, **Rm 2**. This collection of 606 tablets and fragments also markedly differs in structure from the K collection and the subcollections of “mixed” origin, however in a manner almost exactly opposite to 83-1-18. The bulk of the collection (about  $\frac{3}{4}$  of it) consists of various literary texts; “archival” texts make 12.4 % of the total, the rest are royal inscriptions. Now, 85 % of the latter are fragments of Assurbanipal's Prism A commemorating the restoration of the North Palace, and an additional 6 % are captions to reliefs sculptured during these very restoration works<sup>36</sup>. The “archival” texts are divided chronologically as follows:

<sup>32</sup> Judging from *ALN*, 394 (cf. *ibid.* 363), Rassam appears to have adopted the practice of packing and shipping antiquities to the British Museum in Baghdad once or twice a year, after the close of each digging season. In 1882, Rassam left Baghdad for London on October 22 (*ALN*, 424).

<sup>33</sup> These are 36 joins to K tablets, 4 to Sm, one to DT, 2 to Rm, one to 80-7-19, two to 81-2-4, one to 81-7-27, one to 82-3-23, 5 to 82-5-22, 4 to Bu 91-5-9, and 3 to the Ki 1904-10-9 subcollection. See E. Leichty, *A Bibliography ... of the Kuyunjik Collection* (London 1964), 263 ff.; Borger, *HKL* 2 (1975), 387 f. and *idem*, *AfO* 28 (1981/82), 391 f. Notice the absence of joins to the Rm 2 subcollection.

<sup>34</sup> Cf. *ALN*, 221 f. and especially 306, 365 and 391.

<sup>35</sup> 83-1-18, 483, 601 and 836 (= Borger, *Ash.* §§ 75, 26 and 83) are fragments of inscriptions of Esarhaddon; two of them refer to the conquest of Egypt but not a word is left of the building sections. 83-1-18, 605 is an inscription of Sennacherib probably relating to the construction of the SW Palace, cf. Reade, *JCS* 27 (1975), 193 f. 83-1-18, 602+ is a fragment of Assurbanipal's Prism B commemorating the restoration of the Armoury (*ekal māšarti*) of Nineveh on Tell Nebi Yunus; 83-1-18, 603 and 604 are fragments of Assurbanipal's Prism A (pertaining to the North Palace).

<sup>36</sup> See Weidner, *AfO* 8 (1932/33), 175 ff.

— Letters	Sg.	43
	Ash.	3 <sup>37</sup>
	undatable	4
— “Reports”	Sg.	1 (Rm 2,345 = <i>RMA</i> 136S)
	undatable	1 (Rm 2,254 = <i>RMA</i> 237A)
— Legal texts	Tigl. (744 BC)	1 (Rm 2,19 = <i>ADD</i> 415)
	Sg.	1 (Rm 2,499 = <i>ADD</i> 497)
	Sn. (694 and 693 BC)	2 (Rm 2,18 & 185 = <i>ADD</i> 243 & 223)
	Asb. (648 BC)	1 (Rm 2,22 = <i>ADD</i> 197)
	post-645	1 (Rm 2,319 = <i>ADD</i> 80)
	undatable	7
— Adm. texts	Sg.	2? <sup>38</sup>
	undatable	6
— Royal grants	Tigl. (730 BC)	1 (Rm 2,194 = <i>StPohl</i> SM 1 No. 7)
	undatable	1 (Rm 2,247 = <i>ADD</i> 911)

Notice the almost total absence of texts from the reigns of Sennacherib, Esarhaddon and Assurbanipal, especially the total lack of *AGS/PRT*-type oracle queries and reports and the scarcity of astrological reports, which include the only specimen of the genre datable to the reign of Sargon<sup>39</sup>. All in all, the (pre-)Sargon and post-648 texts constitute 91.1 % of all datable “archival” texts of the collection, which beautifully correlates with the portion (91 %) the N Palace-related prism and epigraph fragments make of all royal inscriptions in the Rm 2 collection. It would stand to reason, accordingly, that about 90 % of this collection (including the Tigl., Sg. and post-canonical archival texts) originates in the North Palace. The rest would be from elsewhere, most likely primarily from the *ekal māšarti* palace on Tell Nebi Yunus, which seems to be the provenance of the remaining seven royal inscriptions of the collection<sup>40</sup>. One text (Rm 2,21 = *ADD* 509) is from the Nergal temple of Sherif Khan/Tarbišu<sup>41</sup>.

To summarize briefly, the picture emerging from the above analysis looks like this. In addition to a large number of literary and scientific texts (the “Library of

<sup>37</sup> Rm 2,6 = *LAS* 15, Rm 2,371 = *ABL* 371 and Rm 2,870 = *LAS* 193.

<sup>38</sup> Rm 2,278 = *ADD* 748 and Rm 2,130+ = *ADB* 7. Both uncertain. Possibly also Rm 2,591 (unpublished; list of deportees from URU *Sa-al*[ ]).

<sup>39</sup> See Parpola, *AOAT* 5/2 (1983), 422 f. Does Rm 2,254 also date from the reign of Sargon?

<sup>40</sup> Rm 2,94 and 185 are duplicates of Sennacherib’s Taylor Prism commemorating the building of the *bēt kutalli* (later *ekal māšarti*) of Nineveh; for two further Sennacherib prism fragments (Rm 2,56 and 98) see Reade, *art. cit.* (n. 35), 192. Rm 2,184 and 384 are fragments of Esarhaddon’s *ekal māšarti* prisms (Nin. A<sup>12</sup> and <sup>13</sup>, see Borger, *Ash.* § 26). Is it a mere coincidence that one of the three Rm 2 letters from the reigns of Ash./Asb. (Rm 2,8 = *ABL* 371) happens to be a horse report? Cf. Borger, *Ash.* p. 59 and *ADD* 172:2f. Rassam’s (limited) excavations at Nebi Yunus started in the course of his second expedition (*ALN*, 304 f.).

<sup>41</sup> The tablet carries the note “from Sherif Khan” written in ink aside the museum number. The text itself is a marriage contract drawn up for an individual named Šār-Nergal-allak.

Assurbanipal"<sup>42</sup>), the North Palace housed a large collection of "archival" texts (over 1,300 letters, many administrative and legal texts, royal grants and edicts, and a few astrological reports) from the reign of Sargon II<sup>43</sup>, plus scattered legal and economic texts from the post-canonical period. The SW Palace of Sennacherib too contained a Royal Library, which seems to have been somewhat smaller in size to the one of Assurbanipal, and a large collection of "archival" texts from the reigns of Sennacherib, Esarhaddon and Assurbanipal. Post-canonical texts are scantily in evidence for this palace<sup>44</sup>. It is likely, though there is no conclusive evidence, that the Nebi Yunus palace also had a collection of archival texts (and a library?).

The correctness of this picture is at least partially confirmed by isolated tablets whose provenances are known from the accounts of the excavators. Thus, Layard in his *Nineveh and Babylon* (p. 346) gives drawings of two legal texts from the SW Palace; both can be identified (K 76 = *ADD* 229 and K 296 = *ADD* 642) and date from the reign of Sennacherib (680 BC) and the post-canonical period respectively. Correspondingly, five "archival" texts described and/or illustrated in G. Smith's *Assyrian Discoveries* (pp. 408, 414, 417 and 424) are identifiable; two of these are letters addressed to Esarhaddon (DT 98 = *LAS* 278, from Mār-Ištar; Sm 1034 = *ABL* 389, from Bēl-iqīša), three are legal documents (DT 12 = *ADD* 317, Sm 921 = *ADD* 378, Sm 957 = *ADD* 128) dating respectively from 687, [687-673]<sup>45</sup> and 665 BC, and all were found in the SW Palace. By contrast, not a single text from the reign of Sargon can in this or any other way be traced back to the SW Palace<sup>46</sup>.

It is but natural that "archival" texts from the reigns of Sennacherib, Esarhaddon and Assurbanipal should have been deposited in the magnificent SW Palace, constructed in 703-694 BC<sup>47</sup>, which undoubtedly served as the principal royal

<sup>42</sup> If the conclusions drawn in this article prove valid, it will be necessary to stop speaking of "Assurbanipal's libraries" and instead start differentiating between the actual library of Assurbanipal (under which should be included only tablets bearing the Assurbanipal colophons or the Asb. library stamp) and the library of the SW Palace, which had existed since the reign of Sennacherib. The matter requires more thorough investigation, but a search through the Kuyunjik literary texts published in *CT* revealed no 83-1-18 (= SW Palace) texts with Asb. colophons, whereas all extant Rm 2 (= N Palace) colophons turned out to be of this type.

<sup>43</sup> The "reign of Sargon" is here understood to (possibly) include also the beginning of Sennacherib's reign (ca. 704-702, i.e. the period preceding the construction of the SW Palace). Cf. Parpola, *ARINH* (1981), 119<sup>1</sup> and below, n. 64. The earliest legal texts from Sennacherib's reign in the 83-1-18 collection are dated 698 (1x), 696 (1x) and 694 BC (2x).

<sup>44</sup> Cf. 83-1-18, 354 = *ADD* 354 (eponymy of Nabû-da' `in <anni>) and K 296 = *ADD* 642 (eponymy of Zabāba-erība; see n. 45).

<sup>45</sup> *ADD* 378 belongs to the dossier of Mannu-kī-Arbail, which covers the period from 687 (*ADD* 43 and 100) through 673 BC (*ADD* 8).

<sup>46</sup> Cf. also Lambert & Millard, *Cat.*, 2nd Suppl., 92. Unfortunately none of the "archival" texts there listed can be dated. For the Sargon latter BM 123359 (= *Iraq* 7, 99) found in the Ištar temple see n. 14 above.

<sup>47</sup> Luckenbill, *OIP* 2, 94-116. The palace appears to have been habitable already by 703 but it is not known whether the king moved his residence there already at that time. Cf. next note.

residence until the restoration of the North Palace that was concluded in 646/5<sup>48</sup>. But why should the archives of Sargon II have been deposited in the latter place, commonly known (because of its date of construction) as the *Palace of Assurbanipal*? The answer is simple: the North Palace never primarily was a palace of Assurbanipal. It had been, and continued to be even after its restoration, the “Succession Palace” (*bēt rēdūti*)<sup>49</sup>, where Assyrian crown princes since the days of Sargon had exercised royal power in the absence of or in collaboration with their fathers<sup>50</sup>. During the long crownprincehood of Sennacherib (ca. 715-705) in particular, the palace had virtually functioned as the seat of the Assyrian government<sup>51</sup>. If all the letters and documents from Sargon’s reign in the Kuyunjik collection were filed in Nineveh already in this king’s lifetime; as they most probably were<sup>52</sup>, they can only have been filed in the *bēt rēdūti*. Thus the fact that they continued to be filed in this palace even after its restoration is actually in no way to be wondered at: the texts had simply been “returned to their place”, as customary in the course of restoration work<sup>53</sup>.

While thus quite natural in itself, the location of the Sargon tablets is of crucial importance to the understanding of the nature of the Ninevite “archival” texts. It has to be remembered that the old *bēt rēdūti* was not merely restored; it was pulled down to the ground and completely rebuilt<sup>54</sup>. The fact that the Sargon texts really were “returned to their place” and not just dumped somewhere as useless debris makes in absolutely certain that these texts (letters and administrative documents

<sup>48</sup> Two of the prisms commemorating the completion of this palace (A<sup>A</sup> and F) are dated 646 BC; for the date of the third (643?; Prism A) see Tadmor, *25th International Congress of Orientalists* (Moscow 1960), 240. Since 646 is the last eponym date found in epistolary texts from Assurbanipal’s reign (*ABL* 518, 879, 1222, 1262), it would seem that the king moved from the SW palace in 645 or the next year at the latest.

<sup>49</sup> On *bēt rēdūti* see my remarks in *AOAT* 5/2 (1983), 119 f., but note the correction *ibid.* 514 f. (Streck, *Asb.* CCCLXXX to be corrected accordingly; there is no evidence that the SW Palace, Sennacherib’s “Palace Without a Rival”, ever functioned as *bēt rēdūti*; on the contrary, this is plainly contradicted by the passages quoted below in n. 50.

<sup>50</sup> Cf. Streck, *Asb.* 4:23-28 (“I entered [as crown prince] the *bēt rēdūti* ... where my grandfather Sennacherib had ruled as crown prince and as king, where my father Esarhaddon had been born and where he had grown up and ruled as lord over Assyria”) and 84:59 ff. (“since ... Aššur etc. had guarded my crownprincehood in that *bēt rēdūti* and had, after I had sat upon my father’s throne, constantly brought good news to me there”); Borger, *Ash.* 41:21 f. (“I joyfully entered [as crown prince] the *bēt rēdūti* ...”).

<sup>51</sup> Thus certainly during Sargon’s sojourn in Babylonia (710-707) and in 715-714 while the king was campaigning in Media and Urarṭu. See G. Lanfranchi, *OrAnt* 22 (1983) 133 ff. on the dates of the two Sennacherib letters *ABL* 197 and 198 +. Calah remained the residence of Sargon till at least 714 BC (cf. *TCL* 3, 2:8) and probably later.

<sup>52</sup> Sic; after the identification of the North Palace as the depository of the Sargon correspondence there is no reason to maintain the (unlikely) suggestion made in *ARINH* (1981), 121, that the correspondence was brought to Nineveh in Sennacherib’s reign.

<sup>53</sup> See S. Lackenbacher, *Le roi bâtisseur* (Paris, 1982), 157 f. and 209.

<sup>54</sup> “I pulled it down entirely (*ana siḫirtišu*)”, Streck *Asb.* 86:75.

included) were considered important documents worth preserving<sup>55</sup>. The same can be assumed in the case of the “archival” texts found in the SW Palace: why else should these texts consistently have been found in association with literary and scientific texts?<sup>56</sup> Exactly because of this latter fact one could go a step further and seriously assert that the majority of the Ninevite “archival” texts actually were not archival at all since they obviously did not form separate archives but had been incorporated in the royal libraries as priced “antiquities” along with other historical curiosia<sup>57</sup>.

I would personally not entirely disagree with such a view. However, it is in my opinion not advisable to press the argument too far. The fact that literary and archival materials were stored in the same premises is merely a matter of organization and does not in any way exclude the likelihood that the royal libraries also functioned as archives, or vice versa<sup>58</sup>. Thus I would prefer continuing to differentiate between royal “libraries” and “archives”, while at the same time keeping in mind that the borderline between the two is fluid and that what is an “archival” text at one point of time may easily become a “library” one at another<sup>59</sup>. On the other hand, the unquestionable association of the two makes it imperative to stress that the archives we are talking about were decidedly royal, in the sense that they were the personal archives of Assyrian kings not open to anybody, just as the “royal libraries” were the private property of the Assyrian kings<sup>60</sup>. Accordingly, one should avoid referring to them as “state” or “government” archives, since these terms not only have inappropriate modern connotations but also are too broad in

<sup>55</sup> This has been questioned e.g. by Weidner, who writes (1952, 1971): “Gleichartige Briefe kamen neuerdings in Kalah zutage. Dort hat man sie schon im Altertum als Füllschutt verwendet, man hat die Briefe in Ninive daher sicher nicht als wertvolle ‘Bibliothekstücke’ betrachtet”. It is true that the Nimrud letters Weidner refers to were used as fill in antiquity; but that happened only long after the fall of the Assyrian empire, probably during the Achaemenian or Hellenistic period (see Mallowan, *Nimrud and Its Remains I* [London 1966], 172).

<sup>56</sup> Cf. n. 10 above and see *N&B*, 345 f. and *AD*, 145 f.

<sup>57</sup> For such “curiosia” see especially the copies of letters exchanged between Middle Assyrian and Babylonian kings most recently translated and commented upon by Grayson, *ARI* I 888-896 and 934-938. All the copies are in Neo-Assyrian script and at least one of them (*ABL* 1282) bears an Assurbanipal colophon. Another historical letter in the Kuyunjik collection is *ABL* 1406 (Neo-Babylonian script), dated 20 Tishri, eponymy of Mutakkil-Marduk (798 BC); the text is a report on a lunar eclipse, almost certainly (because of the date) that of October 23, -797. For one more possibly early Kuyunjik letter see *ABL* 872, but note E. Behrens, *Assyrisch-babylonische Briefe kultischen Inhalts* (= *LSS* 2/1; Leipzig 1906), 59.

<sup>58</sup> Cf. Wiseman, *OLZ* 1962, 374 and Veenhof 1982, 8 f.

<sup>59</sup> Note e.g. the case of Neo-Assyrian prophecies, which are extant in two types of documents: small, horizontally oblong (*u’iltu*-shaped) tablets containing single prophecies written down from dictation, and large multicolumn tablets compiled from several *u’iltu* originals (see Weippert, *ARINH* [1981], 72 ff. and 112). The former are typical “archival” texts comparable e.g. to astrological reports, the latter (copied out by the king’s chief scribe) equally typical “library” texts.

<sup>60</sup> Note the ownership mark *ekal/tuppi Aššur-bāni-apli* in Asb. colophons, and cf. *CAD* E 60 s.v. *ekallu* (mng. 2) and especially *RMA* 152 r. 4 referring to “the writing board of the king” which the writer (the chief scribe!) was unable to consult without the king’s permission. The writing board in question must have been similar to the Nimrud polyptych (Mallowan, *op. cit.* 153 ff.) bearing the ownership mark of Sargon II (*ekal Šarru-kēn*).



giving ground for potential confusion with the “departmental” archives referred to above, p. 226. The significance of the term “royal” in this context lies in the fact that, in contrast to the “departmental” archives, the royal archives were tightly linked with the person of the king. Each royal residence had an archive or archives where incoming correspondence and other documents of importance were filed, and whenever the king changed residence permanently, the flow of letters and administrative information to him not only changed direction but certainly for the most part ended up being permanently stored in the archive(s) of the new residence<sup>61</sup>.

This brings me to one final important point. If the stocking of texts in the royal archives was a matter largely conditioned by the presence or absence of the king, then the latter factor (if relevant) would necessarily manifest itself in the form of major chronological gaps in the Ninevite archival material, particularly the epistolary and administrative texts. And indeed, there are clear chronological gaps in this material, some of which are very interesting indeed<sup>62</sup>. Where are, for instance, the correspondence and administrative files of Sennacherib and (for the period after 645 BC) Assurbanipal? Sticking to the conclusion that the royal libraries and archives were conjoined, I find it hard to believe that they could still be found in some unexcavated corner of the SW or North Palaces<sup>63</sup>. But if they are not to be found in these palaces, they are very unlikely to ever turn up in Nineveh at all, and how does this square up with the fact that at least Sennacherib indisputably spent most of his reign in Nineveh? I have earlier argued<sup>64</sup> that the only thinkable explanation is that the archives of Sennacherib were purposely destroyed already in antiquity, and find this conclusion only strengthened by the analysis of the Rm 2 and 83-1-18 subcollections. Does the same explanation also apply to the post-645 Assurbanipal archives, or did this monarch actually late in his reign shift his residence outside Nineveh, perhaps to Harran<sup>65</sup>? There is no way of knowing at

<sup>61</sup> This explains why parts of Sargon's correspondence and administrative archives were found in Calah.

<sup>62</sup> It is unfortunately not possible to pursue this matter in any detail here; see provisionally *ARINH* (1981), 119 ff. and *AOAT* 5/2 (1983), XII ff. and 411-427. The major gaps are: 1) the reign of Sennacherib, ca. 704-682 (only legal documents); 2) ca. 664-659 and 656-653 (legal documents only); 3) ca. 645-615 (legal documents and sporadic letters and royal grants only). In addition, there are conspicuously few Assyrian letters and no Assyrian reports and oracle queries from the early part of the reign of Esarhaddon (ca. 681-675). I don't know how to convincingly explain the latter fact; cf. Aro, *CRR* 14 (1966), 112.

<sup>63</sup> The impression one gets from the available evidence is that the papyrus and parchment archives of the SW Palace were located in the “Papyrus Room” (n. 19) and that all clay tablets and writing boards belonging to the royal “library and archive” were likewise (at least in principle) kept in a single place in this palace, the “Chambers of Records” (n. 23). Analogously, the same practice can be posited for the North Palace. Why should the letters of Sennacherib have been kept separate from those of Esarhaddon and Assurbanipal, while e.g. the legal documents from the reigns of these rulers were certainly kept in the same place?

<sup>64</sup> *ARINH* (1981), 120.

<sup>65</sup> Cf. R. C. Thompson, *AAA* 20 (1933), 110 ff.

present. In any case, the likely fate of Sennacherib's archives implies that the royal archives must have been carefully ordered chronologically; otherwise it would be impossible to see (knowing the difficulties involved in the dating of Assyrian letters and administrative documents) how the destroyers could have been so thorough in their work.

The present article is not the place for a comprehensive, interpretive survey of the (extant remains) of the royal archives of Nineveh. The subject is simply too vast and complicated for a brief paper like this. What I have tried to do here is to stress the complex archival background of the Kuyunjik archival/non-literary texts and to suggest a new approach by which the bulk of the extant material could be reduced to two originally distinct royal archives. I would like to emphasize once again that these two archives (or the pitiful remnants of them) are not by any means to be regarded as the state archives of the Sargonid empire. Vast amounts of documents written on papyrus, leather and waxed writing-boards and kept in separate archives have been destroyed, and again vast amounts of archival clay documents have either been destroyed or deposited in other archives, many of which certainly have not yet been detected. However, even the extant remains of the two Ninevite royal archives are an exceedingly rich source of information on the Sargonid empire. Since many of these texts are either undated or badly broken, a recognition of their archival connections is of vital importance and often the only way of regaining their historical context. I hope the present article has provided some clues that will prove helpful in this respect<sup>66</sup>.

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<sup>66</sup> These clues should prove valuable particularly in the analysis of the Kuyunjik administrative texts. As pointed out above (n. 29), most of these texts are undated and have remained undatable for lack of other tangible chronological evidence. The 83-1-18 subcollection alone contains 32 such (previously) undatable texts, which now can be immediately assigned to the reigns of Esarhaddon and/or Assurbanipal. Further analysis will establish more precise dates for individual texts and lead to the isolation of various dating criteria, with the help of which the chronology of the Kuyunjik administrative texts can hopefully some day be reliably reconstructed. Just one example to illustrate the new possibilities opened up by the archival approach to the 83-1-18 and Rm 2 collections. *ADD* 855 (K 8093) + Rm 2,23 is a document itemizing contingents of the Assyrian army; the extant portion of the text alone lists more than 30,000 troops of various kinds and derivation. This important document, probably drawn up immediately before a major campaign, can now with great probability be dated to the reign of Sargon, however only on the archival evidence discussed in this article. The personal names and the orthography of the text support the dating but would not alone make it but a possibility among others.

## NEO-ASSYRIAN LEGAL ARCHIVES IN THE KOUYUNJIK COLLECTION<sup>1</sup>

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Neo-Assyrian legal documents in the Kouyunjik Collection belong to some of the earliest publications in Assyriology. Already in 1866, Edwin Norris published eleven texts in Henry Creswicke Rawlinson's *The Cuneiform Inscriptions of Western Asia*, Volume II (London). An additional thirty-seven tablets were edited by George Smith in Rawlinson's third volume<sup>2</sup>.

Publications of Neo-Assyrian legal material continued throughout the 19th century by Jules Oppert und Joachim Ménant, Rudolph Ernst Brünnow, Charles Melchior de Vogüé, James Alexander Craig, and Felix E. Peiser<sup>3</sup>.

In 1898, Claude Herman Walter Johns published the first volume of his *Assyrian Deeds and Documents* (Cambridge). The actual title of the work is: *Assyrian Deeds and Documents, recording the transfer of property, the so-called private contracts, legal decisions and proclamations, preserved in the Kouyunjik Collections of the British Museum, chiefly of the 17th Century B.C..* With the appearance of the second volume of ADD in 1901, the majority of the Neo-Assyrian legal documents were available in copy. As the title of the book implies, the texts were arranged according to their business and legal contents and this is the arrangement that almost all editors of the Neo-Assyrian legal material have employed. In 1913, J. Kohler and A. Ungnad published their *Assyrische Rechtsurkunden* (Leipzig). The texts were collated, transliterated, and translated into German. The documents were arranged according to well defined and exact legal categories. This treatment has remained the standard work of Neo-Assyrian legal texts. In 1976, J.N. Postgate's *Fifty Neo-Assyrian Legal Documents* (Warminster) appeared. The documents, not only from the Kouyunjik Collection, were divided according to their business and legal character. The only exceptions to categorizing texts according to their legal contents were the works of

<sup>1</sup> The paper is based on the author's 1982 dissertation and forthcoming edition: *Neo-Assyrian Legal Documents in the Kouyunjik Collection*. This paper is limited to a discussion of basic observations concerning the Neo-Assyrian legal material in the Kouyunjik Collection. Many points will be elucidated in the above-mentioned study.

<sup>2</sup> *The Cuneiform Inscriptions of Western Asia*, vol. III (London, 1870).

<sup>3</sup> J. Oppert-J. Ménant, *Documents Juridiques de l'Assyrie et de la Chaldée* (Paris, 1877); R. E. Brünnow, *ZA* 3 (1888) 238; J. A. Craig, *Assyrian and Babylonian Religious Texts*, 2 (Leipzig, 1897) 20; F. E. Peiser, *KB* 4. *Texte juristischen und geschäftlichen Inhalts* (Berlin, 1896).

James Henry Stevenson and Louis Delaporte<sup>4</sup>. These editions were concerned solely with documents which contained Aramaic notes. In 1979, Simo Parpola published collations to Johns' ADD<sup>5</sup>. These are an important contribution to the study of the legal material as they demonstrate the need for a new text edition.

Of the circa 600+ Neo-Assyrian legal tablets and fragments housed in the Kouyunjik Collection of the British Museum, there are about 200 archives. The oldest archive can be dated to the year 786 B.C. and the latest belong to the post-canonical period and thus the texts span at least 174 years. The majority of documents, which can be dated, fall in the 7th century B.C.. The largest archive belongs to Rēmanni-Adad and contains some 53 tablets. The next archive according to size contains 24 texts and the remaining archives are all considerably smaller. There are five archives with 10-20 documents, 13 with 3-8, and 20 with 2 texts. This means that there are over 150 archives with just one text. The single document archive is one of the most important features of the legal material in the Kouyunjik Collection.

The relationship between single and multi-text archives is 3:1. This relationship may have to be modified in the light that about 20 % of the material can not be put into archives and there are a considerable number of texts which have only partially preserved personal names. Besides this, the reason for the large number of single document archives may be due to archeological accident, but it should be made a point of consideration that there were individuals with only one written business or legal document.

In dealing with the tablets of the Kouyunjik Collection, it should not be assumed that they all originated in Ninua. There are at least two reasons for this situation: 1) "contamination" of the Collection through tablets not excavated at Kouyunjik<sup>7</sup>; 2)

<sup>4</sup> J.H. Stevenson, *Assyrian and Babylonian Contracts with Aramaic Reference Notes* (New York, 1902); L. Delaporte, *Épigraphes araméens. Études des textes araméens gravés ou écrits sur des tablettes cunéiformes* (Paris, 1912).

<sup>5</sup> S. Parpola, 'Collations to Neo-Assyrian Legal Texts from Nineveh', *Aššur* 2/5 (1979).

<sup>6</sup> In 1925-6 additional texts to ADD were published in *AJSL* 42. In 1970, J.N. Postgate published: 'More Assyrian Deeds and Documents', *Iraq* 32. These texts have not been included in the present discussion. It is beyond the scope of this paper to discuss terminology. However, the use of the word archive is similar to the words dossier and file — a collection of documents classified according to specific criteria. Actually, the word archive is used only in the plural in English. Despite this, Elsevier's *Lexicon of Archive Terminology* (Amsterdam, London, New York, 1964) lists the word in the singular. It defines "archives" as follows: "Les Archives sont l'ensemble des documents reçus ou élaborés par une personne physique ou morale, publique ou privée et destinée par leur nature à être conservés par cette personne même". (*op. cit.* 33 No. 90).

<sup>7</sup> At least two tablets are designated as not originating in Kouyunjik: Rm. 2, 21, which has Sherif Khan (Tarbišu) written on it, and 79-7-8, 287, which has the abbreviation N.Y. (Nebi Yunis). These cases are incidental. In how many cases tablets were procured for the British Museum outside of Kouyunjik and not registered will probably never be determined. There are also the inscriptions of Tiglath-Pileser III, which were excavated at Nimrud, but given the signatures K. 3751 and Dt. 3. I have the impression that a good many tablets among the legal material, which can be identified as coming

non-Ninua legal texts through tablets not excavated in antiquity. For the large amount of non-Ninua texts among the legal material in antiquity an answer may be sought in the professions of the archive owners. The largest archives belong to members of the royal chariotry. Obviously, these people were often located outside of Ninua as the documents attest.

It should be noted that some texts have been published with the automatic assumption that they are from Ninua. This is the case with V. Scheil, who published in *RA* 24 (1927) a number of Neo-Assyrian legal documents and assumed that they came from Ninua. From the prosopography and professions of the persons in these documents it is quite clear that these texts are from Aššur<sup>8</sup>.

Besides the place names mentioned in the texts, documents can be localized roughly according to penalty clauses where a divine name and locality are mentioned. The information which emerges, at present, is as follows: 1 text from the region of Dur-Enlil, 1 from Dur-Šarrukin, 10 from Ḫarran, 1 from Ḫuzirina, 33 from Kalḫu, 5 from Kalzi, 12 from Aššur, and 2 from Laḫiru<sup>9</sup>.

The archive of Rēmanni-Adad, as stated above, contains some 53 tablets. Approximately 13 % of the documents have duplicates. Rēmanni-Adad is *mukīl appāte* to Esarhaddon and *mukīl appāte dannu* to Aššurbanipal. His earliest dated text is from 671 B.C. and the latest is from 660 B.C.. 16 other archives can be dated to this time. This means that half of Rēmanni-Adad's archive can be dated and this results in 11 years of business activity.

The majority of texts are sales documents: 14 concern the purchase of slaves, 12 concern purchase of land, and 8 concern mixed purchases of land and people. 5 documents are loans: 2 dealing with animals and 3 with silver. Unfortunately, not all the documents in this archive can be located. But from those which can be located the texts originate from three provinces: Ḫarran, Raṣappa, and Arrapha. Two tablets can be located as coming from Kalḫu. Rēmanni-Adad's texts are heavily concentrated in the western parts of the Assyrian Empire. This leads to the conclusion that a large amount of non-Ninua texts in antiquity must be ascribed to the profession of the *mukīl appāte* and his entourage<sup>10</sup>.

from Nimrud were excavated there. This could also be the case for Aššur. For the Aššur texts among the legal material cf. K. Deller, 'Drei Wiederentdeckte Neuassyrische Rechtsurkunden aus Aššur', *BagM* 15 (1984) 226 n. 9.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.* 226 ff.

<sup>9</sup> A list of Neo-Assyrian penalty clauses is given in: B. Menzel, *Assyrische Tempel*, 2 (Rome, 1981), T 194 ff. The penalty clauses of Ištar of Arbail are excluded, since this cult was widely spread and does not necessarily indicate the provenience of the text.

<sup>10</sup> The mobility of the *mukīl appāte* can be seen in the case of Rēmanni-Adad, where in a short span of time he purchases property in such disparate and distant places as Ḫarran and Arrapha. This is suspicious and might mean that the purchases are not private, but military. For the standard view cf. *BiOr* 27 (1970), 168 ff.

This causes naturally, a complicated situation for the orthographical and linguistic features of Rēmānni-Adad's archive and the archives concerned with the people of the royal chariotry. Scribes were not part of the permanent entourage. There are no less than 8 scribes attested in Rēmānni-Adad's archive and it can be assumed that the number is higher. We are dealing then to a large extent with provincial features and this would also explain for example the use of Aramaic words and partly the employment of Aramaic captions. It also explains differences in pronunciation as in the name Uarbis/Ubarbis/Uarmeri as well as grammatical inconsistencies — for example the usage of the ending *-e/-i* instead of *-u* for the nominative<sup>11</sup>.

The witness lists of Rēmānni-Adad are generally composed of two parts: one where the standard entourage of Rmānni-Adad is attested and one section where rarely attested witness occur (local inhabitants).

The permanent witnesses vary over the years but are mostly members of the royal chariotry. There are never more than five *mukīl appāte* and six *tašlīšu* attested in a witness list. This perhaps shows that Rēmānni-Adad's unit did not contain more than six chariots.

Of the other archives contained in the Kouyunjik Collection, 16 belong to women. The majority belong to the *šakintu*. But, besides the *šakintu* of Ninua, we have also the archives of the *šakintu* of Aššur, Kalḫu, and Kalzi. The reason for this is unclear, unless we assume that these documents may not have been found at Kouyunjik. The *šakintu* of Ninua between 694 and 681 B.C. is Aḫi-dalli. She has a maximum of 13 texts and some of these are dubious. The witness lists are never the same and the reason for this is that women are never attested as witnesses in Kouyunjik<sup>12</sup>. The proportion of female archives is quite small and besides members of the royal family only palace personnel are attested. Interesting is the designation of the *šakintu* in the archive of Aḫi-dalli. It seems that the logogram MÍ.ERIM.Ē.GAL is the older designation of MÍ.GAR. The suggested reading MÍ.ERIM = *sekretu* is unlikely<sup>13</sup>.

In summary the following points should be noted:

- 1) The Neo-Assyrian legal material in the Kouyunjik Collection has a conspicuous number of single document archives.
- 2) The Kouyunjik Collection contains an inordinate amount of non-Kouyunjik documents for the legal material. In Kalḫu and Aššur foreign (non local) legal texts are rare.
- 3) The reason for the large number of non-Ninua documents in antiquity is due partly to the occupation of the *mukīl appāte* and the professions of the royal chariotry. Because of this situation, the legal documents are often of provincial character, marked with linguistic features of the areas from which they originate.

<sup>11</sup> In dealing with non-Assyrian words, the provenience of the text should always be indicated if possible. The author is preparing a study on the subject.

<sup>12</sup> S. Dalley points out that in CTN 2, No. 19 a woman is attested as a witness. This is unique.

<sup>13</sup> CAD S 215b has taken over MÍ.ERIM.Ē.GAL = *sekretu* without questioning it. The suggestion that MÍ.ERIM.Ē.GAL = *šakintu* will be dealt with in my forthcoming edition.

## LES ARCHIVES INÉDITES D'UN CENTRE PROVINCIAL DE L'EMPIRE ASSYRIEN

PAUL GARELLI (Paris)

Les Musées royaux d'Art et d'Histoire de Bruxelles ont acquis un lot de tablettes, provenant d'une collection privée suisse, constituée il y a une trentaine d'années. Aucune indication précise de provenance n'a été donnée par son propriétaire, qui l'aurait achetée en Turquie ou en Syrie. Ce fonds comprend 24 tablettes araméennes, dont la publication sera assurée par E. Lipinski, ainsi que 35 tablettes néo-assyriennes et néo-babyloniennes, dont D. Homès-Fredericq a bien voulu me confier la publication, elle-même en assumant l'étude iconographique. La grande masse de ces textes, à vrai dire, est assyrienne, trois tablettes seulement étant rédigées en caractères babyloniens, mais deux de ces dernières sont datées, l'une de l'an 25 (sic) de Sennacherib, roi du pays d'Assur, c'est-à-dire de l'année même de la mort de Sennacherib en 681<sup>1</sup>, l'autre de l'éponyme Nabû-bêl-ušur, gouverneur de Dūr-šarrukīn, en 672, sous le règne d'Assarhaddon<sup>2</sup>.

D'une façon générale, ces documents portent une date, car ce sont des actes d'achats de terres ou d'esclaves, des prêts d'argent ou d'orge et des minutes de procès. Seules certaines pièces comptables en sont dépourvues ainsi que quelques tablettes cassées. Mais il n'y en a que sept dans ce cas et on peut les répartir entre les différents groupes, grâce aux noms des personnes mentionnées.

Ces dates s'échelonnent de la manière suivante: 7 tablettes datent du règne de Sennacherib; 4 du règne d'Assarhaddon; 12 du règne d'Assurbanipal; il y en a 1 du règne d'Aššur-eṭel-ilāni et 1 de Sîn-šar-iškun. Une des tablettes sans date pourrait être postcanonique, mais les six autres ont dû être rédigées à l'époque de Sennacherib et d'Assarhaddon. Les tablettes araméennes forment un lot complémentaire, car on retrouve les mêmes personnages que ceux qui figurent sur les tablettes cunéiformes et d'ailleurs celles-ci comportent parfois des graffiti araméens.

Il est extrêmement difficile de préciser le lieu d'origine de ces archives, car les toponymes mentionnés sont inconnus. La ville la plus fréquemment citée et où semblent se dérouler les transactions, est la ville de Mallanat(e), attestée sous les formes suivantes: *Ma-al-la-na-te* (en 686 et 653), *Ma-al-na-a-te* (en 682), *Ma-al-na-*

<sup>1</sup> O 3703: (22) MU.25.KAM (23) <sup>d</sup>30.PAP.MEŠ.SU (24) LUGAL KUR <sup>d</sup>Aš-šur. Apparemment ce texte suit le comput attesté dans d'autres documents, qui font débiter le règne de Sennacherib, non pas en 704, mais en 705: cf. *RIA* 2, 146.

<sup>2</sup> O 3697, 13: šá <sup>uru</sup>URU.BÂD.LUGAL-uk-ki.

'a-te (en 665) et *Ma-al-la-a-nat* (en 652). En araméen, on trouve la forme M<sup>c</sup>LNH, avec un 'ayn correspondant à la coupure *Ma-al-* et une longue à la place de la finale -at(e).

Je m'étais demandé si cette localité ne pouvait pas être identifiée au <sup>kur</sup>*Mal-la-a-nu ša ina qé-reb* <sup>kur</sup>*Ar-qa-ni-a*, mentionné dans les annales d'Aššurnasirpal II et des stèles d'Aššur<sup>3</sup>. Mais, outre qu'il s'agit d'un pays et non d'une ville, E. Lipiński me fait remarquer que la graphie araméenne initiale avec 'ayn peut difficilement être rendue par le signe *mal*, et qu'il serait curieux de voir une finale -(n)u/i ne correspondant pas à la finale araméenne longue -âh, équivalent de l'assyrien -at(e).

Les autres localités mentionnées dans les transactions ne sont pas d'un grand secours. Ce sont vraisemblablement des villages jouxtant certains domaines mentionnés dans les actes de vente: *A-bi-si-te* (O 3690, 1), *A-ku-hi-i* (O 3666 R. 6'), *Hi-ri-ni* (O 3669, 5), *Hu-ru-bi-te* (O 3712, 9), *I-šu-na-a* (O 3682, 6), *Na-bi-hu* (O 3711, 6, 8), *Ni-'i-me-te* (O 3708, 3), *Qa-ia-ni-hu* (O 3666 R. 3') ou *Sa-pa-la-(a)-te* (O 3712, 7, 8).

Le plus utile pour notre propos est la mention de certains sanctuaires, auxquels on devait faire des donations, en cas de rupture de contrat. Sans doute, trouve-t-on quatre allusions à l'Ištar de Ninive (O 3712, 28; O 3683 R. 7; O 3681, 22; O 3680, 20) et une autre à l'Ištar d'Arbèles (O 3708, 25), comme dans beaucoup de contrats de cette époque. Encore convient-il de noter que l'Ištar d'Arbèles avait un sanctuaire à Sopalate: dans la vente d'un champs, situé dans cette localité, le long de la route menant à Hurubite, il est précisé qu'il jouxte également le sanctuaire (*parakku*) de la déesse (O 3712, 10). Il n'est donc pas sûr qu'une donation à l'Ištar d'Arbèles ait impliqué un déplacement dans cette ville lointaine.

Il est surtout instructif de constater que le dieu mentionné aussi souvent que l'Ištar de Ninive est le «dieu Adad résidant à Guzana»<sup>4</sup>, ce qui n'est guère le cas dans les documents de Ninive. Le fait est au contraire attesté dans ceux de Tell Halaf<sup>5</sup>. Si l'on ajoute une allusion similaire au dieu Sîn de Harran<sup>6</sup>, on ne peut se défaire de l'impression que les rédacteurs mentionnaient des sanctuaires proches de leur province.

E. Lipiński me signale que la ville de Harran est aussi attestée dans un texte araméen (O 3648), portant la mention suivante: BTLL ZY QPN HRN. On est tenté d'y voir une allusion au *qipani* de Harran, ce qui inviterait à penser que *qipani* n'est pas ici un nom de pays<sup>7</sup>. Ce serait plutôt le "district" ou la "circonscription" de

<sup>3</sup> Cf. *AKA* 377, III, 101 = K. Grayson, *ARI* 2, 144; stèles 39 et 47.

<sup>4</sup> O 3712, 30; O 3668, 22; O 3705, 18; O 3708, 19: <sup>d</sup>IM *a-šib* <sup>uru</sup>*Gu-za-(a)-na*.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. E. Weidner, *AFO Beih.* 6, TH 106, 17; 3, 5; 70, 1. F. Fales me rappelle qu'il est également mentionné dans le texte de la statue de Tell Fekheriye, I, 7: DIŠ <sup>d</sup>IM...*a-šib* <sup>uru</sup>*Gu-za-ni*.

<sup>6</sup> O 3690, 12: <sup>d</sup>30 *a-šib* <sup>uru</sup>KASKAL.

<sup>7</sup> Cependant tous les exemples cités par F. Fales, *RSO* 45 (1971), 21-28 ne doivent pas être nécessairement envisagés de ce point de vue, en particulier le <sup>kur</sup>*Qi-pa-a-ni*, parallèle au *qa-ni* <sup>uru</sup>KASKAL de F. M. Fales, *Censimenti e Catasti di Epoca Neo-Assira* (= *CCNENA*; Roma, 1973), p. 32.



Harran, Quant à TLL, E. Lipinski songe à le rapprocher de *Tiluli*. Cette ville se trouvait dans le pays de Katmuhi, d'après les annales d'Aššurnāširpal II<sup>8</sup>. Tout ceci pourrait nous ramener dans la région évoquée à propos de Mallanu, même si on ne peut retenir l'équation avec Mallanate. Nous serions dans un secteur s'étendant au Nord d'un axe Harran-Našibina, ce qui expliquerait la proportion massive de noms propres araméens dans les textes de Bruxelles, au moins aussi considérable que dans ceux de Tell Halaf.

D'autres tablettes provenant de collections privées pourraient être rattachées à ce lot de Bruxelles. Le cas est assuré pour la tablette de Peter Franke, publiée par J. N. Postgate dans *Iraq*, 35 (1973), 35, PL. XII n° 6. C'est une avance de 10 *imēru* d'orge, capital (SAG.DU) de <sup>m</sup>KASKAL-*a-a*, lu par J. N. Postgate *Hulāya*, à deux personnes nommées Ahiābi (PAP-*ia-AD*) et Adad-nadir (U-*na-dir*) du village de Qaštu (<sup>uru</sup>BAN-*a-a*).

Or la tablette O 3693 de Bruxelles a la teneur suivante: «(1) Sceau de <sup>m</sup>U-*na-dir* (2) de <sup>uru</sup>BAN (3) 4 *imēru* d'orge, capital (SA [G.DU]) (4) de <sup>m</sup>KASKAL-*a-a* (5) à disposition de <sup>m</sup>U-*na-dir* (6) il a pris en échange» (*ana pūhi ittišī*). Suit la mention du taux d'intérêt, une allusion à 4 moissonneurs non nommés, le témoin *Ha-la-rim* et la date de l'éponyme *ša-d*<sup>PA</sup>-[*šu*]. Si c'est bien *ša Nabû-šu*, la document daterait de 658. Mais un graffite araméen sur la tablette montre que les noms doivent être lus, non pas *Hulāya*, ni *Adad-nadir*, mais *Harranaiu* et *Adad-nadan*.

Dans son commentaire, J. N. Postgate remarquait: «since the name of the village does not occur elsewhere, we have no means of determining the text's provenance». Nous pouvons dire maintenant qu'il est à rattacher au groupe de Mallanate. La localité de <sup>uru</sup>BAN est attestée dans une autre tablette de Bruxelles (O 3699), de l'éponyme Nabû-šar-ušur (682), enregistrant des avances d'orge provenant de <sup>m</sup>Sa-ka-a-MAN et <sup>m</sup>DINGIR-*ha-ri*, 2 *imēru* de <sup>uru</sup>BAN-*a-a*, faites par <sup>m</sup>Ha-ma-na-ni *ša* <sup>uru</sup>BAN à <sup>m</sup>A-za-ri-ia-u *ša* <sup>uru</sup>BAN. Le témoin est <sup>m</sup>U.KI-*ia* A <sup>m</sup>Na-ni-*i*.

Bien qu'elle n'offre pas de parallèle aussi précis, une tablette de la collection Borowski, publiée par K. Grayson dans O. W. Muscarella (ed.), *Ladders to Heaven* (Toronto, 1981) 126-7, n° 84, pourrait avoir la même origine, à en juger par les noms des personnes et des divinités mentionnées. Il est typique, en effet, d'y trouver une allusion au dieu Adad de Guzana, qui est la divinité la plus fréquemment citée dans les tablettes de Bruxelles. Et la moitié des noms propres figurent dans ces tablettes. Ce sont l'éponyme de 630 *Adad-rēm-a-ni*, *Na-ni* (à Bruxelles *Na-ni-i*), *Si-ir-nu-ri*<sup>9</sup>, *Adad-nadin-apli*<sup>10</sup>, *Kur-ila-aia*<sup>11</sup>, *Ha-la-rim*<sup>12</sup> *Adad-issi-ia*<sup>13</sup>, *Adad-ra-*

<sup>8</sup> Cf. K. Grayson, *ARI* 2 133 = *AKA* 2 87. F. Fales se demande si TLL ne serait pas le *Tihulina/ni* (*CCENA* p. 28) qui est *qa-ni* <sup>uru</sup>KASKAL dans *CCENA* 3 R I, 5.

<sup>9</sup> O 3666, 6: <sup>m</sup>Si-ir-ZALAG<sub>2</sub>-*i*; O 3705, 7, 15: <sup>m</sup>Si-ir-nu-*ri*; O 3701, 3, 5, 7: <sup>m</sup>Si-*i-ri*-ZALAG<sub>2</sub>; O 3668, 8, 18: <sup>m</sup>dŠe-er-nu-*ri*; O 3691, 1: <sup>m</sup>dBU(*šir*)-ZALAG<sub>2</sub>.

<sup>10</sup> O 3708, 29: <sup>m</sup>U.AŠ.A.

<sup>11</sup> O 3692, 14; O 3701, 16: <sup>m</sup>Kur-il-*a-a*. Sur la lecture, cf. M. Stolper, *AfO* 27 (1980), 85, n. 7.

<sup>12</sup> Correction suggérée par F. Fales. Cf. O 3685, 30, 45; O 3708, 31: <sup>m</sup>Ha-la-rim.

<sup>13</sup> O 3606 R. 9'; O 3705, 23: <sup>m</sup>U.KI-*a*; O 3699, 6: <sup>m</sup>U.KI-*a* A <sup>m</sup>Na-ni-*i*.

*hi-me*<sup>14</sup> et *Nūr-ili*<sup>15</sup>. Nous pouvons donc accroître, semble-t-il, le lot d'archives de deux documents.

Le nature des textes et l'abondance des noms propres araméens évoque le milieu de Tell Halaf et, comme sur les 20 tablettes néo-assyriennes publiées par E.

Weidner, 8 n'ont pas été retrouvées sur le site, mais ont été achetées aux environs et sont de provenance inconnue, il était nécessaire de les comparer aux tablettes de Bruxelles, pour voir si nous ne pouvions établir un fonds d'archives commun. La réponse paraît négative. Sur 272 noms propres répertoriés dans les tablettes de Bruxelles, il n'y en a que 37 identiques à ceux de Tell Halaf. Sur ce nombre, 17 sont attestés dans les tablettes néo-assyriennes de Tell Halaf. Et seulement 4 figurent dans le lot d'origine inconnue publié par Weidner. Ce sont: *Ahī-nūrī* (TH 108, 19; 114, 4), *Ṣalam-šarri-iqbi* (TH 108, 21); *Na-ni-i* père de *Bēl barak* (TH 111, 3) et *Nūrānu* (TH 114, 11).

Parmi les parsonnages des tablettes de Bruxelles, ceux qui sont le plus souvent cités sont <sup>m</sup>*Ha-an-di-i*, son fils <sup>m</sup>*KASKAL-a-a* et le <sup>m</sup>*Si-ir-nu-ri* précédemment évoqué sous des graphies diverses (note 9). Il y a tout lieu de croire que ces tablettes constituaient leurs archives, soit à titre personnel, soit au titre des fonctions qu'ils exerçaient.

Handī est en effet désigné comme <sup>lū</sup>*GAR-nu ša É.GAL* dans un acte de 686 (O 3682), par lequel il achète deux terrains de 4 *imērū* dans Mallanate, à un certain Adad-eriba. Parmi les témoins figure le *hazānu* de la ville, qui s'appelait <sup>m</sup>*Sa-la-manu*. Dans un acte de 682 (O 3685), concernant la mise en gage d'une partie d'un champ vendu par un certain *Nūrānu*, l'un des témoins est *Harranaiu* fils de *Handī* <sup>lū</sup>*GAR-nu*. Dans les autres tablettes, son titre n'est pas précisé. Il y en a 16 en tout, couvrant les règnes de Sennacherib et d'Assarhaddon, parmi lesquelles figurent les trois tablettes écrites en signes babyloniens, où son nom est écrit <sup>m</sup>*Ha-an-di-ia*. Il semble que cette finale en *-ia* soit systématique en babylonien, car on y trouve mentionné un certain <sup>m</sup>*Na-ni-ia*, attesté dans les documents assyriens de la même époque, sous la forme <sup>m</sup>*Na-ni-i*.

J'ignore ce qu'il faut entendre exactement par *šaknu ša ekallim*. Peut-être s'agit-il de l'administration du palais local. Mais le titre peut avoir la portée très générale de «responsable», comme on le voit pour un autre *šaknu*, mentionné dans ses archives: il s'agit d'un certain <sup>m</sup>*Sa-'a-te-DINGIR*, témoin dans un acte d'achat d'esclaves effectué par Handī en 670 (O 3709, 18). C'était peut-être un de ses subordonnés, mais rien ne prouve qu'il ait été aussi affecté au palais.

Il faut noter, toutefois, que dans un acte d'achat d'esclaves de 687, parmi les contestataires éventuels, énumérés suivant les formules qui permettent de reconstituer en partie le passage cassé, on précise: (14) [*man-nu*] *ša* (15) [*de-e-n*]u KA.KA [*it-*

<sup>14</sup> O 3682, 27: <sup>m</sup>*dIM-ra-hi-me*.

<sup>15</sup> O 3690, 17: <sup>m</sup>*ZALĀG-DINGIR*; O 3685, 47: N. fils de <sup>m</sup>*Ha-la-rim*; O 3705, 27.

ti] (16) [<sup>m</sup>Ha-an-d]i-i ù [DUMU.MEŠ-šú] (17) [ ] ù <sup>lú</sup>ER[IN].M[AN] (18) [ub-ta-ú-ni] ... Peut-être a-t-il exercé des fonctions militaires. Mais, dans l'ensemble, on le voit procéder deux fois à des achats de terres et six fois à des achats d'exclaves. Une fois il contracte un emprunt de 42 sicles d'argent, mais il en prête également et la tablette babylonienne de 681 (O 3703) enregistre la fin d'un différend qui l'avait opposé à un certain <sup>m</sup>Bu-ú-šu.

Quant à Harranaiū, rien ne prouve qu'il ait exercé les mêmes fonctions que son père. Il n'est désigné par aucun titre et l'on précise simplement, dans un acte de 665 (O 3702) qu'il est de la ville de Mallanate (TA ŠĀ <sup>uru</sup>M.), lorsque son fils <sup>m</sup>Ha-na-na emprunte 11 sicles d'argent à un certain Buzā. A partir de cette date, jusqu'en 655, alors que Handī a disparu de la scène, c'est Harraniū qui est le plus souvent mentionné. Il effectue des prêts d'argent ou d'orge, peut-être au profit du temple local de l'Ištar d'Arbèles.

Quatre documents des années 653, 652, 649 et 636 mettent en scène des individus aux noms les plus divers, sens qu'on puisse dégager une personnalité marquante, ni les rattacher aux archives antérieures ou postérieures. Mais à partir de 631 et jusqu'en 622, c'est Šēr-nūrī qui est le personnage principal, soit qu'il achète des terres ou des esclaves, soit qu'il prête de l'argent. Pas plus que Harranaiū, il ne semble avoir été šaknu, titre attribué à un certain Mušēzib-Nabū en 629 (O 3691, 17: GAR-nu). Mais dans les textes araméens, il semble en relation avec le temple d'Adad et l'on peut se demander s'il n'en a pas été un administrateur.

A supposer que les hypothèses concernant les deux derniers personnages principaux soient exactes, nous disposerions d'archives concernant le palais de Mallanate et les temples d'Ištar et d'Adad, ou d'individus ayant profité de leurs fonctions dans ces organismes, pour développer leurs avoirs personnels.

Quand on examine les fonctions exercées par certains témoins, on est frappé par la mention d'officiels au service de la reine ou du prince héritier. Dans l'acte de vente de terres O 3685 de 682, les témoins Nanī et Adad-hari sont İR šā MÍ.É.GAL (27-28), Ahu-ilāia est İR ša DUMU MAN (29). A leur côtés figurent quatre personnes sans titres et le texte récapitule: «en tout 7 témoins de la ville de Mallanate»<sup>16</sup>. Ou bien les trois premiers personnages étaient des officiels de la cour de passage dans leur ville d'origine, ou bien la reine et le prince héritier, en l'occurrence Zakūtu et peut-être Assarhaddon, disposaient d'une résidence à Mallanate. On peut dès lors se demander si ce n'est pas la région où se serait réfugié Assarhaddon, après l'assassinat de son père. En outre, un témoin d'un acte de 687 est un «chef panetier de la reine»<sup>17</sup>. Et dans un texte postérieur de 629, du règne d'Aššur-eṭel-ilāni, figure un «Adad-rāmu tašlišu de la reine»<sup>18</sup>.

<sup>16</sup> L. 32: PAP 7 IGI.MEŠ URU Ma-la-na-a-te.

<sup>17</sup> O 3680, 25: GAL.NINDA.MEŠ šā MÍ.É.GAL.

<sup>18</sup> O 3691, 3: IGI <sup>m</sup>U-ra-a-mu LÚ 3-šú MÍ.É.GAL.

Il est intéressant de noter qu'un «troisième homme» (LÚ.3.U<sub>5</sub>) est associé à un «second» (LÚ.2.ú) dans l'acte de vente de terres O 3712, datant de 697. Ils étaient peut-être les deux adjoints du gouverneur palatin, en l'occurrence Handī. On sait que le *tašlišu* est souvent mentionné dans des unités de chars à côté du *mukil appāte* et l'on trouve des personnages de ce titre dans nos textes, notamment les actes de vente d'esclaves O 3680, daté de 687, et O 3683 de 675. Mais il y en a un autre désigné comme *mukil appāte ša dunāni* (O 3704, 23) dans un document de 653. Des palefreniers figurent dans les actes de 697 (O 3712, 37: LÚ.GIŠ.GIGIR) et de 687 (O 3680, 26: EN GIŠ.GIGIR) et l'un d'eux est palefrenier du roi<sup>19</sup>. Un chef des attelages du palais figure dans le texte de 697<sup>20</sup>. On trouve aussi des membres des corps de garde *ša šēpē*<sup>21</sup>, et des commandants d'unités de cinquante, *rab haššā*<sup>22</sup> et naturellement des messagers<sup>23</sup>. Dans un jugement rendu par un *ša rēši* (O 3686), un certain <sup>m</sup>*Am-ra-a-mu* doit amener à Ninive 7 Gurréens<sup>24</sup>. Parfois il est aussi question d'Ituéens (O 3696, 11, 13).

Semblables relations avec la capitale et les villes principales de l'empire sont attestées à plusieurs reprises. Indépendamment de celles qu'impliquent les allusions à la reine et au prince héritier, on voit dans un texte de 752 Harranaiu fils de Handī garantissant une dette de 9 sicles d'argent fin, contractée par le *rab alāni ša bēl pāhite ša Dūr-šarrukīn* (O 2606, 1, 6). On trouve aussi un homme dépendant du *sukkallu* dans un texte de 649<sup>25</sup>.

Parmi les employés subalternes, on trouve un percepteur (EN *na-še-e*), un marchand (DAM.GĀR : O 3680, 29), un orfèvre (LÚ.SIMUG KÙ GI : O 3701, 1), un tisserand (LÚ.UŠ.BAR : O 3705, 29), un apprenti (LÚ *tar-bi-u* : O 3680, 30), un panetier (LÚ.NINDA : O 3690, 16), un conducteur LÚ.UŠ : O 3698, 3), un jardinier NU.KIRI<sub>6</sub> : O 3705, 30), des bergers (LÚ.SÍB : O 3682, 28; O 3685, 36). Quant aux scribes, ils sont désignés une fois comme DUB.SAR (O 3697, 7, 10), généralement comme A.BA<sup>26</sup> et, dans un texte babylonien, comme LÚ.ŠID (O 2703, 20). Un employé(?) du temple d'Adad est mentionné dans un texte de 622<sup>27</sup>. Enfin, détail intéressant, nous savons qu'en 686, le *hazānu* de Mallanate s'appelait <sup>m</sup>*Sa-la-ma-nu* (O 3682, 24: cf. plus haut p. 244). C'est toute l'organisation d'un centre provincial de l'empire assyrien que nous révèle ce lot d'archives.

<sup>19</sup> O 3704, 20: LÚ.GIŠ.GIGIR *ša* MAN (en 653). Sur la traduction du titre, cf. S. Parpola, *JCS* 21 (1976), 172.

<sup>20</sup> O 3712, 36: <sup>m</sup>*Qa-ta-a* LÚ.GAL *ú-ra-at ša pa-<ni>ša* Ê.GAL.

<sup>21</sup> O 3686, 16-18 (630); O 3691, 12 (629): LÚ *ša* GĪR.

<sup>22</sup> O 3690, 14 (649); O 3686, 20 (630).

<sup>23</sup> O 3683, R. 18, 21; O 3666, R. 7: LÚ A.SIG.

<sup>24</sup> L. 8: PAP 7 LÚ.ERĪN.MEŠ LÚ *Gur-ra-a-a*.

<sup>25</sup> O 3690, 16: *Di-ni-me ša* SUKKAL.

<sup>26</sup> O 3711, 21; O 3682, 29; O 3712, 45; O 3668, 37; O 3681, 31.

<sup>27</sup> O 3705, 32: <sup>m</sup>*U-im-me ša* Ê.<sup>d</sup>IM.

LA GLYPTIQUE DES ARCHIVES INEDITES  
D'UN CENTRE PROVINCIAL DE L'EMPIRE ASSYRIEN  
AUX MUSEES ROYAUX D'ART ET D'HISTOIRE, BRUXELLES

DENYSE HOMÈS-FREDERICQ (Brussel)

Les Musées royaux d'Art et d'Histoire ont acquis en 1972 deux lots de tablettes: ils se composaient des vingt-quatre textes araméens<sup>1</sup> que Monsieur Lipiński et moi-même vous avons présentés à la Rencontre Assyriologique de Göttingen<sup>2</sup>, ainsi que de quarante-neuf autres<sup>3</sup>, écrits en cunéiformes.

Monsieur P. Garelli, que nous tenons à remercier ici pour sa collaboration, a examiné les textes cunéiformes et vérifié si la plupart appartenaient, comme nous le supposions, aux mêmes archives que les araméennes<sup>4</sup>.

L'hypothèse que les deux groupes avaient principalement une même origine, nous avait été suggérée par les faits suivants:

1. Les deux lots, composés chacun de textes araméens et cunéiformes, parfois avec une glyptique identique, avaient été achetés à quelques mois d'intervalle à deux antiquaires qui se connaissaient. Tout laisse supposer que ces marchands se sont partagé, en amis, une même trouvaille, complétée de quelques tablettes éparses récoltées dans la région d'origine. Ils ont vraisemblablement réparti les textes de manière arbitraire dans les deux lots en espérant que l'écoulement des pièces se ferait ainsi plus facilement.
2. L'origine, peu précise, donnée pour les deux achats était la même: soit le nord de la Syrie, soit le sud-est de la Turquie (c'est à dire la région de Harran).
3. L'aspect «physique» des tablettes était presque identique: les documents araméens et cunéiformes étaient rectangulaires ou triangulaires et présentaient pour

<sup>1</sup> Numéros d'inventaire: 0.3645 à 0.3659; 0.3670 à 0.3673; 0.3713 à 0.3717.

<sup>2</sup> D. Homès-Fredericq, «Glyptique sur les tablettes araméennes des Musées royaux d'Art et d'Histoire», *RA* 70 (1976), 57-70, 4 fig.; Les communications suivantes ont été présentées par E. Lipiński, «Les tablettes araméennes de Bruxelles». in A. Caquot éd., *Etudes Sémitiques* (Actes du XXIX<sup>e</sup> Congrès international des orientalistes, Paris 1975), 25-29; Idem, «Textes juridiques et économiques de l'époque sargonide», *Acta Antiqua Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 22 (1974 = *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft im Alten Vorderasien*, Budapest 1976), 373-384; Idem, «Les temples néo-assyriens et les origines du monnayage», in E. Lipiński éd., *State and Temple Economy in the Ancient Near East II* (*OLA* 6; Leuven 1979), 565-588. Les tablettes de Bruxelles ayant été nettoyées en 1977 certaines amélioration de lecture (surtout de noms propres) ont pu être apportées.

<sup>3</sup> 0.3660 à 0.3669; 0.3674 à 0.3712.

<sup>4</sup> Quelques tablettes dataient de l'époque «cappadocienne» (0.3674 à 0.3679) et ne faisaient pas partie des mêmes archives, constituées par les textes 0.3660 à 0.3669; 0.3680 à 0.3712.

la plupart la couleur brun-chamois, normale pour l'argile, tandis qu'un certain nombre d'autres textes avaient été brûlés dans l'Antiquité<sup>5</sup>.

4. L'écriture des tablettes araméennes correspondaient au ductus du 7<sup>e</sup> s.av.J.-C., celle des cunéiformes répondait à la tradition néo-assyrienne de la même époque.

Monsieur Lipiński avait pu établir que les tablettes araméennes avaient une même provenance: certains toponymes et quelques noms propres (noms de villes, d'éponymes, de vendeurs ou de témoins) étaient pareils dans les deux groupes. De même, la glyptique confirmait l'hypothèse d'une même origine puisqu'un cachet des archives de Sēr-nūri<sup>6</sup> apparaissait identique dans les deux lots.

Si les tablettes araméennes avaient vraisemblablement une origine commune, il s'agissait de vérifier si les textes cunéiformes appartenaient aux mêmes archives.

Nous savions au départ

1. que les tablettes cunéiformes se trouvaient réparties dans les deux lots;
2. que leur provenance était la même (région de Harran);
3. que les tablettes noircies pouvaient avoir été brûlées dans un même incendie ou une même catastrophe que les araméennes;
4. que la glyptique sur les actes cunéiformes correspondait tout à fait aux traditions du 7<sup>e</sup> s.

L'analyse des textes que M. Garelli vient de commenter confirme cette même origine des archives. Ces écrits sont d'autant plus intéressants que datés avec précision, ce qui permet de les classer chronologiquement du début à la fin du 7<sup>e</sup> s. av.J.-C. Par analogie, ils permettent de préciser l'époque à laquelle les tablettes araméennes ont été rédigées, puisque les noms de Handi, Harranaiu et Sēr-nūri reviennent dans les deux types d'écriture. Enfin, ils sont particulièrement utiles pour l'étude de la glyptique, que l'on reconnaissait appartenir aux 8<sup>e</sup>-7<sup>e</sup> s., mais que l'on peut maintenant limiter au 7<sup>e</sup>.

Les textes nous apprennent que les archives cunéiformes (et par conséquent araméennes) ont été constituées au 7<sup>e</sup> s. par:

1. Handi, vivant à l'époque de Sennacherib (704-681) et d'Assarhaddon (681-669).
2. Son fils Harranaiu, à l'époque d'Assourbanipal (669-630)<sup>8</sup>.

<sup>5</sup> Actuellement les tablettes ont perdu l'aspect noirâtre que certaines avaient à l'origine, car toutes ont été recuites et restaurées dans le laboratoire du «Department of Western Asiatic Antiquities» du British Museum. Nous tenons à remercier Messieurs R. Barnett et E. Sollberger, qui ont permis que tous les textes y soient traités, garantissant ainsi leur conservation dans le futur.

<sup>6</sup> 0.3656; 0.3715; 0.3716.

<sup>7</sup> Lu sur les tablettes araméennes en 1976: Hday (*Hdy*). Les tablettes suivantes appartiennent aux archives de Handi (sous les règnes de Sennacherib et d'Assarhaddon): 0.3660; 0.3680 à 0.3683; 0.3685; 0.3687; 0.3689; 0.3697 à 0.3699; 0.3703; 0.3707 à 0.3709; 0.3712.

<sup>8</sup> Lu sur les tablettes araméennes Harranay (*Hrny*). Numéros d'inventaire: 0.3669; 0.3688; 0.3690; 0.3692 à 0.3694; 0.3696; 0.3700; 0.3702; 0.3704; 0.3710; 0.3711.

3. Leur successeur Sēr-nūrī à l'époque postcanonique (630-612)<sup>9</sup>.

Tout comme les textes araméens, les documents cunéiformes sont d'ordre juridique (ventes de terre ou d'esclaves, avance d'orge et actes de comptabilité divers).

Leur formes sont semblables quoique les tablettes araméennes étaient principalement triangulaires (22 pour 2 rectangulaires). L'ensemble cunéiforme comprend par contre 29 exemplaires rectangulaires<sup>10</sup>, une enveloppe<sup>11</sup> et trois «dockets» triangulaires, dont l'un porte en outre une ligne en araméen<sup>12</sup>.

Nous pouvons donc étudier la glyptique des tablettes araméennes et cunéiformes comme un ensemble.

A. *Les empreintes araméennes* ont été montrées dans un tableau récapitulatif à la RAI de Göttingen<sup>13</sup>. On constatait que:

1. Les tablettes araméennes avaient été légalisées par

- 15 empreintes de cachets<sup>14</sup>;
- 3 empreintes de cylindres<sup>15</sup>;
- 3 impressions d'ongles<sup>16</sup>;
- 3 estampages de coquillages cypraea et trivia<sup>17</sup>

2. Les thèmes étaient d'inspiration variée

a) Les cylindres, qui appartiennent aux archives de Handi (début du 7<sup>e</sup> s.), sont d'inspiration purement mésopotamienne, ce qui ne doit pas nous étonner dans cette province occidentale de l'empire assyrien. Nous la retrouvons dans le thème de l'adorant devant la marre de Marduk, le calame de Nabu et la déesse Gula trônant sur son chien (0.3714), ainsi que dans le combat du héros contre un animal ailé du style «modelé» (0.3645) ou dans ce fouillis de lignes du style «linéaire» assyrien (0.3673)<sup>18</sup>.

b) Pour les cachets, les influences diverses se remarquent: ceci correspond à une coutume de l'art syrien, où l'on voit un amalgame de sources d'influences puisées dans des cultures diverses<sup>19</sup>.

Certains motifs sont typiques pour la région du Harran:

<sup>9</sup> Lu dans les tablettes araméennes: Šihar-nūrī (*Šhrnwry*). Numéros d'inventaire: 0.3666; 0.3668; 0.3686; 0.3691; 0.3701; 0.3705.

<sup>10</sup> 0.3660; 0.3666; 0.3668; 0.3680 à 0.3683; 0.3685 à 0.3687; 0.3689 à 0.3692; 0.3695 à 0.3697; 0.3699; 0.3701 à 0.3706; 0.3708 à 0.3712.

<sup>11</sup> 0.3702.

<sup>12</sup> 0.3669; 0.3693 (avec une ligne en araméen); 0.3694.

<sup>13</sup> D. Homès-Fredericq, *RA* 70 (1976), fig. 1-4.

<sup>14</sup> 0.3646; 0.3649; 0.3653 à 0.3654; 0.3713; 0.3715 à 0.3717.

<sup>15</sup> 0.3646; 0.3673; 0.3714.

<sup>16</sup> 0.3652 à 0.3655; 0.3670.

<sup>17</sup> 0.3658 à 0.3659; 0.3671.

<sup>18</sup> D. Homès-Fredericq, *RA* 70 (1976), 65-68.

<sup>19</sup> Idem, 60-68.

- Le quadrupède avec croissant de lune (0.3656; 0.3715 à 0.3716), provenant des archives de Sēr-nūri (fin du 7<sup>e</sup> s.) répond à un thème néo-assyrien et néo-babylonien, mais également nord syrien, car les éléments de comparaison les plus proches doivent être cherchés sur les cachets conservés à l'Ashmolean Museum, qui ont été achetés dans la région d'Antioche et dans le nord de la Syrie<sup>20</sup>;
- Le croissant de lune (0.3653; 0.3654), attesté dans ces mêmes archives de Sēr-nūri, se retrouve souvent dans la glyptique néo-assyrienne, mais est très fréquent dans la région de Harran. Cet emblème lunaire représente le dieu Sin. N'oublions pas qu'un important temple dédié au dieu-lune a été fouillé par S. Lloyd à Harran<sup>21</sup>. Ce temple est d'ailleurs mentionné dans nos tablettes cunéiformes. D'autre part, la carte de la diffusion du culte de Sin dans le Proche-Orient, établie par A. Spycket, montre assez l'importance de ce dieu dans la région<sup>22</sup>.
- Les Sibittis ou sept étoiles (0.3653; 0.3654) sont adorées dans ce milieu de pasteurs-nomades de Syrie qui se dirigent souvent la nuit à l'aide des astres.
- Le signe «anch» (0.3654), simple ou complété d'un signe *nb* (0.3713) est d'inspiration égyptienne, mais se retrouve souvent dans le répertoire palestinien et syrien. Il a été transformé ici de manière personnelle sur ce cachet de Handi (début du 7<sup>e</sup> s.) (0.3713).
- Un motif que nous interprétons comme une fleur de lotus (0.3649)<sup>23</sup>, pourrait également représenter le foudre de Adad, ce dieu dont le temple de Guzana est mentionné dans nos tablettes cunéiformes.

B. *Les tablettes cunéiformes* présentent un certain nombre d'analogies avec les araméennes, en ce qui concerne la glyptique.

1. Vingt-neuf textes ont été légalisés par

- 17 empreintes de cachets<sup>24</sup>;
- 7 empreintes de cylindres<sup>25</sup>;
- 4 impressions d'ongles<sup>26</sup>;
- 1 estampage de coquillage<sup>27</sup>.

<sup>20</sup> Idem, 61-62.

<sup>21</sup> S. Lloyd-W. Brice, Harran, *AnSt.* 1 (1951), 77-111; G.S. Gadd, «The Harran Inscriptions of Nabonidus», *AnSt.* 8 (1958), 35-92.

<sup>22</sup> A. Spycket, «Le culte du dieu-lune à Tell Keisan», *RB* 80 (1973), 394.

<sup>23</sup> D. Homès-Fredericq, *RA* 70 (1976), 64.

<sup>24</sup> 0.3666; 0.3668 à 0.3669; 0.3683; 0.3686; 0.3690; 0.3692 à 0.3693; 0.3699; 0.3701 à 0.3703; 0.3705 à 0.3706; 0.3708 à 0.3709; 0.3711.

<sup>25</sup> 0.3680 à 0.3681; 0.3685; 0.3687; 0.3689; 0.3696; 0.3704.

<sup>26</sup> 0.3660 et 0.3712 (3 empreintes d'ongles); 0.3682 (4 empreintes d'ongles); 0.3694 (groupe de deux empreintes d'ongles).

<sup>27</sup> 0.3710.



2. La position des empreintes ne tient généralement pas compte du sens de l'écriture. Les cylindres sont souvent imprimés dans un espace délimité par deux traits parallèles réservés dans le texte, tandis que les cachets, le plus souvent apposés par deux, se remarquent souvent verticalement dans un espace gardé libre dans le texte, d'après une coutume qui semble être courante à l'époque assyrienne.

3. Les thèmes sont d'inspiration variée.

Nous les analyserons ci-dessous chronologiquement, ce que nous n'avions pas pu faire pour la glyptique araméenne.

Sous le règne de *Sennacherib* (704-681), les tablettes attribuées aux archives de *Handi* présentent (fig. 1):

a) trois empreintes de cylindres d'inspiration mésopotamienne<sup>28</sup>

— la première, très estompée (0.3680; fig. 1c) illustre le thème du héros dompteur, empoignant deux animaux ailés dressés, ainsi qu'une scène secondaire à peine lisible, représentant probablement un adorant avec un dieu.

— Le second (0.3687; fig. 1b) reprend l'un des sujets les plus fréquents de la glyptique néo-assyrienne: un archer debout (quoiqu'il puisse être agenouillé), attaque un monstre, dans notre cas un serpent dressé. Il peut être remplacé par des quadrupèdes ou non, marchant ou dressés comme sur les tablettes araméennes de *Handi* (0.3545) ou de *Harranaiu* (0.3673). Le motif floral entre les deux protagonistes est également mésopotamien, mais le croissant de lune évoque le culte du dieu *Sin* de *Harran*.

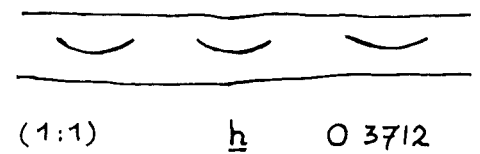
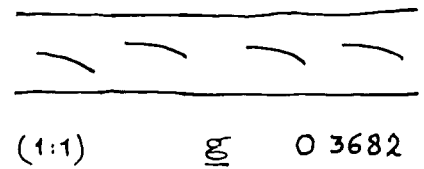
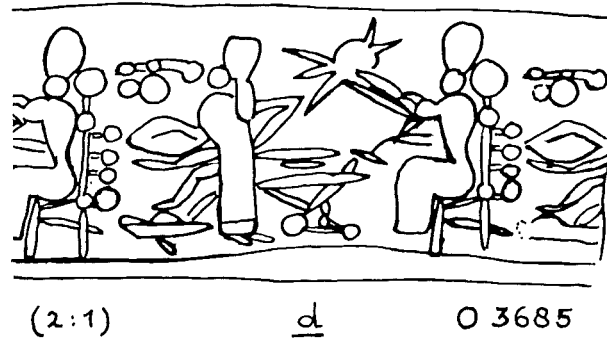
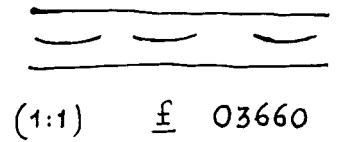
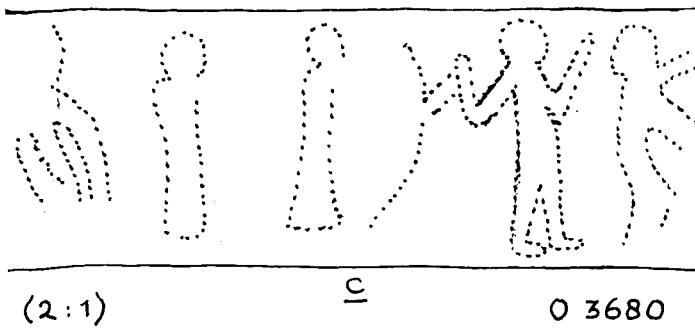
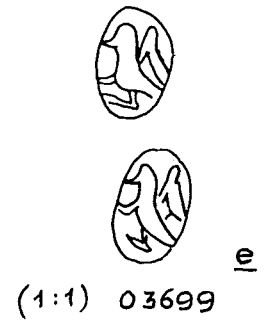
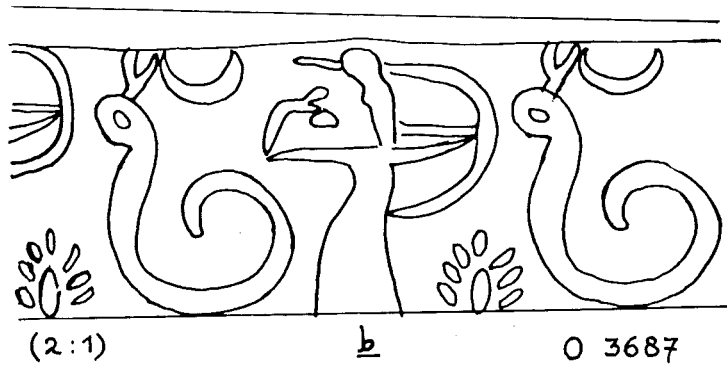
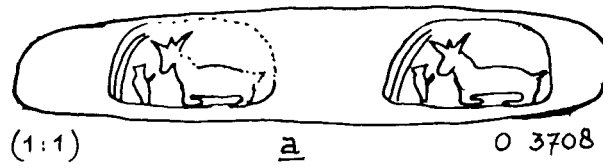
— Sur la troisième empreinte (0.3685; fig. 1d) un repas rituel, typique pour le style linéaire néo-assyrien reproduit un dieu assis devant une table d'offrandes. Il reçoit l'hommage d'un serviteur debout.

Les deux techniques<sup>29</sup> en usage à l'époque sont employées: la boute-rolle, usuelle pour ce thème en Mésopotamie est réservée pour le dieu, la décoration de son siège, pour l'étoile qui évoque *Ishtar*, tandis que la gravure au burin se remarque dans le losange, la table et le parachèvement de certains éléments faits en cupules.

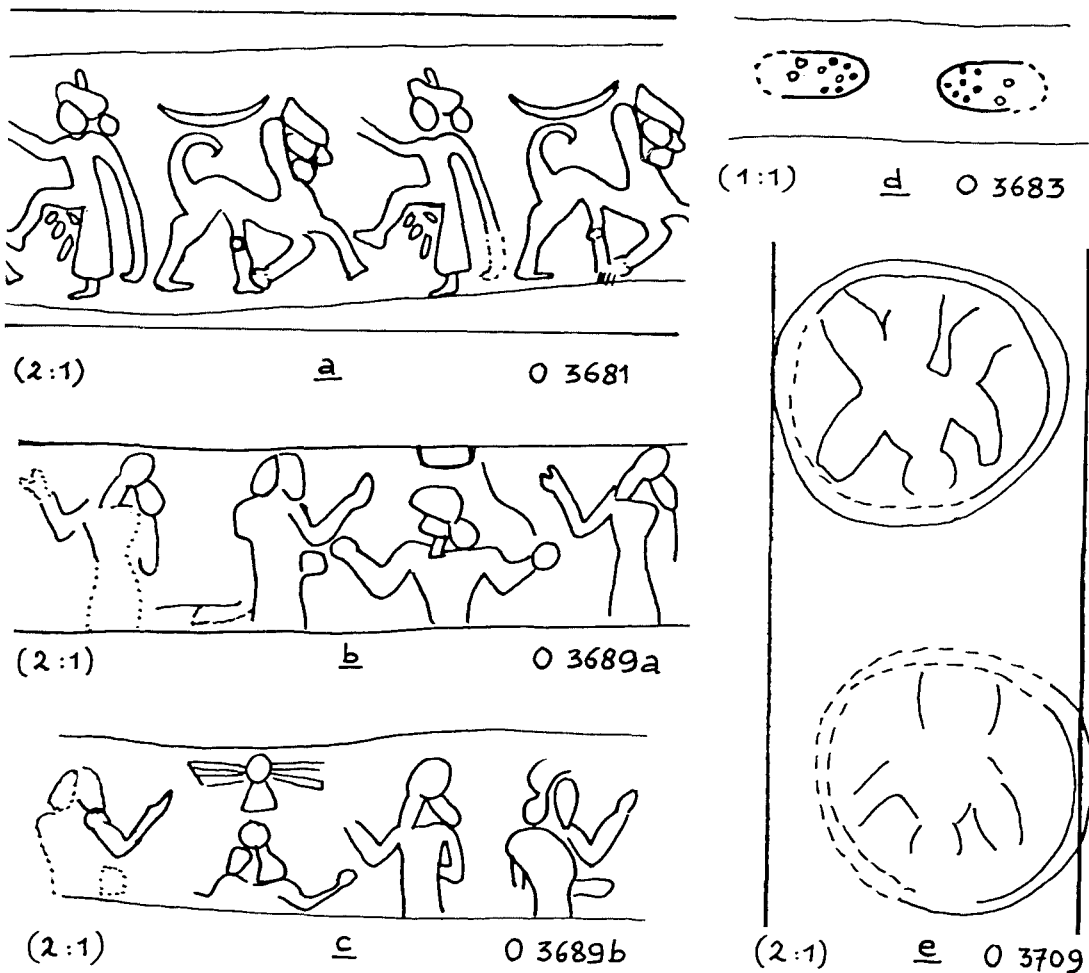
b) Deux empreintes de cachets, l'une avec un oiseau (0.3699; fig. 1) à aile éployée ou peut-être surmonté d'un autre oiseau (l'empreinte est assez

<sup>28</sup> Comparer à H. Frankfort, *Cylinder Seals* (Londres, 1939), 194-216; A. Moortgat, *Rollsiegel*, 66-76; E. Porada, *CANES*, 71-100; H.H. von der Osten, *Altorientalische Siegelsteine der Sammlung Hans Silviu von Aulock*, Upsala 1957 (= *Studia Ethnografica Upsaliensia*), 63-64; B. Buchanan, *Catalogue of Ancient Near Eastern Seals in the Ashmolean Museum I, Cylinder Seals* (Oxford, 1966), 105-119; p. Amiet, *Bas-reliefs imaginaires de l'orient ancien d'après les cachets et les sceaux-cylindres* (Paris, 1973), 170.

<sup>29</sup> E. Porada, *op. cit.*, 71-72.



1. Epoque de Sennacherib (704-681): archives de Handi.



2. Epoque de Assarhaddon (681-669): archives de Handi (suite).

incertaine); l'autre (0.3708; fig. 1a) un quadrupède couché devant une cruche (?) et un trait.

- c) Trois empreintes d'ongles (0.3660; 0.3682; 0.3712; fig. 1f-h), reproduites trois ou quatre fois, l'arc dirigé vers le bas ou le haut de manière très régulière, répond à une tradition attestée en Mésopotamie pour la légalisation des actes officiels<sup>30</sup>. Sur les tablettes araméennes, ces empreintes d'ongle sont parfois imprimées verticalement et sans grand soin<sup>31</sup>.

<sup>30</sup> J.N. Postgate, *Fifty Neo-Assyrian Legal Documents* (Warminster, 1976), 8-9; J. Renger, «Legal Aspects of Sealing in Ancient Mesopotamia», in Mc Guire Gibson-R. Biggs, ed, *Seals and Sealing in the Ancient Near East* (Bibl. Mes. 6; Malibu, 1977), 78.

<sup>31</sup> 0.3652; 0.3655; 0.3670.

*Handi* gérait également les archives sous *Assarhaddon* (680-669 av.J.-C.,.). De cette époque datent (fig. 2):

- a) Trois empreintes d'influence mésopotamienne, faites avec deux cylindres. La première (0.3681; fig. 2a) nous livre le combat traditionnel contre un animal; les deux autres (0.3889; fig. 2b-c) se trouvaient sur la face et le revers d'une même tablette et ont été exécutées avec le même sceau, légèrement décalé. Le disque ailé d'Assur surplombe les personnages, peu ou bien visibles d'après l'empreinte envisagée.
- b) Les empreintes de cachets reproduisent un génie ailé, très estompé (0.3709; fig. 2e) et les Sibittis (0.3683; fig. 2d). Ceux-ci semblent à première vue isolés (ce qui serait anormal, car ils sont toujours reproduits accompagnés d'autres symboles). Les empreintes sont assez floues, mais deux cupules imprimées très légèrement représentent peut-être des glands de la marre de Marduk, comme dans le cylindre araméen des archives de *Handi* (0.3714). Une autre tablette (0.3706; fig. 4h), non datée, comporte également les Sibittis et le croissant de lune de Sin, comme sur les tablettes araméennes, mais il est complété d'une étoile. Entre les deux empreintes se retrouvent deux estampages de coquillages, de 4 mm. de long, de la famille des buccinidae, petits mollusques de la Mer Méditerranée, dont les plus grands exemples ont 11 mm.

Pour la légalisation des archives de *Harranaiu*, fils de *Handi*, vivant à l'époque d'*Assurbanipal* (669-630 av.J.-C.), nous possédons (fig. 3):

- 11 empreintes de cachets<sup>32</sup>;
- 2 empreintes de cylindres<sup>33</sup>;
- 1 empreinte de deux ongles qui se touchent sans grand soin, rappelant les exemples sur tablettes araméennes<sup>34</sup>;
- 1 estampage d'un coquillage (?) ou d'un autre objet, car notre collègue du Musée d'Histoire Naturelle n'a pas pu nous donner de précision à ce sujet<sup>35</sup>.

Nous n'analyserons que les empreintes de cachets, faute de temps: ils sont souvent décorés de symboles divins. L'enveloppe 0.3702 (fig. 3c) reproduit le croissant de lune de Sin, l'étoile de la déesse Ishtar, le disque solaire d'Assur. La tige horizontale terminée par une cupule pourrait s'identifier avec le calame de Nabu que nous reconnaissons sur une tablette araméenne des archives de *Handi* (0.3714)<sup>36</sup>. La signification exacte de cet attribut n'est pas encore connue, mais il est souvent interprété comme un signe divin. Ces divers symboles, schématisés ou

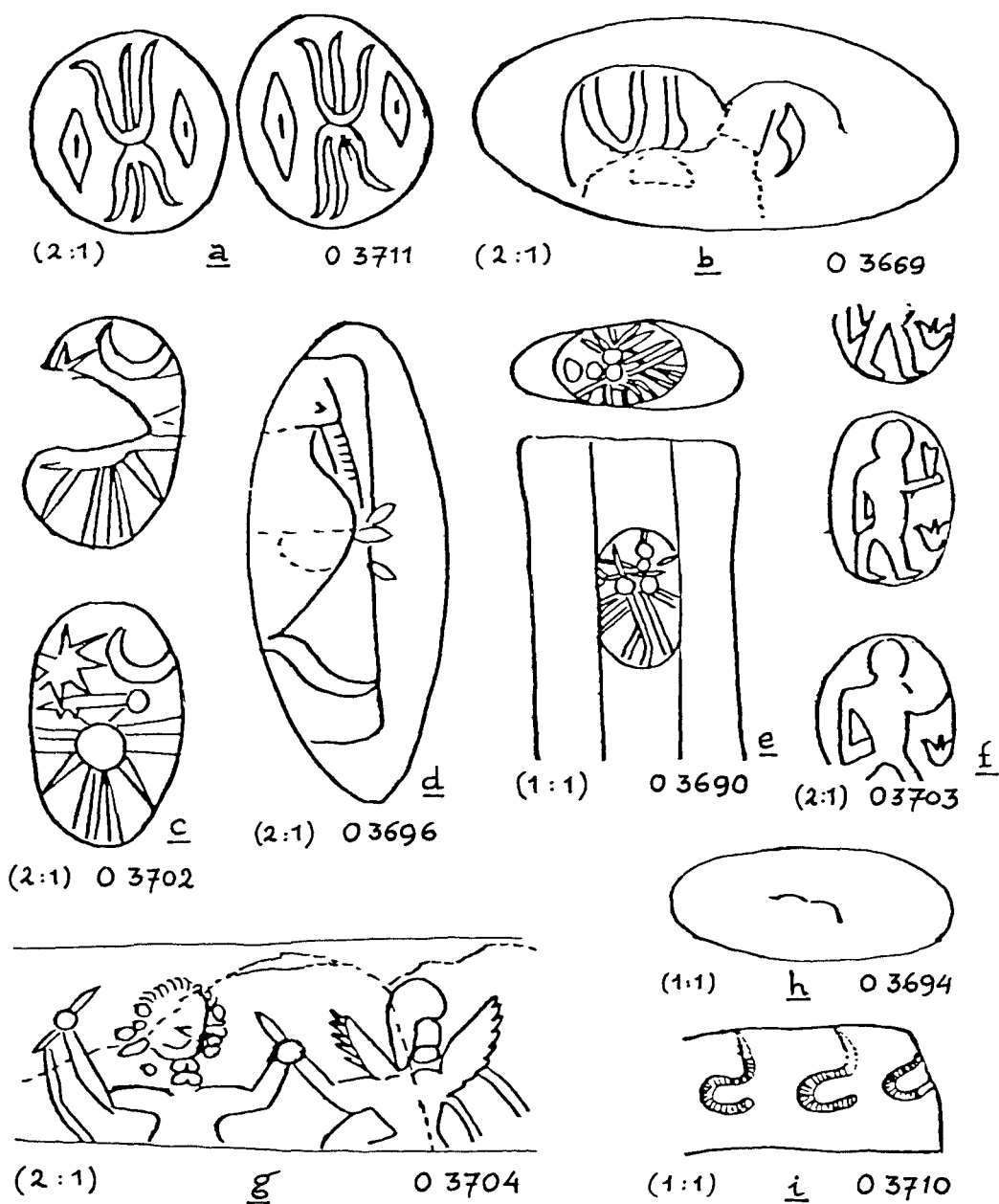
<sup>32</sup> Numéros d'inventaire des tablettes possédant une à trois empreintes de cachets: 0.3669; 0.3690; 0.3692 à 0.3693; 0.3702 à 0.3703; 0.3711.

<sup>33</sup> 0.3696; 0.3704.

<sup>34</sup> 0.3694.

<sup>35</sup> 0.3710.

<sup>36</sup> D. Homès-Fredericq, *RA* 70 (1976), 66-67, fig. 2.



3. Époque de Assurbanipal (669-630): archives de Harranaiu fils de Handi.

combinés entre eux sont fréquents dans la glyptique de l'époque, que ce soit sur une tablette araméenne conservée au Louvre<sup>37</sup> ou sur des exemples de Halaf<sup>38</sup>.

Deux autres cachets, mal imprimés, sont difficiles à identifier. Le premier est illisible (0.3692) et semble avoir été gravé par une bague. Le second (0.3669; fig. 3b), fragmentaire, montre une partie du double faisceau de foudre de Adad, également connu par une empreinte de cachet des archives araméennes de Sēr-nūrī (0.3649). Le dieu Adad, adoré en Syrie, Palestine, Phénicie ainsi qu'en Mésopotamie, possède son temple à Guzana, mentionné d'ailleurs sur les tablettes des archives cunéiformes.

Nous le retrouvons à la période *postcanonique* dans les archives de Sēr-nūrī (630-612 av.J.-C.).

Toutes ces tablettes sont légalisées par des empreintes de cachets, d'inspiration néo-assyrienne de styles modelé, incisé ou linéaire, et présentent parfois des reminiscences phéniciennes ou palestiniennes.

La vogue des cachets s'explique aisément : ils réapparaissent vers la fin du 8<sup>e</sup> et au début du 7<sup>e</sup> s. en Mésopotamie et remplaceront progressivement les cylindres<sup>39</sup>. Par contre, ils ont toujours été à la mode à l'Ouest de la Mésopotamie, en Palestine, en Phénicie et en Syrie<sup>40</sup>.

Sur les tablettes postcanoniques, le foudre de Adad est adoré par un fidèle, soit accompagné d'un signe «anch» stylisé (0.3701; fig. 4e) comme sur les sceaux phéniciens<sup>41</sup>, soit isolé (0.3666; fig. 4f).

Le dieu Sin, dont le temple est mentionné dans nos archives cunéiformes, est représenté par son croissant de lune, accompagné parfois d'un quadrupède (0.3668; fig. 4a) ou de la marre de Marduk (0.3705; fig. 4d). Il peut aussi surmonter un symbole schématisé (0.3693; fig. 4g), identifiable peut-être avec l'étoile de la déesse Ishtar d'Arbèles, déesse locale, mentionnée dans nos archives.

Nous n'avons malheureusement pu qu'effleurer le sujet, faute de temps. Il reste encore beaucoup à dire sur cette glyptique, mais nous voulons conclure en rappelant les points suivants :

1. Les deux lots achetés par les Musées royaux d'Art et d'Histoire appartiennent effectivement aux mêmes archives, confirmant une fois de plus l'emploi simultané des écritures cunéiformes et araméennes dans cette province occidentale qu'est la région de Harran dont nos tablettes sont originaires. Ceci ne doit pas

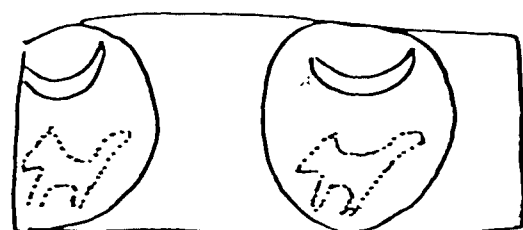
<sup>37</sup> P. Bordreuil, «Une tablette araméenne inédite de 635 avant J.C.», *Semitica* 23 (1973), 95-102, pl. 1.

<sup>38</sup> M. F. von Oppenheim-B. Hrouda, *Tell Halaf 4: Die Kleinfunde auf Historischer Zeit*, Berlin, 1962, pl. 27, n° 64-65, pl. 28 n° a.

<sup>39</sup> E. Porada, *op. cit.*, 72.

<sup>40</sup> H. H. von der Osten, *op. cit.* (n. 28), 59, 66-71; P. Amiet, *op. cit.* (n. 28), 171-172.

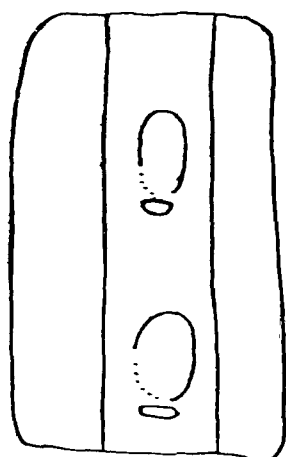
<sup>41</sup> K. Galling, «Beschriftete Bildsiegel des ersten Jahrtausende v. Chr. vornehmlich aus Syrien und Palästina», *ZDPV* 64 (1941), fig. 150; A. Reifenberg, *Ancient Hebrew Seals* (London 1950), fig. 10-11, 17; E. Porada, *op. cit.*, 119-120, n° 910, 913.



(2:1)

a

O 3668



(2:1)

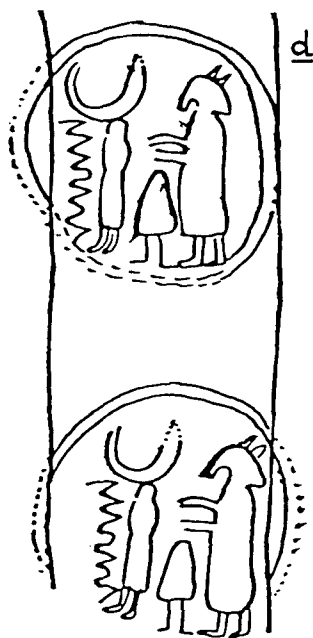
O 3692



c

(1:1)

O 3686



(2:1)

O 3705

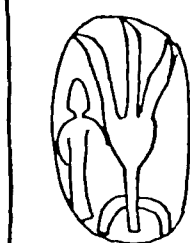


(2:1)

O 3701



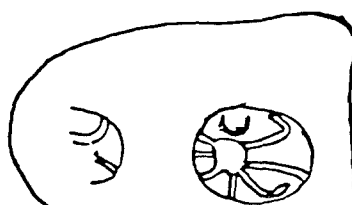
e



(2:1)

O 3666

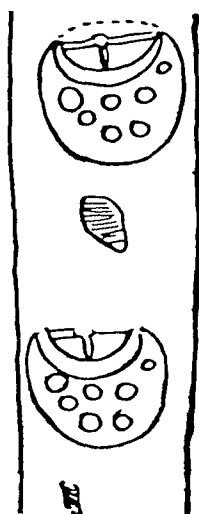
f



(1:1)

O 3693

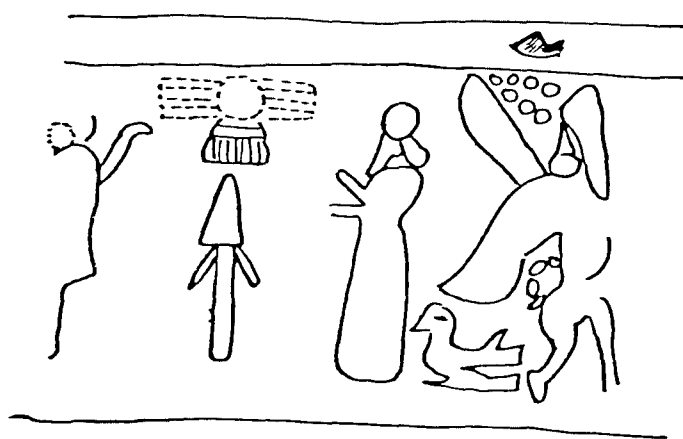
g



h

(2:1)

O 3706



(2:1)

i

O 3695

nous étonner à une époque où le Levant a adopté une écriture propre, tout en restant soumise aux coutumes et aux souverains assyriens.

2. Tous les textes datent du 7<sup>e</sup> s. av.J.-C., aussi bien par leur écriture que par leur glyptique. Aucune empreinte n'a été faite avec un sceau d'une époque antérieure.
3. Les modes de légalisation de ces divers textes juridiques sont les mêmes : cachets, cylindres, ongles et coquillages sont apposés tant sur les tablettes cunéiformes que les araméennes, sans faire de distinction de langue employée. Les cachets, qui remplacent progressivement les cylindres au I<sup>er</sup> millénaire sont proportionnellement mieux représentés (16 cachets pour 8 cylindres). La plupart des tablettes légalisées par l'apposition de l'ongle proviennent du début du 7<sup>e</sup> s. Les coquillages semblent employés à partir du milieu du 7<sup>e</sup> s.
4. La position des empreintes ne tient pas compte de la direction de l'écriture, quoiqu'un espace bien délimité par deux horizontales soit souvent réservé sur les tablettes pour les empreintes.
5. La chronologie définie par les textes confirme que les cylindres, en vogue au début du 7<sup>e</sup> s. sont progressivement remplacés par les cachets.
6. La glyptique subit diverses influences :  
la mésopotamienne se reflète surtout dans les cylindres qui reprennent des thèmes et des techniques assyriennes tandis que les cachets indiquent surtout des sources palestiniennes, égyptiennes ou égyptisantes, phéniciennes, néo-hittites et syriennes.
7. Les formes des empreintes correspondent à celles laissées soit par des cachets scarabées, scaraboïdes, coniques ou en forme de canard, soit par des cylindres traditionnels.
8. Il est naturellement impossible de définir la matière des sceaux employés : par analogie avec des exemples assyriens, on peut supposer qu'ils étaient façonnés en chalcédoine, agate, serpentine, stéatite, marbre, pierre calcaire ou frite.
9. Plusieurs sceaux, tant sur les documents araméens que cunéiformes, sont influencés par des cultes locaux, mentionnés dans ces archives provinciales cunéiformes :  
— Ishtar et son temple dans une localité voisine appelée Arbèles comme la grande cité assyrienne ;  
— Adad, mentionné comme le « dieu Adad résidant à Guzana » ;  
— Sin dont le temple de Harran est cité ;  
— Les Sibittis, qui ne sont pas cités dans nos tablettes, mais sont des divinités de la région.
10. Certaines particularités locales sont à noter quant à l'emploi des coquillages comme sceaux ou à celui de l'apposition des ongles, imprimés avec plus de soin au début qu'à la fin du 7<sup>e</sup> s. av.J.-C.



*Liste des empreintes illustrées*

<i>n°</i>	<i>fig.</i>	<i>n°</i>	<i>fig.</i>
0.3660	— 1f	0.3694	— 3h
0.3666	— 4f	0.3695	— 4i
0.3668	— 4a	0.3696	— 3d
0.3669	— 3b	0.3699	— 1e
0.3680	— 1c	0.3701	— 4e
0.3681	— 2a	0.3702	— 3c
0.3682	— 1g	0.3703	— 3f
0.3683	— 2d	0.3704	— 3g
0.3685	— 1d	0.3705	— 4d
0.3686	— 4c	0.3706	— 4h
0.3687	— 1b	0.3708	— 1a
0.3689	— 2b/c	0.3709	— 2e
0.3690	— 3e	0.3710	— 3i
0.3692	— 4b	0.3711	— 3a
0.3693	— 4g	0.3712	— 1h

## THE CORRESPONDENCE OF NABÛ-UŠABŠI, GOVERNOR OF URUK

G. FRAME (Toronto)\*

It is the intention of this paper to examine a few aspects of the correspondence of one individual, Nabû-ušabši (a governor of Uruk during the time Ashurbanipal sat upon the throne of Assyria). Several letters sent by him and addressed to him have been preserved among the collection of cuneiform tablets discovered at Kuyunjik in the last century and form an interesting group for study within the framework of the Babylonian correspondence of the Assyrian king. The letters sent and received by Nabû-ušabši form the largest part of a group of letters dealing with Uruk and it is best to examine his letters in relation to these others. No attempt is made to examine every letter or to present an all encompassing picture of this individual and his career as that would take us beyond the scope of this particular conference.

It is fortuitous that Nabû-ušabši is mentioned in a number of economic texts as having been *šākin tēmi* of Uruk at the time the texts were composed. Thus we are able to determine that he was governor of that important city in southern Babylonia from at least the tenth month of 661 through to the first month of 649. Actually his tenure in office may have been somewhat longer than this period of just over eleven years since the previous governor, Aḫḫēšā, is last attested in office in 666 and the next person who is known to have been governor, Kudurru, first appears as such in 647<sup>1</sup>. Who held the governorship during the intervening years is unknown — Nabû-ušabši, Aḫḫēšā, Kudurru, or possibly some other person(s). Still, the evidence of these economic texts allows us to fit the Kuyunjik letters involving Nabû-ušabši within some sort of temporal frame.

Who was Nabû-ušabši besides being the governor of Uruk and a correspondent of Ashurbanipal? It is likely that Nabû-ušabši was from a prominent Urukean family since high officials of Babylonian cities tended to come from a limited number of families within their respective cities<sup>2</sup>. In his recent study, Kümmel has shown that

\* I wish to express my appreciation to the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada for the award of a travel grant which permitted me to take part in the 30<sup>e</sup> Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale.

<sup>1</sup> For text references, see J.A. Brinkman, 'Notes on Arameans and Chaldeans in Southern Mesopotamia in the Early Seventh Century B.C.', *OrNS* 46 (1977) 311.

<sup>2</sup> Citing *ABL* 1106:22 as evidence, Röllig states that Nabû-ušabši came from Kissik (*RIA* 5, 621). The passage is damaged and several different interpretations are possible. It is not necessary to read any more into the text than that at one point the author of the letter (likely Nabû-ušabši) had sent a servant or associate of his father's to Kissik (<sup>21</sup> ... *Hašdiya māršu ša Šarrāni* <sup>22</sup> [LÜ?] x x *abiya ana Kissik altapra*).

this was the case at Uruk around the sixth century<sup>3</sup> and in a paper presented before the American Oriental Society<sup>4</sup> I have attempted to show that the same can be said for the situation at Borsippa in the seventh century. In *ABL* 269 Nabû-ušabši states that the Elamites had come, destroyed his father's house, and, at least, intended to kill his brother<sup>5</sup>. Whether we take the term "father's house" literally or figuratively, it seems probable that Nabû-ušabši had family ties to Uruk. We learn from *ABL* 998 that he had a brother by the name of Bēl-lē'i and that the latter's corpse had been beaten with a rod three times in the presence of the Elamite prince Ummanigaš, who had presumably come to Uruk as part of Urtaku's invasion of Babylonia in or around 664 B.C.<sup>6</sup>. Although the introductory section of *ABL* 1106 is not preserved, Waterman and Dietrich have assigned it to Nabû-ušabši on reasonable grounds<sup>7</sup>. There we learn that Šin-ibni, a brother of the author, had been slain by supporters of Šamaš-šuma-ukīn. This same letter refers to Babylonians as being the brothers of the author's mother<sup>8</sup>, suggesting that she was originally from Babylon and not Uruk. Thus we may suppose that Nabû-ušabši had at least two brothers and that his mother came from Babylon.

It is interesting to note that Nabû-ušabši may be mentioned in the Aššur ostrakon, an Aramaic letter found at Aššur in the early part of the century. The letter dates to the time during, or shortly before, the outbreak of the Šamaš-šuma-ukīn revolt and involves various persons who can be identified with individuals acting in and around Uruk in the Kuyunjik letters. Here we learn that one Nabû-zēra-ušabši is angry with the author of the letter and that this man appears to be higher in authority than the author. Recent editors of the text have tentatively identified Nabû-zēra-ušabši with Nabû-ušabši<sup>9</sup>. If this is correct, we would learn the full writing of the personal name of the governor of Uruk.

The introductory formulae of the letters to the Assyrian king from Babylonia are often useful in determining the origin of a letter, even when the name of the sender is

<sup>3</sup> Hans Martin Kümmel, *Familie, Beruf und Amt im spätbabylonischen Uruk: prosopographische Untersuchungen zu Berufsgruppen des 6. Jahrhunderts v. Chr. in Uruk* (= *AbhDOG* 20; Berlin, 1979). See especially pages 137-146.

<sup>4</sup> Baltimore, March 21, 1983.

<sup>5</sup> *ABL* 269:11-15.

<sup>6</sup> *ABL* 998:3'-6'. The name of the author of this letter is not preserved; however, it may be assigned to Nabû-ušabši on the basis of a comparison of its contents with those of *ABL* 266. These two letters also describe the actions of Pir'u and his father, Bēl-ētir (names not preserved in *ABL* 998), who had had dealings with Elam; in both texts the father is said to have died in Elam (*ABL* 266:15-16 and *ABL* 998:8'-9').

<sup>7</sup> Waterman, *RCAE* 2, 269 and Dietrich, *Aramäer* 92.

<sup>8</sup> *ABL* 1106:19'-20'.

<sup>9</sup> E.g., Donner und Röllig, *KAI* 2, 289 and John C.L. Gibson, *Aramaic Inscriptions, Including Inscriptions in the Dialect of Zenjirli* (= *Textbook of Syrian Semitic Inscriptions* 2; Oxford, 1975) 101.

not preserved. For instance, letters from Ur and its dependencies Kissik and Šāt-iddina invoke the gods Sîn and Ningal<sup>10</sup>; Enlil-bāni of Nippur calls upon Enlil, Ninurta and Nusku<sup>11</sup>; and Na'id-Marduk and Bēl-ibni, who at different times both controlled the Sealand, usually invoke Aššur, Šamaš and Marduk<sup>12</sup>. Indeed, it is possible that due to the use of different introductory formulae we can distinguish three or four different persons by the name of Nabû-bēl-šumāti who sent letters to Assyria<sup>13</sup>.

The introductory formulae used in the letters of Nabû-ušabši and several other persons from Uruk are particularly distinctive. At least twenty-three letters in the Kuyunjik collection have essentially the same beginning:

*ana šar mātāti bēliya aradka PN Uruk u Eanna ana šar mātāti bēliya likrubū  
ūmussu Ištar Uruk u Nanaya ana balāt napšāti ša šarri bēliya ušalli*

To the king of the lands, my lord, (from) your servant PN: May Uruk and Eanna bless the king of the lands, my lord! I pray daily to Ištar of Uruk and Nanaya to preserve the life of the king, my lord<sup>14</sup>!

Of those letters where the name of the sender is preserved, one was sent by Aḥḥēšā<sup>15</sup>, one by Nabû-kudurrī-ušur<sup>16</sup>, two by Kudurru<sup>17</sup>, and nine by Nabû-ušabši<sup>18</sup>. In three further cases where only part of the name is preserved, two may likely be assigned to Nabû-ušabši and one to Kudurru<sup>19</sup>. In addition to these, two letters (CT 54 84 and 188) use essentially the same formula but were sent by a person (or persons) whose name is not preserved "and the Urukeans". Certain necessary changes to the introduction were then made (for instance, "my lord" became "our lord")<sup>20</sup>. A look at Salonen's book on greeting formulae in Babylonian and Assyrian

<sup>10</sup> E.g., *ABL* 1274, 210 and 942.

<sup>11</sup> E.g., *ABL* 238.

<sup>12</sup> E.g., *ABL* 917 and 282 respectively.

<sup>13</sup> See the author's article 'The First Families of Borsippa during the Early Neo-Babylonian Period', *JCS* 36 (1984), 67-80.

<sup>14</sup> *ABL* 266-270, 272, 274, 277, 751 + CT 54 429 (recently joined by W. von Soden; information courtesy of C. B. F. Walker), *ABL* 752-753, 754 + CT 54 250, *ABL* 859, 866, 964, 1062, 1124?, 1135, 1231, 1309, CT 54 95, 206 and 519. The letters do have a few minor variants to this. Once *Bēlet ša Uruk* is invoked not *Ištar Uruk* (*ABL* 1062), and the final vowel of the verb *ušalli* can be "u", or less often "a".

<sup>15</sup> *ABL* 1062.

<sup>16</sup> *ABL* 859.

<sup>17</sup> *ABL* 274 and 277.

<sup>18</sup> *ABL* 266-270, 272, 751 + CT 54 429, and *ABL* 752-753.

<sup>19</sup> *ABL* 1135 and CT 54 519, and *ABL* 754 + CT 54 250 respectively.

<sup>20</sup> Part of the name of the sender of CT 54 188 may be preserved in line 1'; Dietrich (*Aramäer* 89 n. 1) suggests that the traces are those of the name Nabû-ušabši. This letter invokes *Bēlet ša Uruk* not *Ištar Uruk* (line 5').

letters will show that there is nothing particularly unusual in the individual parts of this introduction<sup>21</sup>. Elements were used in letters from other cities, simply changing the names of the gods, temple and city. At Uruk the basic formulae can be traced in letters after the fall of Assyria.

Statements in economic texts show that of the four individuals who are known to have used this Uruk introduction in letters to the king of Assyria, three served as governor of Uruk during the time of Ashurbanipal. As was stated earlier, Nabû-ušabši governed for a minimum of eleven years, from at least the tenth month of 661 till the first month of 649. Aḥḥēšā began to govern Uruk under Esarhaddon and continued to do so until at least 666, and Kudurru was governor of Uruk for likely at least two years, 647-646<sup>22</sup>. The contents of the letters of Nabû-ušabši and Kudurru fit well into the period during which they are known to have been governor, as do the letters sent by the king to these two. Indeed the actions the two carry out, or contemplate carrying out, in their letters indicate that they must have had high official positions at the time they sent their letters<sup>23</sup>. It is likely that in general only high officials would have corresponded with the king and have had their letters preserved. Little more than the introductory section of the letter by Aḥḥēšā (*ABL* 1062) is preserved, thus its contents do not provide a clue as to his position at the time he sent this letter. Although only the righthand portion of the letter sent by Nabû-kudurri-ušur (*ABL* 859) is preserved, the letter appears to refer to a Nabû-ušabši as having been seized and led away — an action which might have happened to Nabû-ušabši of Uruk during the Brothers' War<sup>24</sup>. Thus this letter may date to the time during or after the revolt. It has been suggested that Nabû-kudurri-ušur may be a longer writing for the name Kudurru<sup>25</sup>. If correct, this would allow us to reduce the number of persons who are known to have used this Uruk introduction to three, all persons who were governors of Uruk under Ashurbanipal. An attempt at comparing the orthographic peculiarities of this letter with those found in Kudurru's letters was made and the results tended to oppose such an identification. Such an identification,

<sup>21</sup> Erkki Salonen, *Die Gruss- und Höflichkeitsformeln in babylonisch-assyrischen Briefen* (= StOr. 38; Helsinki, 1967) 78-112.

<sup>22</sup> See Brinkman, *OrNS* 46 (1977) 311. The only dated texts clearly referring to Kudurru as governor date to 647 (*AnOr.* 9 13 and YBC 7166). NBC 8392, however, dated to 11-VII-646 (year two of Kandalānu), probably also mentions Kudurru as governor (line 20: [... <sup>m</sup>NIG.D]U LÚ.GAR.KU UNUG.KI). In addition, when addressing "Kudurru and the Urukeans" in *ABL* 518, a letter dated to 24-II-645? (eponymy of Nabû-šar-aḥḥēšu), Ashurbanipal was undoubtedly indicating that Kudurru was the chief official in Uruk at that time. (I am grateful to J. A. Brinkman and D. A. Kennedy for giving me access to their information on unpublished Babylonian economic texts from the eighth and seventh centuries).

<sup>23</sup> Such actions included mobilizing troops and sending them into battle, holding back gifts intended for the temple of Ištar of Uruk, and arresting men and sending them off to the king.

<sup>24</sup> *ABL* 859:7-9; see Dietrich, *Aramäer* 176-177. For the date, see below.

<sup>25</sup> Brinkman, *OrNS* 46 (1977) 312.

however, cannot be ruled out since not much of *ABL* 859 is preserved and since it is possible that Kudurru used more than one scribe to write his letters.

The name of the sender of *ABL* 754 + *CT* 54 250 is damaged, but a collation by I. Finkel<sup>26</sup> suggests that it was likely Kudurru. The actions described in this letter show the author sending military aid to Ur against the supporters of Šamaš-šuma-ukīn. Reconstruction of events during the revolt might suggest that Ur was relieved in 650<sup>27</sup>, a point when Nabû-ušabši was presumably still governor (unless his tenure in office was not continuous down to 649). If Kudurru did write this letter and Nabû-ušabši was still governor, then we would be able to conclude that not all letters with the Uruk introduction had to be sent by governors of Uruk. Dietrich has argued fairly convincingly that Nabû-ušabši was forced to leave Uruk at one point during the revolt<sup>28</sup>, likely before Babylon was besieged in the fourth month of 650. Perhaps during his absence Kudurru held control of the city, whether he was officially governor or not, and wrote to Ashurbanipal using the Uruk introduction at that time.

In contrast to the letters of Nabû-ušabši with the Uruk introduction, *ABL* 271 is a letter written in Assyrian script and dialect which was sent to the king by one Nabû-ušabši and which has a different introductory section. Here Ashurbanipal is called simply “the king, my lord”, not “king of the lands, my lord” and the blessing reads *lū šulmu ana šarri bēliya Nabû Marduk ana šarri bēliya likrubū*<sup>29</sup>. In view of this different introductory section and the fact that the text deals with the making of ornaments for armrests<sup>30</sup>, we may safely assume that this letter was not sent by the man who was governor of Uruk but rather by a different person of the same name.

A few letters coming from, or dealing with Uruk, have introductory formulae which have similarities with those in the letters from the governors of Uruk. Only a trace of the name of the sender of *CT* 54 591 is preserved; however, his introductory section modifies and expands the standard Uruk introduction. After the address, it appears to read as follows:

<sup>3</sup> *Uruk u Ea[nna ana šar mātāti]* <sup>4</sup> *bēliya likrub[ū ūmussu]* <sup>5</sup> *Bēl Nabû Ištar U[ruk ? u Nanaya]* <sup>6</sup> *ana balāṭ napšāti ṭū[b libbi ṭūb šīr]* <sup>7</sup> *arāk ūmū u ku[nnu (išid) kussē]* <sup>8</sup> *šarrūtu ša šar mātāti bēliya u[šalli?]*

<sup>26</sup> Private communication.

<sup>27</sup> Grant Frame, *Babylonia 689-627 B.C.: A Political History* (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Chicago, 1981) 141-143.

<sup>28</sup> Dietrich, *Aramäer* 89-93. Not all the details of the episode as reconstructed by Dietrich are totally convincing.

<sup>29</sup> *ABL* 271:1-6. It is unclear how line 3 fits into the introduction since this appears to contain a personal name, suggesting that the letter was sent by two individuals. The rest of the letter, however, shows that it was sent by only one person.

<sup>30</sup> *ABL* 271:7-9.

<sup>34</sup> May Uruk and Ea[nnā] bless [the king of the lands], my lord! <sup>48</sup> I [pray daily] to Bēl, Nabû, Ištar of U[ruk and Nanaya] to preserve the life of the king of the lands, my lord, for (his) hap[piness, health] and long life, and for the estab[lishment of the (foundation of his)] royal [throne].

The body of the letter refers to battle, fortified outpost(s) in Bīt-Amukāni, troops, the *turtānu*, and possibly the Gurasimmu; thus a date during the Šamaš-šuma-ukīn Revolt is quite possible. The invocation of Bēl and Nabû, Ištar of Uruk and Nanaya is not unique in the Uruk correspondence. In the body of *ABL* 277, Kudurru says: “May Bēl, Nabû, Ištar of Uruk and Nanaya give the king, my lord, complete dominion over the world from east to west<sup>31</sup>”. While writing to fellow Urukeans in Assyria, several persons in Uruk (possibly including two future governors of the city) state: “May Bēl, Nabû, the Lady (*Bēlet*) of Uruk and Nanaya make a decision for you concerning the city of Uruk and (its) gods<sup>32</sup>!”

Just as a standard introductory section was used in the letters from Uruk’s governors to the Assyrian king, there appears to have some standardization in how the letters were ended. Excluding duplicates, of the fifteen letters which are firmly assigned to persons using the Uruk introduction and whose end is sufficiently preserved for study, only one does not end in one of two ways<sup>33</sup>. The more common way is with the phrase *ana šarri bēliya altapra šarru kī ša ile”u līpuš* (with such variants as *ultēbila* for *altapra* and the Assyrian *ila”u* for *ile”u*)<sup>34</sup>. The second way is with the phrase *šarru bēliya lū īde*, usually preceded by *ana šarri bēliya altapra* (or *ultēbila*)<sup>35</sup>. Nabû-ušabši and Kudurru use both endings. The same phrases may be found in the body of two other letters from Uruk whose ends are not preserved<sup>36</sup>. The appearance of these phrases is not, of course, surprising; they are stock phrases found in many other Kuyunjik letters. It is simply the consistency with which they are used in the Uruk letters which is worthy of note. Interestingly, *ABL* 269, one of Nabû-ušabši’s letters, has after the first ending the following: *egirtu annītu uṣri* “Preserve this tablet<sup>37</sup>!” Possibly this note was not to be read to the king, but rather

<sup>31</sup> *ABL* 277:7-10.

<sup>32</sup> *ABL* 815:6-9.

<sup>33</sup> The exception is *ABL* 272, a letter from Nabû-ušabši.

<sup>34</sup> Nabû-ušabši: *ABL* 267-269, 751 + *CT* 54 429, and *ABL* 752; Kudurru: *ABL* 277; others: *ABL* 866 and 964.

<sup>35</sup> Nabû-ušabši: *ABL* 266, 270, 753 and likely *CT* 54 519 (author’s name mostly restored); Kudurru: *ABL* 274; Nabû-kudurri-uṣur: *ABL* 859. Cf. *ABL* 1387 (assigned to Uruk because of its contents).

<sup>36</sup> *ABL* 754:25 (former phrasing [partly restored] minus *ana ... altapra*; likely from Kudurru) and *ABL* 1028 rev. 2-3 (latter phrasing; assigned to Uruk because of the contents of the letter).

<sup>37</sup> *ABL* 269 rev. 16-17.

was directed to chancellory officials and indeed may have been written by them. The tablet was to be saved because it dealt with important military matters<sup>38</sup>.

In examining the letters sent from Uruk to Assyria, including both those whose introductory formulae are preserved and those which may be clearly assigned to Uruk on the basis of their content, three immediately leap to the eye. In contrast to all the others, these are written in the Assyrian script, not in the Babylonian script. All may be assigned to Nabû-ušabši and all appear to date from the period before the Šamaš-šuma-ukīn revolt. The first letter in Neo-Assyrian script from Nabû-ušabši, *ABL* 269, reports on the king's order that he send *hiyālu* troops against the city of the Gambūlu (i.e., Ša-pī-Bēl). Nabû-ušabši offers to raise all of Akkad to rewin the land if the king should so order. Likely this letter dates before Ashurbanipal's campaign against the Gambūlu for having aided Urtaku in the latter's invasion of Babylonia<sup>39</sup>. The other two tablets (*ABL* 268 and 751 + *CT* 54 429) bear the same message; these relate how flocks belonging to the temple were grazing with those of the Puqūdu in the area of the Ru'ua tribe. The two shepherds who were looking after the flocks had brought to Nabû-ušabši three white horses and their silver trappings for Ištar of Uruk; upon one of the harnesses was the inscription "[Property of Ta]mmarītu, [the ... ]. 'scribe', the king of Elam<sup>40</sup>". Nabû-ušabši had taken possession of the horses, not giving them to the temple, and had sent the shepherds and the inscribed harness-part to the king. The king was advised to do as he saw fit — i.e., to find out how the shepherds had obtained the horses and to decide whether or not they should be given to the temple. Presumably what was behind the problem was the idea of unauthorized contacts with Elam or Elamites.

One may only speculate as to why two copies of this letter were thought necessary. Were both sent by Nabû-ušabši just as we today fill out forms in duplicate or triplicate? Or were one or both copies made in Assyria for administrative purposes there? From an original in Babylonian script? Since the conditions described in the letters do not imply that there was unrest in the land<sup>41</sup>, it is unlikely that Nabû-

<sup>38</sup> I.e., the raising of troops to attack the city of the Gambūlu.

<sup>39</sup> The letter refers to Bēl-iqīša having become hostile to the king and having brought Elam into Babylonia (lines 12-13), thus indicating that the letter is to be dated after the invasion of Urtaku in which Bēl-iqīša is known to have played a part (Piepkorn, *Asb.* 58-61). No indication is given in the letter that the Gambūlu had already been punished for their share in this invasion.

<sup>40</sup> <sup>17</sup> [ša Ta]mmarītu <sup>18</sup> [ ]-il teppir <sup>19</sup> šar māt Elamti (*ABL* 268; not preserved on *ABL* 751 + *CT* 54 429).

<sup>41</sup> One would not expect flocks belonging to the temple to be grazing with those of an Aramean tribe in the territory of another Aramean tribe during a period of hostilities.



ušabši had sent two copies in order to ensure that one got through. Possibly one tablet went with the shepherds and one with the inscribed harness-piece. It would be interesting to have a scientific analysis of the clay of the tablets in order to attempt to determine if they were made in Uruk or Nineveh. A comparison of the handwriting of these letters with those in Babylonian script might also prove informative<sup>42</sup>. One of the letters was found by George Smith and the other bears a "K" number<sup>43</sup>. Unfortunately, this does not have to mean that they were found at different locations on Kuyunjik (i.e., in different offices or storage rooms) since "K" pieces can join Smith pieces<sup>44</sup>.

Why were these letters written in Assyrian script and not the others? The dialect used in them is Babylonian, not Assyrian, although one letter does contain an Assyrian writing for one verbal form (*ila''u* [ABL 269 rev. 14]). If they were written in Babylonia, and were not simply copies made in Assyria, perhaps it is because for a time Nabû-ušabši had an Assyrian scribe, or a scribe trained in Assyria<sup>45</sup>. If he did have a Assyrian scribe, may we speculate that the latter was assigned from Assyria and had the extra duty of keeping an eye upon the governor of Uruk? Letters in Assyrian script from Babylonian officials are not the norm, though others are known. Letters from the king of Assyria to officials in Uruk and elsewhere could be in either Assyrian or Babylonian script and in either Assyrian or Babylonian dialect<sup>46</sup>. As *de facto*, if not *de jure*, ruler of Babylonia, Ashurbanipal had Babylonians at his court, some of whom were in training for future occupations<sup>47</sup>. Undoubtedly some of these could have been employed by the Assyrian king to aid him with his Babylonian correspondence. Since many Assyrian royal inscriptions were written in standard Babylonian it is not surprising that some royal letters were also written in Babylonian.

The care that was shown by the Ninevite chancellor and/or archives in preserving Nabû-ušabši's letters and those from other officials in Babylonia is mirrored in the care that was taken to preserve copies of the king's letters. Just as today we generally keep a carbon copy of any business letter we send, so too the scribes in Nineveh made copies of at least some of the king's letters, obviously for administrative needs. One

<sup>42</sup> C. B. F. Walker has kindly examined these three texts in Assyrian script and has informed me that ABL 268 and 269 might have been written by the same scribe. ABL 751 + CT 54 429, however, "seems to have a slightly different script, and the scribe leaves a small margin on the left side of the tablet which does not appear on the other two tablets. The idea that two different scribes are involved is confirmed by their different choices of signs".

<sup>43</sup> ABL 268 = K 514; ABL 751 + CT 54 429 = Sm. 920 + Sm. 1871.

<sup>44</sup> E.g., Sm. 488 (= ABL 1051) + K 1268.

<sup>45</sup> Or actually two such scribes (see n. 42). For the practice of Babylonians being educated in Assyria, see Parpola, *Iraq* 34 (1972) 33-34.

<sup>46</sup> E.g., ABL 273 and 517 respectively.

<sup>47</sup> See n. 45.

letter from the king to Kudurru even has a dated annotation apparently stating that it was a copy of a letter sent to Akkad<sup>48</sup>. Particularly valuable for this aspect are the letters *ABL* 273, 543, 1108 and 1244. Although each of these last three is damaged, as far as we can tell they are duplicates of one another, with only minor variants for the most part. In none of these is the beginning preserved; however, *ABL* 273 appears to be a much shorter version of these<sup>49</sup> and here the beginning is extant: "To Nabû-ušabši". The scribe did not bother to state that the letter was from the king, that was simply assumed in view of the contents. After the statement "concerning the horses about which your wrote to me<sup>50</sup>", the letter proceeds to repeat what is found at the end of the other three, with only two major variants (the number of horses is specified as being two hundred and the king states that he "has sent" the horses with two officers instead of stating that the officers were "bringing" the horses)<sup>51</sup>. While the shorter text may have been sent at a different time to the others, why were so many copies considered necessary in Nineveh? Since the events described in the letters took place during a period of unrest in Babylonia, it is possible that several copies were made so that they could be sent with different messengers to ensure at least one copy got through to Uruk but that for some reason they had never been sent. One could also suggest that these are school copies made by students in a Ninevite chancellery school, preliminary drafts, or spoiled copies. It is interesting to note that one of these copies, *ABL* 1244, has more logographic writings than the others, including logograms not usually found in the Kuyunjik letters (e.g., *İL*, *DU*, *KIN* and possibly *IGILÁ*, all for verbal forms)<sup>52</sup>. Walker informs me that from the point of view of script *ABL* 273 and 543 "might have been written by the same scribe" and while *ABL* 1108 "may also belong to the group" it is doubtful that *ABL* 1244 belongs here. Thus it is likely that at least two persons had been employed in preparing the various copies of this letter. Two of the four tablets have "K" numbers while the other two were accessioned into the British Museum in 1882 and 1883<sup>53</sup>. Since "K" pieces may join pieces accessioned in those years<sup>54</sup>, we can not tell if they were found in different

<sup>48</sup> *ABL* 518 rev. 6'-11'; exact interpretation uncertain.

<sup>49</sup> These four documents overlap as follows:

<i>ABL</i> 237		<i>ABL</i> 543		<i>ABL</i> 1108		<i>ABL</i> 1244
1	//?	[1]				
		2-5	//?	1'-3'		
		6-15	//	4'-13'		
		16-rev. 1'	//	13'-rev. 1	//	1'-6'
		rev. 2'-7'	//	rev. 2-7	//	7'-rev. 1
2-3						
4-rev. 8	//	rev. 8'-18'	//	rev. 8-19	//	rev. 1-9 +

<sup>50</sup> *ABL* 273:2-3.

<sup>51</sup> *ABL* 273 rev. 1-5; *ABL* 543 rev. 14'-16'; *ABL* 1108 rev. 15-17; and *ABL* 1244 rev. 7-9.

<sup>52</sup> *ABL* 1244:3', 8, rev. 3 and 7' respectively.

<sup>53</sup> *ABL* 273 = K 578; *ABL* 543 = K 176; *ABL* 1108 = 82-5-22, 166; *ABL* 1244 = 83-1-18, 119.

<sup>54</sup> E.g., K 1119 + 1915 + 82-5-22, 107 (= *CT* 53 31) and 83-1-18, 47 (= *ABL* 1109) + K 15101 (= *CT* 54 294).

locations. However, may we again ponder the possibility that the number of copies was a result of various offices in the Ninevite court each requiring one?

CT 54 84 and 188 are letters to the king sent jointly by an individual (or individuals) whose name is lost and “the Urukeans”<sup>55</sup>. In view of the use of the Uruk introduction in these letters, it is quite likely that the initial author was the governor of Uruk. Neither letter is well preserved and it is difficult to determine what they dealt with. Letters from the people of a province to the king are known from other parts of Babylonia. Among the groups that claim to have written to the king were the peoples of Kissik, Šāt-iddina, Ur and the Sealand<sup>56</sup>. While these letters purported to be from the people as a whole, both young and old, it seems likely that they were prepared by only a limited number of persons, probably the leading citizens of the town, its elders, or those to whom the governor turned for advice.

This corporate view of the people of a city is matched in letters from Ashurbanipal. In *ABL* 301 he was addressing every man, woman and child in the city when he wrote to the people of Babylon in order to attempt to persuade them not to join his brother in rebellion. More important here, on two occasions he wrote to Kudurru and the people of Uruk (*ABL* 296 and 518), and once to Nabû-ušabši and the people of Uruk (*ABL* 297). In addressing these letters, the king likely indicates who was the recognized head of Uruk at the time the letter was composed. The third letter (*ABL* 297) is addressed to “Nabû-[ušabši] and the Urukeans, both young and old, my servants, as [many as there may be]”<sup>57</sup>. After the typical “I am well. May you (therefore) be glad”, the text proceeds as follows :

*5 attunu tîdâ ša ina libbi [paṭri ša] 6 Aššur ilēa māta ullū[i gabbiša] 7 išātu tušākila u mātu [ ... ]*

<sup>5-7</sup> You know that with the help of [the sword of] Aššur (and) my gods you destroyed [all] the land beyond (the Tigris) with fire and that the land [ ... ]

Only a few traces are preserved after this. The king is thus commending Nabû-ušabši and his people for their military actions east of the Tigris. Quite likely this action was directed against the Gambūlu and may be connected with the letter mentioned above where we learn that the king had ordered him to go against that tribal group<sup>58</sup>. While interesting in its own right, this letter is particularly informative because it may be compared to *ABL* 292, a well-preserved letter from the Assyrian king to En[lil-bān]i<sup>59</sup>

<sup>55</sup> On the authorship of CT 54 188, see also n. 20.

<sup>56</sup> *ABL* 210, 942, 1274, and CT 54 554 respectively. In the last letter, the Sealander was writing together with some other person (or persons) whose name is not preserved.

<sup>57</sup> While only the first part of Nabû-ušabši's name is preserved, it can be restored with a fair degree of confidence.

<sup>58</sup> *ABL* 269.

<sup>59</sup> Waterman proposed restoring the name to read Bēl-ibni, the name of the man who controlled the

and the “people of Nip[ur], young and [old, my servants], as many as there may be”. The letter proceeds to duplicate the one to Uruk with only a few orthographic variants and continues: “... and that the land has again become submissive and has turned its face towards me<sup>60</sup>”. After this, they are told to take all precautions in order to capture a certain man. They are warned that he may attempt to disguise himself and are promised the fugitive’s weight in gold if he should be caught or killed. Possibly Ashurbanipal knew that the fugitive was in or near Nippur and thus the Uruk letter may not have contained the latter section. In any case, it is clear from the duplication of the opening section that the two letters were written at the same time: one to the governor of Uruk and his people and other to the governor of Nippur and his people. Could we view these letters, or at least their opening sections, as being “form letters” sent by the king to all the cities which had provided troops for the eastern campaign in order to thank them for their efforts<sup>61</sup>?

Less than three dozen of the approximately three thousand letters (and letter fragments) from the state archives at Nineveh appear to have been dated in antiquity<sup>62</sup>, and approximately half of these only give the day, or the day and month, they were composed<sup>63</sup>. Three of these letters involve Uruk: *ABL* 296 (dated to 12-XII), 517 (dated to 19-II-650) and 518 (dated to 24-II-645?). All three were sent by Ashurbanipal; *ABL* 296 and 518 were addressed to Kudurru and the Urukeans and 517 to Nabû-ušabši. Almost all those letters bearing full date formulae (i.e., citing day, month and year) date to the years 652-645<sup>64</sup> and were sent by Ashurbanipal<sup>65</sup>.

Sealand during part of the Šamaš-šuma-ukīn revolt (Waterman, *RCAE* 1, 202). This, however, is most unlikely since Nippur had no connection with the Sealand. Undoubtedly it was Enlil-bāni who was addressed here. The latter is known to have written several letters to the king from Nippur (e.g., *ABL* 238-239 and *CT* 54 15) and is known to have been *šandabakku* of Nippur during the period before the outbreak of the Šamaš-šuma-ukīn revolt.

<sup>60</sup> *ABL* 292:7-9.

<sup>61</sup> Walker informs me that the two letters “look very much as if they were written by the same scribe”. This might support the idea that the two letters (or at least the archival copies) were written at about the same time.

<sup>62</sup> *ABL* 60, 68 + 1450 (= *CT* 53 11), 69, 71, 257, 289, 296, 301, 371, 372, 374, 376, 395, 423, 517, 518, 671, 684, 686, 829, 879, 944, 1022, 1142, 1151, 1170, 1210, 1262, 1379 and 1406, *AAA* 20 (1933) pl. C no. 106, and see *CT* 53 495. Only those texts which have a separate notation giving the date (regularly placed at the end of the text) are cited here.

<sup>63</sup> By far the largest group of these “partially dated” texts was sent by one individual, Nabû-šuma-iddin, likely to Esarhaddon (*ABL* 60, 68 + 1450 [= *CT* 53 11], 69, 71, 371, 372, 374, 376, 684, 686, and 1379). He may also be the author of *ABL* 395 if the name of the sender of that letter, Nādinu, is taken to be an abbreviated writing of Nabû-šuma-iddin. With regard to these texts, see Postgate 1974.

<sup>64</sup> Exceptions appear to be *ABL* 1262 (month not preserved) and 1406. The date of *AAA* 20 (1933) pl. C no. 106 is uncertain; the copy indicates that it was dated in an otherwise unattested eponymy. (Could the name of the eponym be read Nabû-nādin-[aḥḥē]? He is known to have been eponym about this time, possibly in 646). The contents of the letter indicate that it is likely to have come from the period around 652-645.

<sup>65</sup> Exceptions are *ABL* 423, 671 and 829 which were sent to Ashurbanipal by an astrologer, Ištar-

These fully dated letters come primarily from a time of war and deal mainly with important military actions or political relationships relating to that war<sup>66</sup>. During a time of hostilities it was imperative to keep close track of events and communications. Thus, the scribes at the Ninevite court appear to have been attempting to aid in doing this by dating certain letters.

This has been only a brief survey of some aspects of the correspondence involving one individual. There is much work that needs to be done with the Babylonian letters from Kuyunjik, particularly in view of the recent addition to the amount of material available for study due to the efforts of M. Dietrich. It is to be hoped that just as scholars are at present systematically mining the Assyrian material for information, and are using new techniques in the process, some individuals will devote their energies to doing the same with the Babylonian material.

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nādin-apli, and *ABL* 879 which was sent to Ashurbanipal by Ummanaldas<sup>4</sup>, a king of Elam. The authorship of the following letters is uncertain: *ABL* 1142, 1262, and 1406.

<sup>66</sup> E.g., *ABL* 301 was sent by Ashurbanipal to the people of Babylon in order to persuade them not to join his brother in rebellion and 289 (dated on 5-II-650) was intended to assure the people of the Sealand of his support and goodwill.

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## THE NEO-BABYLONIAN ARCHIVES

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It is well-known that, as long as Mesopotamian civilization existed, the commonest material for cuneiform writing was clay. Cuneiform records were also written on stone, metal, ivory, etc. In the first millennium B.C. the Babylonians used often also wax-covered writing-boards on which they wrote cuneiform literary texts and accounts of the temple households (the issuance of wages and rations to workers, lists of livestock, etc.)<sup>1</sup>.

Beginning with the 7th century B.C. there appear dockets in Aramaic and in Aramaic script in Babylonian cuneiform documents. These dockets, which were marked on the clay with a black liquid or were scratched on the fresh clay with a hard instrument, sometimes give short summaries of the cuneiform texts, the reading of which, apparently, took far more time<sup>2</sup>. In some cases the dockets contain only personal names of contracting parties. It seems that many persons who possessed cuneiform documents did not know the Akkadian language since Aramaic was gradually becoming a spoken language in Babylonia. In other words, the Aramaic dockets upon the cuneiform tablets were archival marks. Such a conclusion is confirmed also by some Aramaic dockets upon the Elamite cuneiform documents from the Achaemenian royal archives discovered in Persepolis<sup>3</sup>.

The Aramaic script played a decisive role in the disappearance of cuneiform records, and Aramean scribes gradually came to occupy key positions in the Mesopotamian chancellery. Some scholars have even supposed that only a very insignificant part of the economic and legal documents was written on clay in the Neo-Babylonian period, and that the bulk of the texts was written in Aramaic on leather and papyrus<sup>4</sup>. But, unfortunately texts on such perishable material were easily destroyed by the climatic conditions in Mesopotamia.

Neo-Babylonian law stimulated the written fixing of transactions by the contracting parties. The contracts were drawn up in accordance to a fixed formula in two copies by scribes in the presence of witnesses, each party receiving a copy.

<sup>1</sup> See for literature H. Hunger, "Holztafel", *RIA* 4 (1975), 459; M. Stol, "Wastafeltjes uit het Nabije Oosten", *Phenix*, 24 (1978), 11-14. [See also above, the contribution by S. Parpola, note 16-Ed.].

<sup>2</sup> See e.g. *BE* 10, 52; cf. A. Leo Oppenheim, *Ancient Mesopotamia* (Chicago 1977), 241 and 377, note 16a.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. R. T. Hallock, *Persepolis Fortification Tablets* (OIP 92; Chicago, 1969), 2.

<sup>4</sup> See e.g. A. Leo Oppenheim, *op. cit.* 94-95.

The Neo-Babylonian period is characterized by an exceptional abundance of written sources. As far as I know, 13,096 economic, business and legal documents (including letters), dated from 626 to 331 B.C., have been published to this time. 9232 records of them are precisely dated to particular kings, and 3864 are not dated at all or their dates have been destroyed. Let us give some examples. 315 documents are dated to the reign of Nabopolassar, 1703 to that of Nebuchadnezzar II, 2626 to that of Nabonidus, 819 to that of Cyrus, 998 to that of Cambyses, and 1502 to that of Darius I. Approximately 250 Babylonian documents can be ascribed to the time of Assyrian dominance and ca. 380 tablets belong to the post-Achaemenian period. Thus, 13,726 Babylonian economic and legal tablets of the first millennium B.C. have so far been published. Their contents are very diverse: promissory notes, contracts concerning the sale and rent of land, houses and other property, documents of international trade, records of court proceedings, etc.

The bulk of these sources comes from Babylon, Uruk, Sippar, Nippur, Borsippa and Ur and relates to the reigns of Nebuchadnezzar II, Nabonidus, Cyrus, Cambyses and Darius I.

861 letters of the time of the supremacy of the Neo-Babylonian and Achaemenid kings have also been published. As a whole, these letters relate to the period between 600-450 B.C. The majority of them bears the stamp of an administrative-economic correspondence and comes from the archives of the temple Eanna in Uruk and Ebabbar in Sippar. And there are letters from the archives of private individuals, containing family news, advice about economic matters, etc. They were sent to the addressee in a sealed clay envelope that safeguarded the confidentiality of the correspondence and preserved the text against damage. The seal and name of the sender are preserved on the envelope of one of the letters<sup>5</sup> and certain letters contain the seal impressions of the senders.

Approximately a half of all published Babylonian tablets of the first millennium B.C. comes from the archives of the temple Eanna in Uruk and the temple Ebabbar in Sippar. Certain documents from the Eanna archive were written not in Uruk itself but in Babylon, Borsippa, Larsa and other cities, where this temple had trade entrepôts and various economic interests. Only a small number of documents comes from the Esagila temple in Babylon, which was the most important shrine of the country during the period under consideration.

A half of the documents comes from private archives. The richest private archives are those of the Egibi and Murashû business houses. The majority of the documents from the Egibi archive was composed in the area of Babylon and its suburbs, but a few were written in other cities (including even Ecbatana, the capital of Media), where members of the Egibi family were engaged in trade. The Murashû documents

<sup>5</sup> See CT 22, 142.



were composed in Nippur, and a small portion (about one-tenth), in its environs. An exceptional number of these texts contains Aramaic dockets.

Archives of other private persons have also been preserved. For instance, the archive of the family of a certain Šîn-uballiṭ was discovered in Ur. It covers a period of more than a hundred years<sup>6</sup>. One of the Uruk private archives covers a period almost of a hundred years (680-585 B.C.)<sup>7</sup>.

With a few exceptions we do not possess state archives of the Neo-Babylonian and Achaemenid periods<sup>8</sup>. As seen from the book of Ezra<sup>9</sup>, at least, a part of important documents was kept in the archives of the treasury of the Achaemenid kings at Babylon. Darius I ordered that an investigation should be conducted there in order to find Cyrus' decree concerning the Jerusalem temple. But this document was found "in the fortress of Ecbatana in the province of Media".

During archaeological excavations of the royal palace of Nebuchadnezzar II in Babylon some cuneiform tablets were discovered in a room of service character. These tablets, dating from the 10th to the 35th year of Nebuchadnezzar II (595-570 B.C.), list deliveries of oil, barley and dates to various foreigners, many of whom were prisoners of war<sup>10</sup>. There has also been published a document dated to the reign of Nebuchadnezzar II and relating the execution of a state criminal. This text was composed in Borsippa but found during excavations in Babylon. However, it is difficult to be sure that the document belonged to the state archives since it could be in possession of the man, who had bought a confiscated field of the convict<sup>11</sup>. Finally, according to a contract, dated to the same ruler, a field belonging to the king has been rented to the house of Egibi<sup>12</sup>. But this text definitely belongs to the Egibi archive.

If I understand the text Cyr. 311 correctly, a marriage contract written by the order of a high-ranking official, was deposited in royal archive and a duplicat of it given to the father of the bridegroom. As is known, in the Seleucid time private business documents of various kinds were registered by royal officials<sup>13</sup>.

The question arises: why only a few documents of palace archives have become known to us? This phenomenon can partly be explained by the fact that the royal

<sup>6</sup> See L. Woolley, *The Neo-Babylonian and Persian Periods* (UE 9; London, 1962), 46.

<sup>7</sup> See UVB 18, 41.

<sup>8</sup> Large Achaemenian archives in Elamite have preserved from Persepolis, where they were discovered in the royal treasury and in the Fortification wall of this city. See G. G. Cameron, *Persepolis Treasury Tablets* (OIP 65; Chicago, 1948) and R. T. Hallock, *op. cit.*

<sup>9</sup> Ezra 6:1.

<sup>10</sup> See E. F. Weidner, "Jojachin, König von Juda, in babylonischen Keilschrifttexten", in *Mélanges syriens offerts à R. Dussaud*, 2 (Paris, 1939), 923-935.

<sup>11</sup> See E. Weidner, "Hochverrat gegen Nebukadnezar II", *Afo* 17 (1954/55), 1-5.

<sup>12</sup> *Nbk.* 115.

<sup>13</sup> See L. T. Doty, "An Official Seal of the Seleucid period", *JNES* 38 (1979), 196 (with previous literature).

economy did not play any important role under the Neo-Babylonian kings. But its role substantially increased under the Achaemenids, however we know about it only from the Murashû contracts and some other documents of private persons. Apparently, during the period under consideration the state chanceries, including the regional bureaucracies, were stuffed by Aramaic-speaking scribes who wrote on leather and papyrus.

In temple and palace archives documents were kept in a certain order for many decades or even centuries. Private persons kept also their documents, since they might become necessary in cases of lawsuits. For instance, documents dated to Nergal-šar-ušur, Nabonidus and Cyrus are referred to in a tablet from Sippar, written during the rule of Cambyses. These documents were promissory notes concerning two minas of silver belonging to the business capital of two persons. The business had started in 559 B.C., and in 522 B.C., when the case was heard in court of law, both contracting parties were dead, so that their sons acted as litigants. The Priest of Sippar and "Elders of the City" read all the relevant documents and made their decision<sup>14</sup>.

When loans had been paid off, all the promissory notes and their duplicates were handed over to the debtor. In the same manner, at sales of houses, fields, slaves etc. the purchaser was given old title-deeds.

As is known, the Old Babylonian term for archive as well as for school was *bīt tuppi*<sup>15</sup>. The same term is attested also in several documents, which are dated to the Neo-Babylonian and Achaemenid kings and come from Sippar, Ur and a suburb of Nippur<sup>16</sup>. To judge from partly broken contexts, in the first millennium B.C. *bīt tuppi* designated temple school.

In a few texts from Seleucid Uruk archive is called *bīt šaṭāri* ("record office")<sup>17</sup>.

Temple archives were kept in special rooms. For instance, ca. 3500 economic documents from the 7th to the 5th centuries B.C. were found in two rooms of the Eanna temple in Uruk<sup>18</sup>.

<sup>14</sup> Camb. 412.

<sup>15</sup> See AHw 134b, F. R. Kraus, *Vom mesopotamischen Menschen der altbabylonischen Zeit und seiner Welt* (Amsterdam, 1973), 217 ff.

<sup>16</sup> É.DUB.BA. See J.-M. Durand, *Textes babyloniens d'époque récente* (Paris, 1982), pl. 38, AO 17605:2; UET 4, 180:5; see also UET 4:19 rev. 25: LÚ ŠID ŠÁ É.IM.DUB (*tupšarru šā bīt tuppi*): 13:37: DUB.SAR ŠÁ É *tup-pi*; 12:39: [LÚ]ŠID ŠÁ KÁ.IM.DUB. Cf. É.DUB in Nbn. 883:6-10; Moldenke 2, 46:2; Camb. 42:12 (or should the reading É.DUB be emended to İ.DUB = *našpaku* "storehouse"?).

<sup>17</sup> É SAR-ri. See BRM 1, 98:7; 2, 33:4 etc. Cf. O. Krückmann, *Babylonische Rechts- und Verwaltungs-Urkunden aus der Zeit Alexanders und der Diadochen* (Weimar, 1931), 79-80; L. T. Doty, *Cuneiform Archives from Hellenistic Uruk* (PhD Diss., Yale University, 1977), 392, note 326. However, this term was read *bīt šarri* "palace" by A. Falkenstein, *Topographie von Uruk* (Leipzig, 1941), 51 (k) and 52 (h) and G. J. P. McEwan, *Priest and Temple in Hellenistic Babylonia* (Wiesbaden, 1981), 138, note 325. Cf., finally, *mukinnu šarri* in the Seleucid period letter CT 51, 72:4,9 and 13 (= Strassmaier, *Actes du 8<sup>e</sup> Congrès International*, 32) which probably should be translated, judging by the context, "register of the king", see CAD M/2, 186b.

<sup>18</sup> See UVB 14, 17 ff. Cf. also UVB 18, 14 and 43.

The archive of the house of Murashû was discovered in its entirety in a room of  $5.5 \times 2.75$  m. This archive consists of 730 tablets and covers a period of more than fifty years (455-403 B.C.)<sup>19</sup>.

Other private archives, when their provenance is known to us, were kept in clay vessels<sup>20</sup>. For instance, two groups of economic documents were discovered in one and the same pot in Ur in a private house of the Neo-Babylonian period<sup>21</sup>. During archaeological excavations in Uruk two private archives of economic and business documents were found in a jar. They were put there without any chronological or subject order<sup>22</sup>. Some of the Egibi tablets seem to have also been found in a pot<sup>23</sup>.

Unfortunately, we know almost nothing about the arrangement of documents in the private archives, including the archives of the houses of Egibi and Murashû<sup>24</sup>.

<sup>19</sup> See *BE* 9, p. 13.

<sup>20</sup> See A. Leo Oppenheim, *op. cit.*, 241; M. Weitemeyer, "Archive and Library Technique in Ancient Mesopotamia", *Libri* 6 (1956), 217 ff.; J. Papritz, "Archive in Altmesopotamien", *Archivalische Zeitschrift* 55 (1959), 11 ff.

<sup>21</sup> *UET* 4, p. 1.

<sup>22</sup> See *UVB* 18, 39-41.

<sup>23</sup> See C. B. F. Walker, "Some Mesopotamian Inscribed Vessels", *Iraq* 42 (1980), 86.

<sup>24</sup> See M. Weitemeyer, *op. cit.*, 223-224.

## ARCHIVES FROM NIPPUR IN THE FIRST MILLENNIUM B.C.

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The total number of the non-literary documents from Nippur which are dated (or can be dated) in the first millennium B.C. is 1281. 937 documents are published (fully or partly)<sup>1</sup> whereas 344 are not<sup>2</sup>. Apart from letters (slightly more than one tenth of the documentation) all the documents are economic. The majority of these economic documents belongs to the private archive of Murašû (below, §3.10).

<sup>1</sup> *ABL* 238-24.327.328.699.797.1074; *AS* 17, 18.34; *BE* 8, 1.4-6.10.12.13.15.17-23.25-29.31.33.36.37.39-42.45.46.48-54.56-63.65-78.80-92.98-102.114.118.120.122.124.125.127.130-132.134.141.143.145-152.155-159; *BE* 9, 1-27.29-44.46.47.49-83.85-109.3a.7a.17a.26a.28a.32a.39a.52a.66a.86a.94a; *BE* 10, 2.3.5.6.8-132; *BRM* 1, 83.86; *CLBT* A 128; *CT* 22, 223; Durand, J.-M., *Documents cunéiformes de la IV<sup>e</sup> section de l'École Pratique des Hautes Etudes* 1 (Geneva-Paris, 1982), 27.278.287.296.602; (Paris, 1981 *TBER* Pl. 24: AO 8175-1; 31; AO 8623; 32; AO 8958; 47; AO 17623.17629; 48; AO 17632.17633; 49; AO 17638; 51; AO 17639-17641; 52; AO 17644; 53; AO 17650-17653; 54; AO 17654.17655.17657; 55; AO 17659.17660; *ROMCT* 2 2.7-9.11-13.15-18.23-25.27.28.31.33-37.41.44.45.47-51.54.55; *MPLAB* 2 (150 Murašû documents); *OIC* 22, 26-30; *OIP* 97, 73 f.: 24.25; 75: 26.27.29.30; *PBS* 1/2, 87-90; *PBS* 2/1, 1-228; *PBS* 13, 82.83.85; *TCL* 12, 5.15; *TCL* 13, 203.205; *TuM* 2/3, 7-10.13.19.22.26-29.31.33-42.44.49.51.53.56.58.63.64.70.71.73.76.78.79.82.87.89.90.92.94-97.99.102.104.114.122.123.125.129.132.138.142-145.148.149.178-182.186.187.189-191.196.200.202-204.209-212.216.217.225.226.228.232.238.242.255.259.261.263-269.271.279.280.284; *TuM* NF 5, 78; *UET* 4, 190; *VAS* 3, 4; *VAS* 4, 67; *VAS* 5, 128; *YOS* 17, 320; Aro, *Kleiderlexikon* 38: 10; 40: 11; Driver, G.R., *Iraq* 4 (1937), 17; Knopf, C.S., *Bulletin of the Southern California Academy of Sciences* (= *BSCAS*) 32 (1933), 58; CSK 035; 60; SC 77; 69 f.: SC 134; Lutz, H.F., *UCP* 9/3; Oppenheim, A.L., *Iraq* 17 (1955), 87 f.: 2NT 293.295-302; Owen, D., and Watanabe, K., *OrAnt.* 22 (1983), 37 f.; Stigers, H.G., *JCS* 28 (1976), 24: 3; 37: 24.

<sup>2</sup> *TEBR* 6 f.: AO 17627.17631.17634.17643; *OIC* 22, 31; *OIC* 23, 113 f.: 12N 103-109.111-128.130.132-147.149-162.164-177.179-218.221-227; 118 f.: 12N 576.581; 124: 12N 673.679; *OIP* 78, 76; 1N 133.195.283-285.290.291.293.295.298-300.303.2NT 1.3.29.61.145.165.179.222.260.280-282.284-292.294.303.304.311.325.327.330.342.400-402.419; Borger, R., *JCS* 19 (1965), 68a: Lawrence Art Museum No. VI; Gibson, M., *Bulletin of the Society for Mesopotamian Studies* 3 (Aug. 1982), 24; Goetze, A., *JNES* 3 (1944), 44 with n. 12: *NBC* 6142.6143; *id. ap.* Borger, *JCS* 19 (1965), 67b: *YBC* 7399; Kraus, F.R., *JCS* 1 (1947), 110 f. (152 Murašû tablets and fragments in Istanbul of which only the following eight are known by registration Nos.: *BE* 9, 14, n. 5: *Ni*. 525; 20, n. 3: *Ni*. 493; 31n: *Ni*. 500; *BE* 10, 40n: *Ni*. 611; 47n: *Ni*. 537; 51n: *Ni*. 612; *PBS* 2/1, 52: *Ni*. 536.550); cf. Stalper, *MPLAB* 1, 6 with n. 23; Oelsner, J., *WO* 8 (1976), 314, n. 2 *in fine*: HS (ho. not indicated); Oppenheim, *Iraq* 17 (1955), 87 f.: 2NT 283; Reade, J.E., *JCS* 23 (1970/1), 7, n. 36: IM 57914; Sachs, A. *ap.* Borger, *JCS* 19 (1955), 66b: FLP (no. not indicated); *id. ap.* Wiseman, *CCK* 92 with n. 2: N 4016; Unger, E., *IAMN* 9 (1933), 22 ff.: *Ni*. 2529-2533.2535.2536.2538.2539. — Apart from the Murašû documents, there are some more unpublished Nippur documents from the 1st millennium B.C. in the University Museum, Philadelphia. There is also at least one more FLP tablet from the Chaldean period. Only dated documents are listed in *OIP* 78, 76 which implies that there are more unpublished documents from the 1st millennium B.C. excavated by the same expedition.

### 1. *The chronological framework\**

The earliest dated document (*OIP* 78, 76: 2NT 280) is from 722/1 B.C., but 117 unpublished non-literary documents, which do not bear dates, are probably earlier (early NB)<sup>3</sup>. The latest document is dated after 317/6 B.C. (*OIP* 22, 28)<sup>4</sup>. Except for one document (*OIP* 78, 76: 2NT 284) which is dated to Bēl-ibni, the governor of Southern Babylonia in 702-700 B.C., all the documents are dated to kings' reigns. Not a single Nippur document is dated to usurpators' short reigns.

The documentary gap between the Late-Assyrian and Chaldean periods (more exactly between Sin-šarra-iškun's 6th year = 618/7<sup>5</sup> and Nabopolassar's 12th year = 614/3<sup>6</sup>) at Nippur is small when compared with the earlier and later Nippur documentation. If this gap has any significance at all then it would perhaps reflect the unstable situation of pro-Assyrian Nippur at the beginning of the Chaldean period<sup>7</sup>. Also from Xerxes' reign there are very few documents from Nippur and Babylonia in general. This may be due to the political situation in Babylonia.

More than half of the N/LB documents from Nippur were issued in the reigns of Artaxerxes I and Darius II, in sharp contrast to the rest of Babylonia (except for Ur) where most of the documentation dates to the Chaldean and early Achaemenian (538-482 B.C.) periods. The rich documentation from Chaldean-Achaemenian Uruk ceases at 519/8 B.C. and that from Sippar in 485/4 B.C. Therefore, the Nippur documents are the main source of information about Babylonia during the 5th century B.C., the more so since no more than 80 documents from Babylon and Borsippa can be assigned to the reigns of Artaxerxes I and Darius II; most of these documents do not belong to any archive<sup>8</sup>.

### 2. *The distribution of the documents by place of origin*

Most of the N/LB documents found at Nippur whose place of issue is indicated were issued there<sup>9</sup>. Eight letters from late-Assyrian Nippur were found at Nineveh<sup>10</sup>. *UET* 4, 190, a letter from either the late Assyrian or early Chaldean period was found at Ur. Nine documents were found in Babylon<sup>11</sup>, three at Isin<sup>12</sup>, two in Susa<sup>13</sup>, one

<sup>3</sup> *OIC* 23, 113: 12N 100-227 (cf. below with n. 24) are early NB. 114 (not 139 as reported in *Iraq* 37 [1975], 61) out of these 128 documents are letters. 12N 103.185 are roster/census lists, 12N 223 is a list of personal names, 12N 110 is a literary text and the rest are exercise tablets.

<sup>4</sup> *OIC* 22, 31 is perhaps Seleucid. For an astronomical text from Seleucid Nippur see Oelsner, *WZJ* 20/5 (1971), 141, n. 1.

<sup>5</sup> *TuM* 2/3, 41.42.

<sup>6</sup> *TBER* Pl. 31: AO 8623.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. Wiseman, *Iraq* 17 (1955), 5; J. Oates, *Iraq* 27 (1965), 144, 146 ff. 155.

<sup>8</sup> See Oelsner, *WO* 8, 310 ff. (add *ROMCT* 2, 20).

<sup>9</sup> In many documents the place of issue is not indicated, but in some cases it can be determined by using prosopographical data.

<sup>10</sup> *ABL* 238-240.327.328.699.797. 1074.

<sup>11</sup> *BE* 8, 10.20.31.75; *BE* 10, 15; *PBS* 2/1, 31; *ROMCT* 2, 13.37; *TuM* 2/3, 76.

<sup>12</sup> *BE* 8, 74; *ROMCT* 2, 24.25.

<sup>13</sup> *PBS* 2/1, 113.128.

at Iggur (near Ur, *PBS* 2/1, 126), and one at Qidiš (either on the Orontes or a colony of people from Qidiš in Babylonia : *ROMCT* 2, 2). These sixteen documents belong to archives of Nippureans and/or are concerned with Nippureans' transactions. 81 documents were issued in small settlements: 44 Murašû documents in 17 settlements<sup>14</sup>, 6 at Ālu ša Arbāja<sup>15</sup>, 2 at Ālu ša ardāni<sup>16</sup>, 2 at Ālu ša Nabû-iqbi<sup>17</sup>, and 27 in 27 settlements<sup>18</sup>. 11 out of these 37 documents belong to archives of Nippureans who were active in the vicinity of Nippur. Since the transactions are generally very small, we may assume that these settlements were not far from Nippur. Furthermore, in most of the documents issued in these settlements not only do the scribes and witnesses bear typical Nippurean Names, but also the principals (but not always most of them). At least one settlement, Ālu ša Lūši(-ana)-nūri, might have been ephemeral as it was named after its owner while he was still alive<sup>19</sup>. The places of issue of many N/LB documents, which were found at Nippur, are not preserved, but it is possible to prove by using prosopographical data that they belong to the Nippur documentation. Such proof is more difficult with regard to at least 62 documents of which it is not indicated where they were found<sup>20</sup>. Yet, even here we can use the prosopographical data in certain cases. If such data are not available, there remains, however, a statistical consideration, viz. if most of the names contained in these documents are typically Nippurean, it is conceivable that they belong to the Nippurean documentation. Yet, this is not possible with regard to some documents, including one (*TuM* 2/3, 34) which was issued at IM<sup>ki</sup> (poss. not far from Adab<sup>21</sup>). 24 out of these 62 documents are from the Hilprecht Collection. O. Krückmann, the editor of the N/LB tablets of this collection (*TuM* 2/3), did not indicate the places where these documents have been found. He did not do so even when the place is known (many documents of the collection are evidently from Nippur). Therefore, we may enjoy — at least in certain cases — the benefit of the doubt. It is even possible

<sup>14</sup> See Cardascia, *AM* 17 with n. 5 to which add *MPLAB* 2: CBS 12963 (Addijāja); 12969 (Enlil-ašābšu-iqbi) and 13024 (Šin-bēlišunu).

<sup>15</sup> *BE* 8, 33.50.51.68.72; *TuM* 2/3, 90 (*Ālu ša Abi-ilāja* = *Ālu ša Arbāja*).

<sup>16</sup> Knopf, *BSCAS* 32, 58: CSK 035; 60: SC 77.

<sup>17</sup> *BE* 8, 53; *TuM* 2/3, 19.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. *IOS* 8 (1978), 323 f. and add: Ālu ša rē'ê (*ROMCT* 2, 9), Bannešāja (*ROMCT* 2, 27), Bīt-a-e(?) [...] (*ROMCT* 2, 31), Guzānu (*BE* 8, 52), Hu-Šagibi (*ROMCT* 2, 35), Karalūnu (*ROMCT* 2, 23), and Šatirtu (*TuM* 2/3, 51).

<sup>19</sup> *BE* 8, 12.

<sup>20</sup> *CT* 22, 223; *ROMCT* 2, 2.9.31.33.35.41.44.45.47-51.54.55; *TBER* Pl. 24: AO 8175-1; 47: AO 17628.17629; 48: AO 17632.17633; 49: AO 17638; 51: AO 17639; 52: 17644; 53: AO 17644; 53: AO 17651-17653; 54: AO 17654. 17655.17657; 55: AO 17659.17660; *TuM* 2/3, 28.37.49.53.102.129.200.217. 232.238-242.255.259.261.265-268.279.280.284; *VAS* 4, 67; *VAS* 5, 128; Driver, *Iraq* 4, (1937), 16; Owen/Watanabe, *OrAnt.* 22 (1983), 37 f.; Stigers, *JCS* 28 (1976), 24; 3; 37: 24.

<sup>21</sup> N/LB IM<sup>ki</sup> possibly has the reading *Karkara* like MB IM<sup>ki</sup> (modern Tall Jidr SE of Adab, see Kh. Nashef, *RGTC* 5, 156). It is hardly identical with *Šaṭir* (see my *RGTC* 8, 195; MB has *Ša-ṭi-ri*<sup>ki</sup>, *RGTC* 5, 242, s.v. “*Šadiri*”, which must be different from IM<sup>ki</sup> = *Karkara*).

that Hilprecht has found some of these tablets during his excavations at Nippur (most of his other tablets originate from these excavations!).

### 3. *The distribution of the sources by archives*

#### 3.0. Introduction

Most of the N/LB documents from Nippur were found *in situ*, like the documents from Ur, Kish (and its vicinity) and the periphery. On the other hand, most of the documents from Babylon, Borsippa, Sippar and Uruk originate from clandestine excavations and have been acquired from dealers. This fact facilitates the classification of the Nippur documents according to archives.

Yet, it should not be forgotten that the methods of the first excavations were — unfortunately — destructive, and therefore gave only a very inexact information. Equally unreliable is their registration<sup>22</sup>. Only two collections of Nippurean documents are archives in the true sense: those of Murašû and Ninurta-uballit<sup>23</sup>, as they were found in the same place where they were originally preserved. Two such archives are still unpublished: (1) is presumably not a private but an official archive. This archive consists of 117 early NB documents (all undated; mostly letters and letter fragments) which were found in Square 4 around Burial 5 in the WB area at Nippur. (2) Three tablets (2NT 400-402) dated between 606/5 and 602/1 B.C. were found in a jar preserved in a private house of the scribal quarter of Nippur<sup>25</sup>. Such findings would support an assumption that also private persons have kept archives of their own records. The other ‘archives’ are actually documentation groups identified by us with the help of the prosopography.

They are termed ‘archives’ for convenience’s sake. All the 19 archives are private, except for the early NB one and that of the Enlil Temple which covers the longest period: from the late-Assyrian down to the late-Achaemenian (§3.1 below). From the late-Assyrian and early Chaldean periods there are two archives (§3.2) and from the Chaldean period there are eight (§3.2-4). Two archives cover both the Chaldean and the early Achaemenian periods (§3.5-6). Five archives belong to the Achaemenian period (§3.7-11).

Most of the Nippur documents are classifiable. All of the classifiable ones are juridical, except for c. 130 letters which were issued at Nippur (or — in very few cases — received there?) and some fifty administrative documents. Most of the latter documents are lists of individuals who received food rations or sums of money (or both). A considerable number of the non-juridical documents possibly belongs to the archive of the Enlil Temple, the staff of which held detailed registration and

<sup>22</sup> Cf. *BE* 8, 73 ff.; *MPLAB* 1, 3 ff. and the table below.

<sup>23</sup> See Oppenheim, *Iraq* 17 (1955), 87 ff.

<sup>24</sup> See n. 3 above.

<sup>25</sup> See D. E. McCown, *OIP* 78, 76.

correspondence with external factors. Only two administrative documents (*TuM* 2/3, 225.228) can be assigned to private archives. A private archive like that of Murašû includes except for juridical documents, only three inventory lists (*BE* 10, 105.106; *PBS* 2/1, 118) and one memorandum (*PBS* 2/1, 140). Most of its juridical documents are receipts and promissory notes. The rest are contracts. The sample of the archive of Ninurta-uballiṭ is similar to that of Murašû: only 3 out of 28 documents are non-juridical (two administrative lists [2NT 283.307] and one letter [2NT 306]).

Every private archive includes mainly promissory notes and receipts. Their different distribution between the archive of Murašû and that of Ninurta-uballiṭ stems from the different fields of activity of the owners of the two archives. This also applies to the other Nippurean private archives. The archives described below are arranged chronologically.

### 3.1. The archives of the Enlil Temple

It is possible to assign tentatively at least 28 documents to this archive. They include many of the letters and administrative documents which were issued at 1st-millennium Nippur. Not in every case is it possible to determine whether a document belongs to this archive. Certain transactions were recorded on the tablet (*lê'u*) of Bēl, Šamaš, Nabû (Ezida) and Bēltu of Uruk in Babylon, Sippar, Borsippa and Uruk respectively<sup>26</sup>. Could it be the origin of the '*Sammeltafel*', viz. large tablets on which there were copied several promissory notes of different individuals in a chronological order? There is no direct evidence for the registration on an (assumed) "tablet of Enlil/Ekur" in Nippur, but there remained one '*Sammeltafel*' from there (*TuM* 2/3, 35).

It is possible that at least eight out of eleven documents in which the head of the Enlil Temple (*šandabakku*) is mentioned belong to this archive. To these one may add documents which mention the temple, its estates, officials and servants. Yet, at least several juridical documents can just as well belong to archives of unknown individuals and institutions who had business connections with the important Enlil Temple.

One of these individuals was Ardi-Gula son of Šamaš-iqīša. According to *BE* 8, 87 he was employed by the head of the Enlil Temple. He is mentioned in another eight documents from 539-522 B.C. The earliest document (*BE* 8, 55) is a receipt on a balance of a considerable debt which Ardi-Gula paid to the head of the Enlil Temple. Two years later Ardi-Gula appears as debtor in a receipt which was issued not far from Nippur. Ten years later he owed 20 kors of barley to somebody (*BE* 8, 88; 527/6 B.C.). A year later he owed the head of the Enlil Temple an amount of money (*BE* 8, 89). In 522/1 he was again active near Nippur (*BE* 8, 87). He is the creditor in a document which was issued in the same month (*BE* 8, 71). Ardi-Gula lent small

<sup>26</sup> For references see *CAD* L, 158b.



amounts of money to individuals in order that they will be able to pay the tax (*ilku*) to the authorities during Smerdis' reign (*BE* 8, 100.101). He started this activity as early as Cambyses' reign (*BE* 8, 99; date not fully preserved). In doing this he had preceded Murašû who specialized in this type of activity on a much larger scale several decades later<sup>27</sup>.

### 3.2. Archives from the Late-Assyrian and early Chaldean periods

(1) The archive of Ninurta-uballit (28 documents)<sup>28</sup> is from the end of the late Assyrian period. (2) That of Ninurta-ušallim son of Nabû-usippi (*TuM* 2/3, 37-39.41.42) dates from 635/4 to 618/7 B.C. (3) That of Libluš son of Ninurta-ibni (*TuM* 2/3, 44.70.71.73; 602-597 B.C.). (4) That of Bau-šarrat daughter of Šin-zēra-Lišir consists of two documents (*TuM* 2/3, 26.27). The only dated document (26) is from 579/8 B.C. Both documents deal with the rent of her houses.

### 3.3. The archive of Nergal-iddina (576-529 B.C.)

The earliest document is perhaps *BE* 8, 13 from 576/5 B.C. where Nergal-iddina appears without his patronym. The patronym in *BE* 8, 27 (571/0 B.C.) is *Aḫū-ū-tu* which is just a hypocoristicon of Aḫa-lūmur, Nergal-iddina's patronym. The archive includes 12 documents (of which nine certainly belong to it). All the documents contain endorsements or traces of endorsements, being the largest group of the earliest Aramaic inscriptions found in Babylonia (cf. §5 below). The importance of this economically insignificant archive is due mainly to this find, as well as to the geographical and ethnographical information contained in it.

The grandfather, Nergal-iddina, is mentioned as a small debtor in three documents (*BE* 8, 17.27.28) from 571/0, 563/2 and 562/1 respectively, which were issued at Immalat, Laštān and Aua respectively. In the earliest transaction he mortgaged his female slave. In addition to her he might have possessed a slave (*BE* 8, 53, where Nergal-iddina appears without a patronym thereby making the identification uncertain). Only once did Nergal-iddina act as creditor of an unspecified amount (*BE* 8, 25; Ālu ša Qurabatua, 564/3 B.C.). His son Šamaš-aḫa-iddina owed nine kors of barley. The document (*BE* 8, 33) was issued at Ālu ša Abi-ilija. 13 years later he owed 40 kors of barley (*BE* 8, 50; same place). Nergal-iddina was the guarantor then. Šamaš-aḫa-iddina's last mention may be in *BE* 8, 51 from 545/4 B.C., which was issued at the same place. The grandson, Šamaš-uballit, was the debtor in three promissory notes which were issued at the same place (*TuM* 2/3, 90, *BE* 8, 68.72 from 534/3, 533/2 and 530/29 respectively).

### 3.4. Other archives from the Chaldean period (575-541 B.C.)

1). The archive of Enlil-aḫa-iddina son of Šamaš-šuma-līšir includes four documents from 575-558 B.C. He is the debtor in two documents (*TuM* 2/3, 76 from

<sup>27</sup> Was Ardi-Gula a mediator using the money of the Enlil Temple?

<sup>28</sup> *OIP* 78, 76: 2NT 280-292.294.303.304; Oppenheim, *Iraq* 17 (1955), 87 f.: 2NT 293.295.302.

Babylon and *TuM* 2/3, 82 from 562/1 B.C.). An inventory of his (*TuM* 2/3, 225) was issued in 562/1 B.C. The latest document is a cancellation of a legal claim (*TuM* 2/3, 129).

2). The archive of Bau-iqīša son of Usatu consists of three documents from 569-550 B.C. The earliest one is a promissory note (15 shekels of silver) which was issued in Babylon (*BE* 8, 20). Bau-iqīša possessed a house in Nippur in 554/3 B.C. as can be inferred from *BE* 8, 42; according to this document, the inspector (*qīpu*) of Nippur, the head of the Enlil Temple, and high officials who came from Babylon ordered the evacuation of trespassers from his house. A related document is *BE* 8, 48 from 551/0 B.C. where Bau-iqīša is mentioned without his patronym.

3) The archive of Zēra-ukīn son of Pir'u includes four documents from the Nippur region dated to 567-552 B.C. The earliest transaction (*TuM* 2/3, 196) took place at Ālu ša Kurulāja. Zēra-ukīn was the guarantor in another transaction which took place at Ḥarbē in 556/5 B.C. (*BE* 8, 39; a promissory note concerning four kors of dates). He was the creditor in another promissory note (*BE* 8, 45) concerning the same item and amount, which was issued at Bīt-Ea three years later. He was a commander of fifty according to *TuM* 2/3, 212.

4) The archive of Silim-ilāni son of Šamaš-šuma-līšir (perhaps brother of Enlil-aḥa-iddina, above, §3.4 and Itti-Šamaš-balātu). Itti-Šamaš-balātu is mentioned in 570-555 B.C. The archive consists of seven documents (*TuM* 2/3, 49.50.64.78.87.209.210) which were issued in 565-541 B.C. Four out of these seven documents are promissory notes (*TuM* 2/3, 49.50.64.87). Another two are working contracts (for bakers, *TuM* 2/3, 209.210). *TuM* 2/3, 210 was issued in 542/1 B.C. In all the promissory notes, except for one (*TuM* 2/3, 50) which may or may not belong to this archive, Silim-ilāni was the creditor of small amounts of silver and in kind. He might have been a baker as he was the employer in the working contracts.

### 3.5. The archive of Ninurta-mutīr-gimilli (541-534 B.C.)

The owner of this archive (son of Zēru-kitta-līšir descendant of *Ab-sum-mu*; a scribe) is mentioned in five documents. The earliest one is a receipt for ten kors of barley (*BE* 8, 54). His debts in the promissory notes *BE* 8, 57.59 are also in barley (4 and 26 kors resp.). Another document is a contract of a house purchase (*BE* 8, 58). The latest document is a contract of lease of sheep (*BE* 8, 63) issued at Ālu ša Addidāja.

### 3.6. The archive of Sūqāja (534-526 B.C.)

The archive of Sūqāja son of Līšir consists of four documents. The earliest one (*BE* 8, 65) is a receipt for the rent of a palm grove belonging to Sippari son of Gultammu. This is also the subject of two promissory notes from 531/0 and 528/7 B.C. (*BE* 8, 73.84 resp.). A field was violently taken from him in 526/5 B.C. (*BE* 8, 86).

### 3.7. The archive of Alplā (529/8 B.C.)

This archive belonged to a scribe (son of Ninurta-uballit). It consists of three

documents. Two of these documents are promissory notes which were issued on the same day (20.X.529/8; *BE* 8, 81.82). *BE* 8, 81 was written by Aplā himself. The third document, *BE* 8, 98, is a contract of apprenticeship (of a singer).

### 3.8. The archive of Lābāši (532-525 B.C.)

This archive also belongs to a scribe (son of Zēra-ukîn). It consists of four documents. According to the earliest one (*TuM* 2/3, 56 from Nippur), he owed ten shekels of silver. *BE* 8, 83, which was issued in Babylon in 528/7, concerns a debt of 120 kors of dates. According to *BE* 8, 92 from 535/4 B.C. Lābāši paid a tax and a bribe (in a way, a precedent to the practice reflected in the Murašû archive). The date and place of issue of the promissory note *BE* 8, 138 are not preserved.

### 3.9. The archive of Enlil-šākin-šulum (523- after 522/1 B.C.)

The archive (belonging to E. son of Lišir) consists of two documents. One is a promissory note concerning barley (the quantity is not preserved) from 523/2 B.C. (*BE* 8, 95). The second document is a damaged contract (*BE* 8, 118) from Darius I's reign (the date is not fully preserved) concerning cultivation of a field for a ten years period.

### 3.10. The Murašû archive (455-404 B.C.)

This archive, which is the largest one in 1st-millennium Nippur, has been thoroughly discussed in the recent decades (notably by G. Cardascia, *Les archives de Murašû* (1951) and Stolper, *MPLAB*).

As is well-known, the tablets of this archive were found *in situ* (in pottery jars). I cannot explain why not a single letter is found among the published tablets of the Murašû archive (most of them — over 600 — are published). An explanation that the letters have not been preserved because they were written on parchment seems unsatisfactory. There is no evidence for such parchment documents in the Murašû archive. All the three letters (messages, letter orders) written on parchment (<sup>kuš</sup> *šipir/štu*) that are mentioned in this archive (*BE* 10, 101 and *TuM* 23, 204 from 419/8 B.C., and *PBS* 2/1, 135 from 417/6 B.C.) do not belong to the internal correspondence of the considerable staff of the Murašû firm, but were sent by officials (this also applies to the relevant *šipir/štu*-s which are not preceded by the determinative KUŠ)<sup>29</sup>.

### 3.11. The archive of Enlil-šuma-iškun (371-368 B.C.)

The latest archive tentatively assigned to Enlil-šuma-iškun consists of six letter orders (*ROMCT* 2, 47-51 and Stigers, *JCS* 28, [1976], 37:24).

The dating is as above if the spelling of the royal name Artaxerxes with *Aš-* does refer to Artaxerxes II. This spelling occurs in another five documents from Nippur. *ROMCT* 2, 48 mentions the satrap Bēlšunu which is more likely identical with

<sup>29</sup> Cf. *BRAD* 118a; *MPLAB* 2, 20.26 with n. 20.

Belesys II (second quarter of the fourth cent. B.C.) than with Belesys I (last decade of the fifth cent. B.C.)<sup>30</sup>.

4. *Table of sources arranged by archives and find spots*

(Cf. *BE* 8, 73ff. and n. 22 above. Except for 3.1, only *BE* 8 documents are included because their excavation seasons and find spots are known).

<i>archive</i>	<i>document</i> <i>BE 8 nr.</i>	<i>excav.</i> <i>season</i>	<i>find spot/</i> <i>section</i>		<i>archive</i>	<i>document</i> <i>BE 8 nr.</i>	<i>excav.</i> <i>season</i>	<i>find spot/</i> <i>section</i>
3.1	31	1	—		3.3	13	3	—
	37	3(?)	—			17	3	—
	62	1	—			25	3	—
	69	1	V(?)			27	3	—
	76	1	"			28	1	V(?)
	78	1	"			33	3	—
	80	1	"			50	3	—
	94	1	"			51	3	—
	102	3	"			53	3	—
	130	1	"			68	1	—
	134	—	"			72	2	V/X
	140	3	"			91	3	—
	141	—	"		3.5	54	2	V/X
	145	—	—			57	3	—
	146	1	V(?)			58	3	—
	148	—	—			59	3	—
	151	—	—			63	3	—
	158	—	—		3.6	65	3(?)	—
TuM 2/3, 35						73	1	V(?)
sub-class (Ardi-Gula)						84	1	"
	55	1	V(?)			86	1	"
	60	1	"		3.7	81	3	—
	71	1	"			82	3	—
	87	1	"			98	3	—
	88	1	"		3.8	83	3	—
	89	—	—			92	3	—
	99	1	—			138	3	—
	100	1	V(?)		3.9	95	1	V(?)
	101	3(?)	—			118	1	—

The archives 3.2, 3.4 and 3.11 are fully listed in the discussion section above (§3), whereas the Murašû documents (§3.10) are listed in *AM*, 208ff. and *MPLAB* 1, 3ff.

<sup>30</sup> Cf. my article in *OLP* 15 (1984), 65-75.

### 5. Aramaic documents

The earliest Aramaic endorsements from Babylonia are (1-2) Pinches, *Outline of Assyrian Grammar* 62:2 dated to 593/2 B.C.<sup>31</sup>; their Akkadian sections are still unpublished. (3) is contained in *TuM* 2/3, 19 which was issued at Ālu ša Nabû-iqbi, not far from Nippur in 581/0 B.C. The tablet mentions at least one typical Nippurean name, viz. *Ana-Enlil-atanah* (son of Kudurru). This is the earliest evidence for the use of Aramaic writing in daily life in Babylonia seeing that the Assur Ostrakon (*KAI* 233) written in southern Babylonia in the middle of the seventh century B.C., i.e. several decades earlier, is an official Assyrian document. As is well-known, Aramaic dockets and other Aramaic documents appear in Assyria proper as early as the eighth century B.C. There are some indications that several scribes of Assyrian extraction were active in Chaldean Babylonia. No less than 120 individuals bearing typical Assyrian names appear in documents from Chaldean and Achaemenian Babylonia, that is to say after the fall of the Assyrian empire<sup>32</sup>. This is an impressive number although not every individual bearing an Assyrian name was necessarily an Assyrian (there is at least in one case evidence to the contrary<sup>33</sup>). (4) *BE* 8, 14 is from 573/2 B.C. It was issued in Sippar where some Assyrians are mentioned. (5) *BE* 8, 27 was issued at Laštān (prob. not far from Nippur) in 563/2 B.C. and belongs to the archive of Nergal-iddina (§3.3 above). It mentions the Assyrian *Slmd/Su-lum-ma-a-du*. All the documents of the small archive of Nergal-iddina contain Aramaic endorsements. The archive mentions several West Semitic individuals and groups who have originated — at least partly — from Assyria (in its broadest sense i.e. also Upper Mesopotamia)<sup>34</sup>. Other inscriptions bearing Aramaic characters from Nebuchadnezzar II's reign are *CIS* 2/1, 54-57, but they — like *CIS* 2/1, 58 from Nergilissar's reign — may be of a different type. (6) is *CIS* 2/1, 62 written by Nabû-zēra-iddina who — judging from his patronym *ŠĀR-MU* (? copy *ZIB*) could be an Assyrian. It was issued at Opis in 558/7 B.C. (7) *CIS* 2/1, 61 was issued at Sippar in 554/3 B.C. (8) Knopf, *BSCAS* 32 (1933), 57f. : *CSK* 035 was issued at Ālu ša ardāni not far from Nippur in 548/7 B.C. It mentions *dy* (*Id-di-ia*) son of *Āš-ši-ia* and *Tuq-qin-eš-šū*, who is mentioned in the same document, are typical Assyrian names.

If all this is not just a coincidence, then one may argue that the Aramaic script was introduced into daily (but not necessarily official) use in Babylonia by Assyrians (in the broadest sense) who seem to have been at that stage the only persons in Babylonia capable to write in the Aramaic script. Perhaps this is the reason why the Aramaic

<sup>31</sup> See L. Delaporte, *Épigraphes araméens* (Paris 1912), 44,45.

<sup>32</sup> Their prosopography is contained in my article "Assyrians in Chaldean and Achaemenian Babylonia", *Assur* 4 (1984), 71-98.

<sup>33</sup> Such evidence is contained in an unpublished document shown to me by a scholar who asked me not to disclose his name and the registration number of the document for the time being.

<sup>34</sup> Cf. my *On West Semites in Babylonia during the Chaldean and Achaemenian Periods: an Onomastic Study* (Jerusalem 1978), 16f.

script, which has replaced the ancient Canaanite-Hebrew script in post-exilic Judea, is called 'Assyrian script' in Rabbinic sources<sup>35</sup>. These late sources are from a period when the original Assyrian language fell into oblivion. Therefore, they state: "Assyrian has a script, but it is not a language"<sup>36</sup>. Most of the Aramaic endorsements from Babylonia originate from the Murašû Archive.

The study of the handwriting of each scribe of these endorsements is an urgent desideratum<sup>37</sup>. An Aramaic ostrakon (*Répertoire d'épigraphie sémitique* 957), which may be dated to the Achaemenian period, was also found at Nippur. A fragment of an Aramaic tablet, which could be dated to the Chaldean or Achaenian period (S.A. Kaufman, *OIC* 22, 152: 11NT 8) was found in the WA area.

Additional abbreviations:

*IAMN*, — *Istanbul Asariatika Müzeleri Neşriyatı* (Istanbul, 1916 ff.).

*MPLAB* — M. W. Stolper, *Management and Politics in Later Achaemenid Babylonia. New Texts from the Murashu Archives* (unpubl. Ph. D. Diss., Michigan 1974) [now published under the title *Entrepreneurs and Empire* (Publ. Inst. hist. et arch. néerlandais de Stamboul, vol. 54; Istanbul, 1986) — Ed.].

*ROMCT* — G. J. P. McEwan, *The Late Babylonian Tablets in the Royal Ontario Museum* (Toronto, 1982).

*TBER* — J.-M. Durand, *Textes babyloniens d'époque récente* (ADPF; Paris, 1981).

*TEBR* — F. Joannès, *Textes économiques de la Babylonie récente* (ADPF; Paris, 1982).

<sup>35</sup> Cf. R. D. Barnett, *ErIsr.* 16 (1982), 1\*ff.

<sup>36</sup> *Palestinian Talmud, Megilla* 10a (cf. *Babylonian Talmud, Sanhedrin* 21b).

<sup>37</sup> Cf. the procedure applied by J. Naveh (*The Development of the Aramaic Script* [Jerusalem, 1970], 22 ff.) for the Elephantine documents. [A study of the writing techniques and letter forms of *i.a.* the Aramaic endorsements, a Ph. D. thesis by G. van der Kooy (Leiden), will be completed in 1986 — Ed.].

## ASPECTS OF ARCHIVES IN THE ACHAEMENID PERIOD

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When discussing what is known of the archival system of the Achaemenid period it would be most helpful to be able to relate it with that of the neo-Babylonian period for there can be no doubt that there is a great element of continuity<sup>1</sup>. But the archival practices of the neo-Babylonian period remain, for the present, unknown to us. We lack a body of material that can be compared in any way to the great epistolary or literary archives of Assyria.

The mode of excavation and acquisition (and subsequent storing) of many of the judicial and commercial texts from the neo-Babylonian period, now in the leading collections, has also made it very difficult to organize the known material into "archives". There is also the real possibility that many documents which pertained to an archive were written not in neo-Babylonian on clay, but in Aramaic on perishable material such as leather. It is only in recent years that archives of a private nature have been identified in the excavations at Uruk, and of these only one has been published in full. For the Persian period we have only the archives of the financial house of Murashu that are of a private nature; the other archives from this period deal on the whole with the affairs of the Eanna. The Uruk archive of Nabû-ušallim contains 32 tablets and was found in a neo-Babylonian commercial residence. The archive consists of legal documents ranging in time from 681-593 B.C.E.<sup>2</sup>.

The Murashu archive from Nippur contains a large number of tablets found in a single room. The number usually given is 730 but recent investigation has raised this number to 835, ranging in time from 455 to 403 B.C.E.<sup>3</sup>. Here too the documents were of a commercial and legal nature with the main categories being leases, receipts for payment of rents and taxes and certificates of debt against real security. The documents due to their quantity and variety remain a prime source for studying

<sup>1</sup> Ernst Posner, *Archives in the Ancient World* (Cambridge Mass., 1972) devotes part of chapter 4, "Persia, Alexander the Great, and the Seleucid Empire", to the Achaemenid period (118-126) but his survey is based on secondary sources. The same is true of O. Bucci, "L'attività legislativa del sovrano achemenide e gli Archivi reali persiani", *RIDA* 3 serie, 25 (1978), 11-93, but only a short part of this article deals with actual archival practice. Cf. too P. Briant's chapter on "Sources grecques et histoire achemenide" in his *Rois, tributs et paysans* (Paris, 1982) 491 ff.

<sup>2</sup> See H. Hunger, "Das Archiv des Nabû-ušallim", *BagM* 5 (1970), 193-304.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. G. Cardascia, *Les archives des Murašû*, etc. (Paris, 1951); M.W. Stolper, *Management and Politics in Later Achaemenid Babylonia, New Texts from the Murashu Archives* (Ph.D. Diss, Univ. of Michigan, 1974). [See also the contribution to this volume by R. Zadok, under 310 and note 28a — Ed.].

aspects of Achaemenid property practices, social organisation, business methods and law in Babylonia of the period. But little can be learned about archives and their function from this material beyond the need for gathering and storing documents relevant to the affairs of a single family. It may also be possible to describe a degree of continuity for scribal tradition in Babylonia for the Neo-Babylonian into the Achaemenid period but that tells us little about archives and their function during this period.<sup>4</sup>

The best known and most frequently quoted bit of information about the archives in the Persian empire comes from the passage in Ezra (5:17) which reports that an order was given for a search to be made in the royal archives *yitbaqqar bēbēt ginzayyā dī malkā* for the decree issued by Cyrus permitting the rebuilding of the temple in Jerusalem. It is taken for granted, in the narrative, that if a royal decree had been issued, it would be recorded. The order was not found in Babylon but rather in the old Median capital of Ecbatana (Biblical Aramaic *ʾAḥmātā*) stored in the archive of the treasury *bēt sifrayyā dī ginzayyā mēhaḥātīn* (6:1-2). The record, called *dikrōnā* (memorandum)<sup>5</sup> was not kept as a separate item, but was part of a *megillā* (scroll). The Hebrew form of *dikron* — *zikkārōn* — is known from Esther 6:1 where King Ahasuerus (Xerxes), not being able to sleep, is read to from a *sefer ha-zikrōnōt* a scroll, to be sure, since this was the only form of a *sefer* known then. This *sefer* contained memoranda, a sort of *ephēmerides*<sup>6</sup>. Another biblical reference to a *sefer zikkārōn* is found in Malachi 3:16. A *dikrōn* has actually reached us from the Persian period — Cowley, *Aramaic Papyri (CAP)* nr. 32 (after 407 B.C.E.) and is titled *zkrn zy bgwhy wdlyh* “the memorandum of Bagoas and Delaiah”. It was written in response to the petition (found in *CAP* 30/31) asking for the right to rebuild the temple in Elephantine which had been destroyed by Egyptian priests. This seems to be a poor copy of the original which had reached Egypt and was copied for the local archives.

Very little more is known about this aspect of the Persian archives and surprisingly Herodotus is of little use to us here<sup>7</sup>. Ctesias, whose Persica is unduly suspect in the eyes of historians provides better information when he claims to have used *diptherai basilikai* for his source material (Diodorus II 32)<sup>8</sup>. There is, however, one Persian source which should not be overlooked and whose veracity may be

<sup>4</sup> For elements of continuity see H. M. Kümmel, *Familie, Beruf und Amt im spätbabylonischen Uruk* (Berlin, 1979).

<sup>5</sup> Note that the usual form of this noun in Aramaic is *dukrān* but a form like *dikrōn* is not unusual in Western Aramaic.

<sup>6</sup> A. R. Millard, *Iraq* 26 (1964), 34-35 and *JAOS* 100 (1980), 364 has compared the use of “diaries” and extracts *nishu* for the Babylonian Chronicles with Esther 6:1,2.

<sup>7</sup> The pertinent material in Herodotus has been discussed most recently by Bucci and Briant (above n. 1).

<sup>8</sup> For Ctesias cf. F. W. König, *Die Persika des Ktesias von Knidos* (*AfO* Beih 18; Graz, 1972), 161.



ascertained. This is section 70 of the Bisitun inscription<sup>9</sup>. Darius informed his "readers" that he had copies of his inscription made and sent to all his empire. It is now considered an addition to the Bisitun inscription. We are in a good position to test Darius' claim that copies were sent out "on clay and on leather". That is in Akkadian, since the Old Persian syllabary was in very limited use and may have indeed been an invention of Darius<sup>10</sup>, and in Aramaic since that language was written primarily on leather in the East. Both a Neo-Babylonian text and an Aramaic text have reached us, both sadly in fragmentary form. The Neo-Babylonian text was published many years ago by Weissbach and has been republished by Mrs. Von Voigtlander in her edition of the Akkadian text. The Aramaic text has been reedited and republished by B. Porten and myself<sup>11</sup>.

The text published by Weissbach, as Ursula Seidl has shown, was taken from a series of reliefs that were modeled on the Bisitun monument<sup>12</sup>. The Neo-Babylonian copy, found in Babylon, was in all likelihood produced soon after the decree of Darius (Bisitun 70) was promulgated. Together with the relief it was set up in a position where it could be seen by those using the "Prozessionsstrasse" leading to the Ishtar gate. We may surmise that there may have been a copy of this text in a different form either on a large tablet or on a cylinder like the famous Cyrus cylinder. The Aramaic text that has reached us is a copy made in the late fifth century; the 'original' sent out in the late sixth century was surely on leather, the copy a century later, made in Egypt, on papyrus. Why was a copy made at such a late date? It was surely not for sentimental reasons. Had the original so deteriorated that it was deemed necessary to have a new copy made for the archives in Syene or Elephantine? Was it now a 'classical' text copied by student scribes? The copy found at Elephantine is written by a practiced hand, not that of a student.

At the end of the inscription the Aramaic text is imperfect and does not offer a good version of the Bisitun inscription. The order of the text is different, the paragraphs are shorter, telescoped as it were. Had the last few columns of the 'original' so deteriorated that the scribe was forced to improvise making the best of remaining bits or did he have a different text? But, even where the Aramaic text is well preserved or

<sup>9</sup> Section 70 of the Bisitun inscription has received a great deal of attention in recent years, the articles of Diakonoff, Harmatta and Hinz are discussed in passing by I. Gershevitch, "Diakonoff on Writing", *Studies Diakonoff* (Warminster, 1982), 99-109, who has added his own telling contribution. It is Gershevitch' opinion that both the Old Persian and the Elamite text were read in Old Persian. Cf. too M. A. Dandamaev, *Persien unter den ersten Achämeniden* (Wiesbaden, 1976), 40-52.

<sup>10</sup> Diakonoff believes that the Old Persian script was invented before 590 B.C.E. and therefore in Media.

<sup>11</sup> E.N. Von Voigtlander, *The Bisitun Inscription of Darius the Great, Babylonian Version* (Corpus Inscriptionum Iranicarum; London, 1978), 63-65. The reedited Aramaic text is found in J. C. Greenfield and B. Porten, *The Bisitun Inscription of Darius the Great, Aramaic Version* (Corpus Inscriptionum Iranicarum; London, 1982).

<sup>12</sup> U. Seidl, "Ein Relief Dareios' I. in Babylon", *AMI* (NF) 9 (1976), 125-130. I am indebted to Dr. Seidl for bringing this article to my attention.

can be easily restored there are differences between it and the Akkadian text from Bisitun the version to which it is closest. The exact relationship of these texts is still to be determined. Examination of the Akkadian text preserved in the fragment found at Babylon has shown that when it diverges from the Bisitun text it shares many of these divergences with the Aramaic text. The Aramaic text has more complete information about the number of captives taken and slain than the Bisitun Akkadian text or the other Bisitun texts<sup>13</sup>.

The final section of the Aramaic text contains four lines that may best be called enigmatic and which did not lend themselves to either translation or interpretation. They also contained two Iranian words that were previously unknown. It was our good fortune that Nicholas Sims-Williams saw the manuscript of the Aramaic Bisitun text edition and recognized that these lines, and indeed these Iranian words, were taken from the admonitory portion of a different inscription of Darius known as DNb, i.e. Darius Nakshi Rustum b<sup>14</sup>. In other words the Aramaic version of the Bisitun inscription from Elephantine contains a seemingly foreign element taken from a different text. Among the possible explanations of this phenomenon the following are worth consideration: a) that there was in circulation more than one version of the Bisitun inscription and that this had a different ending; and b) that the local archive had copies in Aramaic of various royal inscriptions and that the local scribe used a different inscription of Darius to complete the now fragmentary text. Without being able to prove it I believe that the latter is the more plausible solution to this problem. One may conclude that the inscriptions known to us in Old Persian primarily on stone were also circulated in Aramaic on leather or papyrus and preserved in archives not only in Babylon, Ecbatana, Susa or Persepolis but also in such outlying areas as Syene-Elephantine.

There is no need to document the use of Aramaic in Asia Minor since there is a constant, if slow, accretion of material from that area. The well documented custom of setting up inscriptions on pillars or stelae in temples or other public places supports rather than precludes the existence of archives in which the original version was kept. In the Achaemenian period the original may very well have been written in Aramaic on leather, and thus was highly perishable. In the extant bilingual inscription from Sardis (Lydian and Aramaic) and trilingual from Xanthus (Lycian, Aramaic and Greek) we have local decrees; but in the letter of Darius to the Satrap Gadatas, found at Magnesia on the Meander, we have in all likelihood the Greek version of a text promulgated originally in Aramaic and publicized in Greek. The

<sup>13</sup> Cogent remarks about the Babylonian version and its relation to the other versions may be found in R. Schmitt, "Zur babylonischen Version des Bisutün-Inschrift", *AfO* 27 (1980) 106-126. R. Borger, *Die Chronologie des Darius-Denkmal am Behistun-Fels* (Göttingen, 1982) argues convincingly that the Babylonian version is dependent on the Aramaic version.

<sup>14</sup> N. Sims-Williams, 'The final paragraph of the tomb-inscription of Darius I (DNb, 50-60): the Old Persian text in the light of an Aramaic version', *BSOAS* 44 (1981), 1-7.

same is in all likelihood also true of the Greek text, from Sardis, extant in a late copy, from the thirty-ninth year of Artaxerxes (II ?) consecrating a statue of Ahuramazda and regulating the actions of his devotees<sup>15</sup>. The original Aramaic texts were probably preserved in the archives of the respective cities.

A similar archive may very well have been the source from which the letter of Xerxes to Pausanias of Sparta, preserved by Thucydides (I, 127, 7; Loeb, pp. 218-219) was eventually copied<sup>16</sup>. Of the three letters quoted by Thucydides (128, 7; 129, 3; 137, 4) even those scholars who have doubted their authenticity have assumed that the one attributed to Xerxes was the most authentic<sup>17</sup>. Most of the historians named by Thucydides were Asiatic Greeks<sup>18</sup> and they probably were well aware of the resources of the local archives. Herodotus fares worse than Thucydides since his supposed sources are suspect in the eyes of many historians. Yet, the comparison of his tale of the rise of Darius to power (III 61-70) with the information to be gathered from the Bisitun inscription leaves the strong impression that there is more than simply an echo of the official version in the Herodotus story<sup>19</sup>. He may very well have composed his tale from information gleaned from the official version combined with oral information circulating during the reign of Artaxerxes. Was a Greek version preserved in one of the Greek speaking cities of Asia Minor under Persian rule or was a Greek translation of the Aramaic version read to him in Egypt?

There are other indications of the existence of such archives. Copies of texts of Darius, for example, must have been kept in the archives, for the texts of Darius were subsequently used by Xerxes, whose inscriptions have been called, perhaps with some exaggeration "largely a rehash of inscriptions of Darius in Persepolis"<sup>20</sup>. It was at Persepolis that the two important collections of Elamite texts that have reached us were found. These are the 'fortification tablets' (thirteenth to twenty-eight year of Darius I, 509-494 B.C.E.) and the 'treasury tablets' (thirtieth year of

<sup>15</sup> L. Robert, 'Une nouvelle inscription grecque de Sardes. Règlement de l'autorité perse relatif à un culte de Zeus', *CRAI* 1975, 306-330. As noted by D. M. Lewis, *Sparta and Persia* (Leiden, 1977), 51 f., the discovery of Aramaic *bullae* at Daskyleion proves the presence of an archive there.

<sup>16</sup> H. D. Westlake, 'Thucydides on Pausanias and Themistocles — a Written Source', *Classical Quarterly* (NS) 27 (1977), 95-110, esp. 102-103.

<sup>17</sup> A. Lippold, 'Pausanias von Sparta und die Perser', *Rheinisches Museum für Philologie* 108 (1966), 334, contends that Thucydides may have made a particular effort to copy court style. But this is a specious argument.

<sup>18</sup> So Westlake (above n. 16), 109.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. A. Matorelli, 'Storia persiana in Erodoto: echi di versioni ufficiali', *Rendiconti dell' Istituto Lombardo, Classe dell' lettere* 111 (1977), 115-121; cf. too Dandamaev (above n. 9), 122-124. Divergent views on this subject may be found in three recent studies: F. Gschnitzer, *Die Sieben Perser und das Königtum des Dareios* (Heidelberg, 1977); J. Wiesehöfer, *Der Aufstand Gaumatas und die Anfänge Dareios' I* (Bonn 1978); and I. Hoffmann and A. Vorbichl 'Das Kambysebild bei Herodot'. *AfO* 27 (1980) 86-105. See also Bickerman-Tadmor, *Atheneum* 56 (1978), 239 ff., and I. Gershevitch, *Acta Antiqua* 27 (1979), 337 ff.

<sup>20</sup> So I. Gershevitch in his preface to R. T. Hallock, 'The Evidence of the Persepolis Tablets' (Middle East Centre, Cambridge, 1971, preprinted chapter of the *Cambridge History of Iran*), 8. See too the remarks of M. Mayrhofer in *Xerxes. König der Könige*, reprinted in his *Ausgewählte Kleine Schriften* (Wiesbaden, 1979), 166-180, esp. pp. 170-171.

Darius I to the seventh year of Artaxerxes I, 492-458 B.C.E.)<sup>21</sup>. The fortification tablets, some 3000 items, record transfers of food products, primarily ration payments of sorts to a variety of individuals and working groups and also food for horses, camels, cattle and fowl. The treasury tablets, much fewer in number, record the disbursement of silver from the Persepolis treasury. These are also chiefly ration payments. There is also, as yet unpublished, a group of tablets with Aramaic text from the same find as the fortification tablets<sup>22</sup>. The Elamite texts refer to scribes who write on parchment, and record that hides of animals, possibly to be used in the making of parchment, were delivered to various treasuries<sup>23</sup>. Among the seals used on the Elamite tablets some bear Aramaic legends. Beside these indications of the activities of scribes writing in Aramaic there were found with the treasury tablets clay-rings, equipped with strings, that probably contained an Aramaic text, that were tied in some way to the tablets. These documents were highly perishable and disappeared in the course of time with the other Aramaic documents on leather kept in the archives at Persepolis.

We must return to the hospitable sands of Egypt, to the island of Elephantine, for definite indication of archival procedure — communal and private<sup>24</sup>. There are at least three archives known from Elephantine, the communal archive contains copies of letters primarily to the Persian authorities. Among the best known items included in it are Cowley 30 and 31, two faulty copies of the communal petition addressed to Bagoas, governor of Judah, and related documents. These were found together as were, it would seem, the Mibtahia archive and the Yehoyishma archive. These are two private archives in which documents were gathered for the clear purpose of establishing personal status and ownership of property. Pertinent earlier documents

<sup>21</sup> For publications and discussion see the article by Hallock referred to in note 20. There may also have been a neo-Babylonian archive at Persepolis. One tablet was found among the 'treasury tablets' which was an administrative text and fitted the context. [M. W. Stolper has published 'The Neo-Babylonian Text from the Persepolis Fortification', *JNES* 43 (1984) 299-310 and has discussed their context. He remarks, "the Fortification tablet is anomalous not only because of its language but also because of its type. It is a private legal document found in a very large group of administrative records that form an otherwise coherent archive dealing with transfers of food and related matters" (p. 304). He, nevertheless, in the light of references in the texts to Babylonian scribes and other considerations, argues for the use of Akkadian at Persepolis].

<sup>22</sup> These were prepared for publication by R. A. Bowman and are to appear posthumously in the near future. [Stolper (p. 300) reports that 80 Elamite texts have Aramaic dockets and that 700 Aramaic texts are monolingual. He states (p. 305) that "the Aramaic tablets are undoubtedly part of the same archive as the Elamite tablets"].

<sup>23</sup> Documents described as *kuššipirtu* are noted in various tablets from the Persian period: the *sepīru* was an expert scribe whose talents included Aramaic writing. For the *sepīru* see most recently Kümmel (above note 4), 132 f.

<sup>24</sup> For a discussion of the archival division of the Elephantine texts see B. Porten, *Archives from Elephantine* (Berkeley, 1968). For the texts noted here conveniently collected and translated see B. Porten-J. C. Greenfield, *Jews of Elephantine and Aramaeans of Syene. Aramaic texts with Translation* (Jerusalem, 1974). In this volume new readings and translations of the texts are given and they are arranged by archives.

are included in the archive and the ownership of a particular plot of land can be traced over a number of years; so too in the case of the Yehoyishma archive the change of status from unmarried slave to married slave to manumitted person can be followed, and the focus of interest shifts from mother to daughter. In both cases it is clear that the documents were carefully preserved and were not assembled in a haphazard manner. In continuation of the practice known from cuneiform archives the private archives at Elephantine were kept at home.

There are three other finds from Egypt that should be considered if only briefly. 1) the Arsham letters published by G.R. Driver<sup>25</sup>. These letters written in the East — Susa or Babylon — on leather by Arsham, governor of Egypt, while on 'home leave' were found in the 'mail pouch' in which they were sent to Egypt for distribution. They are written to diverse individuals and the 'passport' of the carrier seems to be one of the documents. There is no reason to consider this an archive. 2) the Hermopolis letters, a group of family letters, dealing with matters of everyday life<sup>26</sup>. It is not clear that they were ever delivered and the use of the term archive would be an exaggeration; 3) the texts from Saqqara published by J.B. Segal. They are on the whole in a fragmentary condition and no conclusion can be drawn<sup>27</sup>. The majority of texts were found together in two separate collections of debris. Yet, it is tempting to see the texts dealing with court proceedings as emerging from a single archive.

Finally, a word about two groups of texts from Palestine. The first group is known to us in a round about way, a hoard of *bullae* was published by N. Avigad. All indications are that they originate in a single hoard and from the archives of the governor of the city-state of Yehud<sup>28</sup>. The second group comes from a cave in the Wadi Daliya and will be published by F.M. Cross. They are from the late part of the Persian period and are on the whole very fragmentary<sup>29</sup>. Since these texts, and the fragments indicate that there were many documents, were taken along by refugees hiding in the cave we may assume that they would have documented ownership of real and movable property and would have constituted a series of private archives.

We may hope that future finds of archives, cuneiform and alphabetic, would make for a more informative survey.

<sup>25</sup> The handy edition of 1956, *Aramaic Documents of the Fifth Century B.C., Abridged and Revised Edition*, especially in the reprint of 1965 is recommended.

<sup>26</sup> E. Brèsiani e M. Kamil, 'Le lettere aramaiche di Hermopoli', *Atti ANL*, Memorie, Classe di Scienze morali, storiche e filologiche (Rome, 1966) Ser. VIII, 12/5, 356-428. Cf. Porten-Greenfield (Above n. 24), 149-166.

<sup>27</sup> J.B. Segal, *Aramaic Texts from North Saggara* (London, 1983).

<sup>28</sup> N. Avigad, *Bullae and Seals from a Post-Exilic Judean Archive* (Jerusalem, 1976).

<sup>29</sup> I am indebted to Prof. F. M. Cross for letting me examine these texts. Papyrus 1 will be published in the forthcoming *Festschrift* for N. Avigad. [F.M. Cross, 'Samaria Papyrus 1: an Aramaic Slave Conveyance of 335 B.C.E. found in the Wādī ed-Daliyeh', *Eretz Israel* 18 (1985), 7\*-17\*].

## UN CAS TRÈS RARE D'EMPLOI DES "CRETULAE" DANS LE MILIEU PHÉNICIEN D'OCCIDENT

### ESSAI PRÉLIMINAIRE D'ÉTUDE ET D'INTERPRÉTATION

ANNA MARIA BISI (Roma)

L'emploi de bouchons ou de morceaux d'argile, sur lesquels on applique des empreintes de cachets à surface plate, soit pour le scellement de jarres à denrées ou à liquides soit pour la fermeture des verrous ou des pommeaux de portes des archives administratifs des palais et des temples, est bien attesté au Proche-Orient ancien, en Égypte et dans la Crète minoënnne au cours du 3<sup>e</sup> et du 2<sup>e</sup> millénaire avant notre ère. Si quelques documents de ce type précèdent même l'invention de l'écriture en Mésopotamie et en Susiane (étant donné leur fonction de permettre la mise en ordre et la transmission des opérations de comptabilité, comme il ressort des études récentes de Denise Schmandt-Besserat), en remontant bien au delà de la fin du 4<sup>e</sup> millénaire (civilisations de Tell Halaf et d'el Obeïd) avec des antécédents dans le néolithique anatolien de Çatal Höyük), c'est en revanche dans les "cretulae" de Festòs, qui datent de 1700 avant J.-Chr. environs (MM II b)<sup>1</sup> et qui viennent d'être analysées dans leur fonction et dans leur signification par Enrica Fiandra, que se dégagent les éléments les plus intéressants pour la reconstruction "a posteriori" de ce système de scellement.

On a remarqué en effet à propos des empreintes minoennes qu'elles étaient appliquées sur des chevilles en bois fixées aux battants de portes de magasins qui étaient rouverts selon les exigences menagères du palais, même plusieurs fois par jour. Un usage tout à fait pareil est documenté pour les spécimens provenant des forteresses nubiennes du Moyen Empire, pour ceux de Farah, de Lagash, de Karahöyük, de Malatya, de Boghazköy et d'autres endroits anatoliens, mésopotamiens et syriens dont l'étude a été entreprise par Mlle Fiandra au même temps que celle des empreintes de Shar-i Soktah dans le Seistan iranien, remontant au 3<sup>e</sup> millénaire avant notre ère.

Au commencement de l'âge du Fer le cachet à surface plate qui avait été éclipsé pendant l'âge du Bronze au Proche-Orient par le cylindre-sceau d'origine élamite et mésopotamienne, connaît un nouvel essor à la suite de l'adoption des écritures

<sup>1</sup> Elles sont précédées dans la Crète de la période pré-palatiale par les empreintes du même type de Myrtos et de Vasiliki.

alphabétiques issues du phénicien par les peuples de la Syrie et de la Palestine (Israélites, Araméens, Ammonites, etc.). Il est toutefois étonnant que les petites boules en argile attachées aux documents de cette époque aient survécu dans une mesure tout à fait minoritaire par rapport au nombre très remarquable des scarabées et des scarabéïdes qui représentent la plupart du matériel glyptique en Syrie, en Phénicie et en Palestine dès le premier âge du Fer jusqu'à la domination perse.

Le cadre s'avère tout à fait pareil dans le milieu phénicien d'Occident, où Carthage joue apparemment le rôle de protagoniste dans l'adoption de l'ancien système de scellement des documents administratifs courant au Proche-Orient et dans le monde égéen, tandis que les autres comptoirs et colonies sémitiques de Sardaigne, d'Espagne et de l'Afrique du Nord ne semblent pas avoir délivré des empreintes de cachets comparables à celles de la plus célèbre des fondations tyriennes.

Les "cretulae" de Carthage, trouvées à la fin du siècle dernier entre les pentes de l'acropole de Byrsa et la mer, c'est-à-dire dans le quartier de Dermech, occupé jadis par une des nécropoles archaïques, remontaient à plusieurs centaines, mais une quantité beaucoup plus réduite a pu être examinée il y a trente ans par Jean Vercoutter, qui a dressé un fichier des types principaux. À côté des empreintes qui montrent un répertoire de dérivation grecque (têtes de profil ou de face, guerriers, images d'Héraclès et d'autres personnages), il y en a d'autres qui présentent des motifs égyptiens ou, pour mieux dire, égyptisants, étant donné que le cartouche de Thoutmosis III qui scellait les documents sur papyrus (à en juger par les stries régulières, formant une sorte de trame, du revers de ces minces pastilles noircies par le feu) confère à ces empreintes du IV<sup>e</sup> siècle avant J.-Chr. la même valeur d'ancienneté et de sacralité que partagent d'autres empreintes de cette époque (par exemple celles de l'Égypte ptolémaïque qui portent quelquefois le cartouche de Sésostri III). Dans les autres "cretulae" à décor égyptisant de Carthage, tirées le plus souvent d'un cachet à zone, il y a Isis allaitant Horus, Horus agenouillé et levant les bras et d'autres motifs qui trouvent d'étroites ressemblances dans les scarabées et les scarabéïdes répandus dans les milieux phéniciens d'Occident.

Bien que les empreintes de Carthage à cause de leur trouvaille due au hasard ne peuvent être mises en rapport avec aucun bâtiment de la Carthage punique, elles montrent néanmoins qu'à la fin du 4<sup>e</sup> siècle avant J.-Chr., peut-être à la suite de l'hellénisation de la civilisation carthaginoise et de l'introduction d'influences alexandrines, la ville abritait un archive publique ou templaire où les documents sur papyrus étaient scellés sans recourir à des ficelles (étant donné le manque de trous de fixation et de trace des liens), avec des mottes d'argile appliquées directement sur la surface du papier.

On peut supposer, d'après Enrica Fiandra qui a fait cette observation à propos des empreintes crétoises du 2<sup>e</sup> millénaire, que "ai fini dello studio dei sigilli sia



1. Huit "cretulae" de Sélinonte, a-g portent des motifs non grecs.

indispensabile considerare i sigilli stessi individualmente, per il valore e il significato che la loro impronta assume in campo amministrativo; si deve infatti pensare che ad ogni differenza di motivo nei sigilli corrisponde una variazione del loro impiego, variazione che si può supporre legata o al tipo della merce sigillata o al funzionario responsabile del sigillo"<sup>2</sup>. A la lumière de ce que nous savons sur les composants très mélangés de la civilisation carthaginoise de cette époque, on pourrait plutôt penser, à titre d'hypothèse, que la différence entre les deux répertoires n'obéit plus à

<sup>2</sup> E. Fiandra, dans *Bollettino d'Arte*, serie V, 60 (1975), p. 23, nota 16.



cette exigence, mais qu'elle trahit la marque d'une diversité entre deux types de documents scellés, les uns en langue grecque et les autres en langue punique.

Une telle idée semble confirmée par la même composition des «cretulae» d'un autre site qui entra dans les domaines de Carthage à la fin du 5<sup>e</sup> siècle avant J.-Chr. A Sélinonte, fondée sur la côte sud-occidentale de la Sicile par les Grecs de Mégara Hyblaea vers la moitié du 7<sup>e</sup> siècle avant J.-Chr. (Diodore, XIII, 59, 8) mais conquise par les Carthaginois en 409 (Diodore, XV, 17), les fouilles menées à la fin du siècle dernier aux alentours du temple C sur l'acropole, mirent au jour sur la marche inférieure du côté sud du bâtiment et près du coin correspondant du *pronaos*, plusieurs centaines de pastilles en argile très minces, avec de petits trous à travers lesquels passaient les ficelles (*lina*) qui les liaient aux rouleaux de papyrus ou aux tablettes en bois (*tabulae ceratae*).

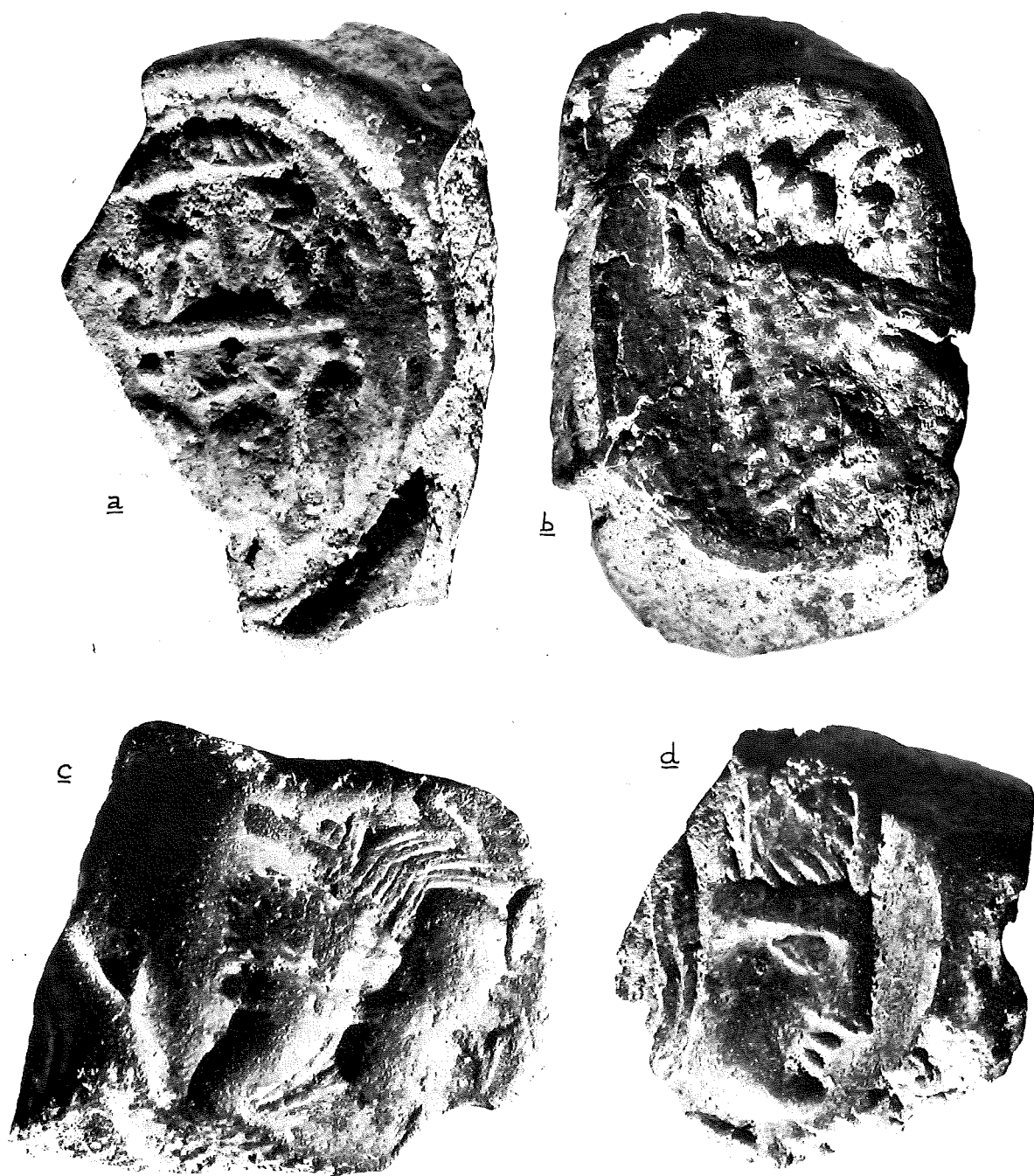
Antonio Salinas, qui a été le premier et le seul archéologue qui s'est occupé en détail de ce matériel, demeuré jusqu'à présent presque méconnu, rappelle deux passages de Cicéron où l'écrivain cite l'emploi des «cretulae». Celles de Sélinonte portent en général trois empreintes de sceaux différents, qui tirent pour la plupart leur répertoire du monde grec. Les motifs les plus répandus sont représentés par Héraclès qui maîtrise le taureau et par un dauphin nageant au dessus d'une massue : dans la première image M. Salinas voit, même à cause de ses dimensions qui l'emportent sur toutes les autres empreintes et à cause de la lettre Σ qui y est gravée et qui serait l'initiale de Sélinonte, le sceau public de la ville ou δημοσία σφραγίς (il faut remarquer que le même sujet apparaît dans le monnayage de Sélinonte dès l'époque archaïque jusqu'aux dernières émissions); un caractère officiel serait à reconnaître aussi à la seconde empreinte qui se multiplie jusqu'à 285 exemplaires et qui est toujours située au centre dans une série de trois empreintes.

Sans aborder l'étude détaillée des types grecs qui apparaissent sur les «cretulae» de Sélinonte et qui sera notre tâche dans un prochain travail, de même que celle des revers à travers des photos, encore entièrement à faire, afin d'aboutir à des conclusions comparables à celles que Mlle Fiandra a tiré de son étude des empreintes égéennes de Festòs, nous nous bornerons dans cette note préliminaire à quelques remarques au sujet des «cretulae» qui portent des motifs non grecs (fig. 1, a-g; 2, a-d).

Avant tout il faut signaler que sur 431 thèmes figurés, seulement 22 selon Antonio Salinas seraient d'origine «orientale», tandis que tous les autres, parmi lesquels sont assez fréquents les images de divinités — Héraclès, Diane, Cérès, Athéna, Vénus et Cupido —, dérivent de la glyptique, du monnayage et des terres cuites moulées d'inspiration hellénique et de production sicéliote.

En deuxième lieu, on est frappé par la rareté des empreintes à légende grecque ou punique. La plus complète des inscriptions grecques mentionne Zeus Sotèr à la

<sup>3</sup> Voir pour *MSP CIS I*, nos 327, 328, 333, 361, 704, 809, 2661.



2. Quatre "cretulae" de Sélinonte qui portent des motifs non grecs: a-d = Salinas 1883 nos. CDIII, CDXXII, CCCLXXIX, et CDXXXVII.

forme du génitif (marque de propriété du Dieu?) (Salinas, pl. XIV, n° CCCLXII), tandis que celle en lettres puniques, témoignée par deux empreintes identiques et gravée au dessus d'une protome de cheval de profil à droite (fig. 2 b), est à lire MSPT (plutôt que MSKT comme auparavant (Salinas, pl. XV, n° CDXXII). Il s'agirait d'un nom féminin, étant donné la -t finale, interprété jadis comme un nom propre<sup>3</sup>, mais que Giovanni Garbini, dans deux études parues presque au même temps, a démontré issu de la racine *ysp*, avec la valeur soit de «adjonction», en se référant à la marchandise qui accompagnait le sceau<sup>4</sup>, soit de «magasin», «dépôt»<sup>5</sup>, d'où M. V. Tusa tire l'hypothèse, selon nous entièrement à vérifier, que le temple C de Sélinonte fut transformé en magasin pendant le siècle et demi de l'occupation punique de la ville, c'est-à-dire entre 409 et 250 avant J.-Chr.<sup>6</sup>

Parmi le vingt-deux «cretulae» à motifs égyptisants il y a d'abord un bétyle (plutôt qu'un disque solaire, étant donné sa silhouette allongée), placé au centre d'une barque en tiges de papyrus et entouré par deux uraei dressés au dessous du disque solaire ailé (Salinas, pl. VII, n° 452; pl. XV, n°s CDVI-CDXII); (fig. 1 a-b), et encore, un génie accroupi à tête d'aigle (?) tenant un sceptre au dessous du même disque ailé (n° CDXIV; fig. 1 c), le dieu Bès vu de face maîtrisant deux lions debout à ses côtés (n° CDXV; fig. 1 f), une tête féminine avec *klaft* de profil à droite (n°s CDXVII, CDXXXVII; fig. 2 d) tout à fait semblable à celles qui représentent Astarté ou Tanit sur les monnaies puniques de Cossyra (Pantelleria) et de Malte, un lion qui déchire avec ses pattes l'épaule d'un taureau tombé sur ses genoux (n°s CDXVIII-CDXIX) comme dans le groupe statuaire de Alésa sur la côte septentrionale de la Sicile, aujourd'hui au Musée de Palerme.

D'autres représentations semblent empruntées à la thématique connue par les stèles provenant du *tophet* de Carthage (niveaux du 4<sup>e</sup> — 3<sup>e</sup> siècle avant J.-Chr.): dans cette série se rangent l'édicule avec un fronton et des acrotères de type classique flanquée par un palmier-dattier qui devait se répéter sur l'autre côté (Salinas, pl. XIV, n° CCCLIII; fig. 1 e), des cratères à panse cannelée empruntés à des modèles en métal (pl. XIV, n°s CCCLIX-CCCLXI; fig. 1 h), des caducées ailés (pl. XIV, n° CCCXLV; fig. 1 g) ou accompagnés par une corne d'abondance (pl. XV, n° CCCLXXV; fig. 2 c) ou par des épis (pl. XV, n° CCCLXXIX).

Un peu plus énigmatique quant à leurs antécédents s'avèrent d'autres scènes qui, au moins à en juger par les croquis de Salinas, ne semblent trouver aucune correspondance exacte dans les séries désormais bien connues de la glyptique et des monnaies phénico-puniques. Il s'agit avant tout de quelques empreintes tirées de cachets à zone qui montrent soit les mêmes motifs que les cachets décorés avec la barque solaire égyptienne, mais cette fois la barque est gravée dans la partie inférieure du sceau tandis que d'autres motifs indistincts (personnages ou tiges de

<sup>4</sup> Dans *RSO* 42 (1967), 1-2.

<sup>5</sup> Dans *Kokalos* 13 (1967), 71.

<sup>6</sup> Dans *Rivista dell'Istituto Nazionale di Archeologia e Storia dell'Arte*, NS, 18 (1971), 63.

fleurs?) occupent l'espace supérieur au dessous du disque solaire ailé (pl. XV, n° CDIII; fig. 2 a), soit deux têtes barbuës (de Bes?) séparées par un signe *nb* et dont celle dans le haut du sceau est placée entre deux figures penchées l'une vers l'autre, vêtues en longues robes (pl. XV, n° CDIV). Ces mêmes personnages en longues robes et avec des disques solaires sur la tête (?) apparaissent sur une deuxième empreinte (pl. XV, n° CDII; fig. 1 d), en attitude d'adoration devant un brûle-parfums métallique du type phénicien et chypriote bien connu à coupes superposées sur une tige à pied évasé.

En conclusion, il devait exister dans le temple C de Sélinonte ou dans ses annexes un archive de documents administratifs rédigés peut-être, en partie du moins, en langue punique et scellés sans aucun doute avec de cachets utilisés par le personnel qui parlait et écrivait la langue de Carthage; même si le répertoire grec l'emporte nettement sur celui de tradition phénicienne emprunté en général à l'Égypte mais avec des créations originales dans le domaine de l'iconologie religieuse (voir surtout le bétyle dans la barque solaire, qui appartient à l'imagerie phénicienne d'Occident réfléchi par exemple par les pendentifs carthaginois à granulation), il est très remarquable la présence de légendes en punique qui se rangent parmi les autres documents épigraphiques mis au jour dans la ville et se référant à la période de la mainmise de Carthage, en tout premier lieu les nombreuses anses d'amphores à lettres sémitiques trouvées dans les mêmes alentours du temple C d'où viennent nos empreintes<sup>7</sup>.

Ce sera la tâche des recherches futures de préciser dans les détails les sources du répertoire «oriental» des empreintes de Sélinonte, le type de documents qu'elles scellaient à en juger par les traces des matériaux du revers et l'origine des cachets dont les empreintes mêmes nous donnent un si riche échantillonnage, bien plus varié que celui de Carthage: étaient-ils fabriqués dans la ville même ou étaient-ils importés de la métropole africaine ou d'autres centres de l'éparchie carthaginoise, tel que Tharros en Sardaigne d'où vient la plupart de scarabées en diaspre à décor égyptisant et grécisant parsemés dans le monde punique entre le 5<sup>e</sup> et le 3<sup>e</sup> siècle avant notre ère?

A toutes ces questions on pourra essayer de donner une réponse seulement après une analyse plus poussée de tout le matériel actuellement renfermé dans les réserves du Musée de Palerme et après une vérification des anciens croquis publiés par Antonio Salinas avec les images tirées des photos agrandies de chaque pièce, dont celles de notre figure 2 représentent un premier échantillon.

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*Nous remercions vivement Mlle E. Fiandra pour nous avoir donné de précieux renseignements bibliographiques et beaucoup de ses travaux en hommage concernant les «cretulae» égéennes et proche-orientales.*

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## APPENDIX

30<sup>e</sup> RECONTRE ASSYRIOLOGIQUE INTERNATIONALE  
4-8 JULY 1983, LEIDEN

Preface to the programme (from the invitation):

### CUNEIFORM ARCHIVES AND LIBRARIES

Interest in archives has been steadily growing in recent years, once the possibilities of an "archival approach" were realized. Reconstructing and studying archives is probably the best way of systematically recovering the administration of the past, according to its scope, intentions, procedures, and techniques. Archives of the various institutions are the primary evidence of bureaucratic control over persons, goods and transactions and their analysis may show how, by whom and for what purposes information was gathered and used. Archives allow statistical approaches which may reveal patterns relating to times, places, persons, quantities and procedures, which frequently cannot be deduced from single documents and public inscriptions. Private archives allow better insights into the economic and social status and history of persons and families or family-firms.

The study of archives should pay attention to the organization of scribal activities (recording and book-keeping; training of future clerks), to the various ways in which records were used, collected, copied, categorized and stored (the physical aspects of archives and scriptoria), or sifted and discarded (selection; chronological range of archives). The persons involved should also receive due attention (such as the pisan.dub.ba/šandabakkum; ša.tam/šatammum; specialized scribes; clerks), together with their administrative careers against the background of the various institutions which employed them (palatial chancelleries; temple archives; archives of separate "offices" or "services").

Comparative analyses of these phenomena, both in historical perspective and in their spatial distribution, within as well as outside Mesopotamia proper (Ebla, Kaniš, Boğazköy, Alalakh, Ugarit, El-Amarna, Susa) should be rewarding.

Libraries are a special type of archives, reserved for specific categories of texts and, probably, for their own circle of users. Their organization (catalogues, labels) and composition (range of texts; duplicates; traditional and new texts) should be examined, together with whatever evidence we have about their physical characteristics. Attention should be paid to their historical development, to the relation between library, school and scribal craft and between library and chancellery, and to the ways such libraries were built up and used.

Papers delivered (those marked with an asterisk are included in this volume):

#### *Cuneiform Archives and Libraries*

Monday 4 July

\*Ö. TUNCA, Le problème des archives dans l'architecture religieuse protodynastique

- \*B. FOSTER, Archives and empire in Sargonic Mesopotamia
- \*A. ARCHI, The archives of Ebla (philological aspects)
- \*P. MATTHIAE, The archives of the royal palace of Ebla. Distribution and arrangement of the tablets according to the archaeological evidence
- S. PICCHIONI, Archäologie und Keilschriftforschung
- L. DE MEYER, Les archives de Ur-Utu à Tell ed-Deir
- \*M. VAN DE MIEROOP, Techniques of archive keeping in the early Isin period
- \*D. CHARPIN, Transmission des titres de propriété et constitution des archives privées en Babylonie ancienne
- \*H. KLENGEL, Altbabylonische Privatarchive Babylons
- \*J. RENGEL, Zu den altbabylonischen Archiven aus Sippar

*Tuesday 5 July*

- J. DE KUYPER, Archives and record-offices in Mari?
- \*A. MALAMAT, "Doorbells" at Mari. A textual-archaeological connection
- \*A. FINET, Une typologie des lettres conservées dans les archives de Mari
- \*J.-C. MARGUERON, Quelques remarques concernant les archives retrouvées dans le palais de Mari
- \*M. DE J. ELLIS, Delivery records from the archives of the Kititum temple
- W. RÖLLIG, Zum Archiv von Dūr-Katlimmu
- \*J. N. POSTGATE, Three generations in the service of the State: the archive of Urad-Šerua and his forebears
- \*P. GARELLI and \*D. HOMÈS FREDERICQ, Les archives inédites d'un centre provincial de l'empire assyrien (textes et sceaux)
- \*S. PARPOLA, The imperial archives of Niniveh
- \*J. READE, The archaeological background of the K-collection
- \*G. FRAME, The correspondence of Nabû-ušabši, governor of Uruk

*Wednesday 6 July*

- \*T. KWASMAN, Neo-Assyrian legal archives from Niniveh
- \*R. ZADOK, Archives from 1st millennium Nippur
- \*M. DANDAMAYEV, Neo-Babylonian archives
- \*J. C. GREENFIELD, Archives in the Achaemenid empire according to literary and epigraphic sources
- G. WILHELM, Rekonstruktionsprobleme eines undatierten und unvollständigen Wirtschaftsarchivs: das Archiv des Šilwa-Teššup aus Nuzi
- A. FRIEDMAN, On Nuzi archives
- \*H. OTTEN, Archive and Bibliotheken in Ḫattuša
- \*G. MAUER, Die Karriere des Schreibers Tattamaru, Sohn des Šaḫurunuwā
- \*P. ARTZI, Observations on the "Library" of the Amarna Archive

*Thursday 7 July*

- M. HELTZER, The archive of Rap'anu, the royal scribe and its relation to the palace archives
- \*J. WANSBROUGH, Ugaritic in chancery practice
- \*W. H. VAN SOLDT, The palace archives of Ugarit
- W. G. LAMBERT, The "Library of Tiglath-Pileser"
- H. HUNGER, Bibliotheken im späten Babylon



*Free Papers: A. Philology and History**Thursday 7 July*

- K. GRAYSON, Assyrian and Babylonian treaties of the 7th century B.C.  
 J. SAFREN, Dūr-Jahdun-Lim  
 A. SKAIST, Mari and the Diyala region: Core or periphery  
 S. GREENGUS, The Akkadian calendar at Sippar in the OB period  
 D. R. FRAYNE, Notes on the "Gazetteer of ancient cities"  
 J. FRIBERG, Answers to some open problems in Neugebauer MKT and Neugebauer/Sachs MCT  
 H. VANSTIPHOUT, The rhetorical disputation between the hoe and the plough  
 G. STEINER, Der Inhalt des Grenzvertrages zwischen Lagaš und Umma  
 N. HAROUTHYOUNYAN, La localisation du pays Mehri des sources cunéiformes (néo-assyriens)

*Friday 8 July*

- N. N. KHAZARADZE, Hittite hieroglyphic inscriptions as a source of the socio-economic history of late Hittite society  
 C. KÜHNE, Some aspects of Huwassanna rituals  
 W. EILERS, Einige akkadische Etymologien  
 M. J. GELLER, The form of the Sumerian durative (*marû*) third person plural  
 S. IZRE'EL, On the use of the so-called ventive morpheme in the Akkadian texts of Amurru  
 M. WEINFELD, Cultic institutions in the Hittite-Hurrian documents and in the Israelite priestly literature  
 B. PERLOV, Two documents from the period of Enliltarzi (24th c.B.C.) in the Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts' collection  
 H. GALTER, Die Zerstörung Babylons durch Sanherib  
 M. ELAT, Assyrian imperialism and international trade  
 L. LEVINE, The R(oyal) I(nscriptions of) M(esopotamia) project and the computer  
 M. L. KHAČIKYAN, Towards the categories of aspect and version in Hurro-Urartian

*Free Papers: B. Archaeology**Thursday 7 July*

- K. SZARZYŃSKA, Some oldest cult symbols in archaic Uruk  
 M. DUCHESNE-GUILLEMIN, New insights on the Mesopotamian origin of the Greek "kithara"  
 R. G. KILLICK and A. J. MOON, Excavations at Muhammed Arab. Eski Mosul salvage project (Iraq)  
 A. BOUNNI, Les fouilles de Ras 'Ibn Hani (Syrie)

*Friday 8 July*

- M. N. VAN LOON, Excavations at Hamman-et-Turkman on the Balikh, 1982  
 H. WEISS, The palace of the palms at Tell Leilân  
 B. HROUDA, Neue Ergebnisse der Ausgrabung in Isin  
 F. HØJLUND, The 2nd millennium settlements in Failaka (Kuwait): relations to Mesopotamia  
 C. KEPINSKI, Khirbet ed-Diniye (Iraq). Un établissement fortifié d'époque paléo-babylonienne et néo-assyrienne dans la province de Suḥu  
 G. TIRAZIAN, Urartu und Armenien: Probleme des Überganges

*Coopération Internationale*