

LE CHÂTEAU DE MON PÈRE – MY HOME MY CASTLE

Sécurité de vie, de propriété et de l'état en Mésopotamie ancienne

Safety of life, property and the state in ancient Mesopotamia

Deuxième colloque franco-tchèque

LE CHÂTEAU DE MON PÈRE – MY HOME MY CASTLE

Sécurité de vie, de propriété et de l'état en Mésopotamie ancienne
Safety of life, property and the state in ancient Mesopotamia
Deuxième colloque franco-tchèque

Edited by

Petr Charvát, Lukáš Pecha & Kateřina Šašková



Department of Middle Eastern Studies, Faculty of Arts

University of West Bohemia in Pilsen

Pilsen 2023

Le château de mon père – My home my castle: Sécurité de vie, de propriété et de l'état en Mésopotamie ancienne – Safety of life, property and the state in ancient Mesopotamia. Deuxième colloque franco-tchèque

Edited by:

Petr Charvát, Lukáš Pecha & Kateřina Šašková

Published by:

University of West Bohemia

Univerzitní 2732/8, 301 00 Pilsen, Czech Republic

Graphic cover design & typographic layout:

Kateřina Šašková

First edition, 178 pages

Pilsen 2023

ISBN 978-80-261-1167-2

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.24132/ZCU.2023.11672>

© Authors, University of West Bohemia in Pilsen

*Dedicated to the memory of
Petr Charvát (January 12, 1949 – September 17, 2023),
an excellent scholar and bighearted friend*

Avant-propos

Le premier colloque assyriologique franco-tchèque prit place dans le cadre de la „Saison tchèque à Paris“, dans la capitale de la France, en 7–8 novembre 2002. Les conférences de ce colloque sont publiés.

Suite à cet événement, l'équipe assyriologique du Département des études du Proche-Orient de la Faculté philosophique de l'Université de Bohême de l'Ouest à Plzeň (Pilsen) a proposé une continuation de cette tradition en organisant, en coopération avec le Centre culturel tchèque de Paris, un colloque sous titre indiqué ci-dessus en 4–5 octobre 2021.

Comme spécialistes d'études de la civilisation cunéiforme de Mésopotamie ancienne, nous nous sommes rendu compte de l'état imparfait de nos connaissances d'un bon nombre des aspects de la vie publique et privée à l'autre côté de l'ère chrétienne. Un de tels aspects est sans doute représenté par la mesure de sécurité personnelle, et de neutralisation de tous menaces à la vie, santé et propriété des inhabitants des états de la Mésopotamie ancienne. Ceci nous voyons en contraste avec les études de l'anthropologie sociale moderne, lesquels insistent sur le liaison étroite entre la sécurité interne et externe en réalisant, par exemple, les projets sociaux de grande échelle.

En termes du Pays des deux fleuves, nous nous sommes consacrés aux études des mesures de sécurité pris en compte par ses citoyens et institutions de ses états, mais aussi en vue de l'ordre public et la protection de la population ancienne. Ce thème peut couvrir une multitude d'aspects de cette idée, dès les serrures de portes jusqu'à les mesures prises contre tous les menaces publics, tels que, par exemple, des envahisseurs étrangers, et jusqu'à les invocations implorants la protection divine des rois et de leurs populaces.

Nous tenons à remercier du tout coeur surtout nos collègues français, qui, malgré les ravages de la pandémie mondiale, ne cessaient pas de nous rendre leur support en amitié collégiale.

Le colloque ne se serait pas tenu du tout sans la coopération très aimable du Centre culturel tchèque de Paris, et surtout sans la compréhension et disponibilité de son Directeur, M. Jiří Hnilica, auquel nous rendons notre hommage le plus respectueux.

A Plzeň, en décembre 2021.

Petr Charvát
Lukáš Pecha
Kateřina Šašková

Contents

Pascal Butterlin

**Des tombeaux aux cités, genèse d'une culture de la sécurité le long
du Moyen Euphrate dans le premier tiers du III^e millénaire avant
notre ère 1**

Grégory Chambon

Sailing safely along rivers and canals in the Amorite period 29

Petr Charvát

**Harvesters all: Closing devices on reverses of archaic Ur sealings
(2900–2700 BC) 41**

Brigitte Lion

Garder et protéger à Nuzi 63

Maria Grazia Masetti-Rouault & Ilaria Calini

**What do you expect from your country? From the Sumerian King
List to the Last Words of Assyrian Governors, before the End 83**

Cécile Michel

The Protection of Goods in the Old Assyrian Period 101

Kateřina Šařková

Assyrian Armory Palaces 131

Indices 163

Des tombeaux aux cités, genèse d'une culture de la sécurité le long du Moyen Euphrate dans le premier tiers du III^e millénaire avant notre ère

Pascal Butterlin

Introduction

Mari fut entre le début du III^e et le premier quart du II^e millénaire avant notre ère l'une des grandes métropoles du Proche-Orient ancien. Réputée d'après « la chronique de la monarchie une » avoir été la X^e cité à avoir dominé le pays de Sumer et d'Akkad après le déluge¹, elle fut une grande puissance politique, qui domina à plusieurs reprises les régions aujourd'hui situées dans l'est syrien et l'ouest de l'Irak. La cité contrôlait la route commerciale le long de l'Euphrate ainsi que les pistes rayonnant depuis le fleuve vers l'est ou l'ouest (Figure 1). Place commerciale majeure, elle fut un puissant centre économique, mais elle fut comme toutes les grandes cités mésopotamiennes, au premier chef, un centre religieux, un lieu qui offrait à la sécurité sous la protection d'un grand dieu, celui que les documents mariotes appellent le seigneur du pays, probablement le dieu Dagan.

La construction d'une culture de la sécurité est profondément liée au développement des premières civilisations urbaines, en particulier au cours du IV^e millénaire avant notre ère². La naissance des premières cités Etats, après l'effondrement qui reste toujours inexpliqué du réseau de relations

¹Glassner 1993, Marchesi 2016.

²Butterlin 2022.

urukéen vit s'affirmer diverses trajectoires dont les mécanismes restent très mal connus. Elle se concrétise en tout cas par l'émergence de diverses formes de contrôle territorial de la part d'acteurs que l'on qualifie de « Cités Etats », centrées sur une ou plusieurs villes qui parviennent à mettre en place les éléments d'un contrôle d'un arrière pays, sur le plan économique, politique, militaire et idéologique.

La naissance sur les bords de l'Euphrate vers 2900 avant notre ère d'une grande cité comme Mari, dans une région jalonnée jusque là par une série d'avant postes urukéens est parmi d'autres une excellente illustration d'un processus de développement distinct de ce qui se passe alors dans le sud de l'Irak, autour d'Uruk, puis Ur et Kish³, ou des développements survenus dans le nord mésopotamien que l'on attribue à une « seconde révolution urbaine »⁴. Quelles que soient les bases structurelles de ce développement, elles ont permis l'émergence dans la longue durée d'une puissance militaire qui s'est imposée comme un acteur de premier plan au milieu et à la fin du III^e millénaire avant notre ère⁵ : il s'agit de ce que l'on appelle la ville II de Mari, contemporaine des premières cités sumériennes, puis de la ville III, bâtie par une série de puissantes lignées de gouverneurs, les *shakkanakkûs* de Mari, de 2250 à 1900 avant notre ère⁶, relayés *in fine* par les trois derniers souverains amorrites. L'objet de la présente communication est de présenter quelques pistes de recherches sur la manière dont Mari a construit une carte mentale spécifique.

1. Le monde des villes subcirculaires du Moyen Euphrate et Mari, la matrice des bords de l'Euphrate

Mari était au début du III^e millénaire la capitale d'un royaume qui se désignait comme les bords de l'Euphrate, un terme qui assurément souligne les liens étroits maintes fois commentés entre la cité et la moyenne vallée de l'Euphrate. On a beaucoup discuté de l'ampleur de l'emprise territoriale exercée par la cité, aux différentes phases de son existence jusqu'à l'époque amorrite. Margueron en particulier a insisté à plusieurs reprises sur l'existence d'un véritable espace vital mariote, passant par le contrôle du trafic fluvial, mais aussi d'un réseau de canaux qui auraient été bâtis dès le début du III^e millénaire pour permettre à la cité de prospérer. On a discuté

³Charvat 2017.

⁴Schwartz 2003.

⁵Butterlin 2019.

⁶Butterlin 2007.

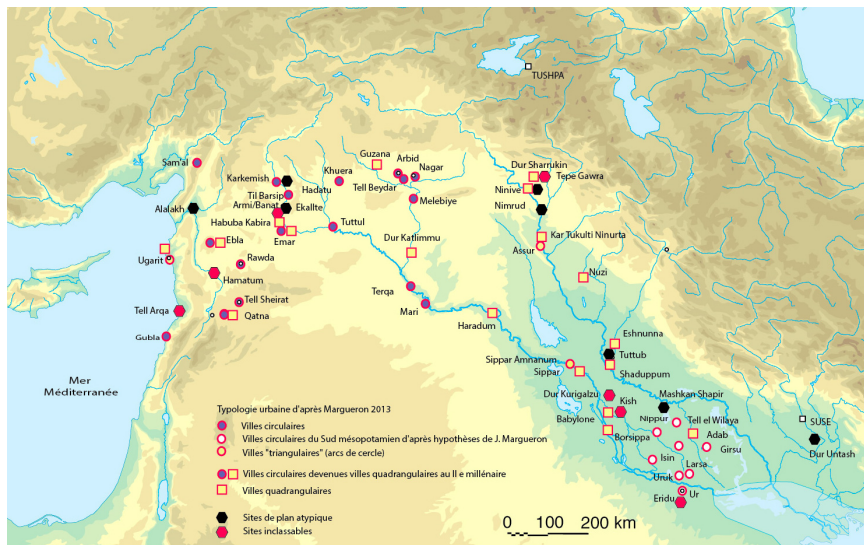


FIGURE 1.

ailleurs les problèmes que pose cette idée d'un espace vital mariote⁷ et je souhaiterais ici verser quelques réflexions sur les conditions dans lesquelles Mari s'articulait avec les autres cités fluviales.

Mari fait partie d'une série maintenant bien identifiée de villes circulaires ou subcirculaires fondées au cours du III^e millénaire avant notre ère en Mésopotamie. On s'est interrogé depuis une trentaine d'années maintenant sur l'existence d'une véritable civilisation des villes circulaires thèmes d'un colloque qui s'est tenu à Lyon en 2013 à la suite d'une ANR franco-allemande, publié en 2020⁸. J'y ai souligné combien la fondation de Mari était singulière et difficile à rattacher aux autres phénomènes de fondation de ce type connus, en Jéziré syrienne (les fameuses « kranzhügel ») et les villes de la Badiya syrienne à l'est de Homs et Hama⁹.

Margueron a proposé que la morphologie circulaire des premières cités ne se limitait pas au Nord mésopotamien, qu'elle comprenait aussi toute une série de cités du sud mésopotamien (Figure 1), le phénomène étant donc consubstantiel à l'urbanisation de l'ensemble du croissant fertile¹⁰. Ces

⁷Butterlin 2016.

⁸Castel et al. 2020. Meier 2014, 2020, Quenet 2020.

⁹Butterlin 2020.

¹⁰Margueron 2013, p. 345-350.

arguments n'ont pas résisté aux nouvelles recherches entreprises dans le sud de l'Irak, si bien que la question de l'émergence de ce type de villes se restreint à un espace et une temporalité spécifiques. Il a été observé que si les villes dites Kranzhügel, villes à couronne, ont été fondées à partir de 2900 avant notre ère dans la Jéziré syrienne entre Balih et Khabur, les villes circulaires de la Badiya syrienne, à l'ouest cette fois de l'Euphrate ont été créées sensiblement plus tard, à partir du milieu du III^e millénaire avant notre ère. Le lien entre ces deux phénomènes est bien difficile à établir, la simple forme circulaire n'étant pas en soi un critère suffisant.

Entre ces deux régions marginales du croissant fertile, Mari fait figure d'exception, tant par sa situation au bord de l'Euphrate dans une région semi-aride que par l'échelle de la fondation. Avec un diamètre présumé de 1 m et une superficie totale de 2980 ha, Mari fait trois fois la superficie de Tell Khuera et dix fois celle d'un site comme Rawda, dans les marges arides de la Badiyah syrienne (Figure 2). Le lien entre ces différents phénomènes est loin d'être évident, tant les disparités culturelles sont importantes. On a souvent fait le lien entre ces fondations dans des régions marginales sur le plan agricole et la sédentarisation possible de groupes nomades ou semi-nomades. Porter a notamment proposé que le développement observé dans le nord mésopotamien dès la période de l'expansion urukéenne était intimement lié au pastoralisme semi-nomade, à la production textile à des cultes d'ancêtres parties dans des centres urbains fonctionnant en symbiose dans un monde tribal¹¹.

Elle ne s'attarde guère en revanche sur les pratiques militaires et les questions de sécurité qui paraissent avoir joué un rôle majeur dans ces fondations, notamment dans la moyenne vallée de l'Euphrate. Mari dans cet espace n'est pas la seule fondation urbaine du début du III^e millénaire et il existe le long de l'Euphrate toute une série de cités fluviales de plan semi ou sub-circulaire. Quand on compare les différentes villes circulaires fondées au III^e millénaire avant notre ère, on peut observer qu'il existe en terme d'échelle quatre types principaux (Figure 2) : un rang 1 avec un rayon de 100 à 250 m, un rang 2 de 400 à 500 m de rayon, un rang 3 de 500 à 650 m et un rang 4 avec deux cités seulement, de 950 m. Les deux villes en question sont Ashur sur le Tigre et Mari. Pour Ashur, il est certain qu'il s'agit d'une section de cercle. Pour Mari, la question reste ouverte, puisque l'Euphrate aurait détruit plus de la moitié de la ville.

¹¹Porter 2012.

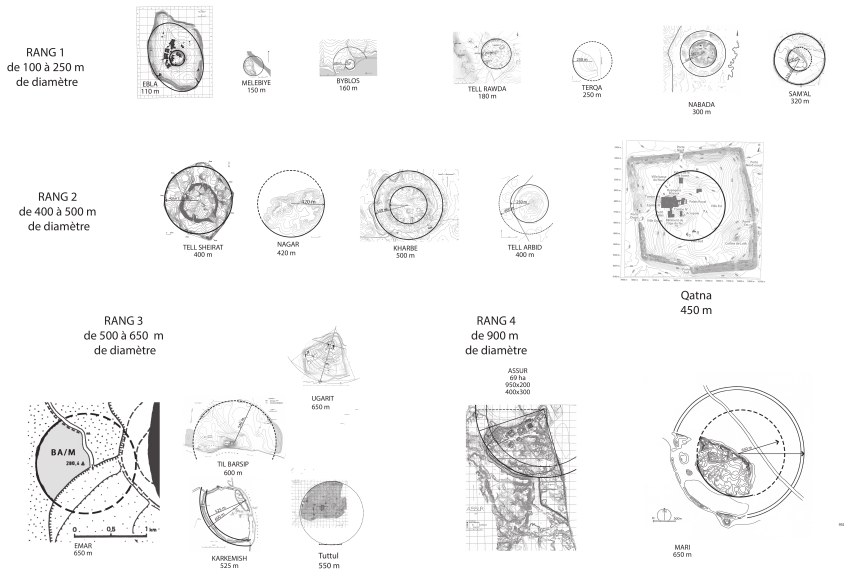


FIGURE 2.

Ce qui nous intéresse ici en dehors de ces deux cas est le regroupement qui nous paraît signifiant de villes sub-circulaires dans le troisième rang : 4 des 5 villes de ce groupe sont des cités fluviales des bords de l'Euphrate : Karkemish, Til Barsip, Tuttul et Emar, si l'on suit les restitutions proposées par Margueron. Il ne s'agit jamais de cercles complets, mais de sections de cercles, comme liserà plus tard Raqqa, la fondation sub-circulaire d'Haroun al Rashid qui a remplacé l'ancienne Tuttul, à al confluence entre Balih et Euphrate. Se dessine ainsi un véritable collier de perles de cités semi circulaires le long du fleuve, résultat évident d'un schéma d'implantation linéaire le long du fleuve d'un établissement urbain, protégé par un périmètre semi ou sub-circulaire construit à partir du centre de la cité (Figure 3). Ces villes étaient largement ouvertes sur le fleuve, dont elles contrôlaient le trafic, elles voient ainsi se développer un schéma étagé de l'activité urbaine comprenant le quai, la ville basse et une citadelle accueillant sanctuaires et palais. Ce schéma mental est remarquablement bien représenté dans la transcription d'une inscription de Naram Sîn évoquant le siège d'Armium-Armi¹².

¹²Butterlin 2019 b.

Le texte se présente comme la copie d’une inscription royale du III^e millénaire qui se serait trouvée sur une statue du roi. On y aurait trouvé non seulement une remarquable et unique description de la prise d’Armanum et de la forteresse qui protégeait la ville, mais aussi une représentation de la ville elle-même d’Armanum assortie de légendes. Celles-ci donnent les noms des différents éléments figurés, mais aussi des dimensions, si bien que plusieurs reconstructions du dessin ont pu être proposées en fonction de l’interprétation de ces chiffres.

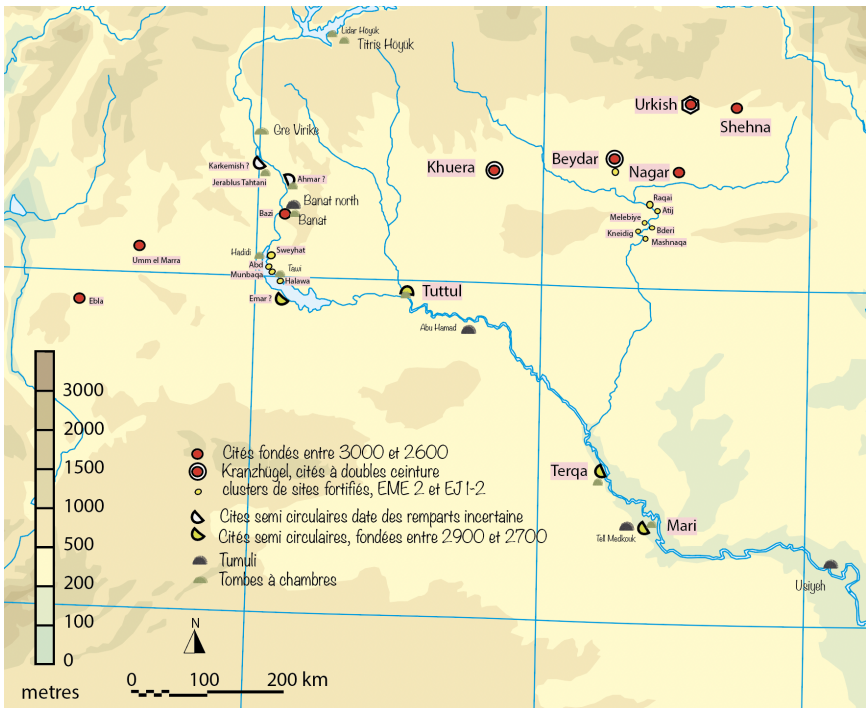


FIGURE 3.

L’inscription présente de la manière suivante la chute de la ville : « Une fois que le dieu Dagan eut rendu son verdict pour Naram Sîn, le puissant, il lui remit entre ses mains Rib Adad, roi d’Armanum. Naram Sîn le captura au beau milieu de la porte de son palais ». Puis Naram Sîn présente comment il fit façonner une image de lui-même dédié au dieu et portant les légendes suivantes : « du mur de fortification au Grand Mur, 130 coudées est la hauteur de la colline et 44 celle du mur, du mur du quai au mur de fortification,

180 coudées est la hauteur de la colline et 30 celle du mur, soit au total 404 coudées de hauteur. Il s'agit de la cité d'Armanum¹³ ».

On a ainsi reconstitué une cité étagée comprenant plusieurs enceintes : une première enceinte celle du quai, haute de 10 m, une deuxième haute de 15 m et enfin le Grand Mur haut de 22 m. L'interprétation même des mesures intermédiaires concernant les collines a été davantage débattue, les dimensions données évoquant moins une hauteur que la longueur d'un plan incliné. S'il s'agit de dimensions, cela donne éventuellement une idée de la taille de la cité : du quai à la fortification 90 m, de la fortification au grand mur 75 m. Ces données ont été mises en rapport avec la topographie du site de Bazi dont A. Otto a proposé de faire le site de l'ancienne Armanum, en se fondant sur les recherches qu'elle a conduites sur le site de 2004 à 2008.

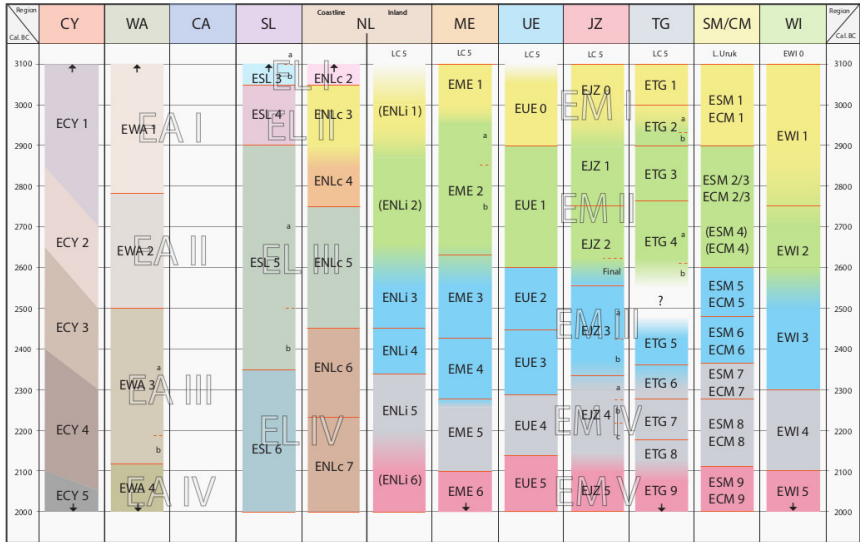
La citadelle de Bazi est au sommet d'une butte ovale dont la plus grande longueur est de cent mètres environ, elle domine une ville basse qui se développe du nord au sud sur 600 m environ, avec une enceinte de tracé irrégulier qui suit la topographie au nord et à l'est. Il ne s'agit pas d'une cité circulaire, mais le système hiérarchisé de défense paraît exemplaire d'une situation emblématique de la région. Armi fut clairement avec Mari l'un des centres politiques principaux de la vallée. La chronologie du développement de ces centres reste encore à préciser, tant nos connaissances sur les origines de ces différentes cités sont limitées.

2. Synchronismes de Haute Mésopotamie, genèse d'une civilisation ?

Le problème est la datation de toutes ces fondations, et en particulier la synchronisation de la chronologie de Mari avec ce que nous savons des autres sites de la moyenne vallée de l'Euphrate et de Syrie du nord. Cela exige en particulier de combiner la séquence de Mari aux chronologies établies par les groupes de travail Early Jezira et Middle Euphrates du programme Arcane, publiés respectivement en 2011 et 2015 (Figure 4)¹⁴. Mari n'a pas été intégrée dans cet ensemble régional, en grande partie à cause de ses liens étroits présumés avec la Mésopotamie centrale du Dynastique archaïque III, faisant partie du groupe Central Mesopotamia. Tout comme Ashur sur le Tigre, Mari est la frontière de deux groupes subrégionaux du programme Arcane, un pont culturel et chronologique, appartenant à plusieurs mondes, au premier chef à celui du Moyen Euphrate inférieur.

¹³Frayne 1993, N°26, p. 48-49.

¹⁴Lebeau et al. 2011, Finkbeiner et al. 2015.



EA (Early Anatolian) – EL (Early Levantine) – EM (Early Mesopotamian) Cultural Horizons Table, v. 5.1.1

The regional phases or sub-phases reflect changes in the material culture (predominantly ceramic), and/or the level of urbanisation, and refer to the comparative stratigraphy of chronological benchmarks, at a regional and inter-regional level. Use of the same colour denotes the existence of strong cultural links between neighbouring regions.

The absolute dates are based on the harmonised radiocarbon data.

E: Early, CY: Cyprus, WA: Western Anatolia, CA: Central Anatolia, SL: Southern Levant, NL: Northern Levant, ME: Middle Euphrates, UE: Upper Euphrates, JZ: Jezirah, TG: Tigris region, SM: Southern Mesopotamia, CM: Central Mesopotamia, WI: Western Iran.

FIGURE 4.

Le système chronologique Early Middle Euphrates repose sur une division en six phases, abrégées en EME, établies à partir de l'étude 43 sites répartis en quatre segments de la vallée, depuis la région du barrage de Karababa en amont jusqu'à Terqa/Ashara en aval. Sur ces 43 sites, 16 ont fourni des inventaires pertinents pour la discussion chronologique, avec un nombre total de 68 inventaires. 4 de ces sites dont une taille supérieure à 20 ha (Tilbeshar, Emar, Bia et Terqa), 3 sites auraient un rôle plus régional avec une superficie comprise entre 10 et 20 ha (Halawa A, Selenkhayé et Oylum). Ces données ont été complétées par les résultats de 25 autres fouilles, en particulier pour notre propos Jerablus Tahtani, Banat, Halawa B et Tell Sweyhat¹⁵.

L'ensemble ainsi obtenu a permis de dessiner quelques tendances générales inédites qui sont très intéressantes pour notre propos. Il apparaît ainsi très clairement que l'abandon des colonies urukéennes a créé des situations contrastées souvent soulignées : au cours de la phase EME 1, de Hassek Höyük au nord à Habuba Kabira Nord, des formes diverses d'occupation se

¹⁵Finkbeiner 2015, p. 25-30.

maintiennent dans un horizon post Uruk caractéristique. Plus à l'est en aval du coude de l'Euphrate, la région paraît avoir été abandonnée après l'évacuation des « avant-postes urukéens » qui jalonnaient la région jusqu'en Irak. Cette période que l'on situe maintenant entre 3250 et 3150 avant notre ère est contemporaine de la phase finale de la période d'Irak dans le Sud (LC 5 récent) et des débuts de l'époque dite de Jemdet Nasr. Cette période est ordinairement considérée comme une époque de progressive régionalisation et dans la moyenne vallée de l'Euphrate se caractériserait par de modestes villages fortifiés. Aucune structure funéraire n'a pour l'heure été attribuée à cette période, ce qui prolonge largement la situation observée au cours de la période de l'expansion urukéenne.

La période EME 2 est une très longue période qui s'étendrait d'après les datations C 14 de 3150 à 2650 avant notre ère. Elle aurait été suivie par une courte phase EME 3, de 2650 à 2550 avant notre ère¹⁶. Le nombre de sites et surtout des fortifications conçues s'accroît considérablement Il s'agit notamment de Halawa B (niveau 3), Sweyhat (KJ, inner Town), Munbaqa niveau IV) et Abd (niveau 5)¹⁷. L'architecture en question se caractérise par des murs en casemate, faits de la juxtaposition de compartiments construits en briques crues comblés de déblais. Ces ensembles enveloppent des périmètres très larges et sont des constructions simples : pas de tours, à l'exception d'une tour à Halawa A. La seule porte dégagée, à Abd est un passage simple, non fortifié. Tell Bia et Terqa auraient été fondées au cours de cette période EME 2, mais on dispose de très peu d'informations sur cette phase, en particulier en ce qui concerne les fortifications. Il importe surtout de souligner que l'on est là en présence d'un véritable cluster de petits établissements fortifiés, ils se situent tous sur la rive gauche de l'Euphrate, comme s'il s'agissait moins de contrôler les deux rives du fleuve que de verrouiller le passage vers l'est, là où se développe Tell Khuera/ Abarsal.

Tout autre est là le processus bien plus précoce observé dans l'ouadi Hammar. Nous savons maintenant que a fondation de Khuera est bien antérieure à celle de Mari¹⁸. La première enceinte bâtie à Khuera daterait du Chalcolithique tardif, elle a été mise en évidence dans le secteur HMS :H-Est. Il s'agit d'un mur de briques crues construit sur le sol vierge, large de 3 m et conservé sur une hauteur de 2,50 m. Il est surmonté par un autre mur moins large, de 2,50 m, assigné à la phase I A de Khuera (EJ 1, vers 2950-2900 avant notre ère). La phase ancienne était associée à des tessons chalcolithiques, on peut toutefois se demander s'il s'agit là de tessons in situ, et si cette phase

¹⁶Finkbeiner 2015

¹⁷Novak 2015.

¹⁸Meier 2006, 2021.

ancienne ne constitue pas la fondation du mur érigé en 2900, à une époque qui serait comparable à celle de la fondation de Mari. L'échelle de cette fondation est en tout cas sans commune mesure à tout ce que l'on observe alors sur le Moyen Euphrate ou en Jéziré, elle ne peut qu'être comparée à celle de Mari, à la même époque. Un autre élément très intéressant est l'évolution de ce système : un tremblement de terre est survenu vers 2800 avant notre ère, et sur la couche de destruction a été édifié à 2 vers l'extérieur du mur précédent une nouvelle enceinte. De briques, large de 3 m cette fois (périodes I B-C, EJ 2). Enfin, un nouveau mur fut érigé encore plus à l'ouest, au cours de la phase I D (EJ 3). Retenons ici surtout les premières étapes d'une séquence perturbée par un tremblement de terre.

Dans le Moyen Khabur au début de l'EJ 1, à Tell Atij et Tell Kneidig notamment en aval de Hassaké et à Tell Kashkakuk III en amont se constitue une autre cluster de sites fortifiés¹⁹. Les fortifications sont essentiellement faites de murs de briques crues, larges de 2 m à 2,50 m, à Tell Atij, Kashkakuk ou Kneidig, soit une largeur très comparable à celle du premier mur de Mari, mais sans fondations de pierres. On a tenté de mettre en rapport les modestes établissements du Moyen Khabur avec l'essor de Mari, vers 2900 avant notre ère. Ces points fortifiés dotés de greniers auraient servi de relais pour la collecte de céréales à destination en aval de Mari. Ils auraient fait parte d'un réseau fortifié avancé sur le moyen Khabur. Il s'agit d'une simple hypothèse qui est loin de faire l'unanimité.

Ce premier cycle de construction de fortifications est suivi d'un ample mouvement au cours de la phase EJ 2, entre 2750 et 2600 avant notre à une époque contemporaine des phases récentes de la ville I de Mari. L'un des phénomènes les plus importants est l'émergence de cités à double enceintes, dont le meilleur exemple est encore Khuera (Figure 6). Outre les travaux menés sur l'enceinte intérieure, une enceinte extérieure, légèrement décentrée par rapport au tracé de l'enceinte intérieure est alors bâtie²⁰.

A la même époque, un autre grand centre Tell Leilan se dote de deux enceintes construites successivement, tandis que le réseau des avant postes du Moyen Khabur connaît un essor considérable qui se poursuit jusqu'à la transition avec la période EJ 3. Non seulement des établissements anciens comme Tell Kneidig se dotent d'une nouvelle enceinte, mais de nouveaux établissements se développent tel Tell Bderi (avec une remarquable porte aux murs protégés par des dalles de pierre) et Tell Raqa'i, où fut érigé un fameux bâtiment subcirculaire muni d'une puissante enceinte (Figure 5). Le développement de tels centres à la fois entrepôts et fortifications est

¹⁹Pfälzner 2015, p.

²⁰Sur cette deuxième enceinte Meier 2021, p. 170-180.

observé également à Tell Khazné, un énigmatique centre situé à proximité de Tell Brak, dont on ne connaît pas les fortifications, malheureusement. Le lien entre ces établissements fortifiés situés au sud et au nord de Nagar reste à définir, mais on en peut qu'être frappé par la pérennité d'un système de défense qui remonte au Chalcolithique tardif, le site de Tell Mashnaqa ayant été le prototype de ces établissements fortifiés couvrant l'accès à Nagar par le sud. Zone de contact, zone solidement défendue par un réseau dense de postes fortifiés, elle est l'expression d'une tension, quelle que soient les origines de cette insécurité et le rôle jouée par Mari dans ce processus.

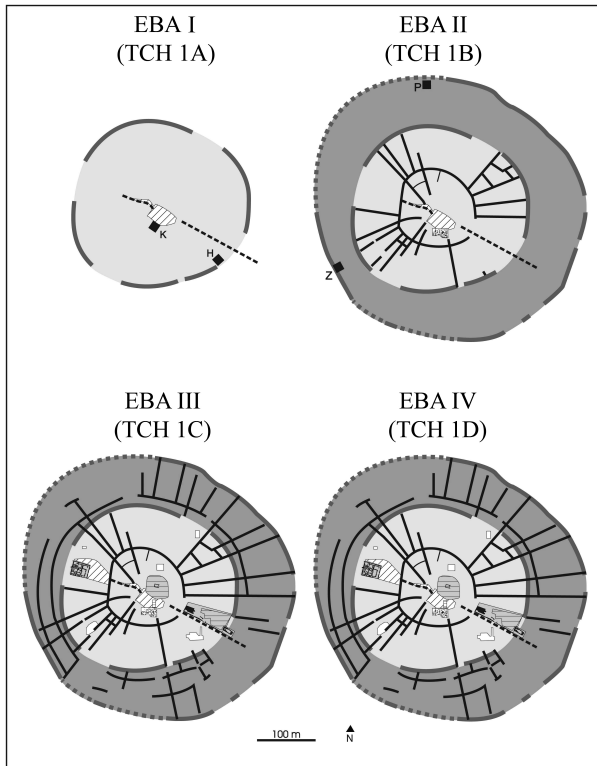


FIGURE 5.

Ces développements témoignent de l'existence de techniques de constructions très différentes de celle de l'époque de l'expansion urukéenne et ils sont la marque de formes d'insécurité dans un espace qui s'étend du coude de l'Euphrate à la poste orientale de la Jéziré. Le développement au cours

de la période EME 3 du complexe de Tell Banat (Phase IV) , est une des innovations majeures de la période suivante, l'une des caractéristiques majeures de la période étant l'abandon de sites occupés antérieurement comme Ahmar ou Tell Bi'a sur les ruines desquels ont été établies des tombes. Ces processus sont contemporains du développement de la ville I de Mari. On observe au cours de cette période (EME 2-3 sur l'Euphrate, EJ 2 en Jéziré, phase récente de la ville I) un processus de décollage avec l'émergence de toute une chaîne de grands centres fortifiés, depuis l'Euphrate (Tell Banat) jusqu'à la Jéziré : dans l'oaudi Hammar, Khuera/Abarsal, le ouadi Khanzir, Tell Mozan (avec une double enceinte, l'enceinte extérieure étant polygonale), ouadi Awayj, Tell Beydar, l'ouadi Jarrah, avec Tell Leilan, et le Nahr Jaghjagh, avec Tell Khazneh et probablement Brak. Se dessine ainsi un archipel de 6 noyaux fortifiés, au sud duquel se trouvent les avant postes du Moyen Khabur et trois cités de l'Euphrate, Tell Bi'a Terqa et Mari.

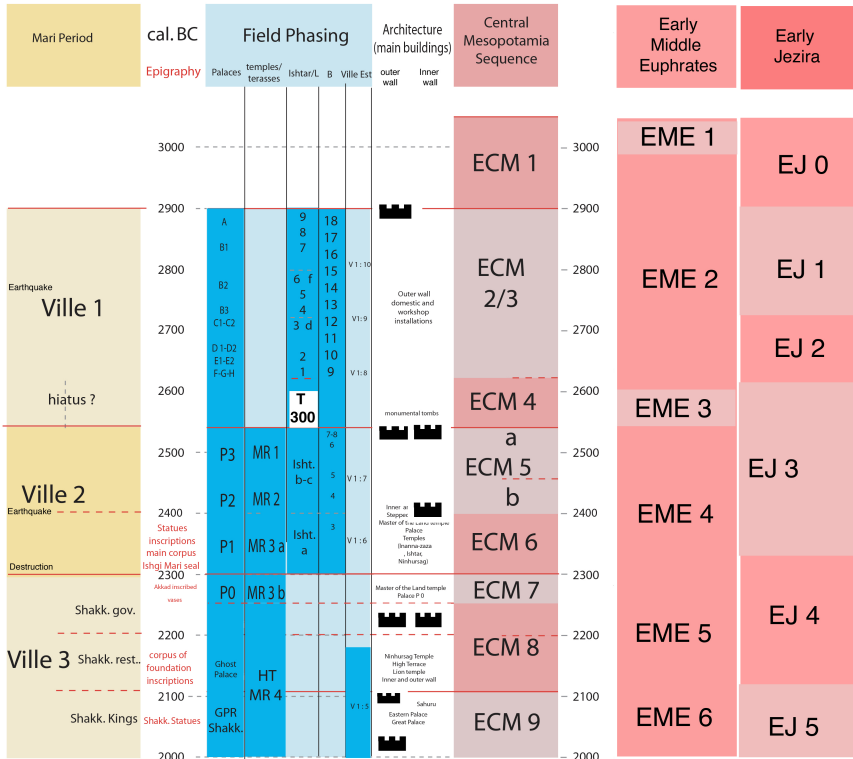
3. Mari, la ville I et sa séquence

On peut proposer une synchronisation des données de Mari avec les deux systèmes chronologiques évoqués plus haut celui du Moyen Euphrate et celui de la Jéziré (Figure 6). Sans entrer dans le détail de la discussion, retenons simplement que la fondation de Mari, entre 3000 et 2900 se situe exactement au moment de la transition entre la période EME 1 et 2 et la période EJ 0 et EJ 1. L'abandon possible de Mari, entre 2650 et 2550 correspond à la période EME 3 et à la phase finale de la période EJ 2, c'est la période de construction du tombeau 300 à Mari. La reconstruction de la ville de Mari intervient au début des périodes EME 4 et EJ 3, c'est la période de l'essor des grandes cités de haute Mésopotamie, divisée en deux phases à Mari, en deux phases EJ 3 a et b et en une seule période sur le Moyen Euphrate, EME 4. Elle s'achève avec les campagnes des rois d'Akkad, à partir de 2300 avant notre ère.

Dans le cas de Mari, nous savons que la première ville de Mari fut dotée au départ d'une enceinte unique, pas deux comme le pensait Margueron²¹. Cette enceinte unique était large de deux mètres, avec des fondations de blocs de gypse noyées dans une digue haute d'1 m, et large de 6 m (Figure 6). Ce mur de pierres était surmonté par un mur de briques dont les traces ténues ont été repérées en 1997 (fouille du chantier C 5, figure 7). La forme parfaitement circulaire de la section préservée de cette enceinte a légitimement laissé supposer qu'au départ le cercle était complet , même

²¹Butterlin 2020.

si aucune trace de cet ensemble n'a été repérée à l'extérieur du tell, et surtout au delà de la ligne supposée du canal connectant la ville à l'Euphrate. L'érosion a assurément fait son oeuvre.



TELL HARIRI PERIODIZATION & PHASING

FIGURE 6.

Toutefois, l'un des problèmes majeurs que pose cette hypothèse est le lien fait par Margueron entre cette enceinte et canal qui aurait traversé la ville. Margueron a on le sait proposé une sorte de package de la fondation de Mari : la situation de Mari, à l'écart du fleuve sur la terrasse holocène exigeait la présence d'un asana afin de contrôler le trafic fluvial mais aussi le trafic le long des canaux construits en rive et rive gauche de l'Euphrate en amont d'une ville située à l'extrémité sud d'une véritable gouttière où s'écoule le fleuve, depuis la passe de la Hanouqa. La ville aurait été dotée de deux

enceintes traversées chacune par ce canal. Ce système aurait fonctionné jusqu'à la destruction de la ville III. Après cette destruction, le tell aurait été soumis à l'érosion des crues séculaires de l'Euphrate, tronqué au nord et à l'est.

La ceinture de Mari : évolution des enceintes et de la digue, chantier C 5

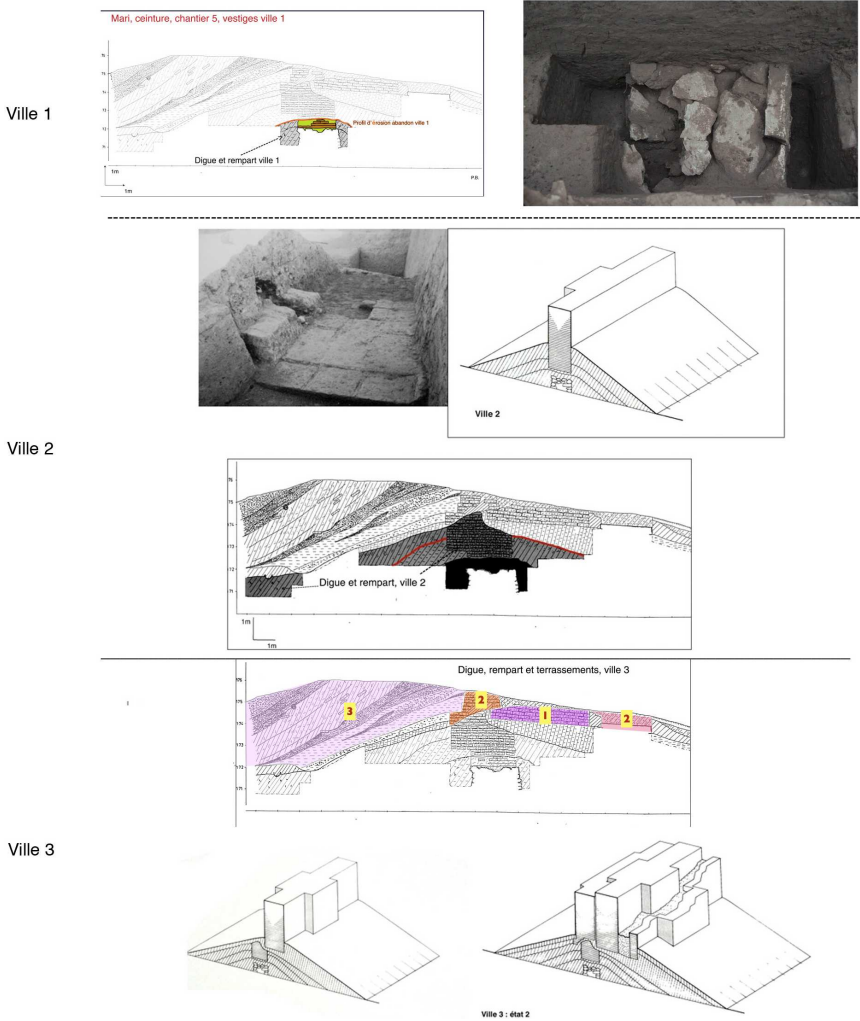


FIGURE 7.

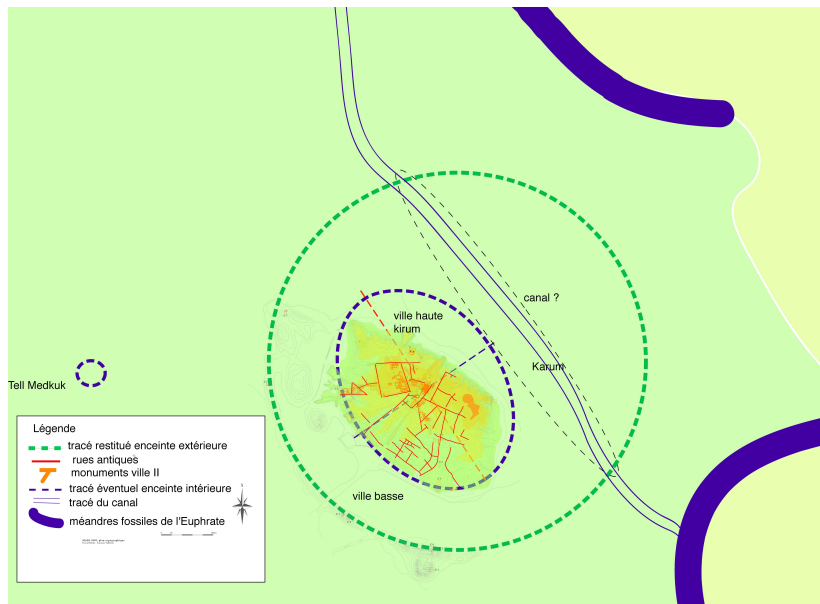


FIGURE 8.

Si l'ancienneté de la ceinture extérieure ne fait aucun doute, des fragments de bols typiques de la ville I ayant été recueillis à la base du mur du niveau le plus ancien du chantier C 5, la datation de l'enceinte intérieure, tout comme du canal s'avèrent beaucoup plus problématiques (Figure 8). Les fouilles menées sous l'enceinte intérieure de la ville III, en 1997, avait permis d'identifier les restes d'enceintes plus anciennes, le niveau le plus ancien ayant livré un mur massif avec des fondations de pierre, large de près de 11 m. L'analogie de situations entre enceinte intérieure et enceinte extérieure était frappante et on en a conclu que cette enceinte sur fondations de pierre était elle aussi d'origine. La ville aurait ainsi été dotée de deux enceintes dès sa fondation, un fait tout à fait unique pour l'époque. Les cités à enceinte doubles de la Jéziré, notamment Tell Khuera ont vu se développer leur système de fortifications par étapes.

Nos propres recherches ont permis d'établir que cette enceinte intérieure a été bâtie au moment de la fondation de la ville II de Mari. Un sol de chantier, jonché de déchets de taille de blocs de gypse a livré des fragments de coupes coniques typiques de la ville II de Mari (Figure 9). Cette enceinte comprenait effectivement deux niveaux mais ces deux niveaux correspondent à deux phases de la ville II, pas deux villes distinctes. De surcroît, un sondage

mené au pied de cette enceinte a livré des niveaux antérieurs, trois niveaux stratigraphiques, datés de la ville I et situés sous les fondations du mur de ville II. Le dernier niveau de la ville I a livré la face extérieure d'un mur parallèle au tracé du futur mur médian (Figure 10), et il est bien possible que la fortification de la ville ait commencé dès la phase finale de la ville I dont l'identité culturelle commence à se dessiner à travers les différentes études sur les chantiers de la ville I.

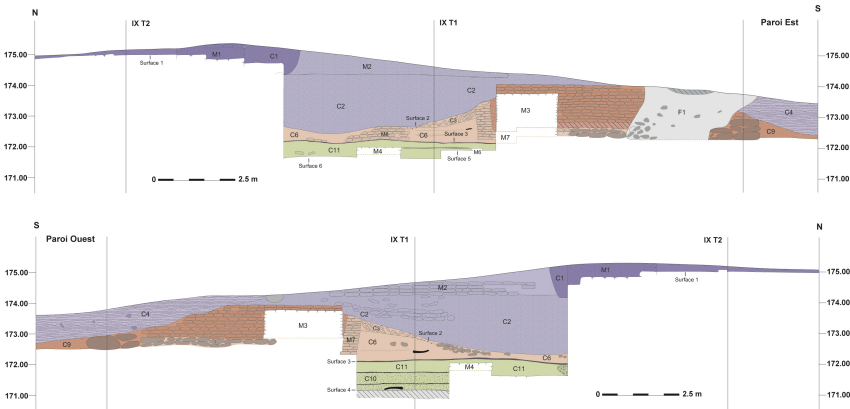


FIGURE 9.

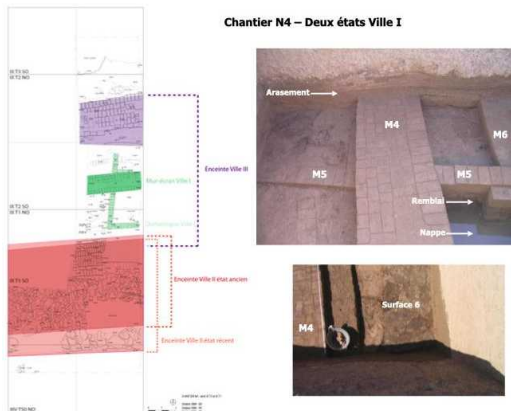


FIGURE 10.

La ville fondée en 2900 avant notre ère est donc dotée d'un vaste périmètre défensif, un périmètre de sécurité, à l'intérieur duquel on n'a retrouvé pour le moment que des restes de maisons et d'installations artisanales, de production céramique, textile, lithique ou métallurgique. Ces installations ont une longue histoire et trois phases au moins peuvent être définies, d'après la stratigraphie établie au chantier L. La ville probablement à la suite d'un tremblement de terre un épisode de destruction suivi d'une nouvelle occupation, marquée dans la phase finale de la ville par une intensification des contacts à longue distance. Il est tout à fait possible que ce tremblement de terre soit le même que celui qui a affecté Khuera et conduit à la construction d'une nouvelle enceinte intérieure comme on l'a vu plus haut.



FIGURE 11.

Les riches inventaires mobiliers des tombes situées sous ces maisons, notamment au chantier L, exploré de 1999 à 2005 témoignent d'une culture matérielle largement liée aux cités du Moyen Euphrate syrien ou turc (Figure 11). Les liens sont à cette époque très limités avec la Mésopotamie centrale. La production céramique présente notamment des céramiques grises de l'Euphrate, des céramiques métalliques, et dans les niveaux le

plus tardifs de la ville I des céramiques à bandes rouges de l'Euphrate, bien connues dans la boucle de l'Euphrate. La présence en abondance de lames cananéennes est un autre témoignage des affinités culturelles de Mari avec le Moyen Euphrate en amont, ce qui suppose l'existence d'un système agricole complètement distinct du sud irakien, et identique à celui des villes fluviales plus au nord qui ne pratiquaient pas massivement l'irrigation. Mari apparaît ainsi moins comme un avant poste du monde sumérien en Syrie que comme un établissement avancé du monde du Moyen Euphrate, mais aussi des steppes qui l'entouraient, face à l'émergence de Kish au Dynastique archaïque I.

Les objets métalliques découverts sont pour l'essentiel des outils (gouges, burins, ciseaux), des bols et des épingles recourbées, dites *toggle pins* bien attestées en Syrie du Nord à cette époque. Les seules armes présentes sont des couteaux à trois rivets et des balles de frondes trouvées en abondance au chantier L, à proximité d'un foyer. La ville I n'a pas livré de tombes aristocratiques comparables aux tombes princières de cette époque découverte en Turquie à Arslantepe ou dans la haute vallée du Tigre. Mari offre l'image d'un monde d'artisans et de marchands, installés à l'abri d'un périmètre de défense bien plus large que la partie habitée de la ville. Cela ne veut pas dire qu'il n'existait pas à Mari de bâtiments de prestige, on n'en a trouvé aucune trace sous les vestiges des palais de ville II et III, et seul un grand mur trouvé sous le temple de Ninhursag témoigne de l'existence très probable de sanctuaires qui restent à explorer.

4. Genèse d'une culture de la sécurité, la construction d'une mémoire

Quand on tente la synchronisation de ces données avec Mari (Figure 6), ils semble que tell Bia/Tuttul et Terqa présentent des niveaux archaïques sensiblement contemporains, et postérieurs à la fondation de Mari. Si à Terqa, l'occupation paraît avoir été continue du niveau V au niveau IV (chantier F), soit pendant les phases EME 2 tardive et EME 3, à Mari et Tell Bi'a, les niveaux initiaux sont abandonnés et des tombes « monumentales » viennent s'insérer dans ces ensembles. La question qui se pose est donc la suivante : a-t'il existé une phase particulière de développement de la moyenne vallée de l'Euphrate, marquée par la construction d'une série de tombes monumentales prélude de l'essor urbain observé pendant la période EME 4, celle de la ville II de Mari. Ce processus se déroule dans la section de la vallée de l'Euphrate en aval du coude du fleuve. Il correspond à la diversification des modes d'inhumation dans l'ensemble de la vallée

qui a fait l'objet de nombreuses études et discussions²². Le développement d'ensembles exceptionnels de tombes à chambre unique, aussi bien dans le bassin de Birecik (Gre Virike) celui de Tishrin (Jerablus Tahtani, Banat, tombeau 1 et 7) ou sur le moyen Euphrate syrien (Tell Bi'a, Mari et à Terqa, tombeau en pierre sous une maison) a été souvent mis en rapport soit avec un processus de différenciation sociale, soit quand il se déroule sur des sites vierges ou abandonnés avec l'implantation de tombes éminentes de populations semi-nomades ou nomades²³. La complexité et la diversité est aussi de mise dans la situation de ces tombeaux qui ont été intégrés dans un second temps au développement urbain, constituant des éléments clefs de la fabrique urbaine et péri-urbaine à l'œuvre dans la genèse des Cités-Etats.

La situation de ces tombeaux intra ou extra muros, une fois le processus urbain amorcé, la diversité des modes de dépôt, qu'il s'agisse d'inhumation doubles ou collectives, ou bien multiples et successives, primaires ou secondaires témoignent de mécanismes mémoriels très particuliers liés à l'affirmation de lignages dans la durée²⁴. Il est très clair dans la plupart des cas (ce n'est pas non plus systématique) que ces ensembles funéraires ont été utilisés pendant une longue période, depuis les moments fondateurs de la période EME 3 ou 4 et leur usage. Toutefois, la distinction entre les inhumations multiples simultanées ou échelonnées tout comme la distinction de ce qui relève du dépôt funéraire et de restes de banques commémoratifs subséquents ne s'avère pas si facile.

Parmi ces ensembles, l'existence de tertres funéraires extra muros a été particulièrement mise en avant et interpréter comme la matérialisation dans le paysage d'une emprise territoriale et de la construction symbolique de l'espace des Cités Etats qui dominent le paysage politique de la Syrie intérieure au milieu du III^e millénaire avant notre ère, en Jéziré, Shamiyé ou le long de l'Euphrate. L'importance du culte des ancêtres a été mise en avant comme un moteur des transformations sociales et il n'est guère possible ici de rentrer dans le détail de ces analyses. Il faut souligner la diversité des processus observés qui ne se ramènent pas à un modèle unique, tant ils sont proportionnés à la construction d'un récit local de la mémoire des grandes Cités Etats attestées notamment dans les textes d'Ebla, qu'il s'agisse d'Ebla, de Mari, Abarsal ou Armi notamment. Dans tous les cas, s'esquissent les éléments d'un système hiérarchisé dans l'espace d'édifices, monuments ou constructions qui sont autant de jalons de rituels, qui sont fondés sur

²²synthèse dans Cooper 2006, Bouso 2015, p. 381-386.

²³Porter 2012, Porter 2018.

²⁴Porter 2012.

des mobilités, des processions ou des pèlerinages destinés à pacifier et construire des territoires « civilisés » et sécurisés.



FIGURE 12.

Parmi ces jalons figurent des ensembles extra muros, situés dans l'espace péri-urbain ou à distance. Le cas le plus commenté est celui de Tell Banat Nord²⁵, avec « le monument blanc » (Figure 13). Il s'agit d'un tell conique de 100 m de diamètre et 20 m de hauteur, situé à 200 m au nord-est de Banat. Il s'agit d'un ensemble complexe, réalisé en trois étapes, désignées C, B et A, la phase C datant peut-être de la fin de la période EME 2. Une série de tumuli faits de pierres a été installée dans et sur ce monument initial. Il a été proposé récemment que ce monument est un tertre funéraire mais aussi un monument commémoratifs où ont été déposés les ossements de victimes de conflits ayant eu lieu à Banat²⁶. Banat serait donc un monument de victoire, que l'on rapproche volontiers des tertres mentionnés dans les textes du Dynastique archaïque, où l'érection d'un tertre est le geste victorieux par

²⁵Porter 2018.

²⁶Macclellan 2021.



FIGURE 13.

excellence²⁷, et de monuments dont plusieurs exemples sont connus jusque dans la région de Mari²⁸.

Porter a souligné récemment²⁹ que le développement de Banat/Bazi s'est fait à partir de monuments funéraires, le monument blanc de Banat nord, et dans la zone C, sous le bâtiment 7, à partir de la période EME 2. Elle a également observé que cette époque a vu se développer un ensemble de petits tertres funéraires disposés en cercle notamment autour de Banat nord. Il ne s'agit pas là de fortification mais d'un schéma spatial qui n'est pas inintéressant pour notre propos, puisque elle présente cela comme la première étape de la morphogenèse d'une cité. La tombe 1 a été édiflée au cours de la période EME 3, et elle coïncide avec les premiers développements monumentaux de Banat/Bazi.

La forme très particulière de Tell Banat a été rapprochée d'un énigmatique monument situé à l'ouest de Mari, le Tell Medkoug (Figure 14). Le tell présente en effet des dimensions voisines de Tell Banat nord, il était haut de 25 m avant sa destruction en 2015 par Daesh. Les fouilles menées sur le

²⁷ Archi et Biga 2003.

²⁸ Kepinski

²⁹ Porter 2018, p. 195, fig. 3 et 4.



FIGURE 14.

site ont confirmé l'ancienneté du monument. Fait de terre compacte mêlée à des fragments de gypse, le monument a été bâti par déversement de la terre depuis l'extérieur vers l'intérieur. De rares tessons de ville III ont été scellés par cette opération, qui semble donc avoir eu lieu au moins dans le sondage pratiqué à la base du tell à la fin du III^e millénaire (Figure 13). Rien ne prouve pour l'heure que le tertre a été construit avant la fin du III^e millénaire mais l'hypothèse est évidemment séduisante. On se contentera ici de souligner qu'en 2007 a été identifié plus à l'ouest (à 1 km, en bordure de plateau) une autre butte de forme conique étrangement similaire à Medkoug, d'origine naturelle cette fois (Figure 14). Des tessons de ville II ont été recueillis sur cette butte et au pied de celle-ci sans qu'aucune installation ait été repérée. La nature de cette butte haute elle aussi de 25 m reste donc à définir. Elle était en tout cas située le long d'un oued au débouché de celui-ci dans la plaine alluviale, en direction de Mari, un axe majeur par conséquent de communication entre Mari et le désert occidental.

Le deuxième cas de figure est la présence de monuments funéraires et de sanctuaires liés aux fortifications, ou portes des villes. On s'est beaucoup interrogé au cours des dernières années sur le lien organique entre le temple d'Ishtar de Mari, la royauté, la guerre et les tombeaux construits déglagés par

Parrot sous les niveaux de ville II du sanctuaire, en particulier le tombeau 300 (Figure 15)³⁰. Ce tombeau fait typiquement partie des tombes à chambre voutées bâties le long de l'Euphrate notamment aux cours de la période EME 3, et après. Un autre ensemble, une tombe à chambre double cette fois a été dégagé plus à l'ouest et ces tombeaux sont considérés comme l'expression d'une phase intermédiaire d'abandon urbain entre la ville I et la ville II. A. Otto a en particulier proposé que ce tombeau était visible dans la cour du temple qui aurait donc été le lieu de la célébration d'un culte des ancêtres fondateurs de la ville II. Même si ces tombeaux n'étaient pas visibles et ont été recouverts par les murs du temple ou ses dépendances, il est bien possible que l'édification du temple à ce point précis s'est faite en lien avec leur présence. Ces tombeaux ont été bâtis pendant la période EME 3, avec un matériel très comparable à celui de la tombe 1 de Banat. Le lien entre tombeaux, genèse urbaine et lignées dynastiques est essentiel.

Les nouvelles études menées sur le temple d'Ishtar³¹ ont souligné la singularité de cet édifice : situé le long de l'enceinte intérieure de la ville II, érigée en 2550, probablement à proximité d'une porte de la ville, cet édifice présente un inventaire très singulier, d'une richesse très différente de celle des autres sanctuaires à l'expiation de l'enceinte sacrée du palais. On a observé le lien entre ce monument et la royauté à Mari, et la concentration d'objets d'exception dans la cour 20 située au sud du temple. Les analyses des relevés initiaux de 1934 m'ont conduit à proposer qu'il y avait là une chapelle royale, donnant sur l'esplanade à l'arrière de la porte de la ville, peut-être un lieu particulier dans les rituels d'investiture des rois de Mari, comparable à celui du temple de Kura à Ebla. Il existe en fait à Mari un axe royal avec trois étapes : à l'extérieur de la ville Tell Medkoug, où pourrait s'être trouvé le sanctuaire d'Ishtar Anunnitum, possiblement érigé avant la ville III, au niveau du rempart le temple d'Ishtar, et dans le palais, l'enceinte sacrée vouée à l'amant d'Ishtar le roi divinisé Dumuzi, vénéré sous sa forme Ama Ushumgal³². On ne sait pas ce qui était déposé à Medkoug (tombeau aussi ?), mais les tombes sont clairement présentes au temple d'Ishtar. Il faut toutefois souligner que d'autres tombes construites de la période EME 3 ont été découvertes au nord du massif rouge en 1933. Nous savons qu'au moment de son investiture, le roi Zimri Lim a passé la nuit à l'extérieur de Mari avant de faire son entrée solennelle évoquée dans une lettre fameuse de Bannum au roi. Cette entrée est logiquement la porte située au sud du temple d'Ishtar Ush, sur l'axe ouest-est qui conduit au palais. Se dessine

³⁰Jean Marie 1999.

³¹Butterlin et Cluzan, 2014, Margueron 2017, Butterlin 2023.

³²Sur cette question Butterlin à paraître b.

ainsi un cheminement mémoriel dans la longue durée de l'histoire de Mari, utilisé jusqu'à la fin de l'histoire de la métropole de l'Euphrate.

Bibliographie

- Baccarin, C., 2012: « Burial Practices in the Middle Euphrates Area during the Early Bronze Age: The Contribution of the Hypogeum of Tell Ahmar (North Syria) », dans F. Borrell Tena, M. Bouso García, A. Gómez Bach,, C. Tornero Dacasa et O. Vicente Campos (dir.) *Broadening Horizons 3. Conference of Young Researchers Working in the Ancient Near East*, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Servei de Publicacions, Bellaterra, 2012, p. 137–151.
- Bunnens, G., 2022: *Tell Ahmar on the Syrian Euphrates, from Chalcolithic Village to Assyrian Provincial Capital*, Oxbow books, Oxford and Philadelphia.
- Butterlin, P., 2007: « Mari, les Shakkanakkû et la crise de la fin du III e millénaire », in C. Kuzugluoglu et C. Marro (dir.), *Sociétés humaines et changement climatique à la fin du III e millénaire : une crise a t'elle eu lie en Haute Mésopotamie ?*, actes du colloque de Lyon, 5–8 décembre 2005, Institut français d'études anatoliennes Georges Dumézil-Istanbul, de Boccard, p. 227–247.
- 2016: “L’hinterland mariote en question”, dans A. Tenu et B. Perello (dir.), *Parcours d’Orient, mélanges offerts à Christine Kepinski*, Archeopress, Oxford, p. 35–48.
- 2019 a: « Mari et l’histoire militaire mésopotamienne : du temps long au temps politico-militaire », dans M. d’Andrea, M.G. Micale, D. Nadali et S. Pizzamenti et A. Vacca (dir.), *Pearls of the Past, Studies on Near eastern Art and Archaeology in honour of Frances Pinnock*, Marru 8, Zaphon, Münster, p. 109–138.
- 2019 b: *Histoire de la Mésopotamie, Dieux, héros et cités légendaires*, Paris Ellipses.
- 2020: « Mari, une ville circulaire ordinaire ? », dans C. Castel, J.W. Meyer et P. Quenet (dir.), *Circular Cities of Early Bronze Age Syria*, Subartu XLII, Brepols, Turnhout, p. 265–277.
- 2021: « Du monde proto-urbain aux villes mésopotamiennes, questions d’échelle et de morphogénèse », *Histoire urbaine* 61, août 2021, p. 9–40.
- 2022: « Des crânes et des piles d’ossements ou la marche forcée vers l’Etat au Proche-Orient ancien », dans P. Cosme, J.C. Couvenhes, S. Janniard, et G. Traina (dir.), *Les récits de guerre comme source d’histoire, de l’Antiquité à nos jours*, Presses Universitaires de Franche Comté, Besançon, p. 293–314.
- Castel, C., Meyer, J.W. et Quenet, P. (dir.), 2020: *Circular Cities of Early Bronze Age Syria*, Subartu XLII, Brepols, Turnhout.

- Cooper, L., 2007: *Early Urbanism on the Syrian Euphrates*, Routledge, Londres et New York.
- Hempelmann, R., 2020: « The Origin and Early Development of Tell Chuëra and Neighbouring Settlements », C. Castel, J.W. Meyer et P. Quenet (dir.), *Circular Cities of Early Bronze Age Syria*, Subartu XLII, p. 47–60.
- Margueron, J., 2004: *Mari, métropole de l’Euphrate*, Paris, Picard.
- 2013: *Cité invisibles, la naissance de l’urbanisme au Proche-Orient ancien, approche archéologique*, Paris, Geuthner.
- 2017: *Mari, le Temple d’Ishtar Revisité. Nouvelles Conclusions*, Madrid, Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas.
- Meyer, J.W., 2014: « The Round Cities : Foundation and Development, a View from Tell Khuera », in M. al Maqdissi, D. Beyer, P. Butterlin, A. Cavigneaux, J.-C. Margueron, B. Muller-Margueron, eds, *Mari ni est ni ouest, Syria Supplément 2*, p. 13–26.
- 2020: « The Birth of the Circular Cities », in C. Castel, J.W. Meyer et P. Quenet (dir.), *Circular Cities of Early Bronze Age Syria*, Subartu XLII, p. 37–47.
- 2021: *Tell Khuera 1958-2011, Zusammenfassung der Ergebnisse*, Schriften der Max Freiherr von Oppenheim Stiftung 21, Harrassowitz Verlag, Wiesbaden.
- Novak, M., 2015: « Urbanism and Architecture », dans U. Finkbeiner, M. Novak, F. (Dir.), *Middle Euphrates, Arcane Vol. IV*, Brepols, Turnhout, p. 41–85.
- Otto, A., 2014: « dans M. al Maqdissi, D. Beyer, P. Butterlin, A. Cavigneaux, J.-C. Margueron et B. Muller-Margueron, (dir.), Beyrouth: Presses de l’IFPO *Mari ni Est ni Ouest, Actes du Colloque International Mari ni est ni Ouest*, Damas 20–22 Octobre 2010. *Syria Supplementum 2*, p. 587–601.
- Parrot, A., 1956: *Mission Archéologique de Mari, vol. I: Le Temple d’Ishtar*. Paris: Geuthner.
- 1967: *Mission Archéologique de Mari, vol. III: Les Temples d’Ishtar et de Ninni-Zaza*. Paris: Geuthner.
- 1974: *Mari, Capitale Fabuleuse*. Paris: Payot.
- Pfälzner, P., 2011: « Architecture in Jezira », dans M. Lebeau (dir.), *Jezira, Arcane Vol. I*, Turnhout: Brepols, p. 137–200.

- Porter, A., 2012: *Mobile Pastoralism and the Formation of Near Eastern Civilizations, Weaving Together Society*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- 2018: « The Tell Banat Settlement Complex during the Third and Second Millennia BCE », dans A. Otto (dir.), *From Pottery to Chronology: The MiddleEuphrates Region in Late Bronze Age Syria*, Proceedings of the International Workshop in Mainz (Germany), May 5–7, 2012, PeWe Verlag Gladbeck, p. 195–225.
- Ristvet, L., 2013: *Ritual, Performance and Politics in the Ancient Near East*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Sailing safely along rivers and canals in the Amorite period

Grégory Chambon

Abstract

The issue of safety in Ancient Near Eastern societies affects many aspects of daily life: the safety of individuals, of groups of persons, of commodities, of properties or at a larger scale, of states. As I have been running the ELEPPU-project on ships and shipbuilding in Mesopotamia with Ariel Bagg (EHESS / University of Heidelberg) for several years, I thought it would be interesting to address the issue of safety in relation to navigation on the rivers.¹

Rivers in Mesopotamia were actually not only landscape elements that structured territories and served as political borders. They also constituted dynamic and oriented spaces (upstream to downstream) for the circulation of goods and people.² Although the Mesopotamian authorities have always sought to control rivers for agricultural purposes, rivers are the place of many activities (fishing, hunting, transport...) which are often beyond any control.³

This paper aims to present some case studies from the Amorite period, especially in the Old Babylonian documentation of Mari (19th–18th centuries BC.) on the Middle Euphrates, about risks and dangers in these “uncontrolled areas”, in order to highlight the complex relationships between rivers and the authorities, which are economic, political as well as ideological. We will seek to answer three main questions:

What were the risks and dangers?

Who takes care of safety?

Did the kings control and secure the rivers (and how)?

¹I thank the conference organising committee for their very warm welcome in the Centre Tchèque de Paris.

²Chambon, 2021.

³Chambon, 2017.

1 What were the risks and dangers?

The risks concerning the navigation on rivers could be of three kinds: natural, political, or economic. As already said, rivers are natural dynamic spaces, depending on the direction of the current, the depth of the water and the topography of their banks. The rhythm of the seasons determines the periods of low water and high water; the water level and the strength of the current, which vary according to the time of year and the geographical areas, condition the movement of people and goods by boat.⁴

For example, although the Euphrates appears to be navigable along most of its course, there were areas in north-western Syria that presented natural barriers, such as series of rapids upstream of the confluence with the Balih, and others in the basaltic plateau near the Halebiye Pass. The boats then had to unload to cross the highlands when they went upstream. People then continue on foot. A clear example is given in the documentation of Mari: a high official, who was in charge of the transport of a votive object to Aleppo for a religious festival explains that he disembarks in the vicinity of Lasqum and then goes to Imâr.⁵

In addition to these geomorphological conditions, climatic conditions forced navigation to follow seasonal rhythms. The most favourable times of the year to travel the Euphrates route were spring, just after the winter, when the flooding began in April, and autumn after the low water period.⁶

The Mesopotamians were well aware of the difficulties that the river's currents could cause for navigation. One of the articles in Hammurabi's Code states that in the event of a collision between two boats, the one that went upstream was responsible for the loss of goods and damage.⁷ It is to be understood that the downstream boat, steered by a pole and sailing with the current, must have been less manoeuvrable than the upstream boat, which was usually hauled, since it ran along the bank and could be stopped at any time. To cope with these geomorphological and climatic hazards, experts were needed to sail the boats. According to this Old Babylonian letter sent by an official to the king of Mari, these experts were professionals or could be recruited from the fishermen's guilds, as they had a good knowledge of the Euphrates.

⁴Gaborit, 2013: 5, 36–20.

⁵See the letter ARM 26 17 (Durand, 1988: 125–128).

⁶Durand, 1988: 124–125.

⁷Hammurabi's Code §240 (Richardson, 2000). The Lipit-İstar Code and the Ešnunna Laws also contain regulations on river traffic.

LAPO 18 906 (A.2407)⁸

“I have sent 200 tree trunks (cut into) planks to the Karkemiš quay. 60 men must go upstream to Imâr to meet me. In order for them to carry out their expedition, a boatman or someone among the fishermen who knows the art of piloting (*mûrûtum ša mê*) must come upstream with the troop.”

Moreover, the banks of the Euphrates were essentially wild, with lots of wild animals that could be dangerous like for example lions;⁹ you can guess that people on Euphrates didn't want to dock just anywhere.

But the dangers could also be political. Rivers served as political borders between two lands or crossed different territories. A boat travelling down a river could therefore find itself successively in hostile and safe areas.

One could travel an average of 80 km per day down the Euphrates from Imâr to Mari.¹⁰ The problem was therefore to spend each night in a safe place. There were not many solid structures to dock on the Euphrates according to both textual and archaeological sources, so most boats simply had to spend the nights on the banks of the river, in places where there was less vegetation. Several letters from Mari tell of Queen Šibtu's journey by boat from Aleppo to Mari to join the king Zimrî-Lîm who has just married her at the beginning of his rule.¹¹ The organisers of the journey became concerned because the boat with the queen and her retinue passed through areas controlled by the Benjaminites, tribes who were hostile to the king. The danger does not seem to be in the daytime but rather at night, and it was essential to find fortresses all along the Euphrates to house the queen and her retinue. There was a set of port/fortress pairs located across the river at regular intervals (of ca. 80 km) on the Euphrates, from Imâr to Mari, a bit like “caravanserais”.¹²

In one case, it was necessary to organise the disembarking of the queen and her staff on the banks of the Euphrates, because the ceremonial boat

⁸Durand, 2000: 42.

⁹Durand, 1988: 272.

¹⁰See the remarks of the French colonel Chesney in *Bulletin de la société de géographie de novembre 1841* “Première section dans le but d'étudier la navigation sur l'Euphrate”, p. 280: “Au moment de la crue [de l'Euphrate], le courant acquiert une vitesse de plus de 5 milles à l'heure, aussi les bateaux n'essaient-ils plus de remonter jusqu'à ce qu'elle soit réduite à 4 milles”. A speed of 4 miles corresponds to 6.4 km/h. So a one-day trip (about 12 hours) by boat is about 80 km.

¹¹Durand, 1988: 95–117.

¹²Chambon, 2021: 67. These pairs of port/fortress still existed during Middle Assyrian Period, as Aline Tenu has shown (Tenu, 2021).

seems to have had a large draught (tirant d'eau), and to make them reach the fortress of Dūr-Yahdun-Lim by canals on lighter boats.¹³ This example has a happy ending, as the queen arrived safely at Mari, but it shows that securing the banks of the Euphrates was a problem in the Amorite period, and the kings had to find solutions to better control the river (see above).

At last, the danger could be of an economic nature. As the ships sailing down the Euphrates were often loaded with valuable or expensive goods from the north-western regions (oil, wine, honey, flavoured wood, etc.¹⁴), it is not surprising that they were vulnerable to theft. This risk is already attested in the documentation from Ebla in north-western Syria dating from the 3rd millennium. A text (ARET 13 15), which was found in Ebla but was certainly written in Mari, because of its handwriting and lexical peculiarities, records several legal cases in which Ebla merchants had been wronged by the institutions of Mari.¹⁵ Two of these cases concern the theft of olive oil that had been transported on rafts from Ebla to Mari.

ARET 13 15 (Translation by P. Steinkeller in Steinkeller, 2021: 191)

obv. iii 15 – v 10:

“The merchant Puzri brought a raft (carrying olive oil) to Mari (from Ebla). And he delivered (to the Mari administration) the olive-oil jars representing the “Euphrates tithe” (zag-10 Buranun_x), and those intended for the ... The olive oil (remaining on the raft) was guarded by one (Mari) man. And he (i. e., the guard) took 2 jars of olive oil, measuring 30 liters of olive oil (each)”.

v 11 – vii 11:

“Pilsa’i brought a raft (carrying olive oil from Ebla to Mari). And he deposited the raft (in Mari’s harbor) as a security in lieu of the “Euphrates tithe”. And a thief from Mari brought a big ship (ma₂-gur₈) during the night. He stole the olive (from Pilsa’i’s raft), and he poured it (into his own containers). And the thief and his Mari helper(s) seized the man guarding (the raft with) olive oil during the night. And they beat up the man guarding the olive oil. This is what Pilsa’i reported to the (Mari?) official

¹³ARM 26 16.

¹⁴For the transport of this commodities, see Michel, 1996: 384–396 and Chambon, 2017: 145–146.

¹⁵See the remarks in Steinkeller, 2021: 191.

in charge of the long-distance trade. And the official in charge of the long-distance trade reported this (to his superiors)“.

These two cases show that, during the Ebla's period (24th century BC.), thefts from the ships' cargo could be carried out, both by individuals and, more worryingly, by the guards themselves. There was an official in charge of the organization of the long-distance trade, but we don't know whether he was responsible for security matters. Rather, it seems that guards were hired to watch the goods at night, which means that there were probably no troops to guard the ships as they docked on the banks.

But goods are not only stolen during transport, often theft occurs before they are even on board. In an Old Babylonian letter,¹⁶ probably from Sippar in Babylonia, the supplier was made responsible for the theft of wood from the storage facilities or the quay in the harbour (the letter does not tell us which) and had to compensate the owner. As Michaela Weszeli pointed out, the theft of a boat (in harbour?) is even mentioned in the diagnostic omen series Sa.gig,¹⁷ where the culprit was then seized by the harbour god and fell ill.¹⁸ Security was therefore most certainly the responsibility of the merchants themselves or the ships owners.

2 Who takes care of safety?

In the Amorite period, there was no river police either. To safeguard a transport, soldiers were mobilised or guards were hired.

For example, King Hammurabi of Babylon wished to bring priestesses from the region of Larsa, the southern Sindjar region, to Babylon by boat, certainly on Euphrates. He then asked the gouvernor of this region, *Sîn-iddinam*, in charge of the journey, to rally soldiers (*ERIN₂-am* (= *šābum*) *bé-eh-ra-am*) and troops used for hauling boats to ensure the safety of the priestesses.

AbB 2 34: obv. 8–24

“Make the priestesses-*ištarītu* travel quickly by boat so that they come to see me in Babylon! And let the women-*kezertum* follow them! Send bread, beer, sheep (and) provisions-*magarrūm*, as well as the preparation for the beer of the women-*kezertum*,

¹⁶AbB 12 194.

¹⁷TDP 28 87.

¹⁸Weszeli, 2020: 97.

(enough) to reach Babylon for the ration of the priestesses-*ištarītu*. Assign rope-wielding soldiers (*šādid ašlim*) and conscripted soldiers to lead the priestesses-*ištarītu* safely to Babylon.”

The king of Mari Zimrī-Līm also sent officials to organise the transport of grain by boat from the region of Imār to Mari, as there was a shortage of grain at the beginning of his reign. One of these official, Yasim-sūmū wrote to the king that 300 gur-measures of grain, which represents 2 1/2 mina of silver, will serve as wages for the sixty or so people, auxiliary troops (60 *šābum tālilū*) to haul the 10 ships.¹⁹

This means that the kings did not set up large expeditions with troops from Babylon or Mari in order to secure the transport of goods or people on rivers. They prefer to send trusted people to organise the shipping and the security with the means at hand, and with the help of the local population in the regions crossed by the rivers.

Individuals could also hire soldiers. In an Old Babylonian letter (AbB 10 15) from Southern Mesopotamia, two agrarian entrepreneurs, probably in the region of Kiš, are involved in transporting sesame by boat on canals. One then says to the other:

“Load five gur-measures of barley on a barge and ten soldiers (AGA.ÚS.MEŠ) with their weapons and ten city guards (ERIN₂.MEŠ *e-li* BĀD) for towing and in the course of tomorrow they shall arrive here in Al-malahim!”

The banks of the Euphrates and the canals were therefore far from secure. The problem of safe overnight stays must have been the same as in the third millennium (see the case of Ebla below) and at a landing overnight someone had probably to sleep on the boat. But there is no mention of this way of safeguarding goods in the Old Babylonian documentation, as far I know. However, some Neo-Assyrian letters provide evidence. For example, Ṭāb-šar-Aššur, responsible for a transport of cult objects, assures king Sargon II that he will stay on the boat to guard the cultic bed until it can be delivered to the temple.²⁰

Do these cases mean that there were organised pirate groups along the rivers or just occasional robberies? The fact that ten armed soldiers can be hired in the Old Babylonian letter seen above seems to support the first hypothesis. In any case, according to a letter from Mari, a trader being in

¹⁹ARM 13 15.

²⁰SAA 1 54–55.

a foreign land is given an escort for his boat by the ruler of this land to protect him, but is told to leave as soon as possible.²¹

In southern Mesopotamia, traders tend to accompany their wares personally or, if one is prevented from going, one would send a trusted person,²² as explained in the following letter between two merchants:

AbB 12 54

“Speak to Sîn-erībam: Thus says Awil-ilim [...] I have sold my textiles and I myself have left for Aššur. Your brother Adayatum is aboard the ship with the millstones. From this ship (‘s cargo) half is mine. Be a gentleman, accompany him on board and notify me of (the arrival of) the millstones.”

But is it really conceivable then that the kings had no means of controlling the rivers?

3 Did the kings control and secure the rivers?

As Hammurabi said in a famous letter to the king Zimrī-Lîm of Mari, Mari was a land of donkeys and carts, not of boats:²³

“The strength of your country (i.e. Mari) are the donkeys and wagons, but the strength of this (country, i.e. Babylonia) are the boats.”

This argument was given in connection with the struggle about the city of Hīt, between Mari kingdom and Babylon kingdom, which was renowned for its bitumen, which Hammurabi needed for coating boats. Although this subjective political argument must be qualified, we must distinguish between two regions, the Mesopotamian north and south, which have different ideological and economic relationships to rivers and canals.

Boats were not so very much needed in Mari, donkeys being preferred for most transports. But the availability of boats is often a matter of distress, especially during harvest time. The palace of Mari and its (agricultural) administrators suffered from an inadequate number of boats for the transport of barley, because the palace does not have a fleet. The palace only had two large cargo ships at its disposal and had to borrow from individuals or

²¹Maul, 1994: 29–31 (Text 8).

²²See for example AbB 12 54 and 58.

²³ARM 26/2 468: Rs. 21’f.

buy other ships if necessary, especially from Imâr and Karkemiš.²⁴ More generally, there is every indication that navigation on the Euphrates was not at all organised by the palace, with, for example, traffic managers, boatmen, and transport equipment directly at the disposal of the palace at various locations along the river banks.

The main reason is that the Euphrates does not only flow through the kingdom of Mari, but also through other regions upstream, such as Karkemiš, Imâr, or Tuttul, which have trade relations with the palace of Mari but do not depend on it.²⁵ In this sense, the Euphrates, unlike agricultural land, belongs to no one.

The only control that the king of Mari can exercise over the river was informational and economic. The king actually wished to have a regular report on who was going down the Euphrates or crossing it upstream from Mari, especially if they were large groups of people, such as the Bedouin tribes. The small military garrisons, which were located in the port/fortress pairs on the Euphrates controlled by the king (see above), had to monitor the comings and goings of people and inform the king. For example, Yaqqim-Addu, the governor of Sagarâtum writes to the king of Mari.²⁶

“On the day when I had this tablet brought to my Lord, Dâriya and the cedars arrived at Tilla-zibim [note: upstream from Deir-ez-Zor]. The soldiers having warned me, I wrote to my Lord.”

The king of Mari exercised economic control over river traffic through customs at Terqa upstream from Mari. The official Numušda-nahrârî, who reported to the chief merchant of the Kingdom, systematically registered the names of the boatmen and the nature of their cargoes and usually took 1/10 of the goods from the boats going downstream.²⁷ Therefore, the palace of Mari did not direct and secure the river traffic, but profited from it through the merchants.

The situation was completely different for Babylonia, as the Euphrates and many canals ran through the Babylonian kingdom. During the reign of Rîm-Sîn in Larsa, a special document was to be shown to the mayors of the localities along a river by the person in charge of the convoy of boats with grain that must reach Larsa.²⁸

²⁴Chambon, 2017: 142.

²⁵Durand, 2018.

²⁶ARM 14 32 (= LAPO 16 192).

²⁷A small dossier of about forty texts concerning Terqa “customs” gives us detailed information on the type of goods “taxed” (ARM 13 58–99; see the new edition and commentaries in Durand, 2000: 26–39).

²⁸AbB 10 67.

“To the various mayors of the banks: the grain of the palace must go to Larsa. Send before it an escort city by city, so that it may reach Larsa safely.”

This shows an insecure situation in the Larsa canal system, perhaps at the end of Rîm-Sîn’s reign. The responsibility for the safety and smooth running of the transport by boat was then entrusted to each locality.

During Hammurabi’s reign, the correspondence between the king and his administrators shows a new attitude of the king towards the problems of insecurity on the river and the canals. Hammurabi clearly sought to control river transport and secure it. Unlike the kingdom of Mari, in the kingdom of Babylon there was a river fleet controlled by the king. A letter from Hammurabi to Sîn-iddinam the governor of the region of Larsa, certainly written just after the Babylonian conquest of Larsa, when Hammurabi wanted to know the current state of the wealth of his new province, mentions cargo captains in the kingdom:²⁹

“Say to Sîn-iddinam, thus says Hammurabi: Write to the captains of the cargo fleets of your province, so that they may plan to arrive in Babylon with their fleets by the 30th day of the month XII, and take command of their entire fleet”.

Hammurabi wanted to make so an inventory of all the ships available in the kingdom that could be mobilised by the palace, for economic exchanges but also probably for military campaigns.

Other letters sent to Sîn-iddinam, show that the king himself supervised the transport of grain or livestock. It was necessary that all the foodstuffs and animals arrived well in Babylon, because this corresponded to the different taxes levied in the country.³⁰

Several officials were appointed for the transport: there was the *rakbum*, responsible for the loading of the foodstuffs, the “river supervisor” (UGULU I₇.DA, maybe *rabi nārim*) who collected the *biltum* tax on the grain, and the *mu’errum* (Á.GÁL) who was in charge of the transport of grain to Babylon. The whole system of tax collection and transport of goods on rivers and canals had to be secured in this way and any loss or theft was the responsibility of the officials involved.

²⁹AbB 2 40.

³⁰For these taxes, see the contributions in Mynářová / Alivernini, 2020.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the human or natural dangers and risks on the rivers and canals were significant. But rivers were more difficult to control and secure than canals, as they flowed through different territories and comply with particular geomorphological and climatic conditions.

King Zimrī-Lîm of Mari preferred to simply keep an eye on the Euphrates and make economic profits from it. The kings of southern Mesopotamia instead sought to deal with the problems of insecurity. They either directly supervised transport operations by appointing different officials for the loading and security of goods, or they entrusted the responsibility for these operations to the localities of the kingdom.

Bibliography

- Chambon, G., 2017: “La navigation fluviale sur l’Euphrate au second millénaire av. J.-C.: usages, enjeux et communautés de pratiques”. In P. De Souza / P. Arnaud / C. Buchet (eds.): *The Sea in History: The Ancient World / La mer dans l’histoire: l’Antiquité*. Pp. 138–150.
- 2021: “De l’amont vers l’aval: Dynamiques de circulation et de contrôle sur l’Euphrate sous le règne du roi de Mari Zimrī-Lîm (XVIII^e siècle av. J.-C.)”. In A. Tenu / M. Yoyotte (eds.): *Le Roi et le Fleuve. Exemples d’usages plurielles de l’espace*. Paris. Pp. 57–71.
- Durand, J.-M., 2000: *Documents épistolaires du Palais de Mari*, Tome III, LAPO 18. Paris.
- 2018: “Le commerce à longue distance de Mari d’après les textes du règne de Zimrī-Lîm”. *Pasiphae* 12, 69–87.
- Gaborit, J., 2013: *La vallée engloutie: géographie historique du Moyen-Euphrate*. Bibliothèque Archéologique et Historique t. 199. Beyrouth.
- Maul, S., 1994: “Die Korrespondenz des Iasī-Sūmû. Ein Nachtrag zu ARMT XIII, 25–57”. In J.-M. Durand / D. Charpin (eds.): *Florilegium marianum II, Mémorial M. Birot*, Mémoires de NABU n°3. Paris. Pp. 23–54.
- Michel, C., 1996: “Le commerce dans les textes de Mari”. In J.-M. Durand (ed.): *Amurru 1, Mari, Ebla et les Hourrites. Dix ans de travaux*. Paris. Pp. 385–426.
- Mynářová, J. / Alivernini, S. (eds.), 2020: *Economic Complexity in the Ancient Near East: Management of Resources and Taxation (Third-Second Millennium BC)*. Prague.
- Richardson, M.E.J., 2000: *Hammurabi’s Laws: Text, translation and glossary*. New York: Sheffield Academic Press.
- Steinkeller, P., 2021: “International trade in Greater Mesopotamia during late Pre-Sargonic times. The case of Ebla as illustrated by her participation in the Euphratean timber trade”. In L. Rahmstorf / G. Barjamovic / N. Ialongo (eds.): *Merchants, Measures and Money: Understanding Technologies of Early Trade in a Comparative Perspective*, Weight & Value: Volume 2. Kiel / Hamburg. Pp. 173–197.
- Tenu, A., 2021: “Le roi d’Assyrie et l’Euphrate d’Adad-nirari I^{er} (1295–1264 av. J.-C.) à Salmanazar III (858–824 av. J.-C.)”. In A. Tenu / M. Yoyotte (eds.): *Le roi et le fleuve: exemples d’usages pluriels de l’espace*. Paris.

Weszeli, M., 2020: "Water Transport in 2nd Millennium BC Babylonia and Mari. Its Organization and Economic Importance". In D.A. Warburton (ed.): *Political and Economic Interaction on the Edge of Early Empires*. eTopoi Journal of Ancient Studies Special Volume 7. Pp. 87–115.

Harvesters all: Closing devices on reverses of archaic Ur sealings (2900–2700 BC)

Petr Charvát

Abstract

I intend to study the closing devices impressed into reverses of the archaic sealings excavated by the Leonard Woolley expedition (1922–1934) at the Sumerian city of Ur. I will focus on the question how these devices guaranteed safety of the contents of the sealed entities and objects. I will then compare my findings with data from similar functional contexts.

In contrast to characterizations of ancient Mesopotamians as uncivilized barbarians and bloodthirsty war-mongers, a more nuanced interpretation of the data suggests that a logic did indeed govern the application of violence and that a range of attitudes toward it, including the concern for personal safety, existed.¹

The ancient Near Eastern idea of cosmos was one of a *creatio continua*, an order that must be constantly re-established. Disruptive elements were perceived as parts of the cosmos itself, and kings bore the charge of permanent re-integrating of such phenomena in the existing order. Creation constituted a part of the present time, and was not restricted to the mythical narratives taking up the origins and emergence of the present world. Thus, the necessity of waging war, and even killing, followed out of the suzerains' task of establishing and maintenance of the political order, and with it, peace and prosperity.²

¹SooHoo, 2019: 7.

²Pongratz-Leisten, 2007: 13–14.

In the Sumerian literature, violence (a₂-zig₃-ga) is always illegitimate since it involves the unjust use of power or force.³ Actions undertaken to establish or restore justice and order were, however, not considered violence by the ancient Mesopotamians. In fact, such behavior had a positive value since it is socially and culturally acceptable.

What counts as violence often depends on cultural assumptions about personhood and agency.⁴ Human behaviour conforms to cultural norms and reflects the values of a society. By presenting an ordered, coherent narrative, myths normalize and render plausible, generating legitimacy for the violence it condones and advocates. Myth is true because it is discourse involving a story that interprets reality convincingly.⁵

In ancient Mesopotamia, all individuals were embedded in social networks and identity was determined by these relationships, which included both other humans and the divine. Cosmic order, personal well-being, and the flourishing of society were interconnected.⁶ Personhood was conceptualized in terms of the social functions and roles an individual inhabited in relation to others.⁷

Every animal and human being that left the safety of the city or the military camp required divine protection because anyone could become prey to the forces of chaos and disorder. Danger, however, was not limited to that which was beyond the confines of the civilized world of the city and, by extension, of the military camp. There was suspicion towards foreigners, often distinguished by their different language, who were employed by the administrators of a city or district.⁸

What harmed the king would have affected his people and the space he inhabits, and vice versa. The army, for instance, was considered an extension of the royal person, and the domain of the king, symbolized by the city, had to be protected from the evil or impurity that threatens from all sides.⁹

As early as the turn of the 4th and 3rd millennium BC, war symbolism included ostentatious display of weaponry within monumental (public?) buildings. This is indicated by the array of arms paraded in the “Weapons Building” at Arslantepe VIA.¹⁰ Herein perhaps belong also the preparation

³SooHoo, 2019: 17.

⁴SooHoo, 2019: 20.

⁵SooHoo, 2019: 68.

⁶SooHoo, 2019: 158.

⁷SooHoo, 2019: 374.

⁸SooHoo, 2019: 293.

⁹SooHoo, 2019: 371.

¹⁰Selover, 2015: 235–238; *ibid.*: 386–387.

of human skulls as trophies, suspected by the team of Augusta McMahon at the Middle Uruk site of Tell Brak-Majnuna.¹¹

Now, to give voice to the inhabitants of ancient Mesopotamia, let us hear the description of what represented the complete absence of safety and security:

*Deathly silence reigns in my sanctum,
Deathly silence reigns in my ceremonial room (aširtum)
Over my house, my estate and my fields deathly silence is spread out
My god has turned his face to some other place
My clan has been dispersed, my fold is broken
...
Speak and may, at your command, the angry god be pacified
The goddess, who turned away in anger, come back.*¹²

Of course, the legitimate components of the possession of Mesopotamian families included, with house, lock, stock and barrel, also their storage areas. These also enjoyed ritual protection including incantations against evil demons:

*The evil eye has secretly entered and flies around
...
She passed by the door of the babies, and created rash among the babies
She passed by the door of the women in childbed and strangled their babies
She entered the storage room and broke the seal
She dispersed the secluded fire-place and turned the locked house into ruins.
She destroyed the išertum and the god of the house has gone.
Hit on the cheek, make her turn backward!
Fill her eyes with salt, full her mouth with ashes!
May the god of the house return!*¹³

¹¹McMahon et al., 2011: 213–214, 216.

¹²Tricoli, 2014: 825 Fig. 15.

¹³Tricoli, 2014: 825 Fig. 15.

It comes to notice that in enemy attacks and pillages, closing devices as bolts and locks of prominent buildings fell prey to the invaders' brutality as its first victims. In the "Lamentation over the Destruction of Sumer and Ur", enemy warriors first ripped up bolts of the palace, and then those of the temple.¹⁴

Finally, let us notice that for the inhabitants of ancient Mesopotamia, the signs of utter destitution and total loss of any means of livelihood meant lack of food, of clothing and – perhaps not too surprisingly, given the character of the local climate – of ointment.¹⁵

* * * * *

But let us go a step farther. It seems logical to suppose that safety and security of ancient Mesopotamian populations depended first and foremost on their basic means of subsistence. Thus, this paper will focus on the storage treatment of the most precious possession of people of the Land of the two rivers, comestibles and specifically grain, probably a staple food of Sumerians, Babylonians, Assyrians and their neighbours. I shall include, as a case study, review of the closing devices on reverses of clay sealings excavated from the SIS 5–4 strata of archaic Ur.¹⁶

A feature to be noted is represented by the fact that the SIS strata of the ED-I period represent administrative discards located in a particular dumping area, possibly commonly used by several agencies. In contrast to this, later, presumably ED-IIIa or ED-IIIb managers of the Ur central precinct left their disused documentation on the spot where it had possibly fulfilled its informative function.¹⁷

The results of investigation of the sealing reverses excavated from the archaic SIS 5–4 strata of the city of Ur (c. 2900–2750 BC) are summarily presented in Table 1.

¹⁴Dahl, 2009: 64, ll. 399ff., ll. 428ff.

¹⁵Zaccagnini, 2020; on hunger in Mesopotamia see Richardson, 2016.

¹⁶For more extensive coverage see Charvát, 2010; Charvát, 2017.

¹⁷Benati, 2013, esp. p. 204 on seal Cat. 12.

Type of carrier	Number of items	%
Lock <i>s. l.</i>	55	18.15
Lock on roughly flattened surface	53	17.49
Lock with admixture of organic matter in clay	26	8.58
Lock on smooth surface	25	8.25
Lock on wall of organic matter	5	1.65
Lock on coarse surface	4	1.32
Locks total	168	55.44
Door	8	2.64
Bar	2	0.66
Wall of organic matter	1	0.33
Immobile structures total	11	3.63
Storage spaces total	179	59.07
Pot/jar	33	10.89
Bale	10	3.30
Container <i>s. l.</i>	10	3.30
Bag	8	2.64
Tablet/Test strip	8	2.64
Pot lid	7	2.31
Basket	4	1.32
Mobile objects total	80	26.40
Box	1	0.33
Envelope	1	0.33
Papyrus roll (Neo-Assyrian?) [(30-12-761 = U14588 (8830))]	1	0.33
Stamp seal	1	0.33
Other total	4	1.32
Unidentified	41	13.53
SIS 5–4 sealings (Penn Museum) total	304	100

Table 1. Types of carriers visible in sealings from the archaeological layers SIS 5–4 of archaic Ur (Early Dynastic I, 2900–2700 BC) from the collections of the Penn University Museum, Philadelphia (PA, USA).

In using the term “lock”, I take the liberty of putting forward this equivalent of Roger Matthews’s “door peg”.¹⁸

In a majority of cases, our material consists of locks (55.44 %), the two most numerous categories being represented by locks *sensu lato*, where the lock

¹⁸Martin / Matthews, 1993: 36–38.

carrier cannot be identified precisely (18.15 %) and locks on uneven surfaces (17.49 %). Of course, this lends itself to a variety of interpretations, the most likely ones moving in the area of firm (brick?) walls of various character. Locks on smooth surfaces, likely to represent true walls, amount to 8.25 %, being closely followed by locks with organic admixture in the clay mass (8.58 %). Locks on walls of organic materials (reeds, wickerwork, etc.), locks on coarse surfaces, door sealings and door-bar sealings constitute a distinct minority (6.6 %).

All in all, sealings of immobile storage spaces of archaic Ur display a representation of 59.07 %.

The picture is rounded up by closing devices of mobile containers (26.40 % total) and of other devices (1.32 % total). The Abu Salabikh counts are similar.¹⁹

The ensuing evidence thus sets before our eyes economic practice leaning first and foremost on masonry, or at any rate, solid storage structures. Their builders provided some with robust closing facilities including locks with bars; alternatively, some were likely to have been situated not far from areas of common agricultural pursuits (organic admixtures, of course, only if it does not represent intentional tempering of e. g. clay bricks). The numbers of structures of lighter materials take a less prominent position, but such constructions were by no means totally absent from the Ur storage areas.

The lock on smooth surfaces and those on surfaces of organic materials may, according to observations by Roger Matthews, stem from palm fronds or even large reeds.²⁰

As to surfaces from which the pegs protruded, Roger Matthews characterizes them as *“level, yet fairly coarse, surfaces often with straw impressions, such as would be provided by a mud-brick wall, with or without mud plaster.”*²¹ This seems pertinent to the Ur situation as well.

Traces of the *“adhesion to a cylindrical object”*, observed in the Abu Salabikh sealings²² raise the interesting question of how far such devices closed rectangular storage facilities, or rather rounded grain silos such as known from ethnographic parallels and from written documents (see *infra*).

With respect to the longevity of seal use in practical life, it might be interesting to observe that in Fourth-dynasty Egypt, officials received their

¹⁹Martin / Matthews, 1993: 40.

²⁰Martin / Matthews, 1993: 36–37.

²¹Martin / Matthews, 1993: 37; for a later archaeological correlate see Malamet, 1986.

²²Martin / Matthews, 1993: 37–38.

seals early in their careers and kept them in use for relatively long periods of time. In moments of change on the throne, former-king seals must not necessarily have been replaced by new matrices.²³ Let us also notice that counter-signing of sealings with butt ends of cylinder seals, well-known from archaic Ur, has been noticed in Fourth-dynasty Egypt, where this usage presumably carries a chronological value.²⁴

New examination of the material of the archaic Ur sealing by Roger Matthews and Amy Richardson have pointed out the identity of clays that sealed storage rooms and pot closures.²⁵ This indicates that goods stored in the rooms left them in jars sealed by the same seals as those which closed the storage (and did not come in in pots sealed elsewhere – they did not enter, but they left the storerooms with our sealings). After their consumption, both storeroom sealings and pot sealings came to be checked by the central commodity administration. Joachim Bretschneider and Greta Jans suggest a similar procedure at Tell Beydar.²⁶ For Ur III times, a procedure of this kind has been noted by Christine Tsouparopoulou.²⁷

Later constructions within the central precinct of Ur²⁸ possibly consisted of structures tentatively identified as storage areas.²⁹ However, as we have seen, robust architectures represented only a part of the storage facilities at hand for the managers of archaic Ur.

It must nonetheless have come out of this investigation that the truly safe storage areas, presumably closed with bar, lock and key, or by means of other facilities of reliable protection, constituted a distinct minority at the Sumerian city of Ur. For a resolute invader who marched in to plunder and take booty, the Ur storeroom doors hardly offered serious obstacles. This, in turn, speaks eloquently about the high level of safety enjoyed by the reserves catered for by the managers of archaic Ur.

* * * * *

How much safety did the Ur doorways afford for the keeping of provisions?³⁰ Ancient Mesopotamian doors usually consisted of wooden frames with panels of reed covered in bitumen. This type of door goes under the

²³Nolan, 2010: 316–320.

²⁴Nolan, 2010: 145.

²⁵Matthews / Richardson, 2019: 12–13.

²⁶Bretschneider / Jans, 2012: 17–18.

²⁷Tsouparopoulou, 2017: 616–626.

²⁸Benati, 2013.

²⁹Benati, 2013: 209 on Area 4.

³⁰In general, see Salonen, 1961, with Hirsch, 1962 and Saggs, 1962 for reviews.

name of ^{giš}ig suḫ₄. Doors could also have been built of palm fronds (ze₂-na), or small boards (mi-ri₂-za). The latter presumably represented doors made entirely of wood, and thus relatively expensive.

The 𒀭I-(še₃) la₂ texts referred to doors with leather panels, produced by attaching the hides to the components of a wooden frame. Doors of this type, lighter than doors with wooden panels, might have carried higher prestige, or pleased the spectators' eyes more than ordinary reed-panelled doors. The Ur-III Umma texts show that the technique involved particularly large and important doors. In several cases we learn that hides of various colours were used, apparently to enhance the aesthetic quality of the result. The leather hinges of such doors needed occasional lubrication with oil.³¹

However, the lexeme 𒀭I-(še₃) la₂ could also mean bronze door panels, perhaps of more or less standardized size and weight.³²

The expression 𒀭I-(še₃) la₂ occurs in connection with several other (wooden) objects: the bench (^{giš}ḫu-um) of a boat (2 texts), the wheel(?) of a chariot; and a bariga vessel. A bench may well have consisted of a strong frame with a leather seat attached to this frame, very similar to the construction of doors discussed above. Also, references to leather lids or leather wrappings around clay vessels turn up relatively often.³³

In a late third-millennium incantation, the door bar is likened to Lama, a protective deity.³⁴

The use of leather for the construction of doors in Ur-III Umma has attracted the attention of Marcel Sigrist.³⁵ The idea that hanging curtains of leather could have supplanted the doors (probably inspired by the Egyptian model of mats rolled around door lintels) seems interesting, but I know of no evidence to substantiate such an assumption. Even more enigmatic seems the proposal that doors consisted of two (pliable?) surfaces with wool filling in between.³⁶

On the other hand, we may expect the use of leather for transport containers of various kind, as well as for pot closures, and such procedures will undoubtedly find reflection in archaeological materials.³⁷

³¹Figulla, 1953a: 91; Figulla, 1953b: 185.

³²See Veldhuis, 2004: § 4, p. 2.

³³Veldhuis, 2004: 3.

³⁴Veldhuis, 2003: 1–2.

³⁵Sigrist, 1981: 184–185.

³⁶Sigrist, 1981: 185.

³⁷Sigrist, 1981: 185–187; *ibid.*: 189–190; on leather use see more recently England, 2003 with ref.

Door-securing devices of later periods as described by the ninth tablet of the *šumma ālu* series have merited an examination by Erle Leichty.³⁸ What this text describes seems to have referred to exactly our manner of “lock”, the only difference being in the door-doorjamb link, constituted by then no more by a cord, but by a latch of hard material, fastened to the door and engaging with a trapping device on the doorjamb or wall. Such a closure then bore a seal of the officer in charge on clay. The omens describe situations observed after taking-off of this seal. The latch might have been stuck, or occurred in various irregular positions, not engaged with the wall device but only resting on it, it might have fallen out, or even a double sealing might have happened.³⁹ The length of interval between the respective openings of the door may be assessed by an omen mentioning a swallow building its nest *ina namzaqi* (= on, or in the latch).⁴⁰

Again, however, the above sketched evidence hardly offers a perspective of robust and firm closure of the respective entrances. Here also, unscrupulous aggression must easily have broken through these devices, and take hold of whatever stood and rested behind them. Obviously, the Mesopotamians resorted more frequently to the “lowered bolts and rings set in place” of the Prayer to the Gods of the Night, guaranteeing security in time of rest, during the Old Babylonian period.⁴¹ This is also the period when the title of “lockmaster”, *rab sikkāte*, makes its appearance in the texts.⁴²

* * * * *

How can we set the archaic-Ur storage practices into the stream of historical development? In the prehistoric age, grain-storage spaces were included within the fortified areas (Hacilar II), but could also have been located outside the area enclosed by fortifications.⁴³ The Early Bronze Age site of Demirci Höyük displays a regular circular layout of concentric and radiating house plots, with house walls leaning on one another, and the central open space, in which storage bins for every house were situated.⁴⁴ A similar disposition has been recorded in Halaf-period site of Güvercinkayası.⁴⁵

Insofar as analyses of sealing clay have been performed, it transpired that for instance at the Halaf-culture site of Tell Sabi Abyad, they have borne out

³⁸Leichty, 1987.

³⁹Leichty, 1987: 195–196.

⁴⁰Leichty, 1987: 192.

⁴¹Cooley, 2011.

⁴²Radner, 2010: 277.

⁴³Köşk Höyük in Anatolia, Selover, 2015: 305–306, 452.

⁴⁴Selover, 2015: 437.

⁴⁵Selover, 2015: 444.

the local origin of clay used for this purpose. This shows the circumscription of sealing practices, and thus their possible non-economic character.⁴⁶

The site of Arslantepe (VII and VI) represents the first instance of centrally administered storage spaces tied to socially prominent architecture,⁴⁷ with Late Uruk-period Hassek Höyük following.⁴⁸ The Arslantepe evidence shows that sealed goods first went to the storerooms, where they were periodically opened. Sealings from the containers were gathered in collections, presumably submitted to the central controlling agency, and then discarded.⁴⁹

The archaic Ur sealings presumably underwent the same curriculum, much as early Dilmun seals.⁵⁰ Another example of such practice comes from the third-millennium Syrian site of Tell Bdēri, where a collection of door sealings of the same seal came to light in a brick cist.⁵¹ Finally, the Nippur excavations of the University of Chicago team provided us with an abundant sample of texts and sealings pertinent to the Ur-III administration of the local Inanna temple, deposited in a brick-revetted and bitumen-lined pit within the temple precinct.⁵² It seems that in these cases the disused sealings went to particular discard spaces, perhaps to be recycled.

The significance of food provisions in relation to socially prominent institutions shines through the storage facilities in the “shrines” of the Anatolian site of Beycesultan.⁵³

The degree of complexity reached already in the 4th millennium finds a fitting illustration at the Syrian site of Hamoukar. The local sealings give evidence on the treatment of sealed commodities: impression-bearing jars went to the ground floor while seal-marked baskets found their way to the upper floor. Moreover, two seal-bearers equipped with stamp seals (A and B) closed the ground-floor doors, while in one instance the closure bear a (corroborative ?) impression of a cylinder seal. Does this indicate a presence of higher authority at the site? On the other hand, Seal C, repeated 31 times, marked both jars and baskets, and might have belonged to a provider agency of goods coming to the Tripartite building from outside.⁵⁴

⁴⁶Schneider / Duistermaat, 1998: 96–97.

⁴⁷Summary in Selover, 2015: 465–474.

⁴⁸Selover, 2015: 490.

⁴⁹Frangipane, 2016: 19–28.

⁵⁰Olijdam, 2015: 208–210.

⁵¹Pfälzner, 2008: 173.

⁵²Zettler, 1991.

⁵³Selover, 2015: 426.

⁵⁴Reichel, 2002: 46–56.

The evidence gathered at the Uruk-period site of Tepe Sharafabad in Iran points, according to the interpretation of the excavator and his collaborators, to the conclusion that storage spaces were opened in mid- to late winter, perhaps to take out grain both as food and for sowing.⁵⁵

Deliveries of grain to Jemdet Nasr-age public institutions took place three times a year, the overall quantity of it amounting to 78–79 BARIGA annually.⁵⁶

Grain-storage facilities in later ancient Mesopotamia and the neighbouring regions have recently received a substantial elucidation by Tate Paulette,⁵⁷ with a welcome supplement by Eloisa Casadei.⁵⁸ A summation of data concerning the use of seals in the ancient Near East has seen the day lately.⁵⁹

Written sources of the later third millennium shed light on the historical situation of archaic Ur practice. The Kiš-Ingharra evidence includes a find of a group of sealings on clay which turned up just below the “flood layer” in the sounding YW, and belongs thus to ED IIIa, likely to be dated to the time of the Fara texts.⁶⁰ These sealings, which had once probably closed doors,⁶¹ refer to an “overseer of ga₂-nun” and “scribe of ga₂-nun”.⁶² This will make the ga₂-nun a building (complex?) closed by a gate, door or doors. Krebernik and Lisman translate ga₂-nun as “barn”.⁶³

The Zame hymns from Tell Abu Salabikh, of approximately the same date, point to the multiplicity of storage facilities within one single centre: “Zabalam, princely quay with the silos”.⁶⁴ Another “house of heaven and earth” received from a king “linen cloaks” there.⁶⁵

Rulers of Pre-Sargonic Lagaš built temples, furnished them with magazine buildings (?) and “heaped grain therein”.⁶⁶ The site URUXKÁR^(ki) hosted a “noble storeroom (ganun-mah)”, and this structure received “night offerings”.⁶⁷ Another storage edifice (gur₇), a source of barley rations, belonged to the temple of a deity ^dig-alima, built by UruKagina.⁶⁸ The same role fell

⁵⁵Wright / Miller / Redding, 1981: 278, 281.

⁵⁶Monaco, 2004: § 16.

⁵⁷Paulette, 2015.

⁵⁸Casadei, 2019.

⁵⁹Tsouparopoulou / Casties, 2014: 46–52.

⁶⁰Zaina, 2020: 103–104.

⁶¹Rohn, 2011: No. 4, p. 150.

⁶²Westenholz, 2020: nos. 26–31, pp. 161–163.

⁶³Krebernik / Lisman, 2020: l. 23/84, p. 60, comments p. 114.

⁶⁴Guru₇: Krebernik / Lisman, 2020: l. 49 p. 55, comments p. 101.

⁶⁵Krebernik / Lisman, 2020: l. 58 p. 73, comments p. 145.

⁶⁶Eannatum: Selz, 1995: 222.

⁶⁷Selz, 1995: 136, 197.

⁶⁸Selz, 1995: 146 No. 6.

to (a magazine belonging to?) the shrine of a deity *Ĥé-gír*.⁶⁹ Ms. Barnam-tarra, consort of the ruler Lugalanda, also disposed of her own ganun.⁷⁰ Other temples commanded *gur*₇ structures of great capacity,⁷¹ so that a parallel with the giant silos of Fara may not be out of place, of course, only insofar as *gur*₇ denotes, beyond a hollow measure, a storage structure with capacity measured in such way.

The personnel of the ganun-maḥ obviously included a doorkeeper, as indicated by reference to a Mr. Ur-šubur, an *ì-du*₈-ganun-maḥ and a holder of a land allotment.⁷²

The question of permanence of such structures stands open: a month name *itu-gur*₇-*im-du*₈-*a*⁷³ has been translated by Josef Bauer as “Monat, in dem die Getreidemagazine aus Lehm gestampft werden”.⁷⁴

In Lagaš of the reign of Gudea (2141–2124), documents reveal both specialized-commodity storage and “general-purpose” magazines, presumably of large dimensions. The specialized facilities housed, for instance, arms and armaments,⁷⁵ or wool,⁷⁶ and had their own personnel.⁷⁷ The “general-purpose” facilities contained comestibles, wood and metal.⁷⁸

Insofar as we know today, at least some food-storage facilities represented part of well-protected, probably fortified, municipal centres.⁷⁹ An example of how such a municipal unit may have looked like is furnished by the layout of third-millennium Tell Beydar in Syria, where large storage spaces occupied the city’s central quarters, while only modest facilities of this kind equipped the private houses.⁸⁰ This feature re-appeared – at least in interpretations of archaeological contexts – in earlier third-millennium agricultural settlements of Syria, as shown by the evidence gathered by Peter Pfälzner.⁸¹

⁶⁹Selz, 1995: 141.

⁷⁰Selz, 1995: 272.

⁷¹Selz, 1995: 220 fn. 1049, at least 518,000 litres of grain.

⁷²Selz, 1995: 136 No. 5; an actual doorkeeper sealing from Ur: Charvát, 2016.

⁷³DP 296 iii 1.

⁷⁴Selz, 1995: 141 fn. 577.

⁷⁵É-kišib-ba: Maiocchi / Visicato, 2020: No. 167 p. 140.

⁷⁶Ibid.: No. 332 p. 218; No. 455 p. 276; *gá-udu-ur*₄: No. 450, p. 274.

⁷⁷Lú-dab₅-ba *gá-nun-šita-ka*: *ibid.*: No. 593 p. 357.

⁷⁸*Gá-nun*: Maiocchi / Visicato, 2020: No. 573, pp. 345–347.

⁷⁹On city fortifications in early Mesopotamia see Zingarello, 2015.

⁸⁰Sallaberger/ Pruß, 2015: 118–119.

⁸¹Pfälzner, 2002; Pfälzner, 2008, esp. p. 176.

However, excavations of third-millennium sites in northern Mesopotamia yielded a rather limited amount of safe evidence with respect to public and private storage facilities.⁸²

A good example of such structures is the “Royal Storehouse of Urkesh” of the 23rd to 22nd century BC, excavated at Tell Mozan.⁸³ Its plan shows a twin layout of neighbouring courtyard houses along the N-S axis, accessed each by a large rectangular area in the north.⁸⁴ A series of sealings appeared in the lowermost occupation layer resting directly on the floor of the Sector-B “vault” of the building.⁸⁵ Some 600 impressions come from about 60 seals.⁸⁶ Most of these sealings once closed mobile containers, as jars, boxes and baskets; only three sealings secured doors. In one case, a sealing was placed against an animal horn, identified by Sándor Bökönyi as belonging to a gazelle.⁸⁷ Four to six seals bear the king’s name and titles of the local king, and eight those of the queen.⁸⁸ This makes the storehouse a central collection point for mobile goods, delivered by the system receptors identified by cylinder-seal impressions. The binarity of the whole setup, and the strict symmetry of both architectural complexes, may well substantiate the authors’ suggestion of economic appurtenances for the king’s and queen’s office respectively.⁸⁹

In the early second millennium, the ganun of the Ningal temple of Ur left us ample textual documentation of procedures taking place within its walls.⁹⁰ These cover a space of 100 years from the 19th year of Gungunum to the 19th year of Rim-Sin; hardly any documents date after Sumu-ilu. The materials stored there included dairy products such as butter, cheese (and milk), also dates and oil, and then, in smaller, irregular and additional quantities, white beans (gú babbar), lentils (ú-ezinu), coriander (še-lú), cassia (gazi), pine nuts (li), also honey (lâl), and an unknown kind of grain. Barley is always drawn from the granary of the Nannar-temple (gur₇^dNannar) here, and the gur₇ thus appears as a structure subsidiary to ganun, and designed to hoard grain.⁹¹

⁸²Ur, 2004: 279–282; see also Richardson, 2016: 754.

⁸³Buccellati / Kelly-Buccellati, 1995/1996.

⁸⁴Plan: Buccellati / Kelly-Buccellati, 1995/1996: 5 Fig. 3.

⁸⁵Buccellati / Kelly-Buccellati, 1995/1996: 5.

⁸⁶Buccellati / Kelly-Buccellati, 1995/1996: 6.

⁸⁷Buccellati / Kelly-Buccellati, 1995/1996: 7, 28.

⁸⁸Buccellati / Kelly-Buccellati, 1995/1996: 28.

⁸⁹Buccellati / Kelly-Buccellati, 1995/1996: 29.

⁹⁰Figulla, 1953a; Figulla, 1953b.

⁹¹Barley; Figulla, 1953a: 88.

In fact, the above investigation shows that permanent architectural structures, identified in the archaeological record as storage spaces, fell short of being the only exclusive depositories of foodstuffs. They definitely received supplements in the form of magazines of perishable materials, thus rendering arguments based on brick-storage facilities only incomplete.

Last but not least, let us notice that sealing of storage-facility doors could well have taken place without the use of cylinder seals. This was apparently the case of Ninevite-V phase of the site of Hamoukar, where the local authorities repeatedly sealed and re-sealed a brewery area (?) with simple clay blobs, bearing hand-incised signs including a pentagram.⁹² The deliveries to rooms thus employed did nevertheless arrive in jars sealed by cylinder seals.⁹³ This arrangement reminds us of the situation at archaic Ur with its handwritten glosses on storage-closing devices,⁹⁴ as well as on the ED-I sealings from Nippur.⁹⁵ In this perspective, cylinder seals would have constituted signatures of the system's receptors delivering their products to the relevant centre which could easily do without seals, as it represented one and only central member of the whole setup, the role, and identity of which, remained without any doubt.

We thus receive valuable information as to the subordinate position of cylinder seals in the redistribution process: they are likely to play the role of markers of individual receptors of the redistribution network, while no seals were needed at its centre where simple hand-written glosses fully sufficed.

In conclusion, it remains only to re-iterate the statement that Roger Matthews submitted nearly three decades ago:

“Mesopotamian door sealing was never a matter of physical security — a burglar would have had no difficulty in breaking the sealing, cutting or unravelling the string and entering the room — but, rather, took its place within a system of guarantee and accountability objectified in the form of clay sealings which, by means of their obverse seal impressions, identified specific guaranteeing individuals or institutions. A door peg sealing, as any other sealing, was both a public asseveration of the security of the sealed room, or container, and at the same time, via its seal impression, an assertion of the identity of the person or organisation responsible for that security.”⁹⁶

⁹²Grossman, 2014: 53–54.

⁹³Grossman, 2013: 319–340.

⁹⁴Charvát, 2017: 37–52.

⁹⁵Zettler, 2007: 360–361.

⁹⁶Martin / Matthews, 1993: 36.

Bibliography

- Benati, G., 2013: “The ‘Archaic I’ phase of the ziqqurat terrace at Ur: A contextual re-assessment”. *Mesopotamia (Rivista di Archeologia, Epigrafia e Storia orientale antica)* XLVIII, 197–220.
- Bretschneider, J. / Jans, G., 2012: “Checkpoint Room 32912: Inspection of Incoming Goods, Outgoing Wares or Temporary Sealing Disposals in the Early Jezirah Upper City Complex of Tell Beydar?”. In M. al-Maqdissi / Ph. Quenet (edd.): «*L’heure immobile*». *Entre ciel et terre. Mélanges en l’Honneur d’Antoine Souleiman* (Subartu XXXI). Turnhout: Brepols. Pp. 9–20.
- Buccellati, G. / Kelly-Buccellati, M., 1995/1996: “The Royal Storehouse of Urkesh: The Glyptic Evidence from the Southwestern Wing”. *Archiv für Orientforschung* 42/43, 1–32. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/41668230>. [accessed June 20, 2021].
- Casadei, E., 2019: „Storage Practices and Temple Economy during the 3rd Millennium BC in Southern Mesopotamia“. In M. d’Andrea / M. G. Micale / D. Nadali / S. Pizzimenti / A. Vacca (eds.): *Pearls of the Past – Studies on Near Eastern Art and Archaeology in Honour of Frances Pinnock (marru 8)*. Münster: Zaphon. Pp. 137–160.
- Charvát, P., 2010: “Inscriptions on sealings from archaic Ur”. In K. Šašková / L. Pecha / P. Charvát (edd.): *Shepherds of the Black-headed People – The Royal Office Vis-à-vis Godhead in Ancient Mesopotamia*. Plzeň: Západočeská univerzita. Pp. 39–74.
- 2016: “A Study in Doors”. In Š. Velhartická (ed.): *Audias fabulas veteres: Anatolian Studies in Honor of Jana Součková-Siegelová* (Culture and History of the Ancient Near East vol. 79). Leiden – Boston: Brill. Pp. 58–70.
- 2017: *Signs from silence – Ur of the first Sumerians*. Praha: Karolinum.
- Cooley, J., 2011: “An Old Babylonian Prayer to the Gods of the Night”. In A. Lenzi (ed.): *Reading Akkadian Prayers and Hymns – An Introduction* (Ancient Near Eastern Monographs v. 3). Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature. Pp. 71–83.
- Dahl, J. L., 2009: “The Statue of Nin-E’íga”. In G. Barjamovic / J. L. Dahl / U. S. Koch / W. Sommerfeld / J. G. Westenholz (edd.): *Akkade is King: a collection of papers by friends and colleagues presented to Aage Westenholz on the occasion of his 70th birthday 15th of May 2009* (PIHANS 118). Leiden: Nederlands Instituut voor het Nabije Oosten (NINO). Pp. 63–73.

- Englund, R. K., 2003: "Worcester Slaughterhouse Account". *Cuneiform Digital Library Bulletin* 2003:1 © Cuneiform Digital Library Initiative
Version: 28 January 2003, 1.6.
- Figulla, H., 1953a: "Accounts concerning Allocation of Provisions for Offerings in the Ningal-Temple at Ur". *Iraq* 15, No. 1, 88–122. Stable URL: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/4199568>. [accessed June 25, 2021].
- 1953b: "Accounts concerning Allocations of Provisions for Offerings in the Ningal-Temple at Ur (Continued)". *Iraq* 15, No. 2, 171–192. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.2307/4199576> [accessed June 27, 2021].
- Frangipane, M., 2016: "The Origins of administrative practices and their developments in Greater Mesopotamia. The evidence from Arslantepe". *Archéo-Nil* 26 (*Naissance de l'état, naissance de l'administration: le rôle de l'écriture en Égypte, au Proche-Orient et en Chine*), 9–32.
- Grossman, K., 2013: *Early Bronze Age Hamoukar: A Settlement Biography*. A Dissertation Submitted to the Faculty of the Division of the Humanities in Candidacy for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy. The University of Chicago, Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations. Chicago.
- 2014: "Fire Installations in a Late Ninevite 5 Complex at Hamoukar, Syria". In P. Bieliński / M. Gawlikowski / R. Koliński / D. Ławecka / A. Sołtysiak / Z. Wygnańska (edd.), *Proceedings of the 8th International Congress on the Archaeology of the Ancient Near East 30 April – 4 May 2012*, University of Warsaw Volume 3, Archaeology of Fire, Conservation, Preservation and Site Management, Bioarchaeology in the Ancient Near East, Islamic Session, Selected papers from workshop sessions. Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz. Pp. 47–60.
- Hirsch, H., 1962: "Review of Armas Salonen: Die Türen des alten Mesopotamien. Eine lexikalische und kulturgeschichtliche Untersuchung, Helsinki 1961". *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 82, No. 3, 396–397. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/597658>. [accessed June 18, 2021].
- Krebernik, M. / Lisman, J., 2020: *The Sumerian Zame Hymns from Tell Abū Ṣalābīlī* (dubsar Bd. 12). Münster: Zaphon.
- Leichty, E., 1987: "Omens from Doorknobs". *Journal of Cuneiform Studies* 39, No. 2, 190–196. Stable URL: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/1359780>. [accessed June 18, 2021].
- Maiocchi, M. / Visicato, G., 2020: *Administration at Girsu in Gudea's Time* (*Antichistica* 27, *Studi orientali* 10). Venezia: Edizioni Ca' Foscari – Digital Publishing.

- Malamat, A., 1986: “‘Doorbells’ at Mari, A Textual-Archaeological Correlation”. In K. R. Veenhof (ed.): *Cuneiform Archives and Libraries – Papers read at the 30e Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale Leiden, 4–8 July 1983* (PIHANS LVII). Leiden: Nederlands Instituut voor het Nabije Oosten. Pp. 160–167.
- Martin, H. P. / Matthews, R. J., 1993: “Seals and sealings”. In A. Green (ed.), *The 6G Ash-Tip and its contents: cultic and administrative discard from the temple?* (Abu Salabikh Excavations vol. 4). S. 1.: British School of Archaeology in Iraq. Pp. 23–81.
- Matthews, R. / Richardson, A., 2019: “Cultic resilience and intercity engagement at the dawn of urban history: protohistoric Mesopotamia and the ‘city seals’, 3200–2750 BC.” *World Archaeology*, 50:5, 723–747, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1080/00438243.2019.1592018>.
- McMahon, A. et al., 2011: A. McMahon / A. Sołtysiak / J. Weber: “Late Chalcolithic Mass Graves at Tell Brak, Syria, and Violent Conflict during the Growth of Early City-states”. *Journal of Field Archaeology* 36, No. 3, 201–220. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/24407987>. [accessed October 10, 2020].
- Monaco, S., 2004: “Revisiting Jemdet Nasr Texts: IM 55580+”. *Cuneiform Digital Library Bulletin* 2004:3, © Cuneiform Digital Library Initiative. Version: 22 June 2004 (PREPRINT).
- Nolan, J. S., 2010: *Mud Sealings and Fourth Dynasty Administration at Giza*. A Dissertation Submitted to the Faculty of the Division of the Humanities in Candidacy for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy. The University of Chicago, Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations. Chicago, Illinois.
- Olijdam, E., 2015: “Archival practices in Early Dilmun Bahrain as indicated by glyptic evidence from domestic and institutional contexts” (poster). In *Proceedings of the Seminar for Arabian Studies Vol. 45, Papers from the forty-eighth meeting of the Seminar for Arabian Studies held at the British Museum, London, 25 to 27 July 2014 (2015)*. Oxford: Archaeopress. Pp. 205–216.
- Paulette, T. S., 2015: *Grain Storage and the Moral Economy in Mesopotamia (3000–2000 BC)*. A Dissertation Submitted to the Faculty of the Division of the Humanities in Candidacy for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy. The University of Chicago, Department of Near Eastern Languages.
- Pfälzner, P., 2002: “Modes of Storage and the Development of Economic Systems in the Early Jezireh-Period”. In L. al-Ghailani-Werr / J. Curtis /

- H. Martin / A. McMahon / J. Oates / J. Reade (edd.): *Of pots and plans. Papers on the archaeology and history of Mesopotamia and Syria presented to David Oates in honour of his 75th Birthday*. London: Nabu. Pp. 259–286.
- 2008: “Redistributive, kommunale und häusliche Vorratshaltung am unteren Ḫābūr im 3. Jtsd.v.Chr.“. In H. Kühne (ed.): *Umwelt und Subsistenz der assyrischen Stadt Dūr-Katlimmu am unteren Ḫābūr* (Berichte der Ausgrabung von Tall Šēḫ Ḥamad / Dūr-Katlimmu Band 8). Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag. Pp. 163–180.
- Pongratz-Leisten, B., 2007: “Ritual Killing and Sacrifice in the Ancient Near East“. In K. Finsterbusch / A. Lange / K. F. Diethard Römheld (edd.): *Human Sacrifice in Jewish and Christian Tradition*. Leiden–Boston: Brill. Pp. 3–33.
- Radner, K., 2010: “Gatekeepers and lock masters: the control of access in Assyrian palaces“. In H. D. Baker / E. Robson / G. Zólyomi (edd.): *Your Praise is Sweet – A Memorial Volume for Jeremy Black from Students, Colleagues and Friends*. London: British Institute for the Study of Iraq. Pp. 269–280.
- Reichel, C., 2002: “Administrative Complexity in Syria during the 4th Millennium BC – the Seals and Sealings from Tell Hamoukar“. *Akkadica* 123 fasc. 1, 35–56.
- Richardson, S., 2016: “Obedient Bellies: Hunger and Food Security in Ancient Mesopotamia“. *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient*, Vol. 59, No. 5, 750–792. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/26426405> [accessed June 20, 2021].
- Rohn, K., 2011: *Beschriftete mesopotamische Siegel der Frühdynastischen und der Akkad-Zeit* (Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis. Series Archaeologica. Band 032). Fribourg – Göttingen: Academic Press and Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht.
- Saggs, H. W. F., 1962: “Review of Armas Salonen: Die Türen des alten Mesopotamien: eine lexikalische und kulturgeschichtliche Untersuchung, Helsinki 1961“. *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London*, Vol. 25, No. 1/3, 602–603. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/610923>. [accessed June 18, 2021].
- Sallaberger, W. / Pruß, A., 2015: “Home and Work in Early Bronze Age Mesopotamia: ‘Ration Lists’ and ‘Private Houses’ at Tell Beydar/Nadaba“. In P. Steinkeller / M. Hudson (edd.): *Labor in the ancient world. The International Scholars Conference on Ancient Near Eastern Economies*, vol. 5. Dresden: ISLET-Verlag. Pp. 69–136.

- Salonen, A., 1961: *Die Türen des alten Mesopotamien. Eine lexikalische und kulturgeschichtliche Untersuchung* (Annales Academiae Scientiarum Fennicae. Ser. B, Tom. 124). Helsinki: Academia Scientiarum Fennica.
- Schneider, G. / Duistermaat, K., 1998: "Chemical analyses of sealing clays and the use of administrative artefacts at Late Neolithic Tell Sabi Abyad (Syria)". *Paléorient* Vol. 24 N°1, 89–106.
- Selover, S. L., 2015: *Excavating War: The Archaeology of Conflict in Early Chalcolithic to Early Bronze III Central and Southeastern Anatolia*. A Dissertation Submitted to the Faculty of the Division of the Humanities in Candidacy for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy. The University of Chicago, Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations, Chicago, Illinois.
- Selz, G. J., 1995: *Untersuchungen zur Götterwelt des altsumerischen Stadtstaates von Lagaš*. Philadelphia: Occasional Publications of the Samuel Noah Kramer Fund 13.
- Sigrist, M., 1981: "Le travail des cuirs et peaux à Umma sous la dynastie d'Ur III". *Journal of Cuneiform Studies* 33, No. ¾, 141–190. doi:10.2307/1359899 [accessed August 8, 2020].
- SooHoo, A. P., SJ, 2019: *Violence against the Enemy in Mesopotamian Myth, Ritual, and Historiography*. A dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, Institute for the Study of the Ancient World, New York University, January 2019. ProQuest13420957.
- Tricoli, S., 2014: "The Ritual Destruction of the Palace of Mari by Hammurapi under the Light of the Cult of the Ancestors' Seat in Mesopotamian Houses and Palaces". In H. Neumann / R. Dittmann / S. Paulus / G. Neumann / A. Schuster-Brandis (edd.): *Krieg und Frieden im alten Vorderasien. 52e Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale, International Congress of Assyriology and Near Eastern Archaeology, Münster, 17.–21. Juli 2006* (AOAT 401). Münster: Ugarit-Verlag. Pp. 796–836.
- Tsouparopoulou, C., 2017: "'Counter-Archaeology': Putting the Ur III Drehem Archives Back in the Ground". In Y. Heffron / A. Stone / M. Worthington (edd.): *At the Dawn of History: Ancient Near Eastern Studies in Honour of J. N. Postgate*. Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns. Pp. 611–629.
- Tsouparopoulou, C. / Casties, R., 2014: "Progress Report: An Online Database for the Documentation of Seals, Sealings and Seal Impression in the Ancient Near East". *Studi Orientalia Electronica*, Volume 2, 37–68.

- Ur, J. A., 2004: *Urbanism and Society in the Third Millennium Upper Khabur Basin I–II*. A Dissertation Submitted to the Faculty of the Division of the Humanities in Candidacy for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy. Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations, The University of Chicago. Chicago, Illinois.
- Veldhuis, N., 2003: “Entering the Netherworld”. *Cuneiform Digital Library Bulletin* 2003:6 © Cuneiform Digital Library Initiative Version: 2 September 2003, 1–4.
- 2004: “HI-(še₃) la₂”. *Cuneiform Digital Library Bulletin* 2004:4 © Cuneiform Digital Library Initiative Version: 20 December 2004, 1–4.
- Westenholz, A., 2020: “The Epigraphic Evidence”. In Zaina, 2020. Pp. 153–172.
- Wright, H. T. / Miller, N. / Redding, R., 1981: “Time and process in an Uruk Rural Center”. *Colloques internationaux du C.N.R.S. No. 580 – L’archéologie de l’Irak: Perspectives et limites de l’interprétation anthropologique des documents*. Paris: Editions du C.N.R.S. Pp. 265–284.
- Zaccagnini, C., 2020: “Legal and Socio-Economic Aspects of the Deprivation of Clothes in the Ancient Near East”. *Zeitschrift für Altorientalische und Biblische Reschtgeschichte* 26, 37–56.
- Zaina, F., 2020: *The Urban Archaeology of Early Kish – 3rd Millennium BCE Levels at Tell Ingharra*. Alma Mater Studiorum – Università di Bologna, Dipartimento di Storia Culture Civiltà. OrientLab Series Maior vol. 5. Bologna: Ante Quem.
- Zettler, R., 1991: “Administration of the Temple of Inanna at Nippur under the Third Dynasty of Ur: Archaeological and Documentary Evidence”. In McG. Gibson / R. D. Biggs (edd.): *The Organization of Power. Aspects of Bureaucracy in the Ancient Near East* (SAOC 46), 2nd Edition. Chicago: The Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago. Pp. 101–114.
- 2007: “Clay Sealings from the Early Dynastic I Levels of the Inanna Temple at Nippur: A Preliminary Analysis”. In M. Roth / W. Farber / M. W. Stolper / P. von Bechtolsheim (edd.): *Studies Presented to Robert D. Biggs, June 4, 2004*. Chicago: The Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago. Pp. 343–362.
- Zingarello, M., 2015: “Fortification Systems in Central and Lower Mesopotamia Between the Third and the First Half of the Second Millennium BC: an Overview”. In G. Affanni / C. Baccarin / L. Cordera / A. Di Michele / K. Gavagnin (edd.): *Broadening Horizons 4. A Conference of young*

researchers working in the Ancient Near East, Egypt and Central Asia, University of Torino, October 2011 (BAR International Series 2698). Oxford: Archaeopress. Pp. 309–317.

Garder et protéger à Nuzi

Brigitte Lion

Le présent article n’a rien d’une recherche exhaustive sur la sécurité et l’insécurité dans le royaume d’Arrapha, dont Nuzi, à la fin du XV^e et au début du XIV^e s. av. J.-C., faisait partie.¹ Il faudrait pour cela inclure une étude de la violence, dans la lignée des nombreux travaux récents sur la question dans le domaine mésopotamien.² Il faudrait aussi regarder de façon systématique les textes de procès, pour voir de quels crimes les habitants du royaume d’Arrapha se rendaient coupables,³ ou le dossier concernant le maire corrompu Kušši-harbe, qui fit l’objet de nombreuses plaintes documentant ses exactions et celles de ses complices.⁴ Enfin le royaume d’Arrapha a disparu, au milieu du XIV^e s., à la suite du conflit qui l’a opposé à ses voisins assyriens, et les tablettes datant des derniers moments de Nuzi laissent entrevoir les horreurs de la guerre : raids, vols de bétail, enlèvements et meurtres de personnes, pertes humaines lors des combats.⁵

L’enquête qui suit se limite aux usages de la racine *našāru*, ayant pour sens général “garder” ou “protéger”, et des termes dérivés, *maššartu* : “la garde” (le fait de garder),⁶ ou “le garde” (le gardien) et *maššaru*, plutôt spécialisé

¹Mes remerciements s’adressent à Petr Charvát et à tous les collègues tchèques organisateurs du colloque, ainsi qu’aux participants, en particulier Grégory Chambon, pour les échanges, discussions et références.

²Voir Garfinkel, 2020, avec les références à la bibliographie antérieure ; une grande partie des études sur ce thème se concentre sur la violence d’État et la violence guerrière, les plus visibles dans les sources.

³Sur les procès à Nuzi, voir Gordon, 1936 ; Hayden, 1962 ; Lion, 2000 ; Negri Scafa, 2021 ; Lion, à paraître.

⁴Voir ce dossier dans Maidman, 2010 : 81–123.

⁵Références ci-dessous, n. 18.

⁶Sur l’évolution du sens de ce terme au I^{er} millénaire, voir Fales, 2011.

dans ce second sens de “gardien”.⁷ Pour le royaume d’Arrapha, il n’y a que peu d’études sur la question : W. Mayer, dans son ouvrage sur le personnel palatial, ne mentionne pas les gardes⁸ et T. Kendall, dans sa thèse consacrée à l’armée, ne les indique pas dans son schéma de l’organisation militaire, même s’il leur consacre quelques pages.⁹

Les références ne sont certainement pas complètes, les quelque 8000 tablettes et fragments trouvés sur le site n’ayant pu être consultés.¹⁰ Mais elles visent à donner une idée générale de ce que les gens du royaume d’Arrapha jugeaient nécessaire de protéger ou de placer sous surveillance. Les mentions de protection des personnes seront d’abord examinées, puis celles relatives à la garde des territoires, depuis l’ensemble du royaume jusqu’à des bâtiments particuliers, et enfin celles concernant la surveillance des biens. Les données archéologiques de la “Strate II”, celle d’où proviennent les tablettes, seront utilisées le cas échéant, mais elles restent assez maigres pour ce dossier.

1 Protéger des personnes

Le verbe *našāru* peut s’appliquer à la surveillance ou à la garde d’une personne. Un exemple clair se trouve dans l’édit royal HSS 13 36¹¹ (provenance inconnue),¹² adressé à Akip-tašenni, le *šākin māti*, “gouverneur du pays”. Le roi lui envoie Hašimaru, apparemment quelqu’un d’important puisqu’Akip-tašenni doit lui fournir trois hommes qui “(l’)emmèneront au pays des Nulléens, (le) protégeront et (le) ramèneront” (l. 7–8 : [a-n]a KUR nu-lu-a-i-ú ub-ba-lu [i]-na-aš-ša-ru-ma à ú-t[a]-ar-ru-uš). Akip-tašenni est en poste à Arzuhina, au nord de la capitale, dans la direction du pays des Nulléens.¹³ Il doit donc faire protéger quelqu’un qui se rend à l’étranger, dans un pays

⁷On laissera cependant de côté les noms propres qui contiennent cette racine et font appel à la protection divine. Même si les noms akkadiens sont moins nombreux que les noms hourrites à Nuzi, sont attestés Iššur-Adad (et Iššuriya, peut-être un hypocoristique), Adad-našir, Bêl-našir, Malik-našir, Nabû-našir, Šakan-našir, Šamaš-našir, ainsi que Ušur-mê, Ušur-mêša et Ušur-mêšu.

⁸Mayer, 1978. Cependant la garde du palais lui-même peut être assurée par des serviteurs du palais, cf. ci-dessous § 3.1.

⁹Kendall, 1974 : 75 pour le schéma de l’organisation militaire et 118–122 pour l’étude de “maššaru – watchman, guard”.

¹⁰Chiffre donné par Maidman, 2020 : 10.

¹¹Photographie : CDLI P408303. Translittération, traduction et étude : Müller, 1968 : 292–314. Voir aussi Fadhil, 1983 : 70 et Löhnert, 2015 : 339–341.

¹²Le lieu de provenance de la tablette, lorsqu’il est connu, est indiqué entre parenthèses après la référence à l’édition.

¹³Fadhil, 1983 : 70b déduit logiquement de HSS 13 36 que la ville “als Tor nach mât Nul-luahhe erschient, das gemeinhin mit dem Zagros-Gebirge identifiziert wird und nördlich von

peu sûr, celui d'où les gens du royaume d'Arrapha importent leurs esclaves et risquent eux-mêmes d'être capturés pour alimenter ce trafic.¹⁴ Le roi semble craindre pour la vie de Hašimaru, car il est ensuite précisé que, s'il disparaît ou s'il est tué, soit dans le pays d'Arrapha, soit dans celui des Nulléens, Akip-tašenni sera mis à mort. Il est donc responsable sur sa propre vie de la personne qui lui est confiée et il scelle la tablette, ce qui a ici une valeur d'engagement personnel.

On retrouve le verbe dans un autre ordre royal, sous forme de lettre, **HSS 14 14**¹⁵ (C19), même si la compréhension de l'affaire est plus compliquée. La missive est adressée par le roi à Šar-Teššub, un "chef de dix", qui est responsable de l'envoi du *sukkallu* et d'un *šangû*, administrateur d'un temple, à Zizza, puis, de là, à Apena, où ils doivent promulguer un édit. Le roi précise à Šar-Teššub : "Protège les hommes qui sont sous ta responsabilité, sinon on te coupera la tête" (l. 24–27 : LÚ.MEŠ *a-na qa-ti-ka₄ na-ad-nu ú-šú-ur SAG.DU-ka₄ lu la i-na-ak-ki-sú*).¹⁶

La protection personnelle est aussi très claire dans la liste **HSS 9 37** (A26), trouvée dans la maison de Šilwa-Teššub, le fils du roi d'Arrapha. Elle enregistre dix hommes et se conclut ainsi : "Ces dix hommes forment la garde de Šilwa-Teššub : ils protégeront Šilwa-Teššub, le fils du roi, dans les combats" (l. 12–17 : 10 LÚ.MEŠ *an-nu-tu₄ ma-aš-ša-ar-te ša¹šil-wa-te-šub¹ šil-wa-te-šub DUMU.LUGAL i+na ta-ha-zi i+na-aš-ša-ru*). On a donc affaire à la garde rapprochée du prince, qui doit entrer en action dans un contexte militaire :

Sulaimaniya gelegen ist". Fincke, 1993 : 68–69, Parpola / Porter, 2001 : 6 et 24, et Radner, 2006 : 45, proposent tous de l'identifier au site de Gök Tepe, au sud du Zab Inférieur. En revanche, la localisation sur les cartes diffère : Fincke, 1993 : 441 et Radner, 2006 : 44, placent Gök Tepe au nord-ouest de la capitale Arrapha, alors que Parpola / Porter, 2001 : carte n° 10, la placent au nord-est d'Arrapha.

¹⁴Fincke, 1993 : 190–193; Lion, 2017 : 148–150.

¹⁵Translittération, traduction et étude : Jankowska, 1969 : 276–277; Deller / Fadhil, 1972 : 210–212; Chow, 1973 : 144–145; Kendall, 1974 : 29–30. Traduction : Löhnert, 2015 : 340. Commentaire : Negri Scafa, 2009 : 466–468.

¹⁶Löhnert, 2015 : 340, traduit : "The people are given at your disposal! Watch out that they do not cut off your head", considérant que "The people are given at your disposal!" reproduit les termes de l'édit, et que Šar-Teššub devrait se protéger lui-même. Mais, d'une part, le contenu de l'édit serait assez étrange et, d'autre part on voit mal de qui Šar-Teššub devrait se protéger : il ne peut s'agir de la population d'Apena, puisqu'il n'accompagne pas les deux voyageurs mais se contente de leur fournir des chevaux. La traduction choisie ici est celle du CAD N : 34 (*sub našāru*) : "Watch the men who are entrusted to you lest your head be cut off", au vu de la situation comparable à celle de HSS 13 36 : le destinataire des ordres royaux est responsable, sur sa propre vie, de personnes qui lui sont confiées et qu'il doit protéger. Negri Scafa, 2009 : 467, comprend également de cette façon : "The whole operation is under the authority and responsibility of Šar-Teššub, who is risking his life". Par ailleurs, une autre lettre royale à Šar-Teššub, HSS 14 19, lui demande aussi de faire placer une garde, mais le contexte est très cassé (l. 5–6 : *aš-šum ma-aš-ša-[ar-ti] te₄-e-ma šu²-k[u-un]*)

cela montre que le fils du roi était prêt à payer de sa personne en cas de conflit. Le statut du prince, et le fait que la situation envisagée soit celle d'une guerre, expliquent le nombre de gardes du corps, alors qu'on a vu plus haut que, pour protéger un personnage de haut rang en mission, même dans un pays peu sûr, trois hommes sont considérés comme une escorte suffisante (HSS 13 36).¹⁷

Il y a néanmoins d'autres termes qui renvoient à la protection d'un personnage important, en particulier le roi d'Arrapha : les GÌR, qui apparaissent fréquemment dans son entourage seraient, d'après C. Zaccagnini, ses gardes du corps et formeraient une escorte de sept à quinze chars.¹⁸

2 Protéger le territoire

Les guerres qui ont mis fin au royaume d'Arrapha ont été étudiées par M. P. Maidman : il a montré que les Assyriens, à l'époque d'Aššur-uballiṭ I^{er}, étaient responsables de l'effondrement du royaume et de la destruction de Nuzi.¹⁹ Avant cet épisode dramatique, il ne semble pas y avoir d'attestations de graves conflits. La sécurité du pays était assurée par un maillage du territoire et une délégation des responsabilités que l'on voit assez bien à travers les emplois de la racine NŠR.

2.1 Un district

L'un des édits du roi d'Arrapha découvert à Nuzi, HSS 15 1²⁰ (C28), rappelle au maire (*hazannu*) de la ville de Tašuhhe que c'est à lui qu'incombe la responsabilité de garder le territoire qui entoure sa ville : "Chaque maire doit protéger les limites de sa ville, jusqu'à sa frontière. S'il y a un *dimtu* abandonné dans la campagne de sa ville, le maire doit (le) protéger" (l. 3–7 : [at-t]a^{1?}-ma¹-an-nu LÚ ha-za-an-nu [š]a URU-šu pa-ṭi-šu i+na¹ li-mi-ti-šu-ma i+na¹ (ŠA)-aš-ša-ar i-ba-aš-ši AN.ZA.GAR ù i+na EDIN.NA ša URU-šu ša na-du₄-ú ù LÚ ha-za-an-nu i+na-aš-ša-ar). La suite du texte énumère les exactions qui peuvent se produire et dont le maire serait tenu pour responsable :

¹⁷La tablette est scellée par Tarmi-Teššub ; D. Stein n'a pu voir le sceau, ce qui rend difficile l'identification du personnage (Stein, 1993a : 176 et Stein, 1993b : 45).

¹⁸Zaccagnini, 2016 : 25–26 ; voir aussi Zaccagnini, 2020 : 158–159.

¹⁹Maidman, 2010 : 15–79, Maidman, 2011a et 2011b.

²⁰La copie figure également dans Lacheman, 1939 : 115. Translittération, traduction et étude : Müller, 1968 : 195–260 ; Jankowska, 1969 : 273–276 ; Kendall, 1974 : 43–45 ; Zaccagnini, 1979 : 17–21 ; Cassin, 1982a et 1982b. Translittération et traduction : Maidman, 2010 : 30–33, n° 8. Traduction : Dassow, 2017 : 128–129. Commentaires : Löhnert, 2015 : 337 n. 13 et 341–342 ; Abrahami / Lion, 2023 : 295–296 et 300–301.

vol, meurtre, pillage, non arrestation de fugitifs qui chercheraient à quitter le royaume d'Arrapha. Il doit aussi s'assurer que les *dimtu*, des points fortifiés, ne sont pas abandonnés²¹ et que leurs propriétaires peuvent, le cas échéant, concourir au maintien de l'ordre. On voit ainsi ce que recouvre la protection du territoire, déléguée par le roi aux *hazannu*, qui eux-mêmes en délèguent une partie aux propriétaires des *dimtu*. Il est possible que de nombreux autres maires aient reçu des courriers similaires.

Un autre document, découvert dans la même pièce, **HSS 15 126**²² (C28), pourrait correspondre à la mise en action de ce type de surveillance du royaume. Il énumère quatre groupes de deux hommes, chacun des groupes devant garder (*i-na-ša-ru*) un espace défini par des limites géographiques, "depuis" (*ša¹-ba-at*) une ville, une route ou un *dimtu*, "jusqu'à" (*a-di*) une (autre) ville. On peut penser à des patrouilles pour surveiller ces portions de territoires.

2.2 Les portes des villes

Les portes urbaines de Nuzi, emportées par l'érosion, n'ont pas laissé de traces archéologiques sur le site.²³ Pour l'époque mittanienne, les autres villes du royaume d'Arrapha n'ont pas été fouillées ; à Tell al-Fahhar, seul un grand bâtiment renforcé de tours a été exhumé.²⁴

Les textes montrent que l'entrée dans les villes est surveillée par des professionnels, appelés *abultannu* ou *maššar abulli*, "gardien de la porte".²⁵ Les deux termes sont équivalents, car ils sont associés aux mêmes individus.²⁶ J. Fincke en a répertorié une cinquantaine, qui gardent les portes de diverses

²¹On peut renvoyer ici à la tablette du Louvre AO 15551+15552, qui ne concerne pas un *dimtu*, mais les fortifications et les portes de la ville même de Nuzi, en assez mauvais état : Lion, 2010 et Maidman, 2021.

²²Photographie : CDLI P408953. Translittération et traduction : Fadhil, 1983 : 142 ; Dosch, 2009 : 143–144, n° 53.

²³Starr, 1939 : 302–303 signale, pour la "strate III", soit la strate antérieure à celle d'où proviennent les tablettes, le bâtiment situé dans le carré de fouilles "X", qu'il appelle "Group 15" et interprète comme un bâtiment administratif situé à proximité de l'une des portes de la ville ; voir Starr, 1937 : plan n° 11.

²⁴Al Khalesi, 1970 et 1971 ainsi que Kolinski, 2001 : 39–45.

²⁵Sur les fonctions des portes urbaines dans le Proche-Orient ancien et la Bible, voir la synthèse de May, 2013. Sur la défense des villes dans le royaume d'Arrapha, voir Lion, 2008 : 73.

²⁶Par exemple Ila-nišu fils de Hamanna est désigné tantôt comme *maššar abulli* (HSS 5 59 : 42–43, HSS 9 19 : 43, HSS 9 22 : 37–38, etc.), tantôt comme *abultannu* (JEN 9 : 37, JEN 192 : 28–29). De même pour Bēliya fils d'Ah-ummeya, qui exerce ses fonctions dans la ville de Ṭupšarriwe (Lion, dans Lion / Stein, 2001 : 64) : il est *maššar abulli* dans EN 9/2 391 : 9' et *abultannu* dans EN 9/2 441 : 23–24 et EN 9/2 331 : 24. Il faut donc revoir l'affirmation de T.

villes du royaume, dont les portes de Nuzi.²⁷ P. Negri Scafa leur a consacré une étude.²⁸ Beaucoup d'entre eux sont connus par leur nom, car nombre de tablettes sont rédigées à la porte des villes, et les gardes servent alors de témoins.²⁹ Ils se succèdent de père en fils, une famille restant attachée à la même porte. Ils ne semblent pas avoir de liens explicites avec le palais, qui ne leur attribue pas de rations.

Faut-il comprendre qu'un homme seul suffit à la garde permanente d'une porte? Il est possible que le garde soit à la tête de plusieurs personnes, mais cela n'est pas explicitement mentionné. P. Negri Scafa a noté que trois familles de gardiens sont attestées à la porte Tiššae de la ville de Nuzi et on peut envisager une collaboration ou un tour de rôle. Le travail du garde n'est jamais clairement explicité et il peut avoir une fonction de surveillance et de contrôle des entrées et sorties plutôt qu'un rôle strictement militaire;³⁰ mais on ne le voit pas lever de taxes.³¹ Le cas échéant, d'autres personnes l'assistent : on en connaît au moins deux exemples.

Le premier est **JEN 358** (maison de Tehip-Tilla, 15), un procès intenté par Enna-mati, le fils de Tehip-Tilla, à Nupa-nani fils d'A[ku]-šenni, qu'il accuse d'avoir volé quelque chose : le texte est cassé mais il doit s'agir d'une partie de l'équipement de son char. Le point qui importe ici est la description des circonstances du vol, telles que les rapporte Enna-mati : "L'é[quipe]ment de mon char se trouvait à la porte, et Nupa-nani, le *rākib narkabti* qui n'a pas de cheval, se tenait de garde avec le gardien de la porte" (l. 5-9 : *ú-[nu]-ut GIŠ.GIGIR-ia i-na a-bu-ul-li ša-ak-nu-mi ù¹nu-pá-na-ni LÚ ra-kib GIŠ.GIGIR ša ANŠE.KUR.RA la TUK a-na ma-aš-ša-ar-ti it-ti ma-[ša]-ar a-bu-ul-li a-ši-ib*). Un combattant à char prête ici main forte au gardien.

Le second cas figure dans **HSS 16 380**³² (A34). Ce document ne comporte pas le terme *maššaru* ou *maššartu*, mais mentionne un *emantuhlu*, "chef de

Kendall : "Assisting the *abultannu* or 'gatekeepers' at the city gates were small detachments of soldiers who stood guard duty throughout the day. These were the *maššaru* or 'watchmen'" (Kendall, 1974 : 118) : il ne s'agit pas de deux professions différentes, mais de la même, cf. Fincke, 1993 : 412 et Negri Scafa, 1998 : 140.

²⁷ Fincke, 1993 : 412-413.

²⁸ Negri Scafa, 1998.

²⁹ Negri Scafa, 1992.

³⁰ Negri Scafa, 1998 : 162, note que des gardiens sont aussi attestés avec d'autres fonctions. L'un, Béliya fils d'Ah-ummeya (ci-dessus, n. 26), est également *nāgīru*, "héraut", dans EN 9/2 384 : 18-19; Mayer, 1978 : 164-165, répertorie ce métier parmi les fonctions officielles liées au palais, mais sans citer EN 9/2 384, alors inédit. Un autre, Dayyānu fils de Zike, *maššar abulli* à la porte de Zizza à Nuzi (AASOR 16 55 : 53), est *ālik ilki* dans HSS 13 6 : 50 (Dosch, 2009 : 105-108, n° 27); dans ce texte, la fonction d'*ālik ilki* a un caractère nettement militaire, puisque deux groupes d'hommes sont distingués, les *rākib narkabti*, combattants à char, et les *ālik ilki*.

³¹ Pour une synthèse sur la question des taxes voir Justel, 2020.

³² Translittération et traduction : Dosch, 2009 : 92, n° 19.

dix", en poste à trois portes de la ville de Nuzi, respectivement la grand porte, la porte Tiššae et la porte de Zizza (l. 7–8 : 3 LÚ.MEŠ *an-nu-tu₄ e-ma-an-tuh-lu ša KÁ.GAL-la-ti*). Les noms de ces *emantuhlu* sont différents de ceux des gardiens habituels, qu'ils viennent donc assister ou suppléer. T. Kendall considère qu'il s'agit d'une situation normale et en déduit qu'il y avait dix hommes affectés à chaque porte.³³ Cependant il indique aussi que le nombre d'hommes sous les ordres d'un *emantuhlu*, en dépit de son titre, n'est pas toujours de dix.³⁴ Mais on peut aussi bien considérer qu'il s'agit d'une situation exceptionnelle, car elle n'est documentée que par cet unique texte.

3 Garder des bâtiments

Des gardes sont aussi affectés à la surveillance de bâtiments qu'il faut protéger, ainsi que leurs occupants ou les biens qu'ils abritent.

3.1 Le palais

Toutes les tablettes relatives à la garde du palais proviennent de ce bâtiment lui-même.

Dans **HSS 15 68**³⁵ (R76), trois *rākib narkabti*, des combattants à char appartenant à l'élite sociale de Nuzi, sont désignés comme "les gardes de la porte / des portes du palais" (l. 4–7 : 3 LÚ.MEŠ *an-nu-tu₄ ša ra-kib GIŠ.GIGIR.MEŠ ma-aš-ša-ar KÁ.MEŠ ša é-kàl-li*). S'il s'agit du palais de Nuzi, la zone d'entrée est perdue; elle se situait dans la partie nord et débouchait sur la cour M94.³⁶

Plus difficile à comprendre est la situation décrite dans **HSS 14 615**³⁷ (R76). La tablette est divisée en plusieurs paragraphes, séparés par des lignes,

³³Voir également Negri Scafa, 1998 : 104 n. 11.

³⁴Kendall, 1974 : 118–119. Il se fonde également sur le fait que dans HSS 13 221 : 8, des *maššar abulli* de la porte *ša šupali*, l'une des portes de Nuzi (équivalente à la porte Tiššae, voir Negri-Scafa, 1998 : 151), recevraient 10 *qa* d'orge, pour une durée non indiquée. Cependant la tablette, très abîmée à cet endroit, provient de la maison du prince Šilwa-Teššub et G. Wilhelm, qui l'a republiée comme AdŠ 152, est très dubitatif sur les restitutions : il ne lit pour cette ligne que 1 BÀN ŠE *a-na* 'LÚ' [*x x x] A[Z x] x x x [l]i š[u* (Wilhelm, 1985 : 160 et n. 1). Le BÀN équivaut, dans les archives de Šilwa-Teššub, à 8 SILA₃ et non à 10 (Wilhelm, 1980 : 27). Les comparaisons paléo-babylonienne et égyptienne données par T. Kendall, pour dix hommes (au moins) gardant une porte, sont intéressantes, mais non déterminantes.

³⁵Translittération et traduction : Dosch, 2009 : 123, n° 38; G. Dosch identifie le premier des gardes, Hutiš-Šimika, au fils du prince Teššuya.

³⁶Mönninghoff, 2020 : 263 et 343–344, avec la bibliographie antérieure.

³⁷Photographie : CDLI, P408863. Commentaire : Kendall, 1974 : 120–121.

chacun comprenant les noms de quatre hommes et la mention : “ces quatre hommes sont la garde des bâtiments du palais” suivie de l’un des quatre points cardinaux (l. 4–5 : 4 LÚ.MEŠ *an-nu-tu₄ ma-aš-ša-ra-tù ša É.MEŠ é-kâl-li*, ainsi que l. 8, 12 et 18 : 4 LÚ.MEŠ KI.MIN). L’ensemble est ainsi récapitulé : “total, ces seize hommes, serviteurs du palais, sont la garde du palais” (l. 20–22 : ŠU.NIGIN₂ 16 LÚ.MEŠ *an-nu-tu₄ IR é-kâl-li ma-aš-ša-ra-tù ša é-kâl-li*). La tablette est scellée par un garde de chacun des groupes, probablement le chef. Le palais de Nuzi a un accès principal par le nord, et non quatre. H. Mönninghoff s’est demandé s’il pouvait s’agir de quatre bâtiments différents, de quatre accès à un seul bâtiment (mais lequel?), ou de quatre passages à l’intérieur d’un bâtiment.³⁸ Le texte ne mentionne cependant pas explicitement les portes ; serait-il envisageable d’y voir des gardes qui patrouillent aux abords du palais, dans des directions différentes ?

Par ailleurs, et sans mention explicite de garde, le palais pouvait abriter des hommes armés, sans que l’on sache si leur résidence y était permanente ou occasionnelle. HSS 15 37³⁹ (N120) est une “inspection (?)”⁴⁰ des arcs [des hommes] qui résident dans le palais” (l. 1–2 : *ṭup³-pu ša pá-zi ša GIS.BÁN [ša LÚ.MEŠ] ša a-ši-ib É.GAL*) : elle recense seize hommes et vingt-trois arcs. HSS 15 100 (N120) enregistre également des hommes “résidant au palais” (l. 26 : *a-ši-ib é-kâl-li*), dont les chevaux ont été attelés ou non. La fouille du palais a cependant livré très peu d’armes, car il a été pillé par les vainqueurs : seulement neuf pointes de flèches ou de lances, un embout de lance et une écaille de bronze faisant partie d’une armure.⁴¹

Outre ces deux derniers documents, de nombreuses autres tablettes relatives à l’armée et à l’armement ont été trouvées dans la pièce N120, qui donne sur la cour M94, donc à proximité de l’entrée du palais.⁴² Comme dans le palais de Mari, la zone de la porte pouvait être un lieu d’opérations administratives,⁴³ mais à Nuzi l’attention semble s’être portée particulièrement, du moins d’après les tablettes conservées dans ce secteur, sur les affaires militaires.

³⁸Mönninghoff, 2020 : 29 ; elle revient sur ce texte p. 286 et se demande s’il n’y avait pas un autre accès au palais, par le sud, puisque la partie sud a elle aussi emportée par l’érosion.

³⁹Translittération et traduction : Dosch, 2009 : 140–141, n° 50.

⁴⁰Le CAD P : 225 enregistre le terme à *pāsū* et suggère, pour les textes de Nuzi, le sens de “disbursement, expenditure, delivery”. Le AHW : 839, également à *pāsū*, propose “(innere) Teile?”. Dosch, 2009 : 140 traduit “Inspektion?”, probablement de façon contextuelle, puisque la tablette indique que certains des arcs sont en mauvais état. Le terme intervient également, à Nuzi, à propos de chars, dans HSS 15 78.

⁴¹Mönninghoff, 2020 : 187–191.

⁴²Mayer, 1978 : 41 ; Negri Scafa, 2006 : 304–305 ; Mönninghoff, 2020 : 263–267.

⁴³Sur les deux entrées du palais de Mari et les activités qui s’y déroulent, voir Durand, 1987 : 42–110 et Chambon, 2018 : 23–24.

3.2 Les temples

Deux temples ont été fouillés sur la citadelle de Nuzi. D'après les découvertes archéologiques et les recoupements qui peuvent être faits avec les textes, l'un était voué à Ištar/Šawuška (G29) et l'autre à Teššub (G53).⁴⁴ Il en existait d'autres, notamment un temple de Nergal,⁴⁵ mais ils n'ont pas été exhumés et devaient se trouver dans la ville basse.

HSS 15 57⁴⁶ (F24) donne une liste de cinq hommes dont un tisserand et le *šangû*, l'administrateur du temple, qui est en même temps le chef du groupe. Ils semblent former la "g[arde] de la porte d'Ištar de Nuzi", donc de la porte de son temple (l. 7 : *m[a-ša-ra-tu₄] ša KÁ⁷.GAL dⁱš₈-tár nu-zu-hé*). Ces cinq hommes sont peut-être assistés d'autres personnes, car si deux d'entre eux sont *ēdēnû*, "seuls", deux autres sont suivis de la mention 2-*mu-nu* et un de la mention 5-*mu-nu*, qui pourrait indiquer qu'ils sont accompagnés, ou vont partager la garde avec d'autres. Depuis la rue 6, l'accès à la cour G50 du temple d'Ištar se fait par le passage G47; on y entre aussi par deux autres portes depuis les rues 7 et 8. Dans la cour G50, deux portes donnent accès au bâtiment lui-même.⁴⁷ Mais l'ensemble devait être relativement facile à contrôler.

Sans recourir à l'emploi de la racine NŠR, d'autres textes indiquent que les temples peuvent être sous protection : **HSS 16 380**⁴⁸ (A34) donne les noms de trois *emantuhlu*, "chefs de dix", des temples (l. 14–16 : *3 LÚ.MEŠ an-nu-tu₄ e-ma-an-tuh-lu ša É.DINGIR.MEŠ*), eux-mêmes placés sous la responsabilité d'Akap-šenni.⁴⁹ Cet Akap-šenni est encore mentionné dans **HSS 14 237**⁵⁰ (provenance inconnue), à la fin d'une liste, en grande partie perdue, comme "chef de dix hommes" qui "ont passé la nuit dans le temple

⁴⁴Sur ces temples, voir Lion / Stein, 2016 : 6–7 (B. Lion) et 227–232 (D. Stein) ; sur la garde des temples, 20–21 (B. Lion).

⁴⁵Il est mentionné comme lieu de rédaction de plusieurs tablettes, le passage le plus explicite figurant dans HSS 19 117 (provenance inconnue) : "dans la ville de Nuzi, à la porte du temple de Nergal" (l. 25–26 : *i-na URU nu-zi i-na KÁ É.DINGIR ša dⁱNĒ.IRI₁₁.GAL*). HSS 19 79 : 40–41 (P401) et HSS 19 114 : 28–29 (S110), simplifient la formule en "dans la ville de Nuzi, à la porte du dieu Nergal".

⁴⁶Photographie : P408920. Translittération et traduction : Dosch, 2009 : 128, n° 43. Commentaire : Kendall, 1974, 119–120.

⁴⁷Starr, 1937 : Plans 13 et 14, repris dans Lion / Stein, 2016 : plate VII et plate VIII (D. Stein).

⁴⁸Translittération et traduction : Dosch, 2009 : 92, n° 19. Cf. ci-dessus § 2.2 "La garde de la porte des villes".

⁴⁹Les trois *emantuhlu* placés aux portes de la ville de Nuzi dans le même texte, ci-dessus § 2.2, semblent également placés sous sa responsabilité.

⁵⁰La copie figure également dans Lacheman, 1939 : 176. Photographie : CDLI P408772. Translittération et traduction : Dosch, 2009 : 91, n° 18. Selon G. Dosch, la tablette est susceptible d'avoir été trouvée en A34, ce qui serait un autre point commun avec HSS 16 380.

d'Ištar de Nuzi et dans le temple de Teššub d'Alep" (l. 3'-7' : GAL 10 ¹*a-kap-še-^rni^r i+na É^diš₈-tár nu-z[u-hé] ù i+na É^dIM hal-ba-he i-^rbi-it^r-[tù[?]]).*

3.3 Une maison

Dans HSS 13 242⁵¹ (L2), la garde d'"une maison, avec son mobilier (et avec sa domesticité", est confiée à cinq hommes, qui scellent la tablette (l. 6-11 : 5 LÚ.MEŠ *an-nu-ti ù É-sú ša¹/1* x-[...]-x qa-du ú-nu-ti-šu-nu qa-du ni-iš É-ti-šu-nu a-na ŠU-ti-šu-nu na-ad-nu ù i-na-aš-ša-ru-uš*). Celle-ci ayant été découverte dans le palais, on peut se demander s'il s'agit d'une saisie opérée par le palais, quelle qu'en soit la raison.

4 Protéger des biens

4.1 Des entrepôts

En surveillant des bâtiments, ce sont les biens qu'ils renferment que l'on cherche à protéger, comme le montre l'exemple précédent. Cela est clair lorsqu'il s'agit des entrepôts, et ce type de surveillance n'a d'intérêt que si ces magasins sont pleins. HSS 16 356⁵² (A34!) énumère vingt-deux hommes, répartis en cinq groupes, chargés de garder des entrepôts ou magasins (*bīt qarīti*) :

- quatre hommes gardent l'"entrepôt du mur" (l. 4-6 : 4 LÚ.MEŠ *an-nu-tu₄ a-šar É qa-ri-ti ša ka₄-ma-ri i-na-aš-ša-ru*).
- trois hommes gardent l'"entrepôt du jardin" (l. 10-11 : 3 LÚ.MEŠ *an-nu-tu₄ a-šar É qa-ri-ti ša GIŠ.KIRI₆ i-na-aš-ša-ru*).
- trois hommes gardent l'"entrepôt de Pilmašše" (l. 15-16 : 3 LÚ.MEŠ *an-nu-tu₄ a-šar É qa-ri-ti ša¹ pil-maš-še KI.MIN*).
- six hommes gardent l'"entrepôt du *šuhurapte*" (l. 25-26 : 6 LÚ.MEŠ *an-nu-tu₄ a-š[ar É] qa-ri-ti^r ša šu-hu^r-ra-ap-te KI.MIN*). H. Schneider-Ludorff propose qu'il s'agisse d'un entrepôt abritant de la nourriture.⁵³
- six hommes gardent l'"entrepôt qui est dans la ville" (l. 32-35 : 6 LÚ.MEŠ *an-nu-tu₄ a-šar É qa-ri-ti ša ŠÀ-bi URU i-na-aš-ša-ru*).

⁵¹Photographie : CDLI P408444.

⁵²Translittération et traduction : Dosch, 2009 : 103-104, n° 26. Le lieu de provenance attribué à la tablette est A23, que G. Dosch corrige en "A34!". Cf. Kendall, 1974 : 121.

⁵³Schneider-Ludorff, 2009 : 487, n. 55, fait dériver ce mot de la racine *šuhh-*, "sucrer".

On comprend la nécessité de garder ces magasins, car dans deux procès au moins, JEN 386 et HSS 13 422,⁵⁴ il est question de vols avec effraction commis dans des *bīt qarīti*, contenant de l’orge dans le premier cas et du bois appartenant à Šilwa-Teššub, le fils du roi, dans le second.

4.2 Des produits agricoles

Les produits à protéger sont parfois clairement désignés, comme dans **HSS 5 107**⁵⁵ (A24) : cette liste de sept hommes, avec leur patronyme, se conclut par : “ces 7 hommes, combattants à chars, sont les gardiens du blé” (l. 9–12 : 7¹ LÚ.MEŠ *an-nu-tu₄ ra-kib* GIŠ.GIGIR.MEŠ *ma-aš-ša-ar-tu₄ ša ki-ba-ti*). G. Dosch a noté que l’un de ces hommes, Hutiya fils de Kalmaš-šura, fait partie des individus chargés, dans HSS 16 356, de surveiller l’entrepôt du jardin ; un autre, Enna-mati fils d’Ila-nišu, serait le frère de Šelwaya qui surveille l’entrepôt de l’intérieur de la ville. L’élite de la société et de l’armée est donc affectée à des tâches de surveillance de nature civile, mais qui concernent des biens fondamentaux pour la population.

La surveillance des produits agricoles se retrouve, dans un contexte assez lacunaire, dans l’une des déclarations contre le maire corrompu Kušši-harbe, **HSS 13 286**⁵⁶ (L2). Un certain Hašip-apu semble faire une déposition à propos d’orge, que Kušši-harbe a peut-être tenté de détourner ; il aurait en tout cas demandé que cette orge soit placée sous bonne garde (“place des gardes pour l’orge”, l. 14–15 : ŠE.MEŠ *ma-aš-ša-re-e [šu]-ši-[ib]-šu-nu-ti-mi*), et cette histoire de surveillance de l’orge doit revenir un peu plus loin dans le document (l. 27 : [ŠE(.MEŠ) *ma-ša]-ar-ru-ti*).

4.3 Les gardes des forêts

Deux documents mentionnent des gardiens de “forêts”, peut-être de bosquets, qui faisaient partie du paysage rural du royaume.⁵⁷ Il s’agit de surveiller un territoire, probablement pour y éviter les coupes illicites et les vols de bois, documentés par des procès.⁵⁸

⁵⁴Lion, 2000 : 152, n° 105 et Lion, à paraître.

⁵⁵Translittération et traduction : Dosch, 2009 : 93, n° 20.

⁵⁶Translittération et traduction : Maidman, 2010 : 119–120, n° 52.

⁵⁷Zaccagnini, 1979 : 12–14 et Schneider–Ludorff, 2002 : 119–122.

⁵⁸Dans les procès, les vols sont cependant commis dans des vergers, GIŠ.KIRI₆, et non dans des bosquets, GIŠ.TIR. C’est le cas dans trois tablettes découvertes dans la maison de Šilwa-Teššub, le fils du roi, faisant état de coupes d’arbres et de vols de bois, de nuit, dans un verger de son père Hišmi-Teššub (EN 9/1 437, provenance inconnue), puis dans les siens,

HSS 13 315⁵⁹ (L2) est une liste d'objets en bois, dont il est précisé à la fin qu'elle constitue l'*iškaru*, la livraison obligatoire, de la ville de Nuzi, que "les [g]ardes des forêts ont apportée [a]u mois *šehali* [d]e Teššub" (l. 27–30 : LÚ.MEŠ [m]a-aš-ša-ar ša GIŠ.TIR.MEŠ [i-n]a ITI-hi še-ha-li [š]a dIM ú-bi-lu-ni). Ces hommes ont donc aussi une responsabilité économique puisqu'ils doivent surveiller la livraison de bois et probablement la fabrication d'objets en bois : si tous les termes employés ne sont pas clairs, du fait des cassures du texte et parce que certains mots sont rares, il est question par exemple de boîtes ou plateaux en bois pour le pain et pour la viande, ce qui suppose des commandes particulières aux artisans.

Cela est confirmé par **JEN 495**⁶⁰ (Maison de Kizzuk, pièce 11), une brève lettre écrite par Šar-Teššub à [T]urar-Teššub, "[le ga]rde de la forêt" (l. 2 : [LÚ EN].NU.UN GIŠ.TIR), pour lui demander de rendre rapidement des poutres qui ont été emportées par un certain Hutiya. Le garde Turar-Teššub est le fils d'Akip-tašenni et le petit-fils de Tehip-Tilla.⁶¹

5 Des gardes professionnels ?

Y avait-il des gardes professionnels, ou du moins des personnes pouvant être recrutées plus souvent que d'autres pour assurer la surveillance de territoires, de bâtiments ou de biens ? L'identité des gardes est souvent difficile à établir, lorsque leur nom seul est mentionné, sans patronyme ni autre indication, car les cas d'homonymie sont nombreux à Nuzi. Dans la mesure où il est possible de les identifier, la réponse est nuancée.

Par exemple **HSS 15 284**⁶² (temple, G73) donne une liste de vingt-quatre gardes, répartis en huit détachements de trois, mais sans préciser ce qu'ils gardent. La profession de quatre d'entre eux est indiquée : il y a deux médecins (l. 5 et 16), un charpentier (l. 14) et un berger (l. 15). Ces métiers ne les prédisposent pas à monter la garde et leur recrutement semble conjoncturel. De même, dans **HSS 15 57** (ci-dessus § 3.2), si la présence du *šangû* est attendue pour surveiller le sanctuaire d'Ištar de Nuzi, celle d'un tisserand l'est moins.

En revanche, la garde des portes urbaines est un métier à part entière, et les "gardes des forêts" (§ 4.3) ont peut-être aussi un emploi pérenne. Certaines

HSS 9 7 (A26) et HSS 9 141 (A26). Translittération et traduction de HSS 9 7 : Hayden, 1962 : 158–160.

⁵⁹Copie : Lacheman, 1939 : 156 ; photographie : CDLI P408504.

⁶⁰Translittération et traduction : Zaccagnini, 1979 : 13.

⁶¹Ce point a été vu par Eichler, 1973 : 124. Sur ce personnage voir aussi Fadhil, 1983 : 137–138.

⁶²Translittération et traduction : Lion dans Lion / Stein, 2016 : 45–47, n° 6.

personnes ayant des fonctions de commandement, militaire ou civil, comme les *emantuhlu*, semblent toutes désignées pour surveiller les portes de la ville ou des temples (HSS 16 380, § 2.2 et 3.2). La prosopographie montre que certains d'entre eux gardent aussi les entrepôts : Ataya fils d'Ariya et Arih-hamanna fils de Šukri-Teššub, connus comme *emantuhlu* par HSS 16 380, apparaissent également, sans ce titre, dans HSS 16 356 (l. 12 et 14; § 4.1);⁶³ un autre garde présent dans HSS 16 356 : 29, Hutiya fils d'Utaya, est lui aussi *emantuhlu*, d'après HSS 5 77 : 2.⁶⁴ Quant à Pal-Teya fils d'Alippiya (HSS 16 380 : 1), il assure la garde d'une maison (HSS 13 242 : 1, § 3.3). Il en va de même des *rākib narkabti*, les combattants à char, que l'on trouve aux portes de la ville (JEN 358, § 2.2), du palais (HSS 15 68, § 3.1), ou affectés à la garde du blé (HSS 5 107, § 4.2) et, par recoupements prosopographiques, à la garde des entrepôts, comme dans le cas de Hutiya fils de Kalmaš-šura (qui garde le blé dans HSS 5 107 : 1 et un entrepôt dans HSS 16 356 : 9; § 4.1). Akap-tukke fils de Kakki, en faction au temple d'Ištar dans HSS 15 57 : 1 (§ 3.2), est *rākib narkabti* d'après HSS 13 6 : 22.⁶⁵

Enfin il faut évoquer un cas particulier, mais problématique. Dans les archives du fils du roi, Šilwa-Teššub, se trouve une liste de "57 femmes de Nuzi", HSS 14 642⁶⁶ (A23). Certaines sont des travailleuses, d'autres sont attribuées comme servantes à différentes dames de la famille du prince. Un groupe de onze noms féminins serait suivi de la mention *maššarti* (l. 37 : **m[a? -a]š? -'ša' ? -a[r? -t]i -i**, collations de G. Wilhelm) : si la lecture proposée est exacte, ces femmes auraient une fonction de gardes. Que peuvent-elles garder ? On pense évidemment aux quartiers d'habitation des femmes dans la demeure du prince, de fait de l'existence de dix-sept femmes portières dans le palais de Mari.⁶⁷ Mais c'est une mention unique à Nuzi.

Conclusion

Lorsqu'il y a des précisions sur ce qui est gardé à Nuzi, on retrouve toutes les catégories proposées dans le titre du colloque : sécurité de la vie (protection des personnes), de la propriété (des biens) et de l'État (territoire du royaume, bâtiments officiels). Les biens mentionnés sont cependant souvent ceux de l'État, et les personnes sont soit des membres de la famille royale

⁶³Sur Arih-hamanna, voir Kendall, 1974 : 121–122.

⁶⁴Dosch, 2009 : 79–80, n° 5, et 195.

⁶⁵Pour une liste plus complète des *rākib narkabti*, permettant d'établir des recoupements prosopographiques, voir Dosch, 2009 : 185–219.

⁶⁶Wilhelm, 1980 : 184–186 = AdŠ 60.

⁶⁷Ziegler, 1999 : 110–112.

(le fils du roi), soit celles dont le roi demande la protection. Cela tient à un biais de la documentation, puisque les sources utilisées proviennent pour la plupart du palais, ou de bâtiments où ont été découvertes des tablettes d'origine officielle.

La majorité des tablettes de Nuzi est issue d'archives privées, mais ces documents renseignent peu sur la sécurité du fait de leur nature : la plupart sont des contrats et, en fait de protection, on y trouve seulement l'indication de pénalités à verser en cas de non exécution ou de rupture de l'accord. Les propriétaires devaient surveiller eux-mêmes leurs biens, sans passer par le recrutement de gardes. Les procès montrent que les risques de vols, parfois avec effraction, étaient réels, mais il font état de voleurs isolés, non de bandes ; la majorité des litiges porte sur la propriété foncière.

Si l'on revient aux préoccupations de la sphère officielle, on a vu que des détachements de quelques hommes suffisaient pour garder des personnages importants, des bâtiments, des portes de ville, ou des zones entières du territoire. En dehors de la fin de la période, où les habitants du royaume ont eu à souffrir des attaques assyriennes, l'insécurité et la criminalité ne semblent pas avoir menacé gravement les habitants du royaume.

Bibliographie

- Abrahami, P. / Lion, B., 2023: "Les fonctions des rois d'Arraphe d'après leurs édits et leurs lettres". In M. Béranger / F. Nebiolo / N. Ziegler (eds.): *Dieux, rois et capitales dans le Proche-Orient ancien. Compte rendu de la LXVe Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale (Paris, 8–12 juillet 2019)*, Publications de l'Institut du Proche-Orient ancien du Collège de France 5. Leuven / Paris / Bristol. Pp. 289–311.
- Al-Khalesi, Y. M., 1970: "Tell al-Fakhar. Report on the First Season's Excavations". *Sumer* 26, 109–126.
- 1971: "Tell al-Fakhar (Kurruhani), a *dintu*-Settlement. Excavation Report". *Assur* 6/1, 1977, 1–42.
- Cassin, E., 1982a: "Heur et malheur du *hazannu* (Nuzi)". In A. Finet (ed.): *Les pouvoirs locaux en Mésopotamie et dans les régions adjacentes. Colloque organisé par l'Institut des Hautes Études de Belgique, 28 et 29 janvier 1980*. Bruxelles: Institut des Hautes Études de Belgique. Pp. 98–113.
- 1982b: "Le document HSS XV, 1". In A. Finet (ed.): *Les pouvoirs locaux en Mésopotamie et dans les régions adjacentes. Colloque organisé par l'Institut des Hautes Études de Belgique, 28 et 29 janvier 1980*. Bruxelles: Institut des Hautes Études de Belgique. Pp. 114–117.
- Chambon, G., 2018: *Forilegium marianum XV. Les archives d'Ilu-kân. Gestion et comptabilité du grain dans le palais de Mari*. Mémoires de N.A.B.U. 19. Paris: Société pour l'Étude du Proche-Orient Ancien.
- Chow, W. W.-K., 1973: *Kings and Queens of Nuzi*. Ph.D. dissertation. Brandeis University.
- Dassow, E. von, 2017: "Texts from Nuzi". In K. Lawson Younger Jr. (ed.): *The Context of Scripture vol. 4, Supplements*. Leiden / Boston: Brill. Pp. 119–129.
- Deller, K. / Fadhil, A., 1972: "NIN.DINGIR.RA/*ēntu* in Texten aus Nuzi und Kurruhani". *Mesopotamia* 7, 193–213.
- Dosch G., 2009: "Zur Struktur des Gesellschaft des Königreichs Arraphe: Texte über die Streitwagenfahrer (*rākib narkabti*)". In G. Wilhelm (ed.): *General Studies and Excavations at Nuzi* 11/2. Studies on the Civilization and Culture of Nuzi and the Hurrians 18. Bethesda. Pp. 71–228.
- Durand, J.-M., 1987: "L'organisation de l'espace dans le palais de Mari: le témoignage des textes". In E. Lévy (ed.): *Le système palatial en Orient, en*

- Grèce et à Rome. Actes du colloque de Strasbourg, 19–22 juin 1985.* Strasbourg. Pp. 39–110.
- Eichler B. L., 1973: *Indenture at Nuzi. The Personal tidennūtu Contract and its Mesopotamian Analogues.* Yale Near Eastern Researches 5. New Haven / Londres: Yale University Press.
- Fadhil, A., 1983: *Studien zur Topographie und Prosopographie der Provinzstädte des Königreichs Arraphē.* Baghdader Forschungen 6. Mainz: Philipp von Zabern.
- Fales, M., 2011: “*Maṣṣartu: The Observation of Astronomical Phenomena in Assyria (7th Century BC)*”. In E. M. Corsini (ed.): *The Inspiration of Astronomical Phenomena VI.* ASP Conference Series 44. San Francisco: Astronomical Society of the Pacific.
- Fincke, J., 1993: *Die Orts- und Gewässernamen der Nuzi-Texte.* Répertoire Géographique des Textes Cunéiformes 10. Wiesbaden: Dr Ludwig Reichert.
- Garfinkel, S., 2020: “*Violence and State Power in Early Mesopotamia*”. In G. G. Fagan / L. Fibiger / M. Hudson / M. Trundle (eds.): *The Cambridge World History of Violence, vol. 1. The Prehistoric and Ancient Worlds.* Cambridge. Pp. 219–237.
- Gordon, C. H., 1936: “*Nuzi Tablets Relating to Theft*”. *Orientalia Nova Series* 5, 305–330.
- Hayden, R.E., 1962: *Court Procedure at Nuzu.* Ph.D. dissertation. Brandeis University.
- Jankowska, N., 1969: “*Communal Self-Government and the King of the State of Arrapha*”. *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 12, 233–282.
- Justel, J. J., 2020: “*Taxation and Management of Resources: the Case of Nuzi*”. In J. Mynářová / S. Alivernini (eds.): *Economic Complexity in the Ancient Near East. Management of Resources and Taxation (Third–Second Millennium BC).* Prague. Pp. 341–361.
- Kendall, T., 1974: *Warfare and Military Matters in the Nuzi Tablets.* Ph.D. dissertation. Brandeis University.
- Kolinski, R., 2001: *Mesopotamian dimātu of the Second Millennium BC.* BAR International Series 1004. Oxford.
- Lacheman, E. R., 1939: “*Nuziana II*”. *Revue d'Assyriologie* 36, 113–219.

- Lion, B., 2000: "Les textes judiciaires du royaume d'Arrapha". In F. Joannès (ed.): *Rendre la justice en Mésopotamie. Archives judiciaires du Proche-Orient ancien (IIIe–Ier millénaires av. J.-C.)*. Saint-Denis. Pp. 141–162.
- 2008: "L'armée à Nuzi". In P. Abrahami / L. Battini (eds.): *Les armées du Proche-Orient ancien (III^e–I^{er} mill. av. J.-C.). Actes du colloque international organisé à Lyon les 1^{er} et 2 décembre 2006, Maison de l'Orient et de la Méditerranée*. BAR International Series 1855. Oxford. Pp. 71–81.
- 2010: "Les fortifications de Nuzi d'après une tablette du Louvre". In J. Fincke (ed.): *Festschrift für Gernot Wilhelm anlässlich seines 65. Geburtstages am 28. Januar 2010*. Dresden: ISLET. Pp. 203–216.
- 2017: "Les étrangers dans le royaume d'Arraphe". In F. Briquel-Chatonnet / C. Bonnet (eds.): *Ekklesia. Approches croisées d'histoire politique et religieuse. Mélanges offerts à Marie-Françoise Baslez. Pallas 104*, 135–153.
- à paraître: "The Judicial Archives of the Kingdom of Arraphe". In S. Démare-Lafont / D. Fleming (eds.): *Judicial Decisions in Mesopotamia. Writings from the Ancient World*. Atlanta.
- Lion, B. / Stein, D., 2001: *The Pula-hali Family Archives. Studies on the Civilization and Culture of Nuzi and the Hurrians 11*. Bethesda: CDL Press.
- 2016: *The tablets from the Temple Precinct at Nuzi*. Harvard Semitic Series 65. Bethesda: CDL Press.
- Löhnert, A., 2015: "Aspects of Royal Authority and Local Competence: A Perspective from Nuzi". In A. Archi (ed.): *Tradition and Innovation in the Ancient Near East. Proceedings of the 57th Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale at Rome 4–8 July 2011*. Winona Lake. Pp. 335–344.
- Maidman, M. P., 2010: *Nuzi Texts and Their Uses as Historical Evidence*. Writings from the Ancient World 18. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature.
- 2011a: "Nuzi, The Club of the Great Powers, and the Chronology of the Fourteenth Century". *KASKAL* 8, 77–139.
- 2011b: "Tracing the Course of the Arrapha-Assyria War: A Proposal". In G. Frame / E. Leichty / K. Sonik / J. Tigay / S. Tinney (eds.): *A Common Cultural Heritage. Studies on Mesopotamia and the Biblical World in Honor of Barry L. Eichler*. Bethesda. Pp. 207–217.
- 2020: *Life in Nuzi's Suburbs. Text Editions from Private Archives (JEN 834–881)*. *Antichistica* 26. *Studi orientali* 9. Venezia: Ca' Foscari.
- 2021: "'This Tablet is Nuzi's': Towers, Gates, and Preparations for War". *KASKAL* 18, 65–88.

- May, N. N., 2013: "Gates and Their Functions in Mesopotamia and Ancient Israel". In N. N. May / U. Steinert (eds.): *The Fabric of Cities. Aspects of Urbanism, Urban Topography, and Society in Mesopotamia, Greece and Rome. Culture and History of the Ancient Near East* 68. Leiden / Boston. Pp. 77–121.
- Mayer, W., 1978: *Nuzi-Studien I. Die Archive des Palastes und die Prosopographie der Berufe*. *Alter Orient und Altes Testament* 205/1. Kevelaer / Neukirchen-Vluyn.
- Mönninghoff, H., 2020: *Der Palast in Nuzi. Studien zur formalen Struktur des Palastgebäudes und den Funktionen der Palastinstitution*. *Schriften zur Vorderasiatischen Archäologie* 18. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz.
- Müller, M., 1968: *Die Erlässe und Instruktionen aus dem Lande Arrapha. Ein Beitrag zur Rechtsgeschichte des Alten Vorderen Orients*. Inauguraldissertation. Karl-Marx-Universität Leipzig.
- Negri Scafa, P., 1992: "Scribes locaux et itinérants dans le royaume d'Arrapha". In D. Charpin / F. Joannès (eds.): *La circulation des biens, des personnes et des idées dans le Proche-Orient ancien. Actes de la XXXVIII^e Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale (Paris, 8–10 juillet 1991)*. Paris. Pp. 235–240.
- 1998: "Gates in the Texts of the City of Nuzi". In D. I. Owen / G. Wilhelm (eds.): *General Studies and Excavations at Nuzi* 10/1. *Studies on the Civilization and Culture of Nuzi and the Hurrians* 9. Bethesda. Pp. 139–162.
- 2006: "Gli archivi amministrativi di Nuzi e la loro dislocazione. Sedi pubbliche e sedi private". In C. Mora / P. Piacentini (eds.), *L'ufficio e il documento. I luoghi, i modi, gli strumenti dell'amministrazione in Egitto e nel Vicino Oriente antico, 17–19 febbraio 2005*. Milano. Pp. 299–312.
- 2009: "Administrative Procedures in the Texts from the House of Zike, Son of Ar-Tirwi, at Nuzi". In G. Wilhelm (ed.): *General Studies and Excavations at Nuzi* 11/2. *In Honor of David I. Owen on the Occasion of his 65th Birthday, October 28, 2005*. *Studies on the Civilization and Culture of Nuzi and the Hurrians* 18. Bethesda. Pp. 437–477.
- 2021: "To Be Guilty at Nuzi". In K. De Graef / A. Goddeeris (eds.), *Law and (Dis)Order in the Ancient Near East. Proceedings of the 59^e Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale Held at Ghent, Belgium, 15–19 July 2013*. University Park. Pp. 208–218.
- Parpola, S. / Porter, M., 2001: *The Helsinki Atlas of the Near East in the Neo-Assyrian Period*. Chebeague Island: Casco Bay Assyriological Institute / Helsinki: The Neo-Assyrian Text Corpus Project.

- Radner, K., 2006: "Provinz. C. Assyrien". In *Reallexikon der Assyriologie* 11, 42–68.
- Schneider-Ludorff H., 2002: "Das Mobiliar nach den Texten von Nuzi". In D. I. Owen / G. Wilhelm (eds.): *General Studies and Excavations at Nuzi 10/3. Studies on the Civilization and Culture of Nuzi and the Hurrians* 12. Bethesda. Pp. 115–149.
- 2009: "Die Amme nach Texten aus Nuzi". In G. Wilhelm (ed.): *General Studies and Excavations at Nuzi 11/2. Studies on the Civilization and Culture of Nuzi and the Hurrians* 18. Bethesda. Pp. 479–489.
- Starr, R. F. S., 1937: *Nuzi, volume 2, Plates and Plans*. Cambridge (Mass.): Harvard University Press.
- 1939: *Nuzi, volume 1, Text*. Cambridge (Mass.): Harvard University Press.
- Stein, D., 1993a: *Das Archiv des Šilwa-Teššup, Heft 8. The Seals Impressions (Text)*. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz.
- 1993b: *Das Archiv des Šilwa-Teššup, Heft 9. The Seals Impressions (Catalogue)*. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz.
- Wilhelm G., 1980: *Das Archiv des Šilwa-Teššup, Heft 2. Rationen Listen I*. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz.
- 1985: *Das Archiv des Šilwa-Teššup, Heft 3, Rationen Listen II*. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz.
- Zaccagnini, C., 1979: *The Rural Landscape of the Land of Arraphe*. Roma: Università di Roma – Istituto di Studi del Vicino Oriente.
- 2016: "The Last Parades of the King of Nuzi". *Kaskal* 13, 21–56.
- 2020: "Pump and Circumstance at Nuzi, on the Eve of the End". *Kaskal* 17, 141–210.
- Ziegler, N., 1999: *Le Harem de Zimrî-Lîm. Mémoires de NABU* 5. Florilegium Marianum IV. Paris: Société pour l'étude du Proche-Orient ancien.

What do you expect from your country? From the Sumerian King List to the Last Words of Assyrian Governors, before the End

Maria Grazia Masetti-Rouault & Ilaria Calini

1 Introduction

Today, perhaps as never before, our generations born and raised in democratic “Western” countries after the end of World War 2 have the opportunity to feel, reflect and discuss the limits of the current “security” situation. A deeper awareness of the conditions that determine our presence in the world finally makes us doubt the likelihood of a future for humanity. Some of us who have so far unscrupulously exploited the wealth and leisure of life in the post-war period still trust in the will of human beings to survive, confident that states and sciences will find solutions to deal with the approaching catastrophes. Others, often among the younger ones, read recent events as signs of an apocalyptic context that is already real, beyond the possibility of a global conversion to better ways of living – and, of course, beyond any messianic intervention.

So we are in the right place to turn to the past and see how other cultures in other historical eras have faced the same kind of problems.¹ Admittedly, this is perhaps the first time that climate and environmental crises have been

¹We would like to thank the organisers of this congress for inviting us to share our reflections.

identified as the most dangerous enemies for the survival of our species, societies, and cultures, replacing in this capacity the invasions of savage humans, monsters or barbarians coming from other landscapes and/or following other ideologies. While capitalism, imperialism and colonisation are sometimes evoked as triggers for apocalyptic situations, the next collapse seems to have already become a “natural” event, so that neither political structures nor economic changes can reverse ongoing processes. To balance such a sense of danger, insecurity and even panic, citizens are asked to evaluate their personal behaviour and consumption choices, or to accept their “crime and punishment”.

2 Catastrophic narratives and the continuity of kingship

In order to discuss and represent “end of the world” situations in which every form of social, individual and economic security fails and disappears, since the end of the third millennium BCE the ancient cultures of the Near East have introduced both patterns of thought: wars and invasions on the one hand and catastrophic natural events on the other. The collapse of the Akkadian Empire, an already mythologised supreme form of beauty, balance, strength and order, was developed in the literary tradition as a narrative about the *hybris* of a king who no longer acknowledges divine authority, and it was depicted as a consequence of the invasion of the Mesopotamian plain by mountain peoples.² Somewhat later, in the same atmosphere, the same intellectual milieu may have elaborated the *Atra-ḥasīs* poem.³ In this text, the extinction of the first humanity and the environment in which it lived occurs through the Great Flood decreed by Enlil, the head of the pantheon. In both cases, the global crisis is ultimately triggered by disloyal or inappropriate behaviour on the part of the kings who govern these societies. They were unable to fulfil the task for which they had been appointed, namely to regulate the relationship between gods and humans – even though in *Atra-ḥasīs* story the reason for Enlil’s irrational anger is explicitly motivated by the unruly, free attitude of the growing mass of humanity, which generates *hubūru*, the sound of their agency, and natural capacity to act.⁴ In both situations, the divine response corresponds to the challenge: it is a violent incursion into the organised world of an unlimited mass from above – barbarians from the mountains and water from the sky – impossible to withstand.

² Attinger, 1984; Cooper, 1983.

³ Lambert / Millard, 1999; Foster, 2005: 227–280.

⁴ Rendu-Loisel, 2016: 97–99; Cassin, 1968: 36.

These catastrophic narratives, which seem to destroy any sense of security and trust in institutions as well as in nature itself and in the attitude of the gods, actually support a different ideological interpretation. Regardless of their crimes, the continuation of society is always ultimately guaranteed, partly because the gods need a living and functioning humanity in order to survive. The very existence of these stories testifies to the reconstruction after punishment. History must go on; present and future remain open and secure, especially because kingship still exists – in the form of the dynasty of Ur III and later the Amorite powers. The description of the collapse, the astonishment and finally the lamentations it evokes already announce positive “works in progress” to restore society and culture to their previous state,⁵ even to improve them, under the impetus of new powers and other political identities. New kings are always keen to revive old models while offering the image of an affordable future for all and sundry.

Royal inscriptions, which are meant to document the legitimacy and right of each king to rule,⁶ are not informed by an interest in the continuity of the institution itself, considered as established forever. Rather, their historical perspective is limited to the duration of a reign or dynasty⁷ and to armed conflicts between contemporary powers. Although some texts invoke the imperial and cosmic authority of the protagonist that spans time, only the constant commitment of kings to restore, enlarge and improve ancient buildings, temples, palaces, and city walls shows an echo of concern for preservation and stability.⁸

The presence and visibility, even from a distance, of monumental buildings in the urban landscapes⁹ possibly conveyed a sense of permanence and security to the entire population, not just the urban elites, combined with a form of cultural identification.¹⁰ For others who lived in the steppe or in the mountains, identity and hope for survival depended on various elements – from the features of the landscape to kinship and tribal ties. However, these more intangible structures have left little or no trace, giving the impression that in Mesopotamia only the city, state and kingship provided justice, balance and freedom. The logic that emphasises the survival and continuity of kingship beyond interruptions and changes – and thus offers good reasons to trust the system – is more evident in non-narrative texts such as the king lists, from the Sumerian to the Assyrian ones, as well

⁵Michalowski, 1989.

⁶Fales, 1981; Tadmor, 1997.

⁷On the process of creating genealogical legitimacy, see Pongratz-Leisten, 1997.

⁸Masetti-Rouault, 2019: 149. See also Masetti-Rouault, 2004.

⁹Harmansah, 2013; Leick, 2001; Osborne, 2015; Van de Mieroop, 1997.

¹⁰Liverani, 1979.

as in other compositions organised according to a diachronic, chronological order – even if fictional.¹¹ The *Sumerian King List*¹² is certainly the best example of an intellectual production that reflects this need. It anchors the real beginning of Mesopotamian history not at creation but at the landing of kingship from above, the realm of the gods, that transformed humanity into a series of cities/states. Without theological explanations, the *Sumerian King List* shows by its own structure how this institution, which moved through a series of cities over time, was embodied by different dynasties – all of whom presumably correctly looked after the welfare of society.¹³ The reason for the change of location and leader is never quoted, but it can be attributed to a human issue, a military defeat, with an implicit reference to royal inscriptions and other chronicle texts. Only in two cases – the Flood and the Fall of Akkad – does the list pause in the sequence of events. The mention of the Flood is astonishing in that this extraordinary natural and climatic phenomenon is not presented in its details: its quotation was enough to evocate the crisis. Its effects required a new political beginning: kingship had to descend from heaven once more.¹⁴ The Fall of Akkad, on the other hand, was closer to the authors of the *Sumerian King List* and was therefore described in terms of its political impact, highlighting the confusion created in the historical sequence by the uncertainty about the identity of the king himself.¹⁵ After the fall of the empire, several names emerge, including a Gutian dynasty against which the Ur III dynasty had to fight to assert its right to the Akkadian inheritance.¹⁶

Unlike the *Sumerian King List*, both literary traditions about the Flood and the Fall of Akkad acknowledge the reasons for the destruction of society and the state as decisions of the gods, but they also emphasise the role of the kings who were involved in this process. Naram-Sin is portrayed in the texts as an arrogant, even criminal character, while Atra-ḫasis, though following the advice and secret plan of the god Ea, is unable to save his people from drowning. Later in the story, he finally represents the possible model for the second kingship descended from heaven. By reminding the gods of their dependence on the services of humans and assuring them of the continuity of human labour and cults, Atra-ḫasis is able to make a pact with Enlil so that there will be no more apocalypses, no more floods: the gods will never again attempt to destroy the whole world. But the literary

¹¹Glassner, 1993.

¹²Jacobsen, 1939.

¹³Michalowski, 1983.

¹⁴Jacobsen, 1939: 76–77 (col. i, 39–42).

¹⁵Jacobsen, 1939: 112–115 (col. vii, 1–7); Cooper, 1993. On this general issue, see Charvát / Maříková Vlčková, 2010.

¹⁶Jacobsen, 1939: 116–121 (col. vii, 25 – col. viii, 3).

tradition of the later standard Babylonian version of the Epic of Gilgamesh shows that, while humanity is now certain to live forever and to be freed from the fear of the end of the future, the gain is not obvious. A kind of birth control through high newborn mortality and an “early” death for every adult are now introduced into human life, to limit the mass of the livings. Atra-ḥasis himself, for all his wisdom, has finally lost his royal function. Now that he is immortal by Enlil’s decree, he disappears from history, while the new society is rebuilt in a different atmosphere, in search of prosperity for all.¹⁷

3 Alternative visions of the ideology of kingship in 2nd millennium Mesopotamia

The Amorite, Old Babylonian culture and civilisation developed in this perhaps optimistic, if not euphoric, historical and intellectual context, sustained by a new vision of life and social expectations, to which the writing of the ‘Code’ of Hammurabi bears particular witness.¹⁸ The text shows a strong interest in the right of every “citizen” to lead a better life, to demand and receive justice guaranteed by the authority of the king. Depending on the administration and power of kings, state structures were reshaped as instruments to ensure order and balance in society so that everyone could and did feel safe and protected. It is possible that the Amorite concept of social management, which emerged in extra-urban institutions and was designed to integrate different populations and economies,¹⁹ eventually enabled and even encouraged the development of economic plans and systems that better connected the Mesopotamian world with other regions, centres and peripheries, mountains, steppes and river valleys. The wealth produced by this economic system supported a civilisational transformation, but the new culture did not reject the past: on the contrary, it strove to show that nothing of tradition had been lost. Continuity in every aspect of life was assured even after the fall of the Ur III empire. However, from the Old Babylonian period onwards, a new meaning was given to the actions of kings that related directly to the protection of citizens and their rights, at least for some groups of the population. For example, the royal decrees called *andurārum*,²⁰ the extraordinary cancellation of debts, show the explicit willingness of the state to intervene and “save” part of the population

¹⁷Masetti-Rouault, 2009: 3–7.

¹⁸Finet, 1973; Foster, 2005: 126–135.

¹⁹Burke, 2021.

²⁰Charpin, 1987; 1990.

in a difficult economic situation, even if not everyone, like the “bankers” and financiers, fully appreciated this step.

We can neither know nor imagine what the “real people” who lived scattered in the Syro-Mesopotamian world thought of this alleged atmosphere of “new age” and political change “after the Flood”. Given the cycles of conflict and war that the relations between states throughout the Middle and Late Bronze periods, we certainly cannot believe in the golden age of peace and progress that was to be expected after Atra-ḫašis’s agreement with the gods. Nothing in the royal ideology of the states during this long period suggests that the military activities, often referred to as the main undertakings of kings, were understood as part of the royal function of protecting the people and the country. They are not described as a kind of “policing” presence to ensure local security, nor is the king’s war decided to defend society against invasions or ethnic movements, or simply to improve the economy and way of life. Rather, the message conveyed by the royal media is a demonstration of the king’s power and legitimacy, as his ultimate victory is a positive sign of the gods’ approval and support.

It is still not clear to what extent the same royal power was seen either as the force that ensured order, security, and development for all social classes, or, on the contrary, as an oppressive and exploitative presence that demanded taxes, corvées and conscription, to be avoided as much as possible. However, from the Late Bronze Age, especially towards the end of the second millennium BCE and up to the Iron Age II, there are some literary texts that may have been written by the same intellectual elites that formed the royal and political chancelleries where these points were discussed. They expressed a profound critique of the ideological, religious and moral system, although it is difficult to assess to what extent such a polemical attitude was widespread among the population beyond the elites. In this respect, the Standard Babylonian version of the Gilgamesh epic²¹ can also be understood as an attack on the ideology of kingship as well as on the philosophical positions of the Atra-ḫašis poem, for the gods do not provide what they seem to have promised in terms of security and happiness. The epic not only criticises the royal wars and conquests, such as the expedition to the Cedar Forest,²² which turns out to be a murderous but futile attempt by the king of Uruk to improve his image and gain fame and recognition. Even in the case of the execution of the “Bull of Heaven”,²³ which is presented as a heroic intervention to free Uruk from the effects

²¹George, 2003.

²²George, 2003: 602–615; 2014.

²³George, 2003: 624–629.

of a catastrophic (climatic) crisis, a drought, the poem ultimately shows Gilgamesh's responsibility for the event itself, his conflictual relationship with Ishtar.²⁴ A strong criticism is also made of the agreement Atra-ḫasis made with Enlil, who accepted an early death in human life. Gilgamesh's protest is clear: death destroys the meaning of life as well as any kind of security, contentment, trust and joy in relationships, even for a king. It was a terrible mistake to allow this for human fate: this conclusion appears in the final tablet of the poem, in the dialogue between the two "wicked" kings who have failed their people, abandoning their cities. Although there are no immediate solutions, the narrative suggests another way of looking at life and security, defined as a cultural and political knowledge capable of transcending nature, death, time, and religion. Back in Uruk, Gilgamesh writes down his experiences, what he has done and learned, a collective memory of the past for the people of the future.²⁵

The poem of the *Righteous Sufferer*,²⁶ particularly famous because its content was later integrated into biblical wisdom, sends the same kind of message, namely to find a way to limit and avoid the power of death and the power of those who can use it indefinitely – gods and kings, the same ones who were expected to provide life and security. The perspective now shifts from that of a king and a collective experience to a personal one: the sufferer is a successful representative of any Mesopotamian elite who suddenly sees his social standing, family connections, wealth and personal health wiped out by several evil attacks – for no apparent reason.²⁷ Destitute and alone in the ruins of his "castle", he still knows himself to be in the right and righteous, innocent of any offence or sin against the king and the gods, even though the sufferings he has to endure look like a punishment, an expression of god Marduk's judgement. He had applied in vain the traditional procedures of religion, cults, and science to find an explanation and then perhaps a solution or a remedy to restore his status with the help of the god. When death is near, dreams announce that Marduk has taken pity and suddenly restores all that has been robbed to him. The *Righteous Sufferer* is often considered a pietistic composition, apparently advising those who have lost all security to never stop trusting in the attention, care, and pardon that the gods eventually grant their faithful servants. In describing the terrible experiences of the sufferer, the text at the same time suggests to the readers never to feel too sure of their behaviour, to be ready to admit some guilt and accept the punishment: there is no other way out.

²⁴Abusch, 1986.

²⁵Masetti-Rouault, 2019: 152–153.

²⁶Annus / Lenzi, 2010; Foster, 2005: 392–409.

²⁷Masetti-Rouault, 2009: 2–3.

Notwithstanding the final celebration of the god – for Marduk is praised as “wise” and merciful²⁸ – the happy ending of the story does not seem to be good enough to restore trust in society and the king as well as in religion and the cults. If it is impossible for people to understand the intentions and logic of the gods, attempts to change their will are also fruitless. This narrative also implicitly suggests that humanity must find an alternative way to ensure its own future and security.

4 The making and unmaking of the world order

Against the background of such a critical attitude, the writing of the mythological and theological text *Enuma elish*²⁹ at the beginning of the Iron Age is an attempt to restructure the Old Babylonian conceptual system and to define a new kind of order. The kingship of Marduk is now based not only on his power and violence, but above all on the legitimisation of his status, which is formally recognised once and for all by the entire society represented in the narrative by the assembly of gods, even before the fight started. After his victory over the masses and chaos, by which he ensured the survival of the pantheon, Marduk, as king, has created a perfect, orderly world in which the gods are fully satisfied, and humans have their place by serving them: no more floods are needed to correct their relationship.³⁰

Thus, when apocalypses occur again and society is destroyed by political catastrophes, this must be due to a mismanagement of the divine government. The (human) king, who is responsible for the state, plays no role in the social tragedy: this point is strongly emphasised in the *Erra* poem.³¹ With this text, the Assyrian king Esarhaddon’s chancellery demonstrates that the unimaginable destruction of Babylon, its people, temples and gods, carried out by his father Sennacherib and described in his inscriptions as a Flood,³² was actually caused by the plan of the god Erra during his short-lived “coup d’état” against Marduk. Fortunately, reason triumphs over force, as god Ishum suggests, and we can assume that the rightful head of the pantheon will eventually return and restore order, just as Esarhaddon did, engaged in rebuilding all that had been destroyed in Babylonia by his father – as the audience well knew. This “novel” was probably written in the heyday of the Neo-Assyrian Empire to support Esarhaddon’s policies

²⁸Cf. for example *Ludlul* I 1–18; see Horowitz / Lambert, 2002.

²⁹Lambert, 2013: 3–134.

³⁰*En. el.* VI; cf. Lambert, 2013: 108–121.

³¹Cagni, 1969; Foster, 2005: 880–911.

³²See for example RINAP 3.2, No. 168: 36b–44a. On this issue, see Brinkman, 1983; 1984.

and ultimately the legitimacy of his kingship, which may also have been threatened by the “sin” of his father. In doing so, he was surely responding to accusations that criticised Sennacherib’s attack on Babylon.³³ The justification by the myth was intended to convince the general audience and appease the political opposition, but at the same time both the structure and the content of the poem show how deep the crisis was at this time and that there was complete uncertainty about its resolution, in Assyria too. The Babylonian urban society is depicted in the poem on the path of disintegration, starting from the family structures and bonds, involving all areas of cults, politics, and economy, possibly just like the Assyrian society.³⁴ The system of religious and ideological conceptions that gave legitimacy to state institutions and created a context in which people could live believing in the present as well as in the future was already weak, unstable and ready for overthrow. The *Erra* poem plays on the contrast between the narrative and the knowledge people had about recent events, showing that the “normal” alliance of kings and gods was broken – their roles were possibly reversed.³⁵ Marduk could not and did not stop the destruction of his city by Sennacherib, who had acted like Enlil, and the new king of the pantheon had to take some responsibility for the disaster. And since Sennacherib was eventually murdered by his “evil” sons, the myth also explains that his death had nothing to do with his “sin”³⁶ – because there was no (royal) sin at all. Seen in this light, his successor Esarhaddon had no reason to fear the consequences of his father’s actions, nor the lack of legitimacy of his own kingship.

5 Towards a conclusion: people’s security through Neo-Assyrian historiographical sources

In the Neo-Assyrian period, the late Assyrian kings, supported by their court, government, and army, gradually tried to achieve a new status, almost liberated from the authority of the gods, even if they insisted on choosing iconographic motifs that emphasised their dependence on the pantheon. Since the reign of Sargon II, these kings have wanted to show that they could control and protect their people, the Assyrians, in a more direct and autonomous way, not only by satisfying the needs of the gods, but also by using new scientific and technological means, especially related to the use

³³Masetti-Rouault, 2010; Franke, 2014.

³⁴Calini, in press; George, 2013.

³⁵Calini, 2018. See also Masetti-Rouault, 2019: 153.

³⁶Weaver, 2005.

of water. Because of the wealth they had acquired through the expansion of the empire, the Assyrian kings were able to change the landscape, intervene in natural and social processes and thus change the rules. Sennacherib, who claims to have used the waters of the Euphrates to drown Babylon, had also built a very long canal, introducing irrigation to a region where dry farming was the usual technique of agricultural production.³⁷ The king says his project changed the natural landscape also for the comfort of the farmers, who had to face the dangers of drought, so that they were no longer dependent on the will of the Storm's god.³⁸ His policy of combining irrigation with the construction of a new capital for the empire is also conveyed to as large an audience as possible through monumental reliefs on which he greets the gods in a reverent posture and prays to them, just as his father Sargon II had chosen to be depicted.³⁹

The coronation of his grandson Assurbanipal marks the beginning of an Edenic world that began in this way, thanks to the king's deep understanding of his function, and conforms to the model of happiness different from the one Atra-ḥasīs had received after the Flood, as a letter from a court intellectual to the king shows:

“A good reign – righteous days, years of justice; abundant rains, huge floods, a good exchange rate! The gods are appeased, there is much fear of God, the temples are full. The great gods of heaven and earth have become exalted in the time of the king, my lord.

The old men dance, the young men sing, the women and girls are merry and rejoice; women are married and given earrings; boys and girls are born, the births prosper.

The king, my lord, has revived the guilty one who was condemned to death; you have released the one who was in prison for many years. Those who were sick for many days have been made well; the hungry are satisfied; the parched are anointed with oil; the needy are covered with clothes.”⁴⁰

The king is now presented, instead of the gods, as the guarantor of the security and well-being of the whole people, but this function could apparently not yet be separated from his relationship with the divine – probably

³⁷Bagg, 2000; Van de Mierop, 2003; Fales / del Fabbro, 2014; Morandi-Bonacossi, 2018: 89–98; Reade, 1978; Ur, 2005.

³⁸Masetti-Rouault, 2018. On Assyrian building projects that changed the physical landscape of the empire, see also Smith, 2003: 180–183; Wilkinson et al., 2005.

³⁹Morandi Bonacossi, 2022.

⁴⁰SAA 10 226: ob. 9 – r. 3; Foster, 2005: 1015–1016.

because the kingship and the empire alone did not yet have enough authority and legitimacy to be trusted. Assyrians, aware of the reality of their situation, still resisted and did not accept that their security and survival depended only on the king and the palace. Gods and other religious ideas, cults and networks were still present and had a place in the administration of society. Even though internal revolts and civil wars are recorded in chronological texts and in some administrative letters and reports, awareness of the weakness, even crisis, of the state was systematically obscured and suppressed by the cultural production of the court, and it did not lead to an alternative political model or plan to survive. However, some texts written outside the Assyrian royal chancelleries show that this situation was real and perceptible even before the Sargonid period, and the foundation of the Neo-Assyrian Empire.

Around the middle of the 8th century BCE, the “new”, independent rulers of the region of “Suhu and Mari”, in the bend of the Euphrates valley downstream of the southern border of the Assyrian “province” of Laqû and upstream of the territory controlled by Babylon, asked their chancellery to compose a series of inscriptions modelled on the Assyrian ones. In these texts, the arrival at the “sheikh” Ninurta-kudurri-usur’s court of the Assyrian governor of the Laqû province Adad-da”ānu, who is portrayed as a miserable neighbour, is described with some irony and in great detail.⁴¹ The governor kisses the ground in front of Ninurta-kudurri-usur and asks for his help to ward off the dangerous attacks of Aramean clans roaming the area. The text reports the governor’s request and quotes his admission that without the sheikh’s support he will surely die, as neither imperial aid nor the gods are willing to save him. And he is right: the text dutifully adds later that even the powerful governor of the larger Assyrian province of Raṣappa, further north, had given up and avoided fighting the attackers:

Relying on their (own) strength, [the Ḫatallu (tribesmen), from the Sarugu (clan) to the Luḫuāyya (clan)] went on to the land of Laqû (and) conquered a hundred villages of the land of Laqû. They made countless spoils and turned the land of Laqû into a heap of ruins. Adad-da”ānu, the governor of the land of Laqû, came before me with four chariots (and) two hundred soldiers. He kissed the ground in front of me and then begged me (for help). I accepted his supplication.⁴²

⁴¹RIMB 2, Ninurta-kudurri-uṣur 02; <http://oracc.org/suhu/Q006212/>.

⁴²RIMB 2, Ninurta-kudurri-uṣur 02: i 27b – i 32; <http://oracc.org/suhu/Q006212/>.

This episode helps to better understand the feelings of another later Assyrian governor who settled at Tushan/Ziyaret Tepe in southern Turkey in the last days of the empire. When he responds to the order from the court to prepare his troops for military action against the invading Neo-Babylonian army, he offers a desperate picture of his administration: he is already alone, waiting for the enemy. Everyone else has left, abandoning him, the palace, the city, and the empire. Desperate, but still in his right mind, he too announces his imminent death, this time with no saviour nearby:

[Of all the horses, Assyrian (and) Aramaean scribes, cohort commanders, officials, craftsmen, coppersmiths, smiths, those who clean the tools (and) equipment, carpenters, bow makers, arrow makers, weavers, tailors (and) those who do the repairs – to whom shall I speak, what shall I say, what shall I do? [...]] Our [goal is] one. (So) am I a[lone] going to die? [...] Now not one of them is there. How can I command? [...] Death will come out of this! No one [will escape]. I am finished!⁴³

His message never left Tushan, so that was really the end. But where did all the other people go? Where did they find help, how did they manage to survive and live, after the war and the apocalypse of the empire? In a way, history continued, even though the empire, with its memory, culture, ideology, and religion, was quickly erased and disappeared from our view. Probably, unlike what we modern historians think, people's security has always depended on many other factors, ideas, social and political relations, experiences, and knowledge that we cannot see. Identifying them is the new frontier of our studies.

⁴³Parpola, 2008: 86–88 (No. 22).

Bibliography

- Abusch, T., 1986: "Ishtar's Proposal and Gilgamesh's Refusal: An Interpretation of "The Gilgamesh Epic", Tablet 6, Lines 1–79". *History of Religions* 26, No. 2, 143–187.
- Annus, A., / Lenzi, A., 2010: *Ludlul Bēl Nēmeqi: The Standard Babylonian Poem of the Righteous Sufferer*. State Archives of Assyria Cuneiform Texts VII. Helsinki.
- Attinger, P., 1984: "Remarques à propos de la "Malédiction d'Accad"". *Revue d'Assyriologie et d'archéologie Orientale* 78, No. 2, 99–121.
- Bagg, A. M., 2000: "Irrigation in Northern Mesopotamia: Water for the Assyrian Capitals (12th–7th centuries BC)". *Irrigation and Drainage System* 14, 301–324.
- Brinkman, J. A., 1983: "Through a Glass Darkly. Esarhaddon's Retrospects on the Downfall of Babylon". *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 103, No. 1, 35–42.
- 1984: *Prelude to Empire. Babylonian Society and Politics, 747–626 B.C.* Occasional Publications of the Babylonian Fund 7. Philadelphia.
- Burke, A. A., 2021: *The Amorite and the Bronze Age Near East: The Making of a Regional Identity*. Cambridge.
- Cagni, L., 1969: *L'Épopée de Erra*. Studi semitici 34. Roma.
- Calini, I., in press: "L'envers de l'endroit. La destruction comme déchirement de la trame sociale dans le poème d'Erra et dans les Travaux et les jours d'Hésiode". In I. Calini (ed.): *Déluges et autres destructions. Les récits de la fin en Méditerranée orientale ancienne*. Paris.
- 2018 : "Temporalité littéraire et devenir historique en Mésopotamie. Le cas du poème d'Erra". In C. Andrieu / S. Houdart (eds.): *La composition du temps. Prédications, événements, narrations historiques*. Colloques de la Maison Archéologie et Ethnologie, René-Ginouvès 15. Paris. Pp. 51–63.
- Cassin, E., 1968: *La splendeur divine. Introduction à l'étude de la mentalité mésopotamienne*. Paris : La Haye.
- Charpin, D., 1987: "Les Décrets Royaux à l'Époque Paléo-Babylonienne, à Propos d'un Ouvrage Récent". *Archiv für Orientforschung* 34, 36–44.
- 1990: "Les édits de «restauration» des rois babyloniens et leur application". In C. Nicolet (ed.): *Du pouvoir dans l'Antiquité: mots et réalités*. Cahiers du Centre Glotz 1. Pp. 13–24.

- Charvát, P. / Maříková Vlčková, P. (eds.), 2010: *Who Was King? Who Was Not King? The Rulers and the Ruled in the Ancient Near East*. Prague.
- Cooper, J. S., 1983: *The Curse of Agade*. Baltimore.
- Fales, F. M. (ed.), 1981: *Assyrian royal inscriptions: New horizons in literary, ideological, and historical analysis*. *Orientalis antiqui collectio XVII*. Roma.
- Fales, F. M. / del Fabbro, R., 2014: "Back to Sennacherib's Aqueduct at Jerwan: A Reassessment of the Textual Evidence". *Iraq* 76, 65–98.
- Finet, A., 1973: *Le code d'Hammurabi. Introduction, traduction et annotation*. Paris.
- Foster, B., 2005: *Before the Muses: An Anthology of Akkadian Literature*. 3rd ed. Bethesda, Maryland.
- Franke, S., 2014: "Der Zorn Marduks, Erras und Sanheribs. Zu Datierung und Funktion von "Erra und Išum"". In H. Neumann et al. (eds.): *Krieg und Frieden im Alten Vorderasien. 52^e Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale / International Congress of Assyriology and Near Eastern Archaeology, Münster, 17–21 July 2006*. *Alter Orient und Altes Testament* 401. Münster. Pp. 315–327.
- George, A., 2003: *The Babylonian Gilgamesh Epic: Introduction, Critical Edition and Cuneiform Texts*. Vol. 1–2. Oxford.
- 2013: "The Poem of Erra and Ishum: A Babylonian Poet's View of War". In H. Kennedy (ed.): *Warfare and Poetry in the Middle East*. London. Pp. 39–71.
- 2014: "Back to the Cedar Forest. The Beginning and End of Tablet V of the Standard Babylonian Epic of Gilgamesh". *Journal of Cuneiform Studies* 66, 69–90.
- Glassner, J.-J., 1993: *Chroniques mésopotamiennes*. Paris.
- Harmansah, Ö., 2013: *Cities and the Shaping of Memories in the Ancient Near East*. Cambridge.
- Horowitz, W. / Lambert, W. G., 2002: "A New Exemplar of Ludlul Bēl Nēmeqi Tablet I from Birmingham". *Iraq* 64, 237–245.
- Jacobsen, T., 1939: *The Sumerian King List*. *Assyriological Studies* 11. Chicago.
- Lambert, W. G., 2013: *Babylonian Creation Myths*. Winona Lake.
- Lambert, W. G. / Millard, A. R., 1999: *Atra-ḫasis: The Babylonian Story of the Flood*. Winona Lake (reprint of Oxford 1969).

- Leick, G., 2001: *Mesopotamia: The Invention of the City*. London.
- Liverani, M., 1979: "The ideology of the Assyrian empire". In M. T. Larsen (ed.): *Power and propaganda: A symposium on ancient empires*. Mesopotamia 7. Copenhagen. Pp. 297–318.
- Masetti-Rouault, M. G., 2004: " 'Pour le bien de mon peuple' : continuité et innovation dans l'idéologie du pouvoir au Proche-Orient à l'âge du Fer". In O. Casabonne / M. Mazoyer (eds.): *Studia Anatolica et Varia. Mélanges Offerts Au Professeur René Lebrun*. Paris. Pp. 113–132.
- 2009: "Les sentiments des dieux pour les hommes. Théologie et mythologie dans la littérature mésopotamienne". In S. H. Aufrère / M. Mazoyer (eds.): *Clémence et Châtiment*. Cahiers de KUBABA. Paris. Pp. 315–323.
- 2010: "Religions du monde syro-mésopotamien, 1, La mythologie mésopotamienne de l'âge du Fer : le poème d'Erra et Išum". *Annuaire de l'Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes (EPHE), Section des sciences religieuses* [En ligne], 117 (2008–2009), 125–127.
- 2018: "The King and the Canal. Development of a Literary Image in Assyrian Royal Inscriptions". In H. Kühne (ed.): *Water for Assyria*. Studia Chaburensia 7. Wiesbaden. Pp. 25–40.
- 2019: "Telling a Story, Giving the Time in Mesopotamia: A Literary Point of View". In P. Abrahami / L. Battini (eds.): *Ina ^dmarri u qan tuppi. Par la bêche et le stylet! Cultures et sociétés syro-mésopotamiennes. Mélanges offerts à Olivier Rouault*. Ancient Near Eastern Archaeology 5. Oxford. Pp. 147–156.
- Michalowski, P., 1983: "History as Charter: Some Observations on the Sumerian King List". *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 103, No. 1, 237–248.
- 1989: *The Lamentation over the Destruction of Sumer and Ur*. Mesopotamian Civilization 1. Winona Lake.
- Morandi Bonacossi, D., 2018: "Water for Nineveh. The Nineveh Irrigation System in the Regional Context of the 'Assyrian Triangle': A First Geoarchaeological Assessment". In H. Kühne (ed.): *Water for Assyria*. Studia Chaburensia 7. Wiesbaden. Pp. 77–116.
- 2022: "Irrigation and Landscape Commemoration in Northern Assyria. The Assyrian Canal and Rock Reliefs in Faïda (Kurdistan Region of Iraq): Preliminary Report on the 2019 Field Season". *Iraq* 84, 43–81.

- Osborne, J. F., 2015: "Ancient Cities and Power: The Archaeology of Urbanism in the Iron Age Capitals of Northern Mesopotamia". *International Journal of Urban Sciences* 19, No. 1, 7–19.
- Parpola, S., 2008: "Cuneiform Texts from Ziyaret Tepe (Tušan), 2002–2003". *SAAB XVII*, pp. 1–113, plates I–XXIII.
- Pongratz-Leisten, B., 1997: "Genealogien als Kulturtechnik zur Begründung des Herrschaftsanspruchs in Assyrien und Babylonien". *State Archives of Assyria Bulletin* 11, 75–108.
- Reade, J., 1978: "Studies in Assyrian Geography: Part I. Sennacherib and the Waters of Nineveh". *Revue d'Assyriologie et d'archéologie Orientale* 72, No. 1, 47–72.
- Render-Loisel, A.-C., 2016: *Les Chants du monde. Le paysage sonore de l'ancienne Mésopotamie*. Toulouse.
- RIMB 2 = Frame, G., 1995: *Rulers of Babylonia from the Second Dynasty of Isin to the End of Assyrian Domination (1157–612 B.C.)*. The Royal Inscriptions of Mesopotamia. Babylonian Periods, Vol. 2. Toronto / Buffalo / London.
- RINAP 3.2 = Grayson, A. K. / Novotny, J., 2014: *The Royal Inscriptions of Sennacherib, King of Assyria (704–681 BC), Part 2*. The Royal Inscriptions of the Neo-Assyrian Period, Vol. 3/2. Winona Lake.
- SAA 10 = Parpola, S., 1993: *Letters from Assyrian and Babylonian Scholars*. State Archives of Assyria 10. Helsinki.
- Smith, A. T., 2003: *The political landscape: Constellations of authority in early complex polities*. Berkeley.
- Tadmor, H. 1997: "Propaganda, literature, historiography: Cracking the code of the Assyrian royal inscriptions". In S. Parpola / R. Whiting (eds.): *Assyria 1995*. Helsinki. Pp. 325–338.
- Ur, J., 2005: "Sennacherib's Northern Assyrian Canals: New Insights from Satellite Imagery and Aerial Photography". *Iraq* 67, No. 1, 317–345.
- Van de Mieroop, M., 1997: *The Ancient Mesopotamian City*. New York.
- 2003: "Reading Babylon". *American Journal of Archaeology* 107, 257–275.
- Weaver, A., 2005: "The "Sin of Sargon" and Esarhaddon's Reconceptation of Sennacherib: A Study in Divine Will, Human Politics and Royal Ideology". *Iraq* 66: *Nineveh. Papers of the 49th Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale, Part One*, 61–66.

Wilkinson, T. J. / Ur, J. / Wilkinson, E. B. / Altaweel, M., 2005: "Landscape and settlement in the Neo-Assyrian empire". *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 340, 23–56.

The Protection of Goods in the Old Assyrian Period

Cécile Michel¹

‘Place (the tablets) in a safe space wherever you sleep, and so guard them!’ wrote an Assyrian merchant to his Anatolian wife.² The Old Assyrian tablets unearthed at Kültepe, ancient Kaneš, focus on the long-distance trade established by the Assyrians in Anatolia during the 19th and the 18th centuries BCE. The donkey caravans traveling from Aššur to Anatolia were mainly transporting tin and textiles, but sometimes also precious stones such as lapis lazuli and carnelian. On the way back, a few donkeys were transporting gold and silver back to Aššur. These commodities were stored in the merchants’ houses in Aššur and Kaneš before being sold.

The letters discovered at Kültepe pay particular attention to the protection of goods: personal property, merchandise, or records including loan contracts and property deeds kept in these houses. When a woman by the name of Lamassī died in Aššur, her husband, who was doing business in Kaneš, wrote to his representatives remembering what was stored in the house: large quantities of barley, gold and silver jewels, and various quantities of precious metals that had been brought to Lamassī by different colleagues.³

Inventories and testaments provide information concerning the precious goods that were kept in these houses; besides slaves these texts list gold and

¹* CNRS, Archéologies et Sciences de l’Antiquité (HAROC), Nanterre & Centre for the Study of Manuscript Cultures, Universität Hamburg; {cecile.michel@cnrs.fr}. I am grateful to Piotr Michalowski who kindly polished the English of this contribution.

²BIN 6 1: 7–9, Michel, 2020: no. 305.

³TC 1 30: 3–4, copy of a letter addressed by Pūšu-kēn to representatives in Aššur: “Alas! My wife is dead!”, *la li-bi, dingir-ma a-ši-ti me-ta-at*.

silver, vessels and toiletry items in bronze and precious metals, jewellery, cylinder seals made of semi-precious stones, stocks of commodities and cuneiform tablets.⁴ In fact, the archives preserve still valid claims on capital in the form of silver and gold, goods entrusted on credit, as well as house deeds. In some houses, there were also large quantities of tin and stocks of textiles waiting to be sold. According to Aššur-taklāku's letters, several bags of such textiles were kept in his house, but as he was in jail, they were damaged by moths.⁵ In the house of Puzur-Ištar and Ištar-lamassī, also in Kaneš, there was more than one storeroom with large quantities of tin and textiles.⁶

All these goods were preserved in various sealed containers, safes, and strong rooms. When archaeologists excavated the lower town of Kaneš between 1948 and 2005, precious goods, jewellery, and vessels could still be recovered, especially from the graves dug under the floors of some rooms, but many of the houses had been emptied by their inhabitants before a perhaps hasty departure. Perishable goods and containers made of organic materials had decomposed due to climatic conditions unfavourable to their conservation, but the sealed lumps of clay that were once used to cap and identify these containers as well as some doors were preserved. As well, the archaeologists were able to unearth large parts of the merchant's archives, including claims and deeds.

This contribution focuses on the different modes of protection undertaken by Assyrian merchants to protect tablets and goods. It is mainly based on the 19th century Old Assyrian textual documentation, and secondarily on archaeological data from Kültepe. The Assyrians were often on the road and had to take precautions to protect their goods and tablets against thieves who might threaten their houses. When a merchant died, his assets were in danger, and measures had to be put in place to ensure that they did not disappear before the succession arrangements were clarified. The Assyrian vocabulary concerning safes, strong rooms, and sealing practices was well-developed and suggests, in some instances, forms of double protection. The spatial distribution of the tablets in the houses, when recoverable, confirms the multiplication of the protections set up by the merchants to secure their most precious goods.

⁴For some examples of testaments, see Michel, 2020: 113–145.

⁵Michel, 1998, and 2008a. This archive was excavated in Kültepe lower town in 1993; I thank Profs. Tahsin Özgüç and Fikri Kulakoğlu for entrusting it to me its study and publication.

⁶Michel, 2020: no. 155.

1 Goods in the merchants' houses and their protection against robbery

The Assyrians involved into the long-distance trade with Anatolia representing their family enterprise in Kaneš often had a house there, located in the lower town. They also sometimes owned another house in Aššur where their wife and younger children remained. Some of these merchants could also possess another building in one of the other Assyrian settlements in Anatolia. For example, Šalim-Aššur, whose archives have been unearthed in 1994 at Kültepe, had also a house in Durhumit where he may have left archives.⁷ Ali-ahum, owner of the archives excavated in 1993 at Kültepe, owned houses in Aššur, Kaneš and Burušhattum, and had goods and tablets preserved in all three.⁸ These houses were inhabited by members of the family or close colleagues, but it is possible that at some times might have remained uninhabited, leaving the goods kept in these houses at the mercy of burglars.

Thieves also threatened the caravans travelling between Aššur and Anatolia or within Anatolia. Letters mention merchandise robbed on the way and sometimes even speak of the murder of merchants. The protection of roads, goods, and people lay at the heart of the commercial treaties signed between the Assyrians and the Anatolians,⁹ but this topic is beyond the scope of this paper, which focuses on the protection of goods inside the merchant's houses.

1.1 Theft and accusations of theft of property

Because of their value, the commodities, claims, deeds, and other merchant's properties were most desirable. Some texts mention thefts break-ins of buildings, houses, or temples. Šāt-Tašmētim, an otherwise unknown woman, wrote a letter to two men beginning as follows:¹⁰

'The house has been robbed and I wander around outside. If you are my brothers, come here so that nobody will harm your paternal house.'

⁷Larsen, 2010: 9.

⁸Michel, 2008a: 58.

⁹Veenhof, 2008: 183–218, and 2013.

¹⁰KT 8 263: 3–7, *be-tum ha-bi₄-it-ma, ki-da-tím(TUM) ar-ta-na-pu-ud, šu-ma a-hu-ú-a : a-tù-nu, al-kà-nim-ma ša-li-ú-um, i-šé-er é a-bi₄-ku-nu lá i-ša-/lá.*

In some extreme cases, theft could be aggravated by the murder of people in the robbed house. Two witness depositions document such a dramatic event. The house of Iddin-Aššur in Burušhattum, the most-western Assyrian settlement in Anatolia, was broken into by thieves and large quantities of silver, copper, tin, and textiles were robbed, and three people were killed:¹¹

You live in our father's house in Burušhattum. But thieves entered my father's house, and cut slit the throats of Al-bēlī and two other men who were there with him, and silver, copper, tin and textiles of great value were taken away. You remained safe in my father's house, and you also brought back many goods safely.

However, Aššur-idī, who was in the house, managed to save his life and his own goods. He explained to Iddin-Aššur:¹²

The gods of your father and the gods of my father stood (by me), so I and the goods came out safely of your father's house.

Not even divine possessions preserved in temples and chapels were safe from thieves. A letter addressed to the Assyrian authorities of Kaneš reports the theft of the jewels adorning the statue of god Aššur in his chapel or temple in Uršu, a town located somewhere west of the bend in the Euphrates:¹³

What had never happened before (has happened)! Thieves entered the temple of Aššur and stole the golden sun disk on the chest of the god Aššur and the dagger of the god Aššur. And (the gold of his) emblem was peeled off, and the nails and the maces were taken away. The temple was emptied, they left nothing! We are looking for the thieves but cannot find them!

¹¹Kt k/k 108: 5–15 (Hecker, 1996: 151–155), *i-na, Bu-ru-uš-ha-tim i-na, é a-bi₄-ni wa-áš-ba-ti, ša-ru-qú : a-na é a-bi₄-a, e-ru-bu-ma Al-be-lí, ú 2^{šé-na} iš-tí-šu, ki-ša-du-šu-nu na-ku-sú, ú kù-babbar urudu an-na ú tug^{hi-[a]}, ša kù-babbar ma-du-ma šé-šú-ú, a-ta i-na é a-bi₄-a, šál-ma-tí ú lu-qú-ut-kà ma-du-ma, ša-lim-ma tú-šé-ší*. The text Kt b/k 471 published by Balkan, 1974: 31, n. 16 deals with the same affair.

¹²Kt k/k 108: 27–29, *i-lu a-bi₄-kà ú i-lu a-bi₄-a, i-zi-zu-ma a-na-ku ú lu-qú-t[um], i-na é^{ti}-kà šál-ma-k[u a-ti-ší]*.

¹³Babyloniaca 6 7: 4–19, *ša iš-tù du-ri-[im], lá ib-ší-ú-ni, ša-ru-qú a-na é^{ti} dA-/šur, e-ru-bu-ma : ša-am-ša-/am, ša kù-gi¹, ša i-ir-tí dA-šur, ú pá-at-ra-am, [š]a dA-šur, [iš-r]i-qú : ú mi-šu-ru-um, qá-lu-pu ú, sà-am-ru-a-tum, ú kà-ta-pu, ta-áb-lu : é^{um}, lá-qú-ut : mi-ma lá e-zi-[bu], ša-ri-qi ni-šé-em[a], lá né-mar*. The text is translated by Larsen, 1976: 261–262 and Michel, 2001: no. 51. On the robbery of jewellery belonging to a goddess see also Dercksen, 2015.

In documents from the merchants' houses, the theft of tablets, often claims, is regularly reported by their owners. An attorney was accused by a group of merchants of having stolen tablets from a colleague's archive. The attorney, in his witnessed deposition, explained that the thief had already been seized and transferred to Aššur, and that the City assembly and the king would render judgment.¹⁴

The best-known case concerning the theft of tablets is reported in an extremely long witnessed deposition preserved at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. Suen-nādā accused Ennum-Aššur of stealing two sealed containers (*tamalakkum*) from his house in Durhumit:¹⁵

While my wife and I stayed at Kaneš, you, you went off to Durhumit, and although I owe you nothing, you acted high-handedly, entered my guest house and took out 2 (tablet) containers (sealed) with my seal and household goods.

He then gives in great detail the content of these two boxes: 19 tablets, mainly claims on silver and copper, witnessed tablets, *išurtum*-contracts with Anatolian palaces, memoranda, tablets belonging to others and left for safekeeping, as well as cylinder seals. In his answer Ennum-Aššur in turn accuses Suen-nādā of having previously stolen these two containers of tablets from the house of his agent Iddin-Ištar:¹⁶

When Iddin-Ištar, my agent, died 3 years ago, (even though) you had no claim on me or on my agent Iddin-Ištar, in the *kārum* Durhumit, without (the authorization) of the *kārum* or the merchants, you high-handedly entered the house of Iddin-Ištar, my agent, who owed 5 talents of silver or more to me, and you robbed the (content of the) safe (*maknakum*) of my agent!

These containers and their content would thus have been stolen twice, despite the precautions taken by the merchants to protect their goods.

1.2 Protecting property in the house, a woman's business?

This protection of merchants' possessions and archives is at the heart of several letters exchanged with women of their family. In fact, unlike their

¹⁴TPAK 1 191: 7, 15, Michel, 2023: no. 90. See also below the section concerning the word *maknakum*.

¹⁵CTMMA 1 84: 4–9, Michel, 2023: no. 89.

¹⁶CTMMA 1 84: 74–82.

fathers, husbands or brothers, these women travelled little.¹⁷ In the absence of the men, they found themselves at the head of the household and became guardians of the house and its contents. In Aššur, they waited for many months for the return of their husbands, some of whom had a pied-à-terre in Kaneš or in another Anatolian town. In Kaneš, they could also find themselves alone while their husbands travelled around Anatolia or to Aššur.¹⁸

Ištar-baštī, the wife of Imdī-ilum, was first living in Aššur, from where she sent several letters to her husband and to her son Puzur-Ištar. In one of them addressed to the latter, she asked him first to look after his father's archives, and then, perhaps believing his son to be incapable of taking care of the house in Kaneš, announced her intention to come and take on this role.¹⁹

Be a gentleman, pay heed to the instructions of your father, keep the tablets of your father safe (...) Come quickly so that I can depart with you and watch over yours and your father's house in Kaneš, and thus no one will make trouble for your father's house.

Later on, when she was in Kaneš, she received recommendations from her husband concerning business and he asked her to archive safely several important documents:²⁰

Please, put all my tablets in safekeeping, both those concerning the son of Ilī-iddinaššu and those concerning Bušiya.

Women were regularly asked to stay in the house and watch over it. Aššur-rabi wrote to his daughter Maganika, furious to learn that she had gone away and left the family house to strangers as she was supposed to watch over the house and the her father's goods:²¹

Why did you let tenants live in the house while you went (to live) with a husband? If you are my daughter, keep watch on the house until we arrive in 10 days!

¹⁷This concerns women belonging to the first generations of Assyrians in Anatolia, Michel, 2008b.

¹⁸Michel, 2020: 27–29, 68–72.

¹⁹KTS 1 1b: 11–14, 25–31, Michel, 2020: no. 229.

²⁰TC 3 56: 19–22, Michel, 2020: no. 217.

²¹BIN 6 20: 4, Michel, 2020: no. 199: 22–27.

Women were supposed to watch over the house and its content day and night, and to sleep nearby the most precious possessions – often the tablets – as Aššur-mūtappil wrote to his Anatolian wife Kunnaniya:²²

The tablets that Nazi and Ilī-bāni will bring you and entrust to your care, place them in a safe place wherever you sleep, and so guard them!

A similar admonition was given by a certain Ennum-Aššur to Kunnaniya:²³

We have no one but you! Watch over the house and the tablets; do not be afraid.

Thus, the women of the family were often the guardians of the house and its contents. The houses in Kaneš were often two-story, the inhabitants sleeping on the first floor while merchandise and archives were kept in a special room on the ground floor. We thus understand these admonitions as instructions to women to sleep either on the ground floor or to take the tablets to the first floor where they were sleeping.

1.3 The fate of a deceased merchant's property

Problems could arise when someone died. Thieves could take advantage of the confusion that sometimes followed the death of an Assyrian merchant in Kaneš to steal his goods:²⁴

My dear fathers and lords, do you not know that because a robbery occurred when my father died, much silver and my father's tablets were stolen?

The family members were also eager to get hold of the deceased person's property as suggested by this letter sent by a woman to a relative after the death of his aunt who was living in his father's house:²⁵

²²BIN 6 1: 3–9, Michel, 2020: no. 305; the text is cited at the opening of this paper. In another letter, he asked her to join him, leaving their daughter to the care of a servant and adds KTH 6: 26–28: "Get ready and come here. Let Šamaš-taklāku sleep near the door!", Michel, 2020: no. 303.

²³KT 4 62: 10–15, Michel, 2020: no. 304.

²⁴Kt 88/k 507b: 37–40 (Hecker, 2007: 94–96), *a-ba-ú-a be-lu-ú-a a-tù-nu* «*a-tù-nu*», *lá tí-de₈-a ki-ma i-nu-mì a-bi₄ me-tù-ni, mì-iš-hu-um i-ší-ik-nu-ma kù-babbar, ma-dām ú ʃup-pì ša a-bi₄-a im-ta-áš-hu'-ni*.

²⁵KT 6d 765: 4–16, *a-ha-at a-bi-kà, me-ta-at, um-ma a-hu-ni-ma, ap-lúm la-šu, é^{bé-tám}, né-nu : ni-tá-ru, ki-ma ʃup-pá-am, ta-áš-me-ú, tí-ib-a-ma, a-ta-al-kam, é a-bi-kà, a-na kà-nu-nim, ba-li-im, iš-ta-ak-/nu*.

Your father's sister is dead. Our brothers (said) as follows: "There is no heir. Let us take away the (the content of the) house ourselves." As soon as you have heard (this) letter, set out and come here. They have turned your father's house into an empty fireplace.

Many disputes arose in such situations. For example, a group of texts documents a dispute between two brothers after their father's death. One son, Amur-Šamaš, was at the side of his father during the last months of his life in Anatolia and his brother Ikūnum, who refused to contribute to the funeral, pretended that Amur-Šamaš kept for himself all his father's possessions, including precious objects made of gold and silver, votive offerings, bronze tools, weapons, vessels and kitchen utensils, various containers, tables, antimony, deeds of slave purchases and loan contracts, and the father's seal that was intended for their sister. Amur-Šamaš replied to his brother that the house was empty of goods when their father died, and that Ikūnum was closer to their father than he. As the affair had been going on for three years he added:²⁶

Come to the city (of Aššur), our sister the consecrated woman and our brothers are in the city (of Aššur). Let us act according to the will of our father. The will of our father (is) in the city (of Aššur).

The problems could get much worse when the deceased had not left a written will. To avoid such a situation, especially when it concerned the death of an Assyrian merchant in Anatolia, the family and collaborators of the deceased had to assess his credit and debits, bring together all his assets and then seal the house and its storerooms so that nobody would get in. When an executor would then ask for their release, the assets were turned into silver and assembled in Aššur. The creditors could then ask first to be repaid according to claim documents they submitted, as detailed in the following letter addressed to the investors and representatives of the deceased:²⁷

The moment Hurāṣānum died, his creditors entered (his house) and sealed (his) *maṣṣartum*-safe. This is the reason why we did

²⁶Michel, 2020: no. 65: 76–82. For this dossier see Hecker, 2004. A similar difficult situation arose for the succession of Šalim-Aššur: the dispute between his two sons for the inheritance is reported in almost a hundred of documents, Larsen, 2010.

²⁷Text published by Michel, 1994, lines 6–22; the translation given here follows Dercksen, 1999. See also for these procedures Larsen, 1977: 95; Michel, 2000: 121–124; Hertel, 2013: 337–346, and Veenhof, 2018, among others.

not write to you when he died. We said to ourselves: “Let his creditors settle the accounts, then we shall write them our detailed report.” His creditors have remitted the (default) interest and have been fully paid with the silver due to them. They consulted both tablets and debtors and have been fully satisfied. The silver, whether out of reach, disputed or lost by fraud amounts to about one talent.

To protect the goods of the deceased before the execution of his will, no one had access to his goods and tablets kept in containers, that were placed in sealed safes and strong rooms, and the house itself was sealed. After the death of his wife in Aššur, Pūšu-kēn asked his correspondents to “place sealings on the doors and windows”.²⁸

2 Safes and strong rooms within the houses

Tablets, assets, and merchandise were usually placed in specific containers, boxes, baskets, bags and jars that were then sealed.²⁹

Concerning the tablet of the house sale on which my father’s name is written, as you are my mother, that very tablet, you yourself and Šumī-abiya open the tablet (container) and place (it) with my tablets and have Šumī-abiya seal (the container). If you have not put the tablet with my tablets, you are no longer my mother!

These boxes, baskets, bags, and jars were then placed in larger containers, niches, corners or rooms in the merchants’ houses – usually all in the same area –, again under seal.³⁰ The main words which refer to these are *maknakum*, *maššartum* and *huršum*. There is a great deal of textual documentation on such technical spaces or rooms, yet it is not always easy to highlight translation the subtle differences between of these terms.

2.1 The *maknakum*

The word *maknakum* (or *maknākum*) refers to a ‘large container’ or a ‘place’ that was sealed. However, its size and material are unknown. Yet, this

²⁸TC 1 30: 9–10, *i-na ba-a-bi ù* a-pá-tim, ší-pá-sú* id-a*, Larsen, 1977: 95.

²⁹TPAK 1 32: 20–31, Michel, 2020: no. 219.

³⁰Michel, 1997, 29.

has usually been translated as a ‘strong room’, a ‘safe’ or a ‘sealed container’.³¹ There was a *maknakum* in most of the merchants’ houses, and in the Anatolian palaces there could be more than one.³²

I will tell the *kārum* (authorities) that we went to explore the *maknakum* of the palace, and that in the middle *maknakum* are my father’s goods.

The *maknakum* was usually sealed as explained in the following examples:³³

And did he not break (the seals) of the *maknakum*, which (had been sealed) a second time with the seal of Aššur-mūtappil and myself?

In accordance with the verdict of the plenary assembly of *kārum* Kaneš, Ennam-ilī, the scribe, seized us, and we entered Elamma’s house and broke the seals of the *maknakum*, we left (them, i.e., the broken sealings) in the *maknakum*. Akūa, son of Baziya, took two of his *tamalakkum*-boxes with tablets.

After the death of her husband, a woman was instructed to not open his *maknakum*, and thus not to give access to its content:³⁴

No one should give you orders there, and you must not open your husband’s *maknakum*.

After removing the seals on the *maknakum*, it was then possible to access the archive:³⁵

And as for the *maknakum*, you removed the sealings of the representatives and my sealings, and you *put* the tablets *in disorder*.

³¹AHw 2: 590b, “versiegelter Behälter”; CAD M/1: 138a, “sealed container or room”. See also Michel, 1997: 288–289 and Kuzuoğlu, 2013, and for the latest translations Kouwenberg, 2019, 156, “sealed container, sealed room”.

³²Prag I 626: 1–7, *ki-ma ma-ak-na-kam, ša «é-gal» é-gal^{lim} «ni», a-sá-lá-im ni-zi-zu-ni, ú du-mu-uq* (°erasure) *a-bi₄-a, i-na ma-ak-na-ki-im, qá-áb-li-im, i-ba-šī-ú a-mì-a-tim, a-kâ-ri¹-im a-ta-wu*. For the *maknakum* of the palace, see also CCT 4 7c quoted below note 39.

³³TPAK 1 35: 14–18, *ú ma-ak-na-kam, ša ša-ni-tí-im, ku-nu-ki ša A-šur-mu-ta-pì-il₅, ú i-a-tí, ú-up-ta-ri-ih-ma*, and Kt m/k 145: 7, transliteration by K. Hecker, text published in KT 8: appendix no. 7. For this last text, see also Hertel, 2013: 129.

³⁴BIN 6 17: 7–10, Michel, 2020: no. 308.

³⁵Kt 88/k 970: 86–91, *ú ma-ak-na-kam : ku-nu-ki, ša ša-zu-za-/tim, ú ku-nu-ki-a ta-áp-ṭù-ra-ma* (u.e. 91) *ú ṭup-pè-e : tù-ba-li-ha*. Text published by Donbaz, 2008: 211–213 and Dercksen, 2015: 54–56 after collations.

Several texts indicate that tablets, often claims, were kept in the *maknakum*:³⁶

It is in the *maknakum* of Husārum: a tablet concerning 8 minas of silver belonging to Elālī, the great priest that I took and on which the name of Kurub-Ištar is written, I gave you the tablet.

Twice you questioned me in court, and I answered you. For opening the *maknakum* and taking out the tablets that Aššur-taklāku had stolen, the City (assembly) transferred him.

Sometimes, tablets are mentioned together with their own containers, often *tamalakkum*-boxes, and kept in the *maknakum*, which was necessarily bigger. This was, for example, the case in the legal text preserved in Metropolitan Museum of Art quoted above. In the following text, we learn that a merchant had two of his tablet containers in the *maknakum* of his father's house:³⁷

I opened the *maknakum* with your seals and I took out 2 *tamalakkum*-boxes with certified tablets ... and I will place them where they must be placed. The remaining of your tablets are with their *tamalakkum*-boxes in the *maknakum* of your father's house.

Besides tablets arranged in containers, other types of precious goods were stored in the *maknakum*, as for example silver:³⁸

22 minas of silver belonging to Luzina which I left you, opening the *maknakum* of Mannum-balum-Aššur, you have taken the bundles piece by piece.

13 minas of silver under seal as a package that Šalim-Aššur left for me, my brother left in my *maknakum*. Let Inna-Suen,

³⁶ BIN 6 241: 6–13, i-[na] ma-ak-ni-ki-im, [ša] Hu-sà-ri-im-ma, tu[p-p]á-am ša 8 ma-na, kù-babbar ša «ra» E-lá-lí sà-an-gi₅-im, ša ál-qé-ú-[m]a šu-mi, Kur-ub-Ištar ú-du-ú, [tup]-pá-am, [a]-dī-na-kum, and TPAK 1, 191: 5–13, a-dī 2^{šé}-mī-šu i-na, dī-tim tū-ša-i-lá-ni-[m]a, a-pu-ul-ku-nu a-na ma-a[k]-ni-ki-im, pá-té-e-em ú tup-pé-e, šé-šú-ú-tim, ša A-šur-ták-lá-ku, iš-ri-qú-ma, a-lu-un, i-sú-hu-šu; see also lines 15–17, a-na ma-ak-ni-ki-im, pá-té-e-em ú tup-pé-e, šé-šú-ú-tim, for this text, see Michel, 2023: no. 90.

³⁷ Kt 88/k 455: 10–16, m[a*-ak-n]a-kam ku-nu-ki-kà, áp-té-ma 2* [t]a*-ma-lá-k[e]* ša tup-pé-e, ha-ru-mu-[ti]m : na-BU-tim, ú-šé-ší-ma [a]-šar ša-kà-nim áš-ku-un, re-eh-tí tup-pí-kà ta-ma-lá-ku é a-bi-kà-ma, i-na ma-ak-ni-ki-im, i-ba-ší-ti, tablet published in Bayram, 2018: 35–36; collated after the photo.

³⁸ CCT 3 29: 9–13, 22 ma-na, kù-babbar Lu-zi-na ša e-zi-ba-ku-ni, lu ri-ik-<sf> : ša a-ha : a-ha : i-ma-ik-ni-ki-im, ša Ma-nu-ba-lúm-A-šur : ta-ap-té-a-ma, tal-qé-a-ni. Sadberk 11: 11–17, 13 ma-na kù-babbar, ku-nu-ki né-pí-ša-am, ša Šál-ma-A-šur, e-zi-ba-ni i-na, ma-ak-ni-ki-a-hi, e-zi-ib (°erasure), ma-ak-ni-ki I-na-Sú-en₆, dumu Šu-A-nim ú Ni-mar-Ištar, dumu Puzur₂-Sú-en₆ li-ip-té-ú-ma, né-pí-ša-am ku-nu-ki, ša Šál-ma-A-šur, li-ip-qí-du-ni-ku-nu-tí-ma, kù-babbar li-ip-ṭur-ma.

son of Šu-Anum, and Nimar-Ištar, son of Puzur-Suen, open my *maknakum* and let them entrust you the package under seal from Šalim-Aššur and thus open the silver.

Silver, gold, as well as goods such as textiles and antimony were also preserved in the *maknakum*:³⁹

Do you not know that Aššur-imittī opened the *maknakum* of our father and that I will consider him responsible concerning the *maknakum*? Heaven forbid he makes demands to the palace concerning the *maknakum* of the palace! When they imposed a fine on our father and the messengers of the City (of Aššur) came and opened this *maknakum* and they saw the antimony and the textiles in his possession, he was forbidden to do anything concerning this *maknakum*. For the interior of the *maknakum* from where the sons of Šu-Suen have taken out silver and gold, (and) where the tablets and *top quality goods* of our father are, as for this, I took him (Aššur-imittī) to court.

It is clear from this text that sealings protecting the *maknakum* could only be opened by its owner, members of his family, or by persons mandated by the authorities in the context of a process.

Less valuable goods could also be stored in the *maknakum*, as for example beer preparation ingredients:⁴⁰

Why have you written me as follows: ‘I will open the *maknakum* and sell the beer bread’? Are the lower as well as the upper floors not sealed with my seal? Urgent! Until my arrival, do not open any of my seals in the house, and keep my sealings intact!

From all these examples it seems clear that the *maknakum* was big enough to house various goods including tablets arranged in their containers. It was a sealed space/safe in the house.

³⁹CCT 4 7c: 1–21, *lá tí-de₈-a ki-ma ma-ak-na-kam, ša a-bi₄-ni A-šur-i-mi-ti, ip-té-ú-ma a-na ma-ak-na-ki-im, a-še-ú-šu-ni a-sú-re-e, a-na ma-ak-na-ki-im ša é-gal, é-gal^{lám} e i-té-ri-iš¹ i-nu-mi, a-bu-ni a-na ar-nim, i-dí-nu-ni-ma ši-ip-ru, ša A-lim^{ki} i-li-ku-ni-ni-ma, ma-ak-na-kà-am šu-a-ti, ip-té-ú-ni-ma lu-lá-am, ú túg^{hi-a} ša qá-ti-šu, e-mu-ru²-ni a-ma-ak-na-ki-im, šu-a-ti e i-pu-uš, a-na ma-ak-na-ki-im, qá-áb-lim a-šar kù-babbar ù, kù-gi me-er-ú Šu-Sú-en₆, ú-še-ši-ú-ni řup-pi-šu, ù mu-hu-um ša a-bi₄-ni, i-ba-ši-ú-ni a-ši-a-ti, a-še-e-šu.*

⁴⁰BIN 6 20: 3–12, Michel, 2020: no. 199.

2.2 The *maššartum*

More frequently used (some 30 or more attestations), was the word *maššartum*, which designated a safe and guarded space.⁴¹ The same word is also used to refer to posts and guards who, among other duties, protected the roads taken by the commercial caravans. The word *rabi maššartim* is to be translated by ‘head of the troops’.⁴² The translation of *maššartum* as either “a safe and guarded place to keep goods” or as “guards” then depends on the context.⁴³

The *maššartum* was sealed as indicated in the following texts:⁴⁴

Why do my mother and my brother prevent your opening the house? The *maššartum* is sealed with your and Aššur-taklāku’s seal.

(All the) silver, gold and copper were sealed in our father’s *maššartum*.

The *maššartum* is sealed by the seals of your representatives.

When a merchant died, his creditors paid special attention to his *maššartum* by sealing it with their own seals pending the settlement of the deceased’s affairs.⁴⁵ Then, the people involved had to break the seals to access the contents of the *maššartum*, which they could even enter.⁴⁶

⁴¹AHw 2: 621a, “Verwahrung, Depot”; CAD M/1: 338–339, “goods kept in safekeeping, deposit”. See also Veenhof, 1972: 392, n. 517, “archive room, strong room”; Larsen, 1976: 175, “strong room”; Bayram, 2001: 6, “the strong room in which merchants deposit their silver and/or gold”; Michel, 1997: 288–289 and Kuzuoğlu, 2013, and for the latest translations Kouwenberg, 2019: 156, “strong room, safe”. Note that the restoration proposed in CUSAS 34 38: 5–6, [*i-ma-ša*]-*ar-tim*, *ša kà-ri-im* remains uncertain.

⁴²Veenhof, 2008: 222; Günbatt, 2012: 132–133.

⁴³*Maššartum*-guards are attested for example in the following texts ATHE 62; BIN 6 267; CCT 4 18; KTS 1 37a; TC 3 28; TC 3 165; TC 3 162, etc. I will not discuss here the “great treasury of divine Aššur” (*maššartum ša Aššur rabitum*) which was commented on by Bayram, 2000: 46–47, nos. 5: 19; 6: 19, and Dercksen, 2004: 79–80, but I will analyse references to the *maššartum* as a guarded space located in the houses of the merchants.

⁴⁴CCT 3 30: 35–40, *mi-šu, ša a-na é^{bé-tim} : pá-ta-e-em, um-mi : ù a-hi : i-kà-lu-ù-kà-ni, ma-ša-ar-tum : i-na ku-nu-ki-kà, ù ku-nu-uk : A-šùr-ták-lá-ku, kán-kà-at*. BIN 6 220: 10–1; Michel, 2023: no. 76. BIN 4 5: 23–25, *ma-šar_x(ŠEŠ)-tum : i-na, ku-nu-ke-e : ša ki-ma, ku-a-ti : kà-an-kà-at*, Michel, 2001: no. 178.

⁴⁵Michel, 1994: 6–22, cited above note 27, “The moment Hurāšānum died, his creditors entered (his house) and sealed (his) *maššartum*.”

⁴⁶CCT 5 3a: 28–33; Larsen, 2002, no. 186–187. See also KT 8 108: 1–13, 17–20; KT 8: annex, no. 1; Hertel, 2013: 276–277.

When they opened the *maṣṣartum*, they let five outsiders enter (it) and had them re-seal; and they themselves sealed together with them.

4 1/2 talents of refined copper, 1 talent and 20 minas of poor copper Aššur-nādā, Elamma and Aššur-rē'ī brought out of the *maṣṣartum* of Amur-Aššur. Aššur-nādā entered on account of his own (claim on) silver, Elamma and Aššur-rē'ī entered in the name of the investors, Aššur-nišū entered representing Kura (...) They inspected his tablets and they were also the ones who sealed them (again) and brought them (again) into the *maṣṣartum*.

If, in this case, the verb 'to enter' concerns the *maṣṣartum* and not the house itself, this implies that the *maṣṣartum* was a space or a room in the house where several people could enter at the same time, thus a translation by strong room seems to be correct.

There could be more than one *maṣṣartum* in a house as suggested by the following letter addressed by a man to his wife that specifies the localization of the strong room within the house:⁴⁷

There, watch over the house. There are 8 talents, 50 minas of sealed tin in the *huršum*, in the foremost *maṣṣartum*, 2 hundred 30 ordinary textiles, 1 hundred 20 good quality textiles, 13 black donkeys; all the (merchandise) I left you in the house under seal.

If the house, and especially the *maṣṣartum* of a deceased was not rapidly sealed, there was always the risk that dishonest people, heirs for example, would help themselves to the deceased's property before the official succession procedure was put in place.⁴⁸

Here, I have turned to the representatives of my father, and I (said) as follows: "Enter and show me what remains of my father's household!" They entered and (said) as follows: "Apart from the 70 *pirikannum*-textiles, we took nothing! We also opened the *maṣṣartum*, and there was nothing in the *maṣṣartum*!"

Before I came, Ali-ahum had opened the *maṣṣartum* (of our deceased father) and had taken out the assets.

⁴⁷VS 26 53: 3–18, Michel, 2020: no. 155 (l. 8–9: *i-na ma-ša-ar-tim, ma-hi-ri-im*).

⁴⁸CCT 5 8b: 3–12, Michel, 2020: no. 70. KT 6a 225: 30–32, Michel, 2020: no. 328.

Goods were deposited (*nadā'um*) in the *maṣṣartum*.⁴⁹

10 minas of silver – its import tax added – under his seal, Aššuriš-tikal, our trading agent, had sent from Buruṣhattum to Kaneš to Ili-ālim's house in order to deposit it in his *maṣṣartum*.

In their *maṣṣartum*, merchants were keeping safe their tablets within their own containers, as well as their valuable goods. Many texts mention tablets and *tamalakkum*-boxes full of tablets kept in a *maṣṣartum*.⁵⁰

You should not give to Iliš-takil the *tamalakkum*-boxes that are in the *maṣṣartum*.

In the very long sworn testimony and interrogation quoted above concerning the double robbery of two *tamalakkum*-boxes of tablets, one of the parties explains that these boxes were kept in his agent's *maṣṣartum*.⁵¹

Tablets could be considered as valuables when they had a legal value, being enclosed in a sealed envelope, and thus certified.⁵²

Abuwa, the attorney, and the creditors of Uṣur-ša-Aššur, son of Aššur-malik, seized us and led us into Uṣur-ša-Aššur's house, and his creditors opened Uṣur-ša-Aššur's *maṣṣartum* with us as witnesses, took out his certified tablets, and (selected) from his tablets one certified tablet.

Together with their tablets, merchants kept precious trade goods in their *maṣṣartum*.⁵³

⁴⁹ATHE 48: 6–11, 10 *ma-na kù-babbar ni-is-ha-sú diri ku-nu-ki-šu, A-šùr-iš-tí-kál ša-ma-lá-i-ni, iš-tù Bu-ru-uš-ha-tim, a-na Kâ-ni-iš a-na é Ī-lí-a-lim, a-na ma-ša-a[r-t]im a-na na-an-du-/im, ú-šê-bi₄-lá-m[a]*.

⁵⁰BIN 6 14: 25–28, Michel, 2020: no. 232. See also BIN 4 42a: 3–4, *ma-ša-ar-tám, pé-té-a-ma ṭup-pi bi-ri-a-ma*.

⁵¹CTMMA 1 84: 75–82, see above notes 15–16.

⁵²KT 6a 120: 1–10.

⁵³KT 6a 255: 1–15. For other references to goods stored in the *maṣṣartum*, see AKT 1 73: 3–15 (gold and silver); KT 6b 404: 8, 14 (copper); Kt c/k 1087: 17–19 (Balkan, 1967: 406–407), *ma-ša-<ar>-tám pè-té-a-ma*, urudu *ki-ma urudu, dí-na-šu-um*, “open the *maṣṣartum* and give him copper for copper”; KT 11a 43: 7 (textiles); KT 11a 100: 5–7 (textiles); CCT 3 3b: 26–30 (tin). Some goods were also kept outside of the *maṣṣartum*; KT 6a 218: 29, “This is apart from that in the *maṣṣartum*.”

In Durhumit, when our father died, Ali-ahum opened the *maṣ-ṣartum* sealed by our father, and witnessed by 3 affiliated traders he took out both silver, good copper, poor copper, lapis lazuli, textiles, and certified tablets concerning creditors, and he gave it to Annina son of Aššur-bēl-awātum, and later the tablets (were) in Annina's house.

Several texts report an affair that involved the sons of Pūšu-kēn after the death of Puzur-Aššur, their father's former associate. His *maṣṣartum* contained precious metals and tablets arranged in containers:⁵⁴

Alas, Puzur-Aššur, the (business) partner of our father's house has died! And while I was in Wahšušana Puzur-Aššur's investors and creditors entered Puzur-Aššur's house; they opened Puzur-Aššur's *maṣṣartum*, and silver, gold, tablets in boxes, all this they entrusted to Enna-Suen, son of Ili-ālum (...) Later on, Puzur-Aššur's attorney and sons came here, and (said) as follows: 'The silver came out from the *maṣṣartum* of our father!'

It was not unusual that a merchant entrusted his goods to be deposited in a colleague's *maṣṣartum*: "your tin is in his *maṣṣartum*."⁵⁵

Thus, the *maṣṣartum* was a room in the house where merchants kept their goods and archives. Several people could enter it at the same time, and so a translation by strong room seems to be correct. By contrast, the smaller *maknakum* could then represent a safe.

2.3 *huršum*

The word *huršum* seems to correspond to various concepts in Old Assyrian; it has been translated as 'kitchen', 'larder', 'shed' and by extension 'store-room'.⁵⁶ According to M. T. Larsen (1967: 70), it could even denote a section of a house. The *huršum* could be divided into several smaller strong rooms:

⁵⁴TC 3 270: 14–24 and 35–39, Michel, 2023: no. 77, see also no. 76 and 78. ATHE 48: 6–11, 10 *ma-na kù-babbar ni-is-ha-sú diri ku-nu-ki-šu, A-šūr-iš-tí-kál ša-ma-lá-i-ni, iš-tù Bu-ru-uš-ha-tim, a-na Ká-ni-iš a-na é l-lí-a-lim, a-na ma-ša-a[r-t]im a-na na-an-du-/im, ú-šé-bi₄-lá-m[a]*.

⁵⁵VS 26 4: 13–14, *an-na-kà i-ma-ša-ar-tí-šu, i-ba-ší*.

⁵⁶AHW 1: 360a, '(Küche mit) Vorratskammer'; CAD H: 254a, (1) 'larder', (2) 'storehouse'. See also Veenhof, 1972: 392, n. 517, 'archive room, strong room'; Michel, 1997: 288–289, 'kitchen'. Note that *huršum* has to be distinguished from *huršiānum*, 'box', 'bundle'. Kuzuoğlu, 2013: 15.

“There are 8 talents, 50 minas of sealed tin in the *huršum*, in the foremost *maššartum*.”⁵⁷ There was a “head of the *huršātim*” in the Anatolian palace.⁵⁸

Several references to *huršum* are linked to food products and utensils, clearly indicating that it was a place where it was possible to store these products and to prepare food, thus in some instances a space that we would consider as a ‘kitchen’:⁵⁹

Send for your *huršum* enough food for your children and your wife so that we can give them their rations.

When I arrived in Kaneš, your beer bread had been deposited in the *huršum*, and I had also entrusted you some furniture with the words: “When you have taken out your beer bread, seal the *huršum*.”

Take 10 shekels of silver (and) 1 litre of oil (in) an *emazum*-container in the *huršum*.

3 cauldrons of 30 minas each (from) the stock of cauldrons in my *huršum*.

The *huršum* was regularly under the supervision of a woman or even belonged to her.⁶⁰

Besides food and cauldrons, a great variety of goods were stored in the *huršum*, including textiles that needed to be aired from time to time,⁶¹ copper,⁶² wool,⁶³ bronze,⁶⁴ saddle of a donkey,⁶⁵ wood,⁶⁶ etc.

Tablets with their containers were also regularly kept in the *huršum*:⁶⁷

⁵⁷VS 26 53 cited above note 47.

⁵⁸Kt 91/k 108: 2, Dercksen, 1996: n. 224; VS 26 146: 7; Kt g/t 36: 5–7, Bilgiç, 1964: 148; CCT 3 28b: 12.

⁵⁹KTH 9: 33–36, Michel, 2020: 206, n. 27; TTC 26: 5–11, Michel, 2020: no. 311; KT 6c 551: 24–26; Kt h/k 87: 26–28, Michel 2020: no. 135. See also “I handed over to her before your representatives her belongings and bronze objects weighing 40 minas from your *huršum* and she took them out (of the house),” Kt n/k 212: 11–14 cited by Dercksen, 1996:78.

⁶⁰KT 11a 48: 8–9 (*amtum*); KT 11a 127: 21–23 (*šuhartum*).

⁶¹KT 6b 329: 39–41; KT 6b 330: 7; KT 6c 550 94/k 843: 35; KT 6c 551 94/k 1243: 4.

⁶²Kt a/k 339: 18 and Kt e/k 67: 6 (Veenhof, 1999: 66, note 43).

⁶³KT 6c 662: 10–14, KT 11a 128: 4–5.

⁶⁴Kt n/k 720, Erol, 2010: 37–38.

⁶⁵KT 11a 127: 21–23.

⁶⁶Ka 367 (l. 8–11) 6 *e-ri-qā-tim ša ki-is-na-tim* 6 *e-ri-qā-tim ša e-ši ša-ma-ma-ni i-na hu-ur-ši-im pi-ih-a-ma*, “Buy 6 wagonloads of tree roots and 6 wagonloads of wood for me. Close it up in the *huršum*”, Barjamovic, 2011: 47.

⁶⁷KT 5 23: 12–15; KT 6b 374: 4–6; KT 6c 667: 12–18.

Since we became afraid, Ennānātum and I myself, we opened the *huršum* and took out of your (tablet) boxes the tablet with his seal, which we gave him.

Following your instructions Pīlah-Ištar gave me (access to) your *huršum* with the tablets.

Also, let your report come to me about how much silver you have given him. You, seal my tablets and the *huršum*. Instruct Ennānātum that no one must open my tablet (containers) without your permission.

The *huršum* was clearly a room or section in a house where people could enter and that could be sealed.⁶⁸

Enter in my father's house, the old house, and open Aššur-mūtappil's *huršum*, break the seals of his representatives, and let the group-of-three seal it afterwards.

The wife of Hali-abum is dead. Collect everything she left behind and bring it into one single *huršum* and seal it in my name.

The *huršum* could even be a unit that could be purchased separately.⁶⁹ Poor and vagrant people could live in it:⁷⁰

I am living in an empty *huršum*.

Aššur-taklāku and Šu-Suen are living in my *huršum*.

Instruct her there so that there will be no wrongdoing in my *huršum*.

A woman could have a slave working in her *huršum*, presumably to prepare food:⁷¹

⁶⁸TC 3 99: 5–12, Michel, 2001: no. 248; Hertel, 2013: 130; KT 8 260: 9–12; see also TTC 26: 5–11, Michel, 2020: no. 311 cited above. Note however that the *huršum* might not always be a safe place to keep goods: "If the *huršum* is not guarded, then place the textiles where they will be under guard," KT 6 551: 9–12.

⁶⁹Ennum-Aššur bought to Alua a *huršum* (Kt v/k 150: 5–13).

⁷⁰Kt n/k 720: 41–42, Erol, 2010: 276; KTS 2 32: 1–3; KT 6a 225: 22–24.

⁷¹KTH 23: 1–16, 10 gín kù-babbar ki-ma A-na-ah-Ištar, Lá-ma-sà-tum, a-na Ša-té-e-a, a-na hu-ur-šī-im, ku-ta-ú-li-im, ta-dí-in, i-ma-tí : Lá-ma-[sà-tu]m, kù-babbar⁴P-ša, Ša-té-a : té-ri-šu, kù-babbar a-na, Lá-ma-sà-tim, Ša-té-e-a, tù-ta-ar-ma, ù i-na hu-ur-šī-im, A-na-ah-Ištar, tù-šī-i.

Lamassutum gave to Šāt-Ea 10 shekels of silver in place of Anah-Ištar to detain him to the *huršum*. Whenever Lamassutum demands her silver back from Šāt-Ea, Šāt-Ea shall give the silver back to Lamassutum and Anah-Ištar will leave the *huršum*.

From all these examples it appears that the *huršum* was either a kitchen, or a part of the house used as storeroom(s). Its size may have been quite varied, and the door opening onto the *huršum* could be sealed.

3 Archaeological identification of the storage areas in the house

The precious goods and archives of Assyrian merchants were kept in different spaces within their house: the *maknakum* corresponded to a safe, the *maššartum* was a strong room, and the *huršum* was the kitchen and its larder or more generally storeroom(s). Is it possible to identify these different spaces on the plans of the houses excavated in Kültepe lower town level II (19th century BCE)?

Many of the goods that were stored in these rooms did not survive time. Food products would mostly been consumed or disappeared, if preserved to some degree, were not fully recognized and systematically recorded with precision during excavations in the lower town. However, in the reports of T. Özgüç covering the first thirty years of excavations, as well as in a few of his later articles, there are some clues concerning the rooms in which cuneiform tablets were discovered.⁷²

The textual analysis of the different spaces in which merchants' goods were preserved has shown that tablets within their containers were kept together with merchandise, mainly metals and textiles. It is thus possible to suggest that, in the following examples, the places where the tablets were found possibly corresponded to a *maknakum*, *maššartum*, or *huršum*.

The house of Kuliya (Kt 92/k, fig. 1) is located on squares LV–LVI/126–127. It had six rooms and measured 126 m². The archive of the merchant was found in the cupboard recess linked to room no. 4. The entrance door was on the north-east and people entering the house had to cross three rooms before reaching the cupboard which could correspond to a safe (*maknakum*).

⁷²This section is mainly based on Özgüç, 1959, as well as on Özgüç, 1994 and Özgüç, 2001. For the identification of the house owners see Hertel, 2014. And for the discoveries of level Ib (18th century) archives within the houses see Özgüç, 2004.

As noted by T Özgüç: “It would be easy to keep this small space safely under lock and key.”

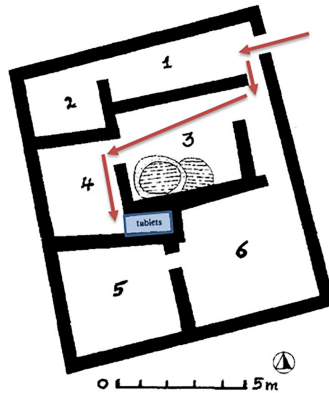


Figure 1. The house of Kuliya (Kt 92/k). From Veenhof, 2010:13 (data provided by T. Özgüç).

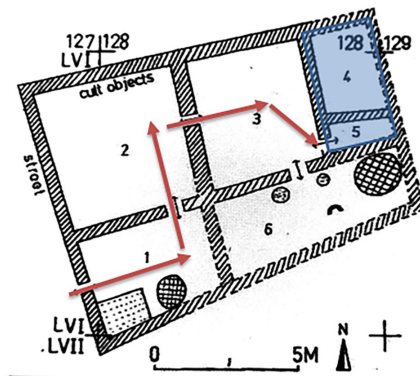


Figure 2. The house of Elamma (Kt 91/k and 92/k). From Özgüç, 1994: 371.

The house of Elamma (Kt 91/k and 92/k, fig. 2) is located on squares LVI–LVII/128–129 and measured 130 m². The entrance door is on the southwest, and one had to cross most of the rooms of the house to reach the

ones in which the archive was kept. The tablets were originally packed in organic materials which had disappeared. Some tablets were also lying along the east wall of room no. 3. The kitchen was located in room no. 6. We suggest that rooms nos. 4 and 5 formed the storerooms area (*huršum*); room no. 5 could have been a safe (*maknakum*) and room no. 4 a strong room (*maššartum*). However, the latter might have been accessible only from room no. 5, which could then have been another smaller strong room (*maššartum*).

The house of Ali-ahum (Kt c/k, fig. 3) is located on squares N-O-P/20 and measured 119 m² (16 × 5.50 m). It had two entrance doors, one on the west and the other one on the east of the house; another possible entrance was located to the north. The kitchen was in room no. 1, while tablets were found in room 2, lying at the base of the south and north walls, originally placed on shelves. This room, which was reached after crossing two rooms, could have been a strong room (*maššartum*) or simply a storeroom (*huršum*).

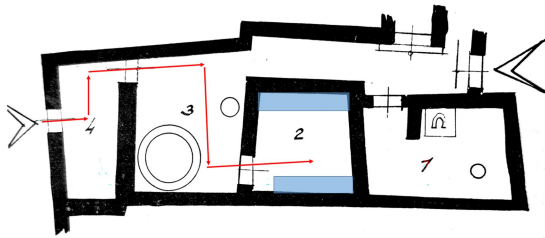


Figure 3. The house of Ali-ahum (Kt c/k). From Özgüç, 1959: 90, fig. 38.

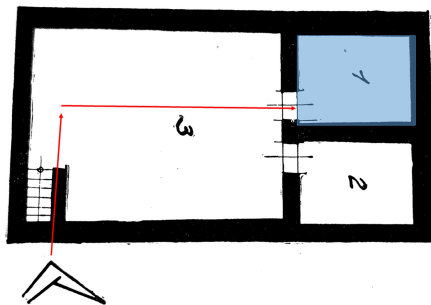


Figure 4. The house of Adad-šulūli (Kt a/k and b/k). From Özgüç, 1959: 89, fig. 33.

The house of Adad-šulūlī (Kt a/k and b/k, fig. 4) is located on squares F–G/9–10; it had two stories and its ground floor measured 66 m² (10 × 5 m). His archive and goods were preserved in the basement room no. 1. The entrance door was on the south-west and people entering the house had to cross room no. 3 before reaching the storeroom, a strong room (*maššartum*), or a simple storeroom (*huršum*).

The house of Šalim-Aššur and his sons (Kt 94/k, fig. 5) is located on squares LXIV–LXVI/130–131. It had 9 rooms and measured 115,5 m² (10.5 × 11 m). There were three entrances to the building to the south-east. The kitchen was room no. 8. The archive of 947 tablets and unopened envelopes was found in rooms nos. 5 and 6 that were separated by a thin partition. Parts of the tablets were kept on shelves along the walls, from which they had fallen down, others were kept in pots on the ground. People entering the building had to cross two rooms before reaching this storage area (*huršum*), perhaps made up of two strong rooms (*maššartum*).

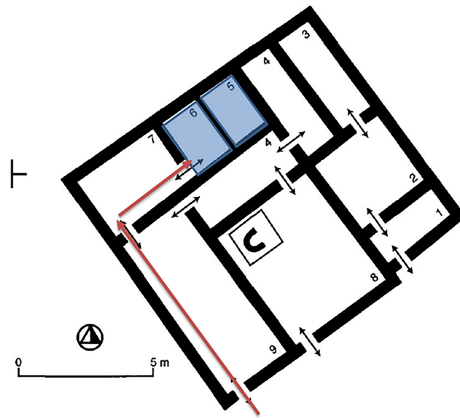


Figure 5. The house of Šalim-Aššur and his sons (Kt 94/k). From Özgüç, 2001: 369–370.

The house of Uzua (Kt a/k and b/k, fig. 6) is located on squares R–S–T/21–22 and measured 154 m². The tablets were found in groups in rooms nos. 3 and 4, and in room no. 3 archaeologists found jars filled with wheat. Room no. 2 contained the kitchen, and room no. 7 served as storeroom. The entrance door was to the south-west. People entering the house had to move through four doors before reaching room no. 4. Rooms nos. 3 and 4 formed a storage area (*huršum*), perhaps incorporating two strong rooms (*maššartum*).

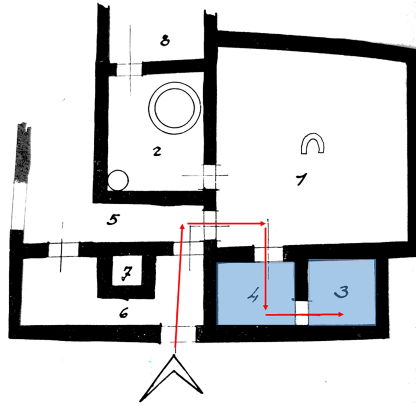


Figure 6. The house of Uzua (Kt a/k and b/k). From Özgüç, 1959: 94, fig. 53.

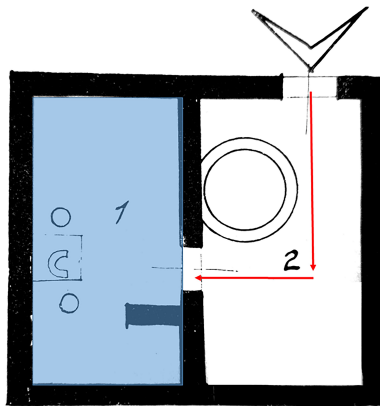


Figure 7. The house of Ṭāb-ahum (Kt c/k). From Özgüç, 1959: 86, fig. 24.

The house of Ṭāb-ahum (Kt c/k, fig. 7) is located on squares O–P/21–22 and measures 56 m² (7.50 × 6.50 m). The entrance door was on the north side, and the tablets were found scattered in the kitchen (*huršum*) in room no. 1. People entering the house had to cross room no. 2 before entering the kitchen.

In all these examples, the rooms used as storerooms or strong rooms in which merchants kept their most precious goods were located at the furthest point of the house from the entrance; this means that to get there, one had

to go through several rooms. Such a location provided additional security to the sealed doors. Other houses in Kaneš were built with layouts similar to those presented above, including some inhabited by Anatolians.

4 Conclusions

The Assyrians traded in metals and luxury textiles, as well as in semi-precious stones. These trade objects constituted their most valuable assets, together with the certified documents that recorded the often-considerable capital, that they had lent out or invested in various financial transactions. Such goods, kept in their houses, were coveted by thieves. To ensure their protection, merchants placed them in safes (*maknakum*), strong rooms (*maṣṣartum*), or storerooms (*huršum*) whose doors they could seal; these places were located in the most inaccessible parts of the house, as far as possible from the front door.

Inside these sealed and guarded rooms, merchandise and tablets were kept in containers (bundles, bags, baskets, boxes, jars) sealed with a *bullā* – a lump of clay with seal imprints and sometimes a few words – bearing the seals of the owner(s) of the goods or of family members. The words written on some *bullā* specified the contents of a container be it tablets or merchandise, providing another level of protection. Women, who were the guardians of the house were even instructed, in some instances, to sleep near the most important goods, i.e., the tablets.

The tablet containers, big and small *tamalakkum* (wooden boxes or reed baskets) or *ṣiliānum* (clay jar or rush container), were always sealed and many texts mention the breaking of seals to open tablet containers and extract specific tablets. The claims, deeds and legal texts kept in these containers, were each in turn protected by clay envelopes on which the seals of the parties and witnesses had been imprinted. Thus, these tablets had triple protection.

Thousands of *bullā* have been found at Kültepe, both in the lower town and on the city mound.⁷³ A detailed investigation of the location of the *bullā* found in each house could make it possible to define more precisely the function of different rooms.

⁷³Özgüç / Tunca, 2001.

Abbreviations

- AHw von Soden, W., 1965–1981: *Akkadisches Handwörterbuch*, 3 vols. Wiesbaden.
- ATHE Kienast, B., 1960: *Die altassyrischen Texte des orientalischen Seminars der Universität Heidelberg und der Sammlung Erlenmeyer*. Berlin.
- Babyloniaca* 6 Sayce, A. H., 1912: "The Cappadocian Cuneiform Tablets of the University of Pennsylvania". *Babyloniaca* 6, 182–192.
- BIN 4 Clay, A.T., 1927: *Letters and Transactions from Cappadocia*. Babylonian Inscriptions in the Collection of J. B. Nies 4. New Haven.
- BIN 6 Stephens, S., 1944: *Old Assyrian Letters and Business Documents*. Babylonian Inscriptions in the Collection of J. B. Nies 6. New Haven.
- CAD Oppenheim, A. L. / Reiner, E. / Roth, M. (eds.), 1956–2010: *The Assyrian Dictionary*, 26 vols. Chicago.
- CCT 3 Smith, S., 1925: *Cuneiform Texts from Cappadocian Tablets in the British Museum* 3. London.
- CCT 4 Smith, S., 1927: *Cuneiform Texts from Cappadocian Tablets in the British Museum* 4. London.
- CCT 5 Smith, S. / Wiseman, D. J., 1956: *Cuneiform Texts from Cappadocian Tablets in the British Museum* 5. London.
- CTMMA 1 Larsen, M. T., 1988: "Old Assyrian Texts". In I. Spar (ed.): *Tablets, Cones and Bricks of the Third and Second Millennia B.C.* Cuneiform Texts in the Metropolitan Museum of Art 1. New York. Pp. 92–143, 177–192, pls. 66–109, 129–156.
- CUSAS 34 George, A. R. / Hertel, T. / Llop-Raduà, J. / Radner, K. / van Soldt, W. H., 2017: *Assyrian Archival Texts in the Schøyen Collection and Other Documents from North Mesopotamia and Syria*. Cornell University Studies in Assyriology and Sumerology 34. Bethesda.
- KT 4 Albayrak, İ., 2006: *Kültepe Tabletleri 4 (Kt o/k)*. Türk Tarih Kurumu Yayınları 6/33b. Ankara.
- KT 5 Veenhof, K. R., 2010: *Kültepe Tabletleri 5 (Kt 92/k 188–263)*. Türk Tarih Kurumu Yayınları 6/33c. Ankara.

- KT 6a Larsen, M. T. 2010: *Kültepe Tabletleri 6a. The Archive of the Šalim-Aššur Family 1: The First Two Generations*. Türk Tarih Kurumu Yayınları 6/33d–a. Ankara.
- KT 6b Larsen, M. T., 2013: *Kültepe Tabletleri 6b. The Archive of the Šalim-Aššur Family 2: Ennam-Aššur*. Türk Tarih Kurumu Yayınları 6/33d–b. Ankara.
- KT 6c Larsen, M. T., 2014: *Kültepe Tabletleri 6c. The Archive of the Šalim-Aššur Family 3: Ali-ahum*. Türk Tarih Kurumu Yayınları 6/33d–c. Ankara.
- KT 6d Larsen, M. T., 2018: *Kültepe Tabletleri 6d. The Archive of the Šalim-Aššur Family 4: Texts concerning non-family members*. Türk Tarih Kurumu Yayınları 6/33d–d. Ankara.
- KT 8 Veenhof, K. R., 2017: *Kültepe Tabletleri 8. The Archive of Elamma, son of Iddin-Suen, and his Family (Kt 91/k 285–568 and Kt 92/k 94–187)*. Türk Tarih Kurumu Yayınları 6/33f. Ankara.
- KT 11a Erol, H., 2018: *Kültepe Tabletleri 11a. Šu-İštar'a Ait Belgeler*. Türk Tarih Kurumu Yayınları 6/33i–a, Ankara.
- Kt ?/k Tablet found during the 1948- Turkish excavations at Kültepe, in the lower town, and preserved in the Anadolu Medeniyetleri Müzesi (Ankara).
- Kt ?/t Tablet found during the 1948- Turkish excavations at Kültepe, on the tepe, and preserved in the Anadolu Medeniyetleri Müzesi (Ankara).
- KTH Lewy, J., 1930: *Die Kültepe-Texte aus der Sammlung Frida Hahn*. Berlin.
- KTS 1 Lewy, J., 1926: *Die altassyrischen Texte vom Kültepe bei Kaisar-ije*. Keilschrifttexte in den Antiken-Museen zu Stambul (1). Konstantinopel.
- Prag I Hecker, K. / Kryszat, G. / Matouš, L., 1998: *Kappadokische Keilschrifttafeln aus den Sammlungen der Karlsuniversität Prag*. Prague.
- Sadberk Donbaz, V., 1999: *Cuneiform Texts in the Sadberk Hanım Museum, Çivi yazılı Belgeler*. Istanbul.
- TC 1 Contenau, G., 1920: *Tablettes cappadociennes du Louvre*. Textes cunéiformes du Louvre 4. Paris.

- TC 3 Lewy, J., 1935–1937: *Tablettes cappadociennes du Louvre*. Textes cunéiformes du Louvre 19–21. Paris.
- TPAK 1 Michel, C. / Garelli, P., 1994: *Tablettes paléo-assyriennes de Kültepe 1 (Kt 90/k)*. Istanbul.
- TTC Contenau, G., 1919: *Trente tablettes cappadociennes*. Paris.
- VS 26 Veenhof, K. R. / Klengel-Brandt, E., 1992: *Altassyrische Tontafeln aus Kültepe. Texte und Siegelabrollungen*. Vorderasiatische Schriftdenkmäler der Museen zu Berlin 26. Berlin.

Bibliography

- Balkan, K., 1967: “Contributions to the Understanding of the Idiom of the Old Assyrian Merchants”. *Orientalia* 36, 393–415.
- 1974: “Cancellation of Debts in Cappadocian Tablets from Kültepe”. In *Anatolian Studies Presented to Hans Gustav Güterbock on the Occasion of his 65th Birthday*. Publications de l’Institut historique-archéologique néerlandais de Stamboul 35. Istanbul. Pp. 29–42.
- Barjamovic, G., 2011: *A Historical Geography of Anatolia in the Old Assyrian Colony Period*. Carsten Niebuhr Institute Publications 38. Copenhagen.
- Bayram, S., 2000: “İna nadītim ša naruā’im”. *Archivum Anatolicum* 4, 29–48.
- 2001: “The nadītim of the Stele”. In W. H. van Soldt (ed.): *K. R. Veenhof Anniversary Volume. Studies Presented to Klaas R. Veenhof on the Occasion of his Sixty-fifth Birthday*. Publications de l’Institut historique et archéologique néerlandais de Stamboul 89. Leiden. Pp. 1–8.
- 2018: “Asur Ticaret Kolonileri Dönemi’nde Nafaka Ödeniyor Muydu?” *Archivum Anatolicum* 12, 31–52.
- Bilgiç, E., 1964: “Three Tablets from the City Mound of Kültepe”. *Anatolia* 8, 145–163.
- Dercksen, J. G., 1996: *The Old Assyrian Copper Trade in Anatolia*. Publications de l’Institut historique-archéologique néerlandais de Stamboul 75. Leiden.
- 1999: “On the Financing of Old Assyrian Merchants”. In J. G. Dercksen (ed.): *Trade and Finance in Ancient Mesopotamia*. MOS Studies 1. Leiden. Pp. 85–99.
- 2004: *The Old Assyrian Institutions*. MOS Studies 4. Publications de l’Institut historique-archéologique néerlandais de Stamboul 98. Leiden.

- 2015: “The Goddess Who was Robbed of her Jewellery. Ishtar and her Priest in an Assyrian Colony”. *Anatolica* 41, 37–60.
- Donbaz, V., 2008: “Three Court Proceedings concerning Walaliašu’e an Anatolian Woman”. In T. Tarhan / A. Tibet / E. Konyar (eds.): *Muhibbe Darga Armağanı*. Istanbul. Pp. 209–220.
- Erol, H., 2010: “Uşur-ša-Ištar Arşivinden (Kt n/k) Šimat-Su’en’in Bir Mektubu”. In Y. Hazırlayan / A. Süel (eds.): *VII. Uluslararası Hititoloji Kongresi Bildirileri Çorum 25–31 Ağustos 2008*. Ankara. Pp. 273–284.
- Günbattı, C., 2012: *Kültepe – Kaniş. Anadolu’da ilk yazı, ilk belgeler*. Kayseri.
- Hecker, K., 1996: “Gurbette Yasal Haklardan Yoksunlunk MU? [Rechtlos in der Fremde?]”. *Anadolu Medeniyetleri Müzesi Yıllığı* 1995, 137–159.
- 2004: “Beim Tode unseres Vaters... Der leidige Streit ums Erbe”. In J. G. Dercksen (ed.): *Assyria and Beyond. Studies Presented to Mogens Trolle Larsen*. Publications de l’Institut historique-archéologique néerlandais de Stamboul 100. Leiden. Pp. 281–298.
- 2007: “Altassyrische Briefe”. In G. Wilhelm (ed.): *Briefe. Texte aus der Umwelt des Alten Testaments, Neue Folge* 3. Gütersloh. Pp. 77–100.
- Hertel, T., 2013: *Old Assyrian Legal Practices. Law and Dispute in the Ancient Near East*. Old Assyrian Archives Studies 6. Publications de l’Institut historique-archéologique néerlandais de Stamboul 123. Leiden.
- 2014: “The Lower Town of Kültepe: Urban Layout and Population”. *Journal of Cuneiform Studies* Suppl. 4, 25–54.
- Kouwenberg, N. J. C., 2019: *Introduction to Old Assyrian*. Münster.
- Kuzuoğlu, R., 2013: “Eski Asurca Metinlerde Tablet Kapları ve Kültepe’den Arkeolojik Örnekler”. *Ankara Üniversitesi Dil ve Tarih-Coğrafya Fakültesi Dergisi* 53, 2, 13–42.
- Larsen, M. T., 1967: *Old Assyrian Caravan Procedures*. Publications de l’Institut historique-archéologique néerlandais de Stamboul 22. Istanbul.
- 1976: *Old Assyrian City-State and its Colonies*. Mesopotamia 4. Copenhagen.
- 1977: “Seal Use in the Old Assyrian Period”. In McG. Gibson / R. D. Biggs (eds.): *Seals and Sealing in the Ancient Near East*. Bibliotheca Mesopotamica 6. Malibu. Pp.89–105.
- 2002: *The Aššur-nādā Archive*. Old Assyrian Archives 1. Publications de l’Institut historique-archéologique néerlandais de Stamboul 96. Leiden.

— 2010: see KT 6a.

Michel, C., 1994: “Règlement des comptes du défunt Hurašānum”. *Revue d'Assyriologie* 88, 121–128.

— 1997: “Propriétés immobilières dans les tablettes paléo-assyriennes”. In K. R. Veenhof (ed.): *Houses and Households in Ancient Mesopotamia*. Publications de l'Institut historique-archéologique néerlandais de Stamboul 78. Istanbul. Pp. 285–300.

— 1998: “‘Les mites d'Assyrie’ Moths in the Assyrian Texts of the IInd millenium B.C.”. *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 118, 325–331.

— 2000: “Les litiges commerciaux paleo-assyriens”. In F. Joannès (dir.): *Rendre la justice en Mésopotamie. Archives judiciaires du Proche-Orient ancien*. Saint-Denis. Pp. 113–139.

— 2001: *Correspondance des marchands de Kaniš au début du II^e millénaire av. J.-C.* Littératures anciennes du Proche-Orient 19. Paris.

— 2008a: “The Alāhum and Aššur-taklāku archives found in 1993 at Kültepe Kaniš”. *Altorientalische Forschungen* 35, 53–67.

— 2008b: “Femmes au foyer et femmes en voyage: le cas des épouses des marchands assyriens au début du II^e millénaire av. J.-C.”. *Clio, Histoire, femmes et sociétés* 28, 17–38.

— 2020: *Women of Aššur and Kaneš: Texts from the Archives of Assyrian Merchants*. Writings from the Ancient World 42. Atlanta.

— 2023: “Old Assyrian Legal Cases”. In S. Démare-Lafont et al.: *Judicial Decisions in Mesopotamia*. Writings from the Ancient World 43. Atlanta. In press.

Özgüç, T., 1959: *Kültepe-Kaniš. New Researches at the Center of the Assyrian Trade Colonies*. Türk Tarih Kurumu Yayınları 5/19. Ankara.

— 1994: “A Boat-shaped Cult-vessel from the Karum of Kanish”. In H. Gassche / M. Tanret / C. Janssen / A. Degraeve (eds.): *Cinquante-deux réflexions sur le Proche-Orient ancien offertes en hommage à Léon de Meyer*. Leuven. Pp. 369–375

— 2001: “Observations on the Architectural Peculiarities of the Archive of an Assyrian Trader of Kārum Kanesh”. In W. H. van Soldt (ed.): *K. R. Veenhof Anniversary Volume. Studies Presented to Klaas R. Veenhof on the Occasion of his Sixty-fifth Birthday*. Publications de l'Institut historique et archéologique néerlandais de Stamboul 89. Leiden. Pp. 367–371.

- 2004: “Archives of the Karum at Kaniš, Level Ib”. In J. G. Dercksen (ed.): *Assyria and Beyond: Studies Presented to Mogens Trolle Larsen*. Publications de l’Institut historique-archéologique néerlandais de Stamboul 100. Leiden. Pp. 445–450.
- Özgüç, N. / Tunca, Ö., 2001: *Kültepe-Kaniš Mühürlü ve Yazıtlı Kil Bullalar [Sealed and Inscribed Clay Bullae]*. Ankara.
- Veenhof, K. R., 1972: *Aspects of the Old Assyrian Trade and its Terminology*. *Studia et Documenta ad Iura Orientis Antiqui Pertinentia* 10. Leiden.
- 1999: “Silver and Credit in Old Assyrian Trade”. In J. G. Dercksen (ed.): *Trade and Finance in Ancient Mesopotamia*. MOS Studies 1. Leiden. Pp. 55–83.
- 2008: “The Old Assyrian Period”. In K. R. Veenhof / J. Eidem: *Mesopotamia. The Old Assyrian Period*. *Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis* 160/5. Fribourg. Pp. 13–263.
- 2010: see KT 5.
- 2013: “New Mesopotamian Treaties from the Early Second Millennium BC from *kārum* Kaneš and Tell Leilan (Šehna)”. *Zeitschrift für Altorientalische und Biblische Rechtsgeschichte* 19, 23–57.
- 2018: “The Struggle for the House of Dalaš in Kanesh”. In K. Kleber / G. Neumann / S. Paulus (eds.): *Grenzüberschreitungen. Studien zur Kulturgeschichte des Alten Orient. Festschrift für Hans Neumann zum 65. Geburtstag am 9. Mai 2018*. *Dubsar* 5. Münster. Pp. 757–771.

Assyrian Armory Palaces

Kateřina Šašková

Abstract

The ancient Assyrians were renowned as fearless warriors and capable conquerors. Their achievements stemmed from the large and well-armed troops, but also from the sophisticatedly organized backgrounds that provided the necessary support to the army. Both archaeological and written sources from the northern Mesopotamia provide the evidence not only about the campaigns into the foreign lands but also about the military organization within the proper Assyrian territory. The significant part of the home warfare system was the institution called ekal māšarti. The present study aims to explore this Assyrian military structure.

1 Introduction¹

“Military Palace,” “Review Palace,” “Arsenal,”² “Armory,”³ “Inventory Palace,”⁴ “Rear Palace,”⁵ “arsenal royal,”⁶ “Hinterhaus,”⁷ “Hinterer Palast,”⁸ “Reserve Palace,”⁹ “Palast der (militärischen) Reserve (truppen),”¹⁰ “Zeug-

¹The numbering of Assyrian texts follows the online editions RIAo, RINAP, SAA, and ATAE (without zeros at the beginning of numbers).

²E.g., Kertai, 2013: 19.

³E.g., the translation of the inscription Sennacherib 15: vii 21’.

⁴E.g., Parpola, 1976: 165.

⁵E.g., the translation of the inscription Sennacherib 22: vi 39.

⁶E.g., Matthiae, 2010: 197.

⁷Or ‘hinter house’ (Grayson, 1987: 314).

⁸E.g., Radner, 1997: 266.

⁹See RIA 10: 218.

¹⁰Frahm, 1997: 275.

haus,¹¹ or “Zeughauspalast.”¹² These all are terms attempting to describe the nature of building complexes which, according to written and material sources, were found in Neo-Assyrian capitals Kalḫu, Nineveh, and perhaps Dūr-Šarrukīn. Although such a type of building is considered a typically Assyrian feature, the evidence offers only three structures explicitly named *ekal māšarti* or *ekal kutalli*, and there are some doubts about one of them.

2 Kalḫu

Compared to the two others, the armory palace at Kalḫu is thoroughly explored (although not in its entirety) and well documented by various written sources, even the hundreds of texts found directly in it. Many studies have already appeared about its history, architecture, texts uncovered in it, and other finds;¹³ therefore, I will focus only briefly on its characteristics and several aspects relevant to the present paper.

The builder of the armory palace at Kalḫu was Shalmaneser III. Although he did not leave any building inscription in this regard, several of his texts calling the structure “Palace of Shalmaneser”¹⁴ were found directly inside the building, and the later king Esarhaddon refers to Shalmaneser as the builder of this palace as well.¹⁵ Adad-nērārī III, Shalmaneser’s grandson, carried out some repair works,¹⁶ and the armory palace at Kalḫu was undoubtedly in use during the reigns of Tiglath-pileser III, Sargon II, and Sennacherib.¹⁷ The final appearance of the complex is a work of Esarhaddon, who accomplished an extensive reconstruction.¹⁸

¹¹E.g., Bär, 2007: 247.

¹²E.g., RIA 10: 474; Frahm, 1997: 274.

¹³Archaeological surveys and architecture: D. Oates, 1959; Mallowan, 1950; Mallowan, 1966: 369–470; Kertai, 2015: 58–73, 159–160; Oates / Oates, 2004: 144–194. Royal inscriptions and other texts: Kinnier Wilson, 1972 (CTN 1); Dalley / Postgate, 1984 (CTN 3); Grayson, 1996 (RIMA 3; see also RIAo). Ivories: IN (Ivories from Nimrud); Mallowan, 1966: 471–599; Herrmann / Coffey / Laidlaw, 2004. Glass objects: Orchard, 1978; Brill, 1978. Metal objects: Curtis / Ponting, 2013.

¹⁴E.g., Shalmaneser III 28: 1. See also footnote 65 (p. 141).

¹⁵Esarhaddon 77: 42–43; Esarhaddon 81: 3–5; Esarhaddon 82: 2–3.

¹⁶His brick inscriptions are numbered Adad-nerari III 17 and Adad-nerari III 18 at RIAo, but these texts have not yet been published (Grayson, 1996: 222; Dalley / Postgate, 1984: 265).

¹⁷The building appears in a letter from the reign of Tiglath-pileser III (SAA 19 12: 8), in another letter from the era of Sargon II (SAA 5 206; see below), and in a legal transaction dated to the year 709 BCE (SAA 6 31: r. 26). Some other texts – not mentioning the armory palace but excavated directly in it – are considered to come from the reign of Sargon II (e.g., CTN 3 86, CTN 3 99, CTN 3 110, CTN 3 116, CTN 3 118). An administrative record CTN 3 76 dated to the reign of Sennacherib (683 BCE) lists 784 bows from Arpadia.

¹⁸He constructed a new terrace with larger palatial halls and *bīt ḫilāni* (Esarhaddon 77: 42–55; Esarhaddon 80: 5’–11’; Esarhaddon 81: 3–7; Esarhaddon 82: 2–5).



Figure 1. Plan of Kalhu.¹⁹

The palace complex occupied the southeastern city corner and was adjacent to a large open area surrounded by the wall. It is probable that stables, granaries, and storages for less rare commodities, for which there was not enough space inside the palace-fortress, adjoined the northern and western sections of the wall.²⁰ The palace consisted of three large courtyards surrounded by rooms and smaller courts. Some rooms around the northwest courtyard served as workshops for repairing military equipment, including chariots, and the others were storerooms for military implements and supplies. Similarly, the rooms around the northeast courtyard were originally storages and workshops, but several of these spaces later became residences. The place of most importance is the northern corner, from where about

¹⁹The plan draws on the following sources: Dalley / Postgate, 1984: xii; Kertai, 2013: Pl. V; Kertai, 2015: Pl. 1; Google Earth; CORONA Atlas. Background map: Google Earth.

²⁰Oates / Oates, 2004: 145–148.

80 administrative texts come.²¹ This sector probably served as an abode of a high-ranking official.²² The rooms in the west corner formed another apartment, perhaps that of *rab ekalli*, the official in charge of the armory palace.²³



Figure 2. Plan of *ekal māšarti* of Kalḫu.²⁴

The long rooms with attached bathrooms along the north and west sides of the southeast courtyard were presumably barracks for the king's troops. The east corner constituted a residential suite of some higher official, and the other rooms served as storerooms.²⁵ Unlike other quadrants of the complex, the southwest quadrant doesn't have a large central courtyard. It consisted of four courts surrounded by large storages where the excavators found plenty of ivories, bulky storage jars, and – among others – a mass of bronze and iron scale armor.²⁶

²¹Including 22 horse lists relating to musters of cavalry and chariotry and 48 wine lists documenting the rations for persons of various statuses.

²²Oates / Oates, 2004: 155–159; Pedersén, 1998: 145.

²³Oates / Oates, 2004: 161, 162, 164; Pedersén, 1998: 145.

²⁴The plan draws on the following sources: Dalley / Postgate, 1984: xii; Kertai, 2015: Pl. 1; Google Earth; CORONA Atlas. Background map: Google Earth.

²⁵Oates / Oates, 2004: 162–163.

²⁶Oates / Oates, 2004: 165–170.

The southern part of the complex was composed of representation rooms – including the throne room – and a private suite. This suite is conventionally called the queen’s household because of the discovery of the archive of *ša-kintu*, the queen’s manageress, in one of its rooms.²⁷ It is, however, probable that this area was also the location of the king’s private rooms. Some other rooms presumably served as residences or offices of eunuch officers.²⁸

3 Nineveh

Archaeologists could explore only a few peripheral parts of the armory palace at Tell Nebi Yunus in Nineveh²⁹ until recently because a church and later a mosque occupied the *tell* since the Middle Ages. In July 2014, during the dramatic events in Iraq, this mosque was destroyed by ISIL, who then dug tunnels in the hill to find antiquities to be a sale on the black market. Only in early 2017, after the expulsion of ISIL from Mosul, an archaeological survey of the Assyrian palace under the mosque ruins could begin.³⁰

The most prominent builder of the armory palace in Nineveh was Sennacherib, who chose this city as his new seat. However, a military building probably stood in this city long before his reign,³¹ presumably already in the Middle Assyrian period. In most cases, Sennacherib refers to his palace as *ekal kutalli*.³² A similar name – *bīt kutalli* – was used by Aššur-rēša-iši I, who informs on the reconstruction of the “*bīt’ šaḫūri* of the *bīt ku’tal’[li]*”³³ in Nineveh. Sennacherib also confirms an older structure on which several

²⁷Pedersén, 1998: 145–167.

²⁸See Oates / Oates, 2004: 180–190; cf. Kertai, 2015: Pl. 9.

²⁹See Turner, 1970: 68–75; MacGinnis, 1989: 187–192; Scott / MacGinnis, 1990: 63–73; Kertai, 2015: 147–153; MacGinnis, 1992: 3–19; Miglus / Maul, 2020: 128–213 (unfortunately, the author did not have access to the study during the writing this paper).

³⁰See, e.g., Danti / Ali / Paulette et al., 2015: 48–54. For contemporary news see, e.g., Ensor, 2017b; Ensor, 2017a; Khoshnaw / Adeane / El Gibaly, 2018; Majeed, 2017; Staff / AFP, 2017; McKirdy / Wedeman / Khadder, 2017.

³¹D. Kertai supposes that until the 9th century BCE, the main Assyrian “palace of war” was in Nineveh, while the “palace of peace” stood in Aššur (Kertai, 2011: 71–72).

³²See below.

³³Aššur-rēša-iši I 4: 4–6. Grayson’s RIMA 1 doesn’t give the exact place from where two fragments of clay cones bearing this inscription come (Grayson, 1987: 314), but CDLI (nos. P467280, P467281) and the website of the British Museum (nos. 1856,0909.173, 1856,0909.177) name Kuyunjik. Two other texts of Aššur-rēša-iši inscribed on bricks may refer to the same building (Aššur-rēša-iši I 5 (BM 137484, BM 137487, BM 137491); Aššur-rēša-iši I 6 (BM 137494)), but these texts were also apparently discovered at Kuyunjik (see Grayson, 1987: 315 and 316, CDLI, and the British Museum website, but cf. Matthiae, 2010: 198). Nebi Yunus is a findspot of a brick inscription of Adad-nērārī III, but most exemplars of this text originate from Kuyunjik (Adad-nērārī III 15; Grayson, 1996: 220).

of his predecessors, whose names are unfortunately unknown, worked.³⁴ He removed the old building and built a massive terrace on which he constructed a monumental palace complex.³⁵

Nevertheless, Sennacherib's son Esarhaddon claims that his father's palace is small for him, and he started further reconstruction,³⁶ mainly in the residential suite.³⁷ The renovated structure was named Ešgalšiddudua, 'The palace that administers everything.'³⁸ Esarhaddon's successor Ashurbanipal left a brief report on repairing a collapsed part of the building.³⁹

According to the building inscriptions⁴⁰ of these three rulers, the armory palace at Nineveh stood on a mudbrick terrace high of 200 courses (*tibku*). The complex contained a large outer courtyard (*kisallu bābānū*)⁴¹ for military parades and horse training and the great courtyard adjacent to the luxuriously furnished and richly decorated limestone palace (*kisallu rabū šaplānu ekal pīli*),⁴² which included, among other things, spaces serving as a treasury (*nakkamtu*).⁴³

Regarding the armory at Nineveh, certain ambiguities arose due to several texts found in the citadel that mention more palaces associated with military affairs located in the city – *ekal māšarti* of Nineveh, *ekal māšarti* of the New Contingent, and *bīt kutalli*:

³⁴"The *ekal kutalli* that earlier kings, my ancestors, had had built (...) – its terrace did not exist, its site had become too small, and its construction was inexpert. With the passage of time, its base had fallen into disrepair, then its foundations had become loose (and) its superstructure had collapsed." (Sennacherib 22: vi 39–44). See also Sennacherib 23: vi 31–37; Sennacherib 34: 55–59 (more detailed).

³⁵The most detailed description regarding the work on the palace is given by Sennacherib 34: 59–90. Following texts offer shorter reports: Sennacherib 22: vi 45–73; Sennacherib 25: ii' 1'–12'; Sennacherib 35: r. 11''–14'' (severely broken); and perhaps Sennacherib 152: 10–16 (partially broken).

³⁶Esarhaddon 1: v 40 – vi 43; Esarhaddon 2: iv 32 – vi 9; Esarhaddon 3: iv 30' – v 39'; Esarhaddon 5: viii 2'–16'.

³⁷Esarhaddon 1: vi 5–6; Esarhaddon 2: v 18–21; Esarhaddon 3: v 8'–11'.

³⁸Esarhaddon 1: vi 42–43; Esarhaddon 2: vi 8–9.

³⁹Ashurbanipal 3: viii 56–64; Ashurbanipal 6: x 19''–1'''.

⁴⁰For a more detailed analysis of the building inscriptions, see Turner, 1970: 69ff.

⁴¹Sennacherib 22: vi 70–71; Sennacherib 34: 58, 67.

⁴²Sennacherib 34: 82.

⁴³Sennacherib 34: 90.

SAA 7 23 ⁴⁴ (ADD 950)	SAA 7 115 ⁴⁵ (ADD 953)	SAA 7 148 ⁴⁶ (ADD 1083)
Review Palace of Nineveh (KUR <i>ma-šar-te</i> NINA.KI)	Review Palace of Nineveh (KUR <i>ma-šar-te</i> URU.ni-nu-a)	Review Palace (of Nineveh) (É.GAL <i>ma-šar-te</i>)
Review Palace of the New Contingent (KUR <i>ma-šar-te ki-šir</i> GIBIL)	Review Palace of the New Contingent (KUR <i>ma-šar-te ki-šir</i> GIBIL)	Review Palace of the New Contingent (É.GAL <i>ma-šar-te ki-šir</i> GIBIL)
		New Palace (É GIBIL)
		New Palace of the Central City (É GIBIL MURUB ₄ -URU)
		Rear Palace (É <i>ku-tal</i>)

Interpretations of these texts differ. Some researchers assume that these palaces were parts of the palace complex at Nebi Yunus,⁴⁷ while others suppose they were separate buildings.⁴⁸ As for *ekal māšarti* of the New Contingent, two lists of high-ranking officers from the reign of Esarhaddon mention the “governor of the new contingent of Sennacherib” after the governor of Nineveh.⁴⁹ It indicates that *ekal māšarti* of the New Contingent was a separate unit with its governor. In addition to these three buildings, the New Palaces could also relate to military matters.⁵⁰ Thus, there may have been five military-related *ekallus* or *bītus* in Nineveh. But this does not

⁴⁴Lines 3–4.

⁴⁵Lines i 3–4. This text also mentions New Palace and *ekal māšarti* of Kalḫu in lines i 6 and 7.

⁴⁶Lines ii 14’–16’ and 18’–19’.

⁴⁷Frahm, 1997: 275 (regarding *ekal māšarti* and *bīt kutalli* in SAA 7 148).

⁴⁸Matthiae, 2010: 197 (concerning *ekal māšarti* and *bīt kutalli* in SAA 7 148), Postgate, 2007: 348 (regarding *ekal māšarti* and *ekal māšarti* of the New Contingent in SAA 7 23, SAA 7 115, and SAA 7 148).

⁴⁹SAA 7 3: i 5–6; SAA 7 4: i 7’–8’. It is also noteworthy that Šumāia, the author of the astrological report SAA 8 499, entitles himself as the “astrologer of the new contingent” (SAA 8 499: r. 4–6; LÚ.DUB.SAR UD-AN-^dEN.LÍL *šá ki-iš-ri eš-šú*).

⁵⁰Parpola, 1983: 128–129; Kertai, 2013: 22. S. Parpola bases his assumption primarily on a document from Nineveh, in which certain Mušēzib-Marduk, the prefect of the horses of the New Palace, appears (SAA 6 301: 2–3; LÚ.GAR-nu *šá* ANŠE.KUR.MEŠ *šá* É GIBIL). D. Kertai also includes the “New Palace of the Central City” among the military buildings (SAA 7 148:

necessarily mean four completely separate palace districts. Both Akkadian terms have broader use, so it is better to understand them as administrative “units” or “households,” especially in administrative texts.⁵¹ Therefore, the “palaces” could be separate administrative entities of the military district at Nebi Yunus. In some texts, the name of one part – most frequently *bīt/ekal kutalli* or *ekal māšarti* – may refer to the whole complex, which is not unusual in Assyrian texts.



Figure 3. Plan of Nineveh.⁵²

ii 18': É GIBIL MURUB₄-URU; Kertai, 2013: 22). However, Parpola translates the concerned line in SAA 7 148 as “New Palace of the Citadel” (Parpola, 1983: 129).

⁵¹Kertai, 2013: 22; Parpola, 1983: 129.

⁵²The plan draws on the following sources: Otto, 2015: 483; Kertai, 2015: Pl. 16; Scott / MacGinnis, 1990: 65, 73; Google Earth. Background map: Google Earth.

4 Dūr-Šarrukīn

The Palace F in Dūr-Šarrukīn,⁵³ resembling the armory at Kalḫu in its dispositions and position within the city, is also considered to be an armory palace.⁵⁴ The building stood on a terrace partially protruding from the city walls, but the reconstruction of its plan is possible only roughly. It is especially true of the section within the city,⁵⁵ where the activities more closely related to military affairs were possibly taking place. No text from the building confirms its purpose as an armory,⁵⁶ and the textual evidence of other provenance is not much better. Sargon himself does not name the armory palace at Dūr-Šarrukīn in his inscriptions, and scanty references in other texts its existence only suggest rather than confirm.

Probably the most important of these texts is a partially damaged letter found in Nineveh, in which the crown prince Sennacherib informs the king about certain Gidgiddānu and his brothers. In the beginning, Sennacherib writes that the persons in question are in Dūr-Šarrukīn. After matters concerning the city of Aššur and the gap of broken text, he probably returns to these persons and states that they have received new orders and are working on *ekal māšarti*.⁵⁷

On the other hand, the lists of horses and military personnel from the armory palace at Kalḫu and probably also similar texts found in the citadel

⁵³For more information, see Frankfort, 1933: 87–90; Loud / Altman, 1938: 75–78; Matthiae, 2010: 197–203, Kertai, 2015: 117–120.

⁵⁴Matthiae, 2010: 199, 201; Reade, 2011: 118; Oates / Oates, 2004: 180. However, some scholars suppose that Palace F may have been the seat of the crown prince Sennacherib, or it could fulfill both functions – the armory palace as well as the residence of the crown prince (see Matthiae, 2010: 199, note 8; Loud / Altman, 1938: 9).

⁵⁵Loud / Altman, 1938: 9, 75–76, Pl. 69 and 75.

⁵⁶Sargon II 10, (pavement slab); Sargon II 11 (pavement slab); Sargon II 43 (cylinders; DŠ 1288–1295; exs. 13–20); Sargon II 57 (L, M; two fragments of glazed brick frieze). See Loud / Altman, 1938: 77, 98, 105; Frame, 2021.

⁵⁷SAA 1 39. The connection of Gidgiddānu and his brothers with Dūr-Šarrukīn is also confirmed by the letter SAA 1 152, whose author assures the king that these men have not left the city. Another proof of the existence of *ekal māšarti* in Dūr-Šarrukīn may be the letter SAA 5 206 (see RIA 10: 218) written by Šarru-ēmuranni, governor of Māzama (PNA Š–Z: 1234–1235). He writes to the king that they opened the treasury of metal scraps at the entrance to the unspecified “house in the palace upon the terrace,” “weighed 420 talents of bronze scraps and plac[ed] it in the storehouse [of] the cupbearer.” After the broken passage, the text continues: “Alternatively, we can do the (inventory) of the *ekal māšarti* on the 29th and go in the remaining days to Dūr-Šarrukīn, to seal those tunics.” Despite the bad condition of the text, it is clear that the *ekal māšarti* mentioned in the letter stood in another city since they intend to go to Dūr-Šarrukīn till after the inventory of this *ekal māšarti*. A badly damaged administrative record SAA 11 21 related probably to the construction of Dūr-Šarrukīn also mentions *ekal māšarti*, but the context is unclear: “[...] in the *sūtu*-measures of the *ekal māšarti*” (l. 9).

at Nineveh dated to the reign of Sargon⁵⁸ show that this ruler used the armories in these cities during his reign.⁵⁹ Their significance is also evident because although Sargon II does not mention the start point of his military campaigns very often, it was Kalḫu from which his army set out on a military campaign against Urarṭu in 714 BCE.⁶⁰



Figure 4. Plan of Dūr-Šarrukīn.⁶¹

⁵⁸Fales / Postgate, 1995: xxvi-xxviii; Dalley / Postgate, 1984: 27–31.

⁵⁹However, some of the horses delivered to Nineveh may have been destined for nearby Dūr-Šarrukīn, where some military officers also operated (SAA 11 133: ii 18 (officers from Dūr-Šarrukīn); SAA 11 138: 4 (Dūr-Šarrukīn in broken context)). The presence of officers connected to military affairs is also confirmed by the letter from Kišir-Aššur, governor of Dūr-Šarrukīn (PNA H–K: 621), who informs the king about the construction of houses for the recruitment officers *mušarkisu* (SAA 1 124; concerning *mušarkisu* officers, see, e.g., Dezső, 2012: 43–44 and 120–128).

⁶⁰“I set out from my royal city Kalḫu (...)” (Sargon II 65: 8).

⁶¹The plan draws on the following sources: Loud / Altman, 1938: Pl. 69 and 75; Kertai, 2015: Pl. 10; Google Earth. Background map: Google Earth.

As for the poor evidence concerning the armory at Dūr-Šarrukīn, the fact that the construction of the city terminated just before Sargon's death seems to play an important role. The armory palace could not provide sufficient background for military activities for a substantial part of his reign as its construction was still in process. It is also the reason for the intensive use of the armory palace at Kalḫu and probably also at Nineveh. After Sargon's death, *ekal māšarti* at Dūr-Šarrukīn perhaps lost its importance when his successor Sennacherib turned his attention to nearby Nineveh, where he renovated its armory.⁶² Dūr-Šarrukīn remained the capital of the province of the same name, and according to the letter written by Nabû-šumu-iddina,⁶³ this city was – together with Kalḫu and Nineveh – a significant tax-collection center (*nakkante ša pirrāni*).⁶⁴

5 Characteristics of documented armory palaces

Written and archaeological evidence relating to armory palaces allows some conclusions regarding the characteristics of these building complexes. But we should remember that these are only conclusions based on three cases.

5.1 Names of the building

Although military buildings must have existed in Assyria much earlier, at least since the Middle Assyrian period, the term *ekal māšarti* appears in Assyrian sources relatively late. Shalmaneser III called his new structure at Kalḫu simply *ekallu*, the palace.⁶⁵ The name *ekal māšarti* (É.GAL-*ma-šar-ti*)⁶⁶

⁶²Apparently, Sennacherib even transported building material from Dūr-Šarrukīn and used it for his armory at Nineveh (Scott / MacGinnis, 1990: 65–66).

⁶³Nabû-šumu-iddina (or Nādinu in abbreviated form) was the inspector of the Nabû temple in Kalḫu. He was responsible for receiving and reviewing horses delivered from various provinces and officials to Kalḫu (SAA 13 82–123; see also PNA L–N: 885–886).

⁶⁴SAA 13 95: 8–12. Indeed, other Nabû-šumu-iddina's reports mention Dūr-Šarrukīn as one of the places from which horses were delivered to Kalḫu (SAA 13 92: r. 2–3; SAA 13 99: r. 1–2; SAA 13 105: 8–9; SAA 13 114: 15).

⁶⁵Shalmaneser III 28 and Shalmaneser III 57 (throne bases); Shalmaneser III 29 (slab); Shalmaneser III 30–37 (door sills and door bolt sockets; the beginning of Shalmaneser III 30 is reconstructed); Shalmaneser III 113 (stone spoon); Shalmaneser III 114 (glazed brick panel; the beginning is reconstructed); Shalmaneser III 115 (lion weight). According to P. Matthiae, Shalmaneser built this structure as a conventional palace and only altered some elements known from the North-West Palace of his father Ashurnasirpal II to better suit his needs as an intense warrior and recipient of abundant booty and tribute (Matthiae, 2010: 200).

⁶⁶For the meaning of the Akkadian term *māšartu*, see CAD M/1: 358–359 and A/2: 420–422 (*ašāru*).

first appears in connection with the same building in a wine list dated to the year 784 BCE,⁶⁷ to the reign of Shalmaneser's grandson Adad-nērārī III.

The term also figures in a letter in which Šarru-dūrī, governor of Kalḫu,⁶⁸ writes to the king Tiglath-pileser III as follows: "I have [persona]lly brought [the people] of Sîn-šabši [in] to the king, my lord's presence: once to the *ekal māšarti* and once to Nineveh."⁶⁹ The designation *ekal māšarti* undoubtedly means the armory palace at Kalḫu. In the case of Nineveh, it perhaps could also be an armory palace, although the text does not state the exact place in the city, nor does it specify "the people of Sîn-šabši" and the reason for bringing them. If so, it would mean that during the reign of Tiglath-pileser III, the term *ekal māšarti* was used exclusively in connection with the building in Kalḫu. The same also indicates the fact that Šarru-dūrī does not bother to specify the city, although the fact that the writer was the governor Kalḫu may also play a role.

Texts relating to the military building in Dūr-Šarrukīn are somewhat uncertain, but in Sargon's time, the armory bore the name *ekal māšarti*.⁷⁰ However, whether the designation refers to Kalḫu or Dūr-Šarrukīn, it is conceivable that just as the architectural dispositions of Fort Shalmaneser influenced the appearance of Palace F in Dūr-Šarrukīn, it could be similar in the case of its name. But on the other hand, Sargon himself does not mention an armory palace in his inscriptions, and this designation is relatively rare even in other texts dated back to his reign.

Sennacherib used the term *ekal māšarti* for his armory palace at Nineveh in its entirety only once,⁷¹ and two other occurrences are related to gate names: *abul ekal māšarti*⁷² and *mušlālum ekal māšarti*.⁷³ In the vast majority of his inscriptions, he uses the name *ekal kutalli*,⁷⁴ a term similar to what the Middle Assyrian ruler Aššur-reša-iši I called his construction at Nineveh (*bīt kutalli*).⁷⁵ The same building is probably in question when some letters

⁶⁷CTN 13: i 11. Dating formula: "Addaru dīri, day 22nd, eponym year of Marduk-šarru-ušur" (l. i 2; concerning the eponym, see PNA L-N: 727).

⁶⁸See Luukko, 2013: xxii, but cf. PNA Š-Z: 1233–1234, and especially PNA P-Š: 1142.

⁶⁹SAA 19 12: 4–9.

⁷⁰See above.

⁷¹Frahm, 1997: 275; Sennacherib 34: 85. However, the previous passage of this text employs the term *ekal kutalli* (l. 55).

⁷²Sennacherib 15: vii 21'; Sennacherib 16: vii 67; Sennacherib 17: viii 2.

⁷³Step gate of *ekal māšarti* (Sennacherib 18: vii 35').

⁷⁴The conventional translation of this term is "Rear Palace," but E. Frahm suggests "Palast der (militärischen) Reserve(truppen)" as a more probable meaning (Frahm, 1997: 275).

⁷⁵Aššur-reša-iši I 4: 4. The term *bītu* does not necessarily refer to a small house or a particular part of a large structure since it may also designate the entire palace or temple building. See, e.g., the use of the term *bītu* (log. É) in the following texts: SAA 20 49 (Götteradressbuch),

addressed to Esarhaddon mention the child, presumably from the royal family, called *piqittu ša bīt kutalli*.⁷⁶ Regarding the probable identification of *bīt kutalli* with the armory of Nineveh, the royal correspondence offers another letter of great importance. The author of the letter SAA 16 143 writes to Esarhaddon that when he was still crown prince, the official Nabû-šarrāni brought some people to his father's presence in *bīt kutalli*.⁷⁷ This text links *bīt kutalli* (not *ekal kutalli*) directly to Sennacherib and, at the same time, proves that this ruler resided in it for some time. Since Esarhaddon's reign, the writing of the term *ekal māšarti* began to vary when the sign KUR sometimes substituted the traditional É.GAL in the expression of the word *ekallu*.⁷⁸ Another name for the armory was possibly the New Palace (*ekallu eššu* or *bītu eššu*⁷⁹) discussed above.

David Kertai assumes that *bīt kutalli* was probably a specific name used for the armory in Nineveh.⁸⁰ I think it could have been similar in the case of the name *ekal māšarti*, which may have initially been a unique designation for the structure in Kalḫu. Only later, the name could be taken first for Sargon's building in Dūr-Šarrukīn and then for the armory palace in Nineveh, for which, however, the original name was still occasionally used, although the name *ekal māšarti* prevailed during Esarhaddon's reign.

5.2 Functions of the building

In addition to the statements of the builders of the armory palaces expressed in their royal inscriptions, other written sources and the results of archaeo-

RIAo Shalmaneser I 3: 5–38; Shalmaneser III 53: 7; Tiglath-pileser III 58: 3; Esarhaddon 85: 4. And similarly, the term *ekallu* may represent both the whole building as well as its separate part (Turner, 1970: 73–74).

⁷⁶SAA 10 214: 7–8; SAA 10 217: 6–7; SAA 10 218: 6; SAA 10 219: 5–6. *Bīt kutalli* also figures in a letter SAA 16 217 (r. 7'); however, the context is unknown because of the damage of the text. This term also occurs in a wine list CTN 1 16 from Kalḫu, but together with *bītu šanû* and *bīt kudinni*. In this case, therefore, it was probably part of a palace complex (CTN 1 16: 8–10; but cf. CTN 1 16: 4' (É [qi-qi-i]) at the ATAE corpus).

⁷⁷SAA 16 143: r. 4'–7'. For dating, see Luukko / Buylaere, 2002: xx; but cf. PNA L–N: 873 (Nabû-šarrāni 4).

⁷⁸Esarhaddon 82: 2 (KUR *ma-šar-te šá qé-reb URU.kâl-ḫa*); SAA 16 21: r. 15–16 (KUR *ma-šar-ti URU.ni-nu-u*); SAA 7 23: 3–4 (KUR *ma-šar-te NINA.KI, KUR ma-šar-te ki-šir GIBIL*); SAA 7 115: i 2–3 and 6–7 (KUR *ma-šar-te (URU.ni-nu-a), KUR ma-šar-te (URU.kâl-ḫa)*, but see É.GAL *ma-šar-te* in the line i 17); SAA 14 451: r. 2'; CTN 3 13 (l. 5; KUR *ma-šar-te*; dated to 642 BCE); CTN 3 12 (l. 2–3; KUR *ma-šar-ti šá URU.kâl-ḫa*; dated to 623 BCE). The last two texts originated from the armory palace in Kalḫu.

⁷⁹See, e.g., SAA 14 169: 8 (É.GAL GIBIL); SAA 14 60: b. e. 7 (É GIBIL).

⁸⁰Kertai, 2011: 71. However, see also the note made by P. Matthiae on the bases of the list of palaces of Nineveh SAA 7 148 (ii 14' and 19'), in which *ekal māšarti* as well as *bīt kutalli* figure (Matthiae, 2010: 197, note 2).

logical surveys give further valuable information on the purposes of these buildings. In principle, the functions are military, residential, administrative, and economic.⁸¹ From the point of view of our topic, the first two are especially important.

Concerning the functions of the structure, Sennacherib writes: “Earlier kings had had built (the palace) for the proper running of the military camp (*ana šutēšur karāši*), the care of horses (*paqādi sisê*), (and) the overseeing of everything (*sanāqi mimma šumšu*).”⁸² Sennacherib himself then “enlarged its outer courtyard for the proper administration of the black-headed (*ana šutēšur šalmāt qaqqadi*), the inspection of thoroughbred horses, mules, *agālu*-donkeys ((*ana*) *paqādi mūrnisqī parê agālī*), military equipment, chariots, carts, wagons, quivers, bows, and *uṣṣu*-arrows, every type of implement of war ((*ana*) *paqādi*) *tillī narkabāti attarāte ereqqī išpāte tilpānāte u uṣṣī mimma šumšu unūt tāhāzi*), (and) the submission of teams of horses (and) mules, which have great strength, to the yoke (*našmandī sisê parê ša emūqī rabāte išū šuknuše ana nīri*).”⁸³ His reason for the enlargement was that the “outer courtyard was not wide enough to have horses show (their) mettle (*šuhūurat šubatsa ana šušmur sisê ul šumdula bābānū kisallu*).”⁸⁴ And finally, he adds: “I filled it with luxuriousness to be an object of wonder for all of the people. The surplus payment (*mandattu*) of all of the lands, (...) together with the wagons, chariots, vehicles (...) that I had captured, along with the countless equipment that I had accumulated: I had (all of these things) carried to the treasury of that palace and brought inside it.”⁸⁵

Esarhaddon, his son, describes the purposes of the building almost in identical words.⁸⁶ He only summarizes the last point of Sennacherib’s previous text as “the plunder of enemies” (*šallat nakiri*)⁸⁷ and adds to the reasons for reconstruction the increasing the area “to train with chariots” ((*ana*) *šitamduḥ narkabāti*).⁸⁸

⁸¹ Compared to the citadel areas, there is no evidence of the presence of a temple building inside the armory complexes at Kalḫu, Nineveh, and Dūr-Šarrukīn. On special occasions, however, religious ceremonies took also place in these buildings. Esarhaddon, for example, celebrated the completion of the reconstruction of the armory in Nineveh this way: „I invited the gods Aššur, Bēl, Nabū, Ištar of Nineveh, (and) Ištar of Arbela, the gods of Assyria, all of them, into it. I made sumptuous pure offerings before them and presented (them) with my gifts.” (Esarhaddon 1: vi 44–47; Esarhaddon 2: vi 10–15).

⁸² Sennacherib 22: vi 39–41; Sennacherib 23: vi 32–33; Sennacherib 34: 55–56.

⁸³ Sennacherib 22: vi 65–70; Sennacherib 25: ii’ 6’–12’.

⁸⁴ Sennacherib 34: 57–58.

⁸⁵ Sennacherib 34: 86–90.

⁸⁶ Esarhaddon 1: v 42–44; Esarhaddon 2: iv 35–38; Esarhaddon 3: iv 33’–35’.

⁸⁷ Esarhaddon 1: v 44; Esarhaddon 2: iv 38; Esarhaddon 3: iv 35’.

⁸⁸ Esarhaddon 1: v 46; Esarhaddon 2: iv 41; Esarhaddon 3: iv 37’.

5.2.1 Arsenal

Both written sources and archaeological finds document the use of the armory palace as a storage of war equipment. At Kalḫu, the excavators found various weapons in many rooms – arrowheads, daggers, a sword, and pieces of scale armor.⁸⁹ Dispositions and findings from other rooms indicate that these spaces served as workshops for making and repairing war equipment, including chariots.⁹⁰ Likewise, several texts excavated in the same building describe inspections, storing, and repairs of military equipment.⁹¹ For example, an administrative document CTN 3 117 records the inspection of 36,242 bows.⁹²

5.2.2 Care and training of horses

Many finds from Kalḫu – horse blinkers and frontlets of ivory,⁹³ stone,⁹⁴ and bronze,⁹⁵ as well as an iron horse bit,⁹⁶ trappings, and other harness equipment and chariot fittings⁹⁷ – prove the Sennacherib's and Esarhaddon's statements concerning horse breeding and training in the armory palace area. Horses came to Assyria as spoils of war⁹⁸ and tributes from vassal rulers, and they were also part of the *iškāru* conscription.⁹⁹ Both rulers state that the outer courtyard, the open space outside the palace, was used as a training ground for riding horses and driving chariots. It perfectly agrees with the finding of Sennacherib's horse troughs to the north of the Armory Gate at Nineveh¹⁰⁰ and also with the claim of Esarhaddon that he planted a park alongside the armory palace and "led a canal into it as a watering place for horses."¹⁰¹ From the armory at Kalḫu originate 22

⁸⁹See, e.g., Curtis / Ponting, 2013: 31–47, 153–163; Stronach, 1958: 169–181; Muscarella, 1988: 317–321.

⁹⁰Oates / Oates, 2004: 155–156.

⁹¹CTN 3 74 (6 shields, parts of trappings, 500 arrows, 200 bow-strings); CTN 3 75 (iron coat of mail); CTN 3 76 (784 bows); CTN 3 84 (iron, mention on the wheel for cart); CTN 3 96 (chariots and their equipment); CTN 3 97 (chariots and their equipment); CTN 3 117 (36,242 bows).

⁹²In addition to ordinary usage, storing a large amount of military equipment was necessary because most conscripts came unequipped (see, e.g., SAA 11 122).

⁹³Orchard, 1967; Curtis / Reade, 1995: 161–170.

⁹⁴See, e.g., BM 140416 at the British Museum website.

⁹⁵Curtis / Ponting, 2013: 183.

⁹⁶Stronach, 1958: 175, Pl. xxxv, no. 1; Curtis / Ponting, 2013: 182.

⁹⁷Curtis / Ponting, 2013: 182–188.

⁹⁸E.g., Esarhaddon 1: v 42–45.

⁹⁹See, e.g., SAA 19 35 and SAA 19 168.

¹⁰⁰Sennacherib 132; MacGinnis, 1989: 187–192.

¹⁰¹Esarhaddon 1: vi 33–34.

horse lists, the registers of cavalrymen and charioteers.¹⁰² Similar texts are also known from Aššur¹⁰³ and Nineveh,¹⁰⁴ but they come from the palaces at the citadel, with one exception from Nineveh.¹⁰⁵ The fact that the cities of Nineveh, Kalḫu, and Dūr-Šarrukīn were the major centers for the collection of horse taxes is also eloquent.¹⁰⁶

5.2.3 Treasury for storing plunder and tributes

The statements that armory palaces served as treasuries for storing rare items from tributes (*mandattu*) and booty (*šallatu*) have also been proved. Many rooms in the southwest area of the armory in Kalḫu contained a large number of valuable items, including beautifully carved pieces of ivory, frequently the furniture inlays,¹⁰⁷ but also several ivory labels bearing inscriptions indicating the origin of the objects¹⁰⁸ and shell fragments with the name of Irḫulēnu of Ḥamāt.¹⁰⁹ The motif of bringing the tribute also occurs on the throne base discovered in the throne room.¹¹⁰

Several objects of a similar nature also come from Nebi Yunus – three statues of Taharqa and a statue of Anuket discovered by Iraqi archaeologists,¹¹¹ and an Egyptian headrest found by Claudius James Rich.¹¹²

5.2.4 Reviews/inspections of the army

The function highly emphasized by Assyrian rulers and even reflected in the name *ekal māšarti* is the organization of parades and inspections of the armed forces and military equipment. These reviews were also the probable reason for making the lists of military personnel found at Kalḫu¹¹³ and

¹⁰²CTN 3 85, CTN 3 98–118. See Dalley / Postgate, 1984: 17–22.

¹⁰³Pedersén, 1985: 30, note 7.

¹⁰⁴E.g., SAA 11 123. See also Fales / Postgate, 1995: xxvi–xxviii; Dalley / Postgate, 1984: 27–31.

¹⁰⁵SAA 11 121. The text is fragmentary; it dates to 625 BCE.

¹⁰⁶SAA 13 95: 8–12.

¹⁰⁷See, e.g., Oates, 1959: 124–125.

¹⁰⁸ND 10150 (king of *gdʾ*); ND 10151 (Ḥamāt); ND 10304 (inscribed with Phoenician letters); ND 12031 (Phoenician or Aramaic inscription); ND 12049 (Phoenician or Aramaic inscription); ND 11310 (Hazael), ND 7624 (Taharqa). Mallowan, 1966: 596–599; Oates / Oates, 2004: 181.

¹⁰⁹Oates / Oates, 2004: 181; Mallowan, 1966: 451, no. 372.

¹¹⁰See Mallowan, 1966: 446–449, no. 371.

¹¹¹Scott / MacGinnis, 1990: 64, 65, 67.

¹¹²EA48030 (the British Museum website).

¹¹³Oates / Oates, 2004: 159, 215–216.

Nineveh.¹¹⁴ At the end of his building inscriptions concerning the armory palace in Nineveh, Esarhaddon states: “At the new year, in the first month,¹¹⁵ yearly, without ceasing, let me inspect in it all of the thoroughbreds, mules, camels, military equipment, implements of war, (and) all of the captured enemy soldiers.”¹¹⁶ These annual ceremonial reviews in Nineveh may relate to the formal submission of the tribute, which probably also took place at the beginning of the year.¹¹⁷ If so, acquired valuables could be immediately deposited into the palace treasury.

Other reviews could take place in a different period, not only in Nisannu, as a part of celebrations of the victorious return from the war, and some of them could also be associated with the festivals of the war goddess Ištar/Mullissu. Ashurbanipal claims he rode in a chariot pulled by captured rulers during the *akītu* festival of Ištar of Nineveh. He also says that this spectacle was observed not only by deities but also by the Assyrian army.¹¹⁸ On this occasion, people could see the booty – subsequently probably stored in the treasury of the armory – and prisoners, some of whom were then exemplarily punished in the throat.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁴E.g., SAA 13 107. The count of all men in SAA 11 126 is 33,700, but the text is partially broken.

¹¹⁵The first month of the Assyrian year was Nisannu (Sennacherib 167: 13; Esarhaddon 34: 11'; SAA 10 48: r. 8, SAA 12 86: 2), but cf. SAA 8 165: 5 – r. 1: “Addaru and Ulūlu are beginning of the year, as Nisannu and Tašritu are at the beginning of the year.”

¹¹⁶Esarhaddon 1: vi 58–61; Esarhaddon 2: vi 31–37; Esarhaddon 3: vi 11'–16'.

¹¹⁷Postgate, 1974: 121.

¹¹⁸Ashurbanipal 11: x 24–39. Ashurbanipal does not mention the exact month in this inscription, but according to other texts, the *akītu* festival of Ištar of Nineveh/Mullissu took place in the month of Tebētu (SAA 3 7: 10–16; see also Cohen, 1993: 335–336, 424; Pongratz-Leisten, 1997: 249). However, some Mesopotamian gods celebrated the *akītu* festival twice a year, and Nineveh probably had two *bit akītis* used not only by the goddess Ištar/Mullissu but perhaps also by the god Aššur – one inside the city (Ashurbanipal 10: v 33 – vi 11) and another presumably behind the city wall (Sennacherib 37: 14 – r. 7'; Frahm, 2000: 76–77; Frahm, 2008: 17). Sennacherib, the builder of the second *bit akīti*, named the building “Ešaḥulezenzagmukam, ‘House of Joy and Gladness for the Festival of the Beginning of the Year.’” (r. 4'–6'). Thus, another *akītu* festival may have been celebrated in the month of Nisannu in Nineveh (see Frahm, 2000: 76).

¹¹⁹Ashurnasirpal II flayed Aḥi-iababa in Nineveh and draped his skin over the wall (RIAo Ashurnasirpal II 1: i 93). Sennacherib did the same with Kirūa (Sennacherib 17: iv 82–86) and Ashurbanipal with Aia-ammu (Ashurbanipal 11: x 1–5). Ashurbanipal also executed Dunānu in Nineveh (Ashurbanipal 4: vi 81–83; Ashurbanipal 7: vii 25–27), and Nabū-na'id and Bēl-ēfir had to crush the bones of their father Nabū-šuma-ēreš opposite the Citadel Gate of Nineveh (Ashurbanipal 4: vi 87–95; Ashurbanipal 7: vii 31–35). Similar exemplary executions took place in Aššur and Arbela as well.

In addition to ceremonial matters, the reviews were suitable opportunities for the king to meet with dignitaries operating in various parts of the empire.¹²⁰

However, the reviews were not only the domain of Kalḫu and Nineveh. They are documented in other cities or provinces¹²¹ and even during a military campaign.¹²² In these cases, the reviews were presumably not festive events but a purely practical administrative necessity.

5.2.5 Start points of military campaigns

Armory palaces probably served for mustering the main military forces before the campaigns, which seems to be the primary purpose of some reviews. It would make sense that the main body of the Assyrian army would summon in an armory palace and its vicinity before a military campaign, given the facilities it provided for the troops. The rulers did not always state the place from where their army set forth for the campaign; however, the following table with known data shows that start points varied and were not limited to the cities with known armories:

Ruler	Year, date	City	Inscription
Aššur-bēl-kala	Šabāḫu	Aššur	Aššur-bel-kala 7: iii 4–5
Tukulti-Ninurta II	886, Simānu 1 st	Nineveh	Tukulti-Ninurta II 5: 13
Tukulti-Ninurta II	886, Tašritu 17 th	Aššur	Tukulti-Ninurta II 5: 30
Tukulti-Ninurta II	885, Nisannu 26 th	Aššur	Tukulti-Ninurta II 5: 41
Ashurnasirpal II	882, Abu 24 th	Nineveh	Ashurnasirpal II 1: i 69–70
Ashurnasirpal II		Nineveh	Ashurnasirpal II 22: 10'

¹²⁰E.g., “I (Tāb-šil-Ešarra, governor of Aššur; PNA Š–Z: 1342) and Zēru-ibni (governor of Rašappa; PNA Š–Z: 1443) will speak with them; when we come to the [revi]ew, [the king my lord can speak] with us.” (SAA 1 92: r. 6–10); “Perhaps the king, my lord, will say: ‘Why did his brother and his deputy, who at the review said they would come, not come?’” (SAA 5 52: 10–13); “Now the king, my lord, should write to Il-iada’ that he come [t]o the review. I shall come too and bring my witnesses with me. Našir-Bēl should come and arbitrate between us. Let us litigate with each other, and let the king decide between us.” (SAA 15 24: r. 13–20).

¹²¹E.g., SAA 19 84 (the writer is Aššur-šallimanni, the governor of Arrapha; PNA A: 217); SAA 1 49 (chariotry of magnates; unknown place); SAA 5 215 (review of the troops of Māzama, altogether 1,430 men); SAA 5 251 (review of cavalry and chariotry; unknown place); SAA 1 11 (the ruler accuses a dignitary, perhaps a governor (PNA L–N: 681), of building a personal army of 5,000 men, and he sends his eunuch to make a review of these soldiers).

¹²²“In the district of the land Sumbi, I held a review of my army and checked the number of horses and chariotry (*piqitti ummānīa aškunma ša sisē u narkabāti āmura mīnašun*).” (Sargon II 65: 12).

Ashurnasirpal II	881, Tašrītu 15 th	Kilīzu	Ashurnasirpal II 1: ii 33; Ashurnasirpal II 17: ii 107–108
Ashurnasirpal II	880, Simānu 1 st	Kilīzu	Ashurnasirpal II 1: ii 49–51
Ashurnasirpal II	878, Simānu 22 nd	Kalḫu	Ashurnasirpal II 1: iii 1
Ashurnasirpal II	877–867, Simānu 18 th	Kalḫu	Ashurnasirpal II 1: iii 28
Ashurnasirpal II	877–867, Simānu 20 th	Kalḫu	Ashurnasirpal II 1: iii 50
Ashurnasirpal II	877–867, Aiāru 8 th	Kalḫu	Ashurnasirpal II 1: iii 56; Ashurnasirpal II 2: 43
Ashurnasirpal II	866, Aiāru 13 th	Kalḫu	Ashurnasirpal II 1: iii 92–93
Shalmaneser III	857, Aiāru 13 th	Nineveh	Shalmaneser III 2: i 29
Shalmaneser III	857, Aiāru 13 th	Nineveh	Shalmaneser III 2: ii 13
Shalmaneser III	856, Aiāru 13 th	Nineveh	Shalmaneser III 2: ii 30
Shalmaneser III	855, Aiāru 13 th	Nineveh	Shalmaneser III 6: ii 3; Shalmaneser III 8: 6'
Shalmaneser III	855	Aššur	Shalmaneser III 8: 8'
Shalmaneser III	854	Nineveh	Shalmaneser III 8: 11'
Shalmaneser III	853, Aiāru 14 th	Nineveh	Shalmaneser III 2: ii 78; Shalmaneser III 8: 12'
Shalmaneser III	850, Nisannu 20 th	Nineveh	Shalmaneser III 5: iv 5
Shalmaneser III	848	Nineveh	Shalmaneser III 8: 35'
Shalmaneser III	847	Nineveh	Shalmaneser III 8: 41'
Shalmaneser III	843	Arbela	Shalmaneser III 6: iii 58
Sargon II	714, Du'ūzu 3 rd	Kalḫu	Sargon II 65: 6–8
Sennacherib	704?, Šabāṭu 20 th	Aššur	Sennacherib 1: 19; Sennacherib 213: 19
Esarhaddon	671, Nisannu	Aššur	Esarhaddon 34: 11'
Ashurbanipal		Arbela?	Ashurbanipal 7: iv 7'–15'

The table shows that Nineveh was the frequent base for military campaigns long before Sennacherib reconstructed the armory. Similarly, Ashurnasirpal II undertook several campaigns from Kalḫu before his son built a large military complex in the southeastern city corner. Dūr-Šarrukīn is absent from the list, but, on the contrary, Arbela, Kilīzu (as start points to the east), and the ancient capital Aššur occur.

5.2.6 Residence of the ruler and his family

Armory palaces also served as royal residences, as the word *ekallu* in the name indicates. Sennacherib and Esarhaddon state that they built armory

palaces at Nineveh and Kalḫu as their royal residence and for their pleasure.¹²³ But the question is whether any armory palace was a primary seat for at least one Neo-Assyrian ruler.¹²⁴ At any rate, the rulers dwelt inside their walls from time to time,¹²⁵ at least during military parades, and the inner rooms of the building were adapted to fit the king's representative and personal needs.¹²⁶

Administrative records¹²⁷ partly document the queen's household in the armory palace at Kalḫu managed by the female officer *šakintu*. A list of the *šakintus* SAA 7 23 shows that the queen's household existed in *ekal māšarti* of Nineveh, *ekal māšarti* of the New Contingent, and other palaces in Assyria.¹²⁸ The evidence indicates that during the reign of Esarhaddon, other members of the royal family occupied the armory palace at Nineveh. The king's exorcist Adad-šumu-ušur several times informs the ruler about the sick *piqittu ša bīt kutalli*, perhaps the crown prince's baby,¹²⁹ and he also mentions two patients of the New Palace.¹³⁰

Assyrian kings owned palaces throughout central Assyria. Other royal palaces stood in provinces, as evidenced by royal inscriptions and letters recording their constructions, reconstructions, or the stay of the ruler. Although armory palaces were not primary abodes of the king, they served – together with other palaces – as secondary residences of the Assyrian ruler.

¹²³Sennacherib 23: vi 45; Esarhaddon 1: vi 11 (Nineveh); Esarhaddon 77: 51 (Kalḫu); Esarhaddon 81: 3–7 (Kalḫu). Sennacherib built a roofed decorated pedestal of valuable materials in the inner courtyard (Sennacherib 34: 82–85) that resembles the throne base of Shalmaneser III in the southeast courtyard of the armory at Kalḫu (see Oates / Oates, 2004: 162). Both rulers also used precious materials with magical functions such as “making storms pass by,” “keeping illness away from a man,” and “whose appearance repels evil” (Sennacherib 34: 72–73; Esarhaddon 1: vi 15–16). It indicates that they wanted to inhabit these spaces at least occasionally. Esarhaddon, for example, held a feast for the gods, officials, and people of his country after completing the structure at Nineveh (Esarhaddon 1: vi 44–53; cf., e.g., Ashurnasirpal II 30: 102–154; and Sargon II 7: 167–186).

¹²⁴Shalmaneser III probably resided in his new palace at Kalḫu (Matthiae, 2010: 200–201; but cf. Russell, 1991: 290), and Esarhaddon, when he dwelt at Nineveh, possibly lived in the armory palace there (Melville, 1999: 42; but cf. Matthiae, 2010: 201–202). After all, the fact that the building was not the ruler's primary residence does not mean it was not a palace as such.

¹²⁵E.g., SAA 19 12: 4–9; SAA 16 163: r. 6'.

¹²⁶The armory at Kalḫu (and probably also at Dūr-Šarrukīn) included a throne room and a private suite equipped with, among other things, a kitchen (see Grayson, 1996: 169). An object considered a spoon bearing the inscription of Shalmaneser originates in the same structure (Shalmaneser III 113 = CTN 3 151; see Dalley / Postgate, 1984: 259; Grayson, 1996: 168).

¹²⁷CTN 3 30–45 (*šakintu*'s archive of the Room S 10) and CTN 3 29.

¹²⁸SAA 7 23: 1–14.

¹²⁹SAA 10 14: 7–8; SAA 10 17: 6–7; SAA 10 18: 6; SAA 10 19: 5–6. See Parpola, 1983: 139–140, but cf. Parpola, 1983: 113 regarding the location of *bīt kutalli*.

¹³⁰SAA 10 222: 6. See Parpola, 1983: 128–129.

5.2.7 Barracks

Armories also provided accommodation for soldiers, but certainly not for all soldiers permanently or temporarily stationed in the city. There was not so much space in the palace complex because workshops, storages, representative and private suites of the ruler, and apartments of high officials occupied most of the rooms. At Kalḫu, only the long chambers in the north and west of the southeast courtyard of the armory possibly were the barracks.¹³¹ Their inhabitants were presumably members of the royal cohort (*kišir šarrūti*) or at least its officers,¹³² while the other men had abodes in the city. It is indicated, for example, by a letter whose author, a Ninevite servant of the crown prince, complains: “The Sidonites and the(ir) heads did not go to Kalḫu with the crown prince, my lord, nor are they serving in the garrison of Nineveh. They loiter in the center of the town, each in his lodging place.”¹³³ Another complaint, written by an unknown author, concerns the troubles caused by the soldiers who arrived in Kalḫu: “The [troops] who a[rrived ...] and have been resid[ent] in [...] are loitering in the center of Kalḫu with their riding horses like [...] common criminals and drunkards. What does my lord say?”¹³⁴ Many soldiers had families – some married explicitly at the king’s request¹³⁵ – so the accommodation in a city providing more privacy would be more appropriate than barracks in the armory palace. Other soldiers lived in the countryside, and the king or magnates summoned them when needed.¹³⁶

6 Other armory palaces?

The sources give evidence of only three armory complexes, and only two of them bore the name *ekal māšarti* without any doubt. Is it possible that buildings of similar functions – although of a lesser extent and without the explicit name *ekal māšarti* – existed in other Assyrian cities? In this regard,

¹³¹Oates / Oates, 2004: 162.

¹³²See Postgate, 2007: 348–349; Oates / Oates, 2004: 162 (“barracks for the king’s household troops”); and Frahm, 1997: 275 (“the building was intended for the standing army, especially for the cavalry”). Administrative records SAA 7 8–12 provide some clues to the practice of temporary accommodation of the officials – for example, during a review – but these texts do not name a specific building and refer to an extraordinary (non-military) event (see Fales / Postgate, 1992: xvii–xix).

¹³³SAA 1 153: 6 – r. 6.

¹³⁴SAA 1 154: 2’ – r. 6.

¹³⁵See, e.g., SAA 13 82 (report on livestock and household equipment for cavalymen and their households); and SAA 19 18 (the king wants the Aramean soldiers to get married).

¹³⁶See, e.g., SAA 7 30, especially r. ii 3’–22’, r. iii 6’.

I suppose there are at least two places to consider: Aššur and Arbela. Both were significant Assyrian cities and seats of the prominent warlike gods, some of whose festivals related to warfare. Moreover, they show several other similarities to Nineveh and Kalḫu.

6.1 Aššur

The excavations in Aššur, the oldest Assyrian capital and seat of the two most significant war deities, Aššur and Ištar, did not prove any specialized armory palace. But it is possible that, at least before the move of the administrative center to Kalḫu, Aššur had a building or part of it that fulfilled similar functions as later armory palaces¹³⁷ since the city was the seat of the ruler and undoubtedly housed a reasonably large number of soldiers requiring the necessary facilities.



Figure 5. Plan of Aššur.¹³⁸

¹³⁷Reade, 2011: 110; cf. Kertai, 2011: 72.

Aššur also shares some other similarities with Kalḫu and Nineveh. It was the starting point of campaigns led by several Middle and Neo-Assyrian kings.¹³⁹ Some rulers received tribute in this city¹⁴⁰ and brought captives and booty there.¹⁴¹ The city also witnessed an exemplary execution of Iaū-bi'di from Ḥamāt when Sargon II brought him together with his family and his soldiers to Aššur and flayed him in front of the city gate.¹⁴² A considerable number of Middle Assyrian texts dealing with horses originate from the city,¹⁴³ and a group of Neo-Assyrian documents resembling the horse lists from Kalḫu comes from the Old Palace at Aššur.¹⁴⁴

If any palace with a military function existed in Aššur, it probably stood in the palatial-temple area, perhaps in the northwest corner of the city, because any secondary citadel with a large courtyard so typical for later armories does not occur in Aššur.

6.2 Arbela

Another possible candidate is Arbela. Although modern Irbil covers the ancient city, the primary citadel and several *tells* are apparent at first glance. Archaeological research has shown the remains of the city wall in some places, while other sections are visible on aerial or satellite images.¹⁴⁵ For the position of the secondary citadel, if it was there, the *tell* adjacent to the northeast part of the city wall seems to be the most suitable location. Although the written and material evidence does not document the armory palace at Arbela, certain clues in Neo-Assyrian texts may indicate its existence.

Arbela was the capital of the province bearing the same name and belonged to the most prominent Assyrian cities. Some rulers dwelt in Arbela for some

¹³⁸The plan draws on the following sources: Marzahn / Salje, 2003: end-leaf; Andrae, 1941: Tafel IV; Google Earth. Background map: Google Earth.

¹³⁹See above.

¹⁴⁰E.g., "They annually brought their valuable tribute and I received (it) in my city Aššur." (Ashurnasirpal II 67: 9–10). Similarly, Shalmaneser III 2: ii 24, 26–27.

¹⁴¹E.g., Shalmaneser III 2: ii 64–65, 74–75, 80; Sargon II 109: 5'; Sargon II 117: ii 20–21; Ashurbanipal 4: vi 70–76.

¹⁴²Sargon II 117: ii 4–11; Sargon II 35: 1–2.

¹⁴³Pedersén, 1985: 37.

¹⁴⁴KAV 31–38, 131–132 (Pedersén, 1985: 29; Dalley / Postgate, 1984: 41–43). This indicates that Aššur may have been one of the centers of cavalry organization (Dalley / Postgate, 1984: 43).

¹⁴⁵Nováček / Amin / Melčák, 2013: 27, Fig. 13; Nováček, 2020: 51–56.

time,¹⁴⁶ and especially Ashurbanipal had a very positive attitude towards the city and its chief divine inhabitant, the war goddess Ištar.¹⁴⁷ We can, therefore, assume that there was at least one royal palace in Arbela.



Figure 6. Plan of Arbela.¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁶“(…) when I was in the king my lord’s (Sargon’s) presence in Arbela (…)” (SAA 19 166: r. 3–6). “When the king (Esarhaddon), my lord, was seated on the *šaddattunu* in Arbela” (SAA 16 121: 6–8). “During the month Abu (…), I resided in the city Arbela, the city that her (Ištar’s) heart loves (…)” (Ashurbanipal 3: v 16–19; Ashurbanipal 7: v 83–87). “Rusâ (…) sent his envoys to me in Arbela, to inquire about my well-being. I made Nabû-damiq (and) Umbadarâ, envoys of the land Elam, stand before them with writing boards (inscribed with) insolent messages.” (Ashurbanipal 35: 3–8).

¹⁴⁷Ashurbanipal 4: v 5’–28”. Ashurbanipal reconstructed the inner and the outer wall of the city, adorned the temple of the goddess Ištar, and renovated the city of Milqia, where the *bīt akīti* of this goddess stood (Ashurbanipal 185: 1–8). He is also considered the author of the Hymn to the city of Arbela (SAA 3 8). It is likely that Ashurbanipal’s father, Esarhaddon, also had a very close relationship with Arbela, given the favorable prophecies of the local prophets for him (see SAA 9 1–6).

¹⁴⁸The plan draws on the following sources: Nováček, 2020: 53; Nováček / Amin / Melčák, 2013: 23, 27, 35; Google Earth; CORONA Atlas. Background map: Google Earth.

Administrative records and letters mention the presence of individual soldiers, military units,¹⁴⁹ and the army¹⁵⁰ in the city or its vicinity. Arbela was a starting point of military campaigns led by Shalmaneser and possibly Ashurbanipal to the east, but above all, some campaigns ended in it.¹⁵¹ Several celebrations of the return from the war became a part of the *akītu* festival of the goddess Ištar,¹⁵² during which the display of captives and the exemplary execution of rebels took place.¹⁵³

7 Conclusion

So far as we know, only three palaces called *ekal māšarti* (or *ekal/bīt kutalli*) appear in Assyrian written sources. The term *ekal māšarti* occurred relatively late, and it was perhaps a special designation for the armory at Kalḫu. Even later, this name passed to structures in Dūr-Šarrukīn and Nineveh, but the building at Nineveh was sometimes still called *bīt/ekal kutalli*. Most of all, *ekal māšartis* differed from other palatial structures by their position outside the primary citadel and a large outer courtyard, an open space used as a training ground for riding horses and driving chariots. And, as far as I know, the temple building is not documented in them. However, many of their functions were analogous to other Assyrian palaces, and, on the contrary, some military activities known from Nineveh and Kalḫu also appear in connection with other cities without documented armory palaces, especially Aššur and Arbela, but not with Dūr-Šarrukīn where this structure very probably stood.

¹⁴⁹CTN 3 102: iii 13'–21'; SAA 1 149; SAA 1 155: 4–10; SAA 16 120: 6–10.

¹⁵⁰"I shall assign my king's men, chariotry and cavalry as the king wrote me, and I shall be in the king my lord's presence in Arbela with my king's men and army by the deadline set by the king, my lord." (SAA 5 152: 22–27).

¹⁵¹Shalmaneser III 2: ii 65–66; Shalmaneser III 6: ii 2; Shalmaneser III 8: 5'; Shalmaneser III 28: 42. See also the following notes.

¹⁵²Shalmaneser III 17: 59–60 (= SAA 3 17); SAA 10 254: 4'–5' (Esarhaddon; see also SAA 13 149; Cole / Machinist, 1998: xv; Pongratz-Leisten, 1997: 249–250); Ashurbanipal 167: 7'–13'; possibly also Ashurbanipal 14: i' 11'–22'.

¹⁵³"I, Ashurbanipal, king of Assyria, after I made offerings (to) the goddess Šadru, performed the *akītu*-festival, (and) seized the reigns (of the chariot) of the goddess Ištar, paraded into Arbela in (the midst of) celebration with Dunānu, Šama'gunu (Samgunu), Aplāia, and the decapitated head of Teumman, the king of the land Elam, (which) the goddess Ištar, the Lady, placed into my hands." (Ashurbanipal 161: iii 18'–23'; Ashurbanipal 167: 7'–13'). See also Ashurbanipal 3: vi 66–74; Ashurbanipal 4: vi 70–81; Ashurbanipal 7: vii 3–10; Ashurbanipal 162: 3'–4'. Concerning other executions of enemies performed in Arbela, see the following texts: Aššur-dan II 1: 39–41; Ashurnasirpal II 1: i 67–68; Ashurnasirpal II 17: i 89.

Abbreviations

- ATAE Novotny, J. R. et al., 2017: *Archival Texts of the Assyrian Empire (ATAE)*. München / Philadelphia: Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München / The Open Richly Annotated Cuneiform Corpus. <http://oracc.museum.upenn.edu/atae/>.
- CAD Oppenheim, A. L. et al., 1956–2010: *The Assyrian Dictionary of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- CDLI Englund, R. K. et al., 2019: *Cuneiform Digital Library Initiative*. Los Angeles / Oxford / Berlin: University of California / University of Oxford / Max Planck Institute for the History of Science. <http://cdli.ucla.edu/>.
- CTN 1 Kinnier Wilson, J. V., 1972: *The Nimrud Wine Lists*. Cuneiform Texts from Nimrud 1. London: British School of Archaeology in Iraq.
- CTN 3 Dalley, S. / Postgate, J. N., 1984: *The Tablets from Fort Shalmaneser*. Cuneiform Texts from Nimrud 3. London / Oxford: British School of Archaeology in Iraq.
- IN Orchard, J. J. / Mallowan, M. / Hermann, G. et al., 1967–: *Ivories from Nimrud*. London: British School of Archaeology in Iraq.
- PNA Baker, H. D. / Radner, K. (eds.), 1998–2011: *The Prosopography of the Neo-Assyrian Empire*. Helsinki: The Neo-Assyrian Text Corpus Project.
- RIAo Frame, G. / Grayson, A. K. / Novotny, J. et al., 2015–: *The Royal Inscriptions of Assyria Online (RIAo) Project*. Official Inscriptions of the Middle East in Antiquity (OIMEA) Project. München / Philadelphia: Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München / The Open Richly Annotated Cuneiform Corpus. <http://oracc.museum.upenn.edu/riao/corpus/>.
- RIMA 1 Grayson, A. K., 1987: *Assyrian Rulers of the Third and Second Millennia B. C. The Royal Inscriptions of Mesopotamia: Assyrian Periods 1*. Toronto / Buffalo / London: University of Toronto Press.
- RIMA 3 Grayson, A. K., 1996: *Assyrian Rulers of the Early First Millennium B. C., Part II*. The Royal Inscriptions of Mesopotamia:

- Assyrian Periods 3. Toronto / Buffalo / London: University of Toronto Press.
- RINAP Novotny, J. / Grayson, A. K. / Leichty, E. / Tadmor, H. / Yamada, S. / Jeffers, J., 2011–: *The Royal Inscriptions of the Neo-Assyrian Period*. Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns.
- Novotny, J. / Grayson, A. K. / Leichty, E. / Tadmor, H. / Yamada, S. / Jeffers, J., 2011–: *The Royal Inscriptions of the Neo-Assyrian Period*. Philadelphia: The Open Richly Annotated Cuneiform Corpus. <http://oracc.museum.upenn.edu/rinap/>.
- RIA Ebeling, E. et al, 1932–: *Reallexikon der Assyriologie und Vorderasiatischen Archäologie*. Berlin / Leipzig: Walter de Gruyter.
- SAA Parpola, S. et al., 1987–: *State Archives of Assyria*. Helsinki: The Neo-Assyrian Text Corpus Project.
- Radner, K. et al., 2014–: *State Archives of Assyria Online*. Philadelphia: The Open Richly Annotated Cuneiform Corpus. <http://oracc.museum.upenn.edu/saao/corpus>.

Bibliography

- Andrae, W., 1941: *Alte Feststraßen im Nahen Osten*. Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs Verlag.
- Bär, J., 2007: “Tributdarstellungen in der Kunst des Alten Orients.” In H. Klinkott / S. Kubisch / R. Müller-Wollermann (eds.): *Geschenke und Steuern, Zölle und Tribute: Antike Abgabenformen in Anspruch und Wirklichkeit*. Culture and History of the Ancient Near East 29. Leiden / Boston: Brill. Pp. 231–261.
- Brill, R. H., 1978: “Some Miniature Glass Plaques from Fort Shalmaneser, Nimrud. Part II: Laboratory Studies”. *Iraq* 40 (1), 23–39.
- Cohen, M. E., 1993: *The Cultic Calendars of the Ancient Near East*. Bethesda: CDL Press.
- Cole, S. W. / Machinist, P., 1998: *Letters from Assyrian and Babylonian Priests to Kings Esarhaddon and Assurbanipal*. State Archives of Assyria 13. Helsinki: Helsinki University Press.
- CORONA Atlas. University of Arkansas, Center for Advanced Spatial Technologies. <https://corona.cast.uark.edu/> (Accessed on February 25, 2022).

- Curtis, J. / Ponting, M., 2013: *An Examination of Late Assyrian Metalwork: With Special Reference to Nimrud*. Oxford / Oakville: Oxbow Books.
- Curtis, J. / Reade, J. E. (eds.), 1995: *Art and Empire: Treasures from Assyria in the British Museum*. London: Trustees of the British Museum.
- Dalley, S. / Postgate, J. N., 1984: *The Tablets from Fort Shalmaneser*. Cuneiform Texts from Nimrud 3. London / Oxford: British School of Archaeology in Iraq.
- Danti, M. D. / Ali, C. / Paulette, T. / Franklin, K. / Cuneo, A. / Barnes G. L. / Elitzer, D., 2015: *ASOR Cultural Heritage Initiatives (CHI): Planning for Safeguarding Heritage Sites in Syria and Iraq*. Weekly Report 39. The American Schools of Oriental Research. Available at: <https://web.archive.org/web/20150729014635/http://www.asor-syrianheritage.org/syrian-heritage-initiative-weekly-report-39-may-5-2015/> (Accessed October 30, 2021).
- Dezső, T., 2012: *The Assyrian Army: I. The Structure of the Neo-Assyrian Army. 2. Cavalry and Chariotry*. Antiqua et Orientalia 3 / Assyriologia 8/2. Budapest: Eötvös University Press.
- Ensor, J., 2017a: “‘Priceless’ Ancient Artefacts Found Hidden in Isil Commander’s House in Mosul”. *The Telegraph*. January 26. <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2017/01/26/priceless-ancient-artifacts-found-hidden-isil-commanders-house/> (Accessed October 30, 2021).
- 2017b: “Previously Untouched 600BC Palace Discovered under Shrine Demolished by Isil in Mosul”. *The Telegraph*. February 27. <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2017/02/27/previously-untouched-600bc-palace-discovered-shrine-demolished/> (Accessed October 30, 2021).
- Fales, F. M. / Postgate, J. N., 1992: *Imperial Administrative Records, Part I*. State Archives of Assyria 7. Helsinki: Helsinki University Press.
- 1995: *Imperial Administrative Records, Part II*. State Archives of Assyria 11. Helsinki: Helsinki University Press.
- Frahm, E., 1997: *Einleitung in die Sanherib-Inschriften*. Archiv für Orientforschung, Beiheft 26. Wien: Institut für Orientalistik der Universität Wien.
- 2000: “Die Akitu-Häuser von Ninive.” *Nouvelles Assyriologiques Brèves et Utilitaires* 2000 (4), 75–79.
- 2008: “The Great City: Nineveh in the Age of Sennacherib.” *Journal of the Canadian Society for Mesopotamian Studies* 2008, 13–20.

- Frame, G., 2021: "RINAP 2 Text Introductions." In *RINAP 2: Sargon II, The RINAP 2 Sub-Project of the RINAP Project*. Philadelphia: The Open Richly Annotated Cuneiform Corpus. <http://oracc.museum.upenn.edu/rinap/-rinap2/rinap2textintroductions/index.html> (Accessed October 30, 2021).
- Frankfort, H., 1933: *Tell Asmar, Khafaje and Khorsabad: Second Preliminary Report of the Iraq Expedition*. Oriental Institute Communications 16. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Grayson, A. K., 1987: *Assyrian Rulers of the Third and Second Millennia B. C. The Royal Inscriptions of Mesopotamia: Assyrian Periods*. Toronto / Buffalo / London: University of Toronto Press.
- 1996: *Assyrian Rulers of the Early First Millennium B. C., Part II. The Royal Inscriptions of Mesopotamia: Assyrian Periods 3*. Toronto / Buffalo / London: University of Toronto Press.
- Herrmann, G. / Coffey, H. / Laidlaw, S., 2004: *The Published Ivories from Fort Shalmaneser, Nimrud: A Scanned Archive of Photographs*. London: British School of Archaeology in Iraq.
- Kertai, D., 2011: "Kalḫu's Palaces of War and Peace: Palace Architecture at Nimrud in the Ninth Century BC". *Iraq* 73, 71–85.
- 2013: "The Multiplicity of Royal Palaces. How Many Palaces Did an Assyrian King Need?" In D. Kertai / P. A. Miglus (eds.): *New Research on Late Assyrian Palaces: Conference at Heidelberg January 22nd, 2011*. Heidelberg: Heidelberg Studien zum Alten Orient 15. Heidelberg: Heidelberg Orientverlag. Pp. 11–22, Pl. I–VI.
- 2015: *The Architecture of Late Assyrian Royal Palaces*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Khosnaw, N. / Adeane, A. / El Gibaly, L., 2018: "Explore the IS Tunnels: How the Islamic State Group Destroyed a Mosque but Revealed a 3,000-Year Old Palace". *BBC News*. November 22. https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/resources/idt-sh/isis_tunnels (Accessed October 30, 2021).
- Kinnier Wilson, J. V., 1972: *The Nimrud Wine Lists*. Cuneiform Texts from Nimrud 1. London: British School of Archaeology in Iraq.
- Loud, G. / Altman, C. B., 1938: *Khorsabad, Part 2: The Citadel and the Town*. Oriental Institute Publications 40. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Luukko, M., 2013: *The Correspondence of Tiglath-Pileser III and Sargon II from Calah/Nimrud*. State Archives of Assyria 19. Helsinki: The Neo-Assyrian Text Corpus Project.

- Luukko, M. / Buylaere, G. Van, 2002: *The Political Correspondence of Esarhad-don*. State Archives of Assyria 16. Helsinki: Helsinki University Press.
- MacGinnis, J., 1989: "Some Inscribed Horse Troughs of Sennacherib." *Iraq* 51, 187–192.
- 1992: "Tablets from Nebi Yunus." *State Archives of Assyria Bulletin* 6 (1), 3–19.
- Majeed, H., 2017: "Tunnels under Ancient Mosul Mosque Show Islamic State's Focus on Loot". *Reuters*, March 10. <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-iraq-antiquities-idUSKBN16H1V5> (Accessed October 30, 2021).
- Mallowan, M. E. L., 1950: "Excavations at Nimrud. 1949–1950." *Iraq* 12 (2), 147–183.
- 1966: *Nimrud and Its Remains*. London: Collins.
- Marzahn, J. / Salje, B. (eds.), 2003: *Wiedererstehendes Assur: 100 Jahre deutsche Ausgrabungen in Assyrien*. Mainz am Rhein: Philipp von Zabern.
- Matthiae, P., 2010: "Une note sur Sargon II et l'histoire de l'ekal māšarti". In Ş. Dönmez (ed.): *Veysel Donbaz'a Sunulan Yazılar DUB.SAR É.DUB.BA.A: Studies presented in honour of Veysel Donbaz*. Istanbul: Ege Yayınları. Pp. 197–203.
- McKirdy, E. / Wedeman, B. / Khadder, K., 2017: "Mosul Offensive: Assyrian Artifacts Discovered in Abandoned ISIS Tunnels". *CNN*. March 8. <http://www.cnn.com/2017/03/08/middleeast/mosul-isis-assyrian-antiquities-discovered/index.html> (Accessed October 30, 2021).
- Melville, S. C., 1999: *The Role of Naqia/Zakutu in Sargonid Politics*. State Archives of Assyria Studies 9. Helsinki: The Neo-Assyrian Text Corpus Project.
- Miglus, P. A. / Maul, S. M., 2020: "Erforschung des ekal māšarti auf Tell Nebi Yunus in Ninive 2018–2019". *Zeitschrift für Orient-Archäologie* 13, 128–213.
- Muscarella, O. W. (ed.), 1988: *Bronze and Iron: Ancient Near Eastern Artifacts in the Metropolitan Museum of Art*. New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art.
- Nováček, K., 2020: "Drawing a New City on a Map: The Archaeology of Pre-Islamic Arbela." In R. Mattila / J. MacGinnis / J. Giraud / Z. Bradosty / F. Alpi (eds.): *Arbela Antiqua: Actes du Colloque International d'Erbil (7–10 Avril 2014)*. Beyrouth: Ouvrage publié avec le concours du

ministère de l'Europe et des Affaires étrangères – et du Centre national de la Recherche scientifique. Pp. 51–57.

Nováček, K. / Amin, Narmin Ali Muhammad / Melčák, M., 2013: "A Medieval City within Assyrian Walls: The Continuity of the Town of Arbīl in Northern Mesopotamia". *Iraq* 75, 1–42.

Oates, D., 1959: "Fort Shalmaneser: An Interim Report". *Iraq* 21 (2), 98–129.

Oates, J. / Oates, D., 2004: *Nimrud: An Assyrian Imperial City Revealed*. London: British School of Archaeology in Iraq.

Orchard, J. J., 1967: *Equestrian Bridle-Harness Ornaments: Catalogue & Plates*. Ivories from Nimrud I/2. Aberdeen: The British School of Archaeology in Iraq.

— 1978: "Some Miniature Painted Glass Plaques from Fort Shalmaneser, Nimrud. Part 1: Description and a Restoration". *Iraq* 40 (1), 1–21.

Otto, A., 2015: "Neo-Assyrian Capital Cities: From Imperial Headquarters to Cosmopolitan Cities". In N. Yoffee (ed.): *The Cambridge World History: Volume 3: Early Cities in Comparative Perspective, 4000 BCE–1200 CE*. The Cambridge World History. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Pp. 469–490.

Parpola, S., 1976: "Review: J. V. Kinnier Wilson, The Nimrud Wine Lists, 1972". *Journal of Semitic Studies* 21 (1–2), 165–174.

— 1983: *Letters from Assyrian Scholars to the Kings Esarhaddon and Assurbanipal, Part II*. *Alter Orient und Altes Testament* 5/2. Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag.

Pedersén, O., 1985: *Archives and Libraries in the City of Assur: A Survey of the Material from the German Excavations. Part I*. *Studia Semitica Upsaliensia* 6. Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell.

— 1998: *Archives and Libraries in the Ancient Near East, 1500–300 BC*. Bethesda: CDL Press.

Pongratz-Leisten, B., 1997: "The Interplay of Military Strategy and Cultic Practice in Assyrian Politics." In S. Parpola / R. Whiting (eds.): *Assyria 1995*. Helsinki: The Neo-Assyrian Text Corpus Project. Pp. 245–252.

Postgate, J. N., 1974: *Taxation and Conscription in the Assyrian Empire*. *Studia Pohl: Series Maior* 3. Roma: Biblical Institute Press.

— 2007: *The Land of Assur & The Yoke of Assur: Studies on Assyria, 1971–2005*. Oxford / Oakville: Oxbow Books / The David Brown Book Company.

- Radner, K., 1997: *Die neuassyrischen Privatrechtsurkunden als Quelle für Mensch und Umwelt*. State Archives of Assyria Studies 6. Helsinki: The Neo-Assyrian Text Corpus Project.
- Reade, J. E., 2011: "The Evolution of Assyrian Imperial Architecture: Political Implications and Uncertainties". *Mesopotamia: Rivista di archeologia, epigrafia e storia orientale antica* 46, 109–125.
- Russell, J. M., 1991: *Sennacherib's Palace without Rival at Nineveh*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Scott, M. L. / MacGinnis, J., 1990: "Notes on Nineveh". *Iraq* 52, 63–73.
- Staff, T. / AFP, 2017: "Islamic State Looting Uncovers Ancient Palace beneath Jonah's Tomb". *The Times of Israel*. February 28. <http://www.timesofisrael.com/islamic-state-looting-uncovers-ancient-palace-beneath-jonahs-tomb/> (Accessed October 30, 2021).
- Stronach, D., 1958: "Metal Objects from the 1957 Excavations at Nimrud." *Iraq* 20 (2), 169–181.
- The British Museum, 2022. *Collection online*. <https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection> (Accessed on October 25, 2021).
- Turner, G., 1970: "Tell Nebi Yūnus: The *ekal māšarti* of Nineveh". *Iraq* 32 (1), 68–85.

Indices

Toponyms and ethnonyms

- Abarsal, 9, 12, 19, *see also* Tell Khura
era
- Abd, 9
- Abu Salabikh, *see* Tell Abu Salabikh
- Ahmar, *see* Tell Ahmar
- Akkad, 1, 12, 86
- Al-malahim, 34
- Alep, *see* Aleppo
- Aleppo, 30, 31
Alep, 72
- Anatolia, 49, 101, 103, 104, 106, 108
Anatolians, 103, 124
- Apena, 65
- Arbela, 144, 147, 149, 152, 153, 154, 155, *see also* Irbil
- Armanum, 6, 7, *see also* Tell Bazi
- Armi, 5, 7, 19, *see also* Tell Bazi
Armium, 5
- Arpadda, 132
- Arrapḫa, 64, 65, 66, 67, 148
- Arslantepe, 18, 42, 50
- Arzuhina, 64
- Ashara, *see* Tell Ashara
- Ashur, *see* Aššur
- Assyria, 91, 141, 144, 145, 150, 155
Assyrians, 44, 91, 93, 101, 102, 103, 106, 124, 131
Assyriens, 66
- Aššur, 35, 101, 103, 105, 106, 108, 109, 112, 135, 139, 146, 147, 148, 149, 152, 153, 155
Ashur, 4, 7
- Awayj, 12
- Babylon, 33, 34, 35, 37, 90, 91, 92, 93
Babylonia, 33, 35, 36, 90
Babylonians, 44
- Badiya, 3, 4
Badiyah, 4
- Balih, 4, 5, 30
- Banat, *see* Tell Banat
- Bazi (1), *see* Tell Bazi
- Bazi (2), 21, *see also* Tell Banat
- Benjaminites, 31
- Beycesultan, 50
- Bia, *see* Tell Bi'a
- Birecik, 19
- Brak, *see* Tell Brak
- Burušhattum, 103, 104, 115

- Cedar Forest, 88
 Chicago, 50

 Deir-ez-Zor, 36
 Demirci Höyük, 49
 Dilmun, 50
 Dūr-Šarrukīn, 132, 139, 140, 141,
 142, 143, 144, 146, 149,
 150, 155
 Dūr-Yahdun-Lim, 32
 Durhumit, 103, 105, 116

 Ebla, 19, 23, 32, 33, 34
 Egypt, 46, 47
 Elam, 154, 155
 Emar, *see* Imâr
 Ešaḥulezenzagmukam, 147
 Ešgalšiddudua, 136
 Ešnunna, 30
 Euphrate, *see* Euphrates
 Euphrates, 7, 8, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33,
 34, 36, 38, 92, 93, 104
 Euphrate, 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 9, 10,
 11, 12, 13, 14, 17, 18, 19,
 23, 24, 31

 Fara, 51, 52
 Fort Shalmaneser, 142

 gdl³, 146
 Gök Tepe, 65
 Grand Mur, 6, 7
 Gre Virike, 19
 Güvercinkayası, 49

 Habuba Kabira Nord, 8
 Hacilar, 49
 Halaf, 49
 Halawa A, 8, 9
 Halawa B, 8, 9
 Halebiye Pass, 30
 Hama, 3

 Ḥamāt, 146, 153
 Hammar, 9, 12
 Hamoukar, 50, 54
 Hanouqa, 13
 Hassaké, 10
 Hassek Höyük, 8, 50
 Ḥatallu, 93
 Ḥīt, 35
 Homs, 3

 Imâr, 30, 31, 34, 36
 Emar, 5, 8
 Irak, *see* Iraq
 Iran, 51
 Iraq, 135
 Irak, 1, 2, 4, 9
 Irbil, 153, *see also* Arbela
 Ištār, 155

 Jarrah, 12
 Jemdet Nasr, 9, 51
 Jerablus Tahtani, 8, 19
 Jéziré, 3, 4, 10, 11, 12, 15, 19
 Jezira, 7

 Kalḫu, 132, 133, 134, 137, 139, 140,
 141, 142, 143, 144, 145,
 146, 148, 149, 150, 151,
 152, 153, 155
 Kaneš, 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106,
 107, 110, 115, 117, 124,
 see also Kültepe
 Karababa, 8
 Karkemiš, 31, 36
 Karkemish, 5
 Kashkakuk, 10
 Khabur, 4, 10, 12
 Khanzir, 12
 Khuera, *see* Tell Khuera
 Kilīzu, 149
 Kish, *see* Kiš
 Kiš, 34

- Kish, 2, 18
 Kiš-Ingharra, 51
 Kneidig, *see* Tell Kneidig
 Köşk Höyük, 49
 Kültepe, 101, 102, 103, 119, 124,
 see also Kaneš
 Kuyunjik, 135, *see also* Mosul *and*
 Nineveh

 Lagaš, 51, 52
 Land of the two rivers, *see* Meso-
 potamia
 Laqû, 93
 Larsa, 33, 36, 37
 Lasqum, 30
 Luḫūāyya, 93

 Māzama, 139, 148
 Mari, 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13,
 15, 18, 19, 21, 22, 23, 24,
 29, 30, 31, 32, 34, 35, 36,
 37, 38, 70, 75, 93
 māt Nulluahhe, *see* Nulluahhe
 Medkouk, *see* Tell Medkouk
 Mesopotamia, 7, 29, 34, 35, 38, 42,
 43, 44, 51, 52, 53, 85, 87,
 131
 Land of the two rivers, 44
 Mesopotamian, 29, 35, 43, 44,
 47, 54, 84, 89, 147
 Mesopotamians, 30, 41, 42,
 49
 Mésopotamie, 3, 7, 12, 17
 Mésopotamie, *see* Mesopotamia
 Milqia, 154
 Mosul, 135, *see also* Nineveh
 Munbaqa, 9

 Nagar, 11, *see also* Tell Brak
 Nahr Jaghjagh, 12
 Nebi Yunus, *see* Tell Nebi Yunus
 New York, 105

 Nineveh, 132, 135, 136, 137, 138,
 139, 140, 141, 142, 143,
 144, 145, 146, 147, 148,
 149, 150, 151, 152, 153,
 155
 Nippur, 50, 54
 Nulluahhe, 64
 Nulléens, 64, 65
 Nuzi, 63, 64, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71,
 72, 74, 75, 76

 Oylum, 8

 Philadelphia, 45

 Raqqa, 5
 Rašappa, 93, 148
 Rawda, 4

 Saggarâtum, 36
 Sarugu, 93
 Selenkhayyé, 8
 Shamiyé, 19
 Sidonites, 151
 Sindjar, 33
 Sippar, 33
 Suhu, 93
 Sulaimaniya, 65
 Sumbi, 148
 Sumer, 1, 44
 Sumerians, 44
 Sweyhat, *see* Tell Sweyhat
 Syria, 30, 32, 52
 Syrie, 7, 18, 19
 Syrie, *see* Syria

 Tašuhhe, 66
 Tell Abu Salabikh, 51
 Abu Salabikh, 46
 Tell Ahmar, *see also* Til Barsip
 Ahmar, 12
 Tell al-Fahhar, 67

- Tell Ashara, *see also* Terqa
Ashara, 8
- Tell Atij, 10
- Tell Banat, 12, 20, 21, 23, *see also*
Bazi (2)
Banat, 8, 19, 20, 21
- Tell Bazi, *see also* Armanum and
Armi
Bazi (1), 7
- Tell Bdēri, 50
Tell Bderi, 10
- Tell Beydar, 12, 47, 52
- Tell Bi'a, 12, 18, 19, *see also* Tuttul
Bia, 8
Tell Bia, 9, 18
- Tell Brak, 11, *see also* Nagar
Brak, 12
Tell Brak-Majnuna, 43
- Tell Kashkakuk, 10
- Tell Khazneh, 12
Tell Khazné, 11
- Tell Khuera, 4, 9, 15, *see also* Abar-
sal
Khuera, 9, 10, 12, 17
- Tell Kneidig, 10
Kneidig, 10
- Tell Leilan, 10, 12
- Tell Mashnaqa, 11
- Tell Medkoug, 21, 23
Medkoug, 22, 23
- Tell Mozan, 12, 53, *see also* Urkesh
- Tell Nebi Yunus, 135, *see also* Mo-
sul and Nineveh
Nebi Yunus, 135, 137, 138,
146
- Tell Raqa'i, 10
- Tell Sabi Abyad, 49
- Tell Sweyhat, 8
Sweyhat, 9
- Tepe Sharafabad, 51
- Terqa, 8, 9, 12, 18, 19, 36, *see also*
Tell Ashara
- Tigre, 4, 7, 18
- Til Barsip, 5, *see also* Tell Ahmar
- Tilbeshar, 8
- Tilla-zibim, 36
- Tishrin, 19
- Tiššāe, 68, 69
- Turkey, 94
Turquie, 18
- Turquie, *see* Turkey
- Tushan, 94, *see also* Ziyaret Tepe
- Tuttul, 5, 18, 36, *see also* Tell Bi'a
Ṭupšarriniwe, 67
- Umma, 48
- Ur, 2, 41, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50,
51, 52, 53, 54, 85, 86, 87
- Urartu, 140
- Urkesh, 53, *see also* Tell Mozan
- Uršu, 104
- Uruk, 2, 9, 43, 50, 51, 88, 89
- URUxKÁR^(ki), 51
- Wahšušana, 116
- Zab, 65
- Zabalam, 51
- Zagros, 64
- Ziyaret Tepe, 94, *see also* Tushan
- Zizza, 65, 68, 69

Persons

- Abuwa, 115
 Adad-daʿānu, 93
 Adad-našir, 64
 Adad-nērārī III, 132, 135, 142
 Adad-šulūlī, 121, 122
 Adad-šumu-ušur, 150
 Adayatum, 35
 Ah-ummeya, 67, 68
 Aḫi-iababa, 147
 Aia-ammu, 147
 Akap-šenni, 71
 Akap-tukke, 75
 Akip-tašenni, 64, 65, 74
 A[ku]-šenni, 68
 Akūa, 110
 Al-bēlī, 104
 Ali-ahum, 103, 114, 116, 121
 Alippiya, 75
 Alua, 118
 Amur-Aššur, 114
 Amur-Šamaš, 108
 Anah-Ištar, 119
 Annina, 116
 Aplāia, 155
 Arih-hamanna, 75
 Ariya, 75
 Ashurbanipal, 136, 147, 149, 154,
 155
 Assurbanipal, 92
 Ashurnasirpal II, 141, 147, 148,
 149
 Assurbanipal, *see* Ashurbanipal
 Aššur-bēl-awātum, 116
 Aššur-bēl-kala, 148
 Aššur-idī, 104
 Aššur-imitti, 112
 Aššur-malik, 115
 Aššur-mūtappil, 107, 110, 118
 Aššur-nādā, 114
 Aššur-nišū, 114
 Aššur-rēša-iši I, 135, 142
 Aššur-rabi, 106
 Aššur-rēʿī, 114
 Aššur-šallimanni, 148
 Aššur-taklāku, 102, 111, 113, 118
 Aššur-uballiṭ I, 66
 Aššuriš-tikal, 115
 Ataya, 75
 Atra-ḫasīs, 84, 86, 87, 88, 89, 92
 Awil-ilim, 35

 Bannum, 23
 Barnamtarra, 52
 Baziya, 110
 Bēl-ēṭir, 147
 Bēl-našir, 64
 Bēliya, 67, 68
 Bušiya, 106

 Chesney, 31

 Dāriya, 36
 Dayyānu, 68
 Dunānu, 147, 155

 Eannatum, 51
 Elālī, 111
 Elamma, 110, 114, 120
 Enna-mati, 68, 73
 Enna-Suen, 116
 Ennam-ilī, 110
 Ennānātum, 118
 Ennum-Aššur, 105, 107, 118
 Esarhaddon, 90, 91, 132, 136, 137,
 143, 144, 145, 147, 149,
 150, 154

 Gidgiddānu, 139
 Gilgamesh, 87, 88, 89

- Gudea, 52
 Gungunum, 53

 Hašimaru, 64, 65
 Hašip-apu, 73
 Hali-abum, 118
 Hamanna, 67
 Hammurabi, 33, 35, 37
 Hazael, 146
 Hišmi-Teššub, 73
 Hurāšānum, 108, 113
 Husārum, 111
 Hutīš-Šimika, 69
 Hutīya, 73, 74, 75

 Iaū-bi'dī, 153
 Iddin-Aššur, 104
 Iddin-Ištar, 105
 Ikūnum, 108
 Il-iada', 148
 Ila-nīšu, 67, 73
 Ilī-ālim, 115
 Ili-ālum, 116
 Ilī-bāni, 107
 Ilī-iddinaššu, 106
 Iliš-takil, 115
 Imdī-ilum, 106
 Inna-Suen, 111
 Irḫulēnu, 146
 Iššur-Adad, 64
 Iššuriya, 64
 Ištar-baštī, 106
 Ištar-lamassī, 102

 Kakki, 75
 Kalmaš-šura, 73, 75
 Kirūa, 147
 Kišir-Aššur, 140
 Kizzuk, 74
 Kuliya, 119, 120
 Kunnaniya, 107
 Kura, 114

 Kurub-Ištar, 111
 Kušši-harbe, 63, 73

 Lamassī, 101
 Lamassutum, 119
 Lipit-Ištar, 30
 Lugalanda, 52
 Luzina, 111

 Maganika, 106
 Malik-našir, 64
 Mannum-balum-Aššur, 111
 Marduk-šarru-ušur, 142
 Mušēzib-Marduk, 137

 Nabû-damiq, 154
 Nabû-na'id, 147
 Nabû-našir, 64
 Nabû-šarrāni, 143
 Nabû-šuma-ēreš, 147
 Nabû-šumu-iddina, 141
 Nādinu, 141
 Nādinu, *see* Nabû-šumu-iddina
 Naram-Sin, 86
 Naram Sîn, 5, 6
 Našhir-Bēl, 148
 Nazi, 107
 Nimar-Ištar, 112
 Ninurta-kudurri-usur, 93
 Numušda-nahrārī, 36
 Nupa-nani, 68

 Pal-Teya, 75
 Pilah-Ištar, 118
 Pilmašše, 72
 Pilsa'i, 32
 Pūšu-kēn, 101, 109, 116
 Puzri, 32
 Puzur-Aššur, 116
 Puzur-Ištar, 102, 106
 Puzur-Suen, 112

 al Rashid, Haroun, 5

- Rib Adad, 6
 Rich, Claudius James, 146
 Rim-Sin, 53
 Rîm-Sîn, 36, 37
 Rusâ, 154
- Samgunu, *see* Šama'gunu
 Sargon II, 34, 91, 92, 132, 139, 140,
 141, 142, 143, 149, 153,
 154
 Sennacherib, 90, 91, 92, 132, 135,
 136, 137, 139, 141, 142,
 143, 144, 145, 147, 149,
 150
 Shalmaneser III, 132, 141, 142, 149,
 150
 Sîn-erībam, 35
 Sîn-iddinam, 33, 37
 Sîn-šabši, 142
 Suen-nādā, 105
 Sumu-ilu, 53
 Šakan-našir, 64
 Šalim-Aššur, 103, 108, 111, 112,
 122
 Šama'gunu, 155
 Samgunu, 155
 Šamaš-našir, 64
 Šamaš-taklāku, 107
 Šar-Teššub, 65, 74
 Šar-Teššup, 65
 Šarru-dūrī, 142
 Šarru-ēmuranni, 139
 Šāt-Ea, 119
 Šāt-Tašmētim, 103
 Šelwaya, 73
 Šibtu, 31
 Šilwa-Teššub, 65, 69, 73, 75
- Šu-Anum, 112
 Šu-Suen, 112, 118
 Šukri-Teššub, 75
 Šumāia, 137
 Šumī-abiya, 109
- Taharqa, 146
 Tarmi-Teššub, 66
 Tehip-Tilla, 68, 74
 Teššuya, 69
 Teumman, 155
 Tiglath-pileser III, 132, 142
 Tukulti-Ninurta II, 148
 Turar-Teššub, 74
 [T]urar-Teššub, 74
 Ṭāb-ahum, 123
 Ṭāb-šil-Ešarra, 148
 Ṭāb-šar-Aššur, 34
- Umbadarâ, 154
 Ur-šubur, 52
 UruKagina, 51
 Ušur-mê, 64
 Ušur-mêša, 64
 Ušur-mêšu, 64
 Ušur-ša-Aššur, 115
 Utaya, 75
 Uzua, 122, 123
- Woolley, Leonard, 41
- Yaqqim-Addu, 36
 Yasim-sūmū, 34
- Zēru-ibni, 148
 Zike, 68
 Zimri-Lîm, 31, 34, 35, 38
 Zimri Lim, 23

Deities

- Ama Ushumgal, 23
 Anuket, 146
 Aššur, 104, 113, 144, 147, 152
- Bēl, 144
 Bull of Heaven, 88
- Dagan, 1, 6
 Dumuzi, 23
- Ea, 86
 Enlil, 84, 86, 87, 89, 91
 Erra, 90, 91
- Hé-gír, 52
- ^dig-alima, 51
 Inanna, 50, *see also* Ištar
 Ishtar, *see* Ištar
 Ishum, 90
 Ištar, 71, 75, 147, 152, 154, 155, *see also* Inanna
 Ishtar, 22, 23, 89
 Ishtar Anunnitum, 23
- Ishtar Ush, 23
 Ištar de Nuzi, 71, 72, 74
 Ištar of Arbela, 144
 Ištar of Nineveh, 144, 147
- Kura, 23
- Lama, 48
- Marduk, 89, 90, 91
 Mullissu, 147, *see also* Ištar
- Nabû, 141, 144
 Nannar, 53
 Nergal, 71
 Ningal, 53
 Ninhursag, 18
- Storm's god, 92
 Šadru, 155, *see also* Ištar
 Šawuška, 71, *see also* Ištar
- Teššub, 71, 74
 Teššub d'Alep, 72

Akkadian terms

- abul ekal māšarti*, 142
abultannu, 67, 68
aḡālī, 144
aḡālu, 144
akītu, 147, 155
ālik ilki, 68
amtum, 117
āmura, 148
andurārum, 87
ašāru, 141
aširtum, 43
aškunma, 148
- attarāte*, 144
- biltum*, 37
bīt akīti, 147, 154
bīt ḫilāni, 132
bīt kudinni, 143
bīt kutalli, 135, 136, 137, 138, 142, 143, 150, 155
bīt qarīti, 72, 73
bīt šaḫūri, 135
bītu, 137, 142, 143
bītu eššu, 143

bītu šanû, 143

dimtu, 66, 67

dīri, 142

ēdēnû, 71

ekal kutalli, 132, 135, 136, 138, 142,
143, 155

ekal māšarti, 131, 132, 134, 136, 137,
138, 139, 141, 142, 143,
146, 150, 151, 155

ekallu, 137, 141, 143, 149

ekallu eššu, 143

emantuhlu, 68, 69, 71, 75

emazum, 117

ereqqī, 144

hazannu, 66, 67

hubūru, 84

huršātim, 117

huršiānum, 116

huršum, 109, 114, 116, 117, 118,
119, 121, 122, 123, 124

ina namzaqi, 49

išurtum, 105

išertum, 43

iškāru, 145

iškaru, 74

išpāte, 144

ištarītu, 33, 34

karāši, 144

kārum, 105, 110

kezertum, 33

kisallu bābānû, 136, 144

kisallu rabû šaplānu ekal pīli, 136

kišir šarrūti, 151

magarrûm, 33

maknākum, 109

maknakum, 105, 109, 110, 111, 112,
116, 119, 121, 124

mandattu, 144, 146

maššār abulli, 67

maššar abulli, 67, 68, 69

maššarti, 75

maššartu, 63, 68

maššartum, 108, 109, 113, 114, 115,
116, 117, 119, 121, 122,
124

maššartum ša Aššur rabītum, 113

maššaru, 63, 64, 68

māšartu, 141

mimma šumšu, 144

mīnašun, 148

mu'errum, 37

mūrnisqī, 144

mûrûtum ša mē, 31

mušarkisu, 140

mušlālum ekal māšarti, 142

nadā'um, 115

nāgiru, 68

nakkamtu, 136

nakkante ša pirrāni, 141

narkabāti, 144, 148

narkabti, 68, 69, 75

našāru, 63, 64, 65

našmandī, 144

paqādi, 144

parê, 144

pāsû, 70

piqitti ummānīa, 148

piqittu ša bīt kutalli, 143, 150

pirikannum, 114

qa, 69

rab ekalli, 134

rab sikkāte, 49

rabi maššartim, 113

rabi nārim, 37

rakbum, 37

rākib narkabti, 68, 69, 75

sanāqi, 144
shakkanakkû, 2
sisê, 144, 148
sukkallu, 65
sūtu, 139
šābum, 33
šābum tālilū, 34
šalmāt qaqqadi, 144
šiliānum, 124
šuhartum, 117
šuhḫurat šubatsa, 144
ša emūqī rabâte išû, 144
ša šupali, 69
šaddattunu, 154
šādīd ašlim, 34
šākin māti, 64
šakintu, 135, 150
šallat nakiri, 144

šallatu, 146
šangû, 65, 71, 74
šehali, 74
šitamduḫ narkabāti, 144
šuhurapte, 72
šuknuše ana nīri, 144
šušmur sisê, 144
šutēšur, 144

tamalakkum, 105, 110, 111, 115, 124
tibku, 136
tillī, 144
tilpānāte, 144

ul šumdula, 144
ummānīia, 148
unūt tāḫāzi, 144
uṣṣī, 144
uṣṣu, 144

Sumerian terms

Á.GÁL, 37
 a₂-zig₃-ga, 42
 AGA.ŪS.MEŠ, 34

 bariga, 48, 51

 É, 142
 É.GAL, 143
 É-kišib-ba, 52
 ERIN₂.MEŠ *e-li BÀD*, 34
 ERIN₂-*am bé-eḫ-ra-am*, 33

 gá-nun, 52
 ga₂-nun, 51
 gá-udu-ur₄, 52
 ganun, 52, 53
 ganun-maḫ, 51, 52
 gazi, 53
 GÌR, 66

ḡ^{is}ḫu-um, 48
 ḡ^{is}ig suḫ₄, 48
 GIŠ.KIRI₆, 73
 GIŠ.TIR, 73
 gú babbar, 53
 gur₇, 51, 52, 53
 gur₇ ^dNannar, 53

 ḪI-(še₃) la₂, 48

 ì-du₈-ganun-maḫ, 52
 itu-gur₇-im-du₈-a, 52

 KUR, 143

 làl, 53
 li, 53
 Lú-dab₅-ba gá-nun-šita-ka, 52

 ma₂-gur₈, 32

mi-ri₂-za, 48

SILA₃, 69

še-lú, 53

ú-ezinu, 53

UGULU I₇.DA, 37

zag-10 Buranun_x, 32

ze₂-na, 48

Texts

AASOR 16 55, 68

AbB 2 34, 33

AbB 2 40, 37

AbB 10 15, 34

AbB 10 67, 36

AbB 12 54, 35

AbB 12 58, 35

AbB 12 194, 33

Adad-nerari III 15, 135

Adad-nerari III 17, 132

Adad-nerari III 18, 132

ADD 750, 137

ADD 953, 137

ADD 1083, 137

AKT 1 73, 115

ARET 13 15, 32

ARM 13 15, 34

ARM 13 58–99, 36

ARM 14 32, 36

ARM 26 16, 32

ARM 26 17, 30

ARM 26/2 468, 35

Ashurbanipal 3, 136, 154, 155

Ashurbanipal 4, 147, 153, 154, 155

Ashurbanipal 6, 136

Ashurbanipal 7, 147, 149, 154, 155

Ashurbanipal 10, 147

Ashurbanipal 11, 147

Ashurbanipal 14, 155

Ashurbanipal 35, 154

Ashurbanipal 161, 155

Ashurbanipal 162, 155

Ashurbanipal 167, 155

Ashurbanipal 185, 154

Ashurnasirpal 1, 147, 148, 149,
155

Ashurnasirpal 2, 149

Ashurnasirpal 17, 149, 155

Ashurnasirpal 22, 148

Ashurnasirpal 30, 150

Ashurnasirpal 67, 153

Aššur-bel-kala 7, 148

Aššur-dan II 1, 155

Aššur-reša-iši I 4, 135, 142

Aššur-reša-iši I 5, 135

Aššur-reša-iši I 6, 135

ATHE 48, 115, 116

ATHE 62, 113

Atra-ḫasīs poem, 84, 88

Babyloniaca 6 7, 104

Bilgiç, 1964: 148, 117

BIN 4 5, 113

BIN 4 42a, 115

BIN 6 1, 101, 107

BIN 6 14, 115

BIN 6 17, 110

BIN 6 20, 106, 112

BIN 6 220, 113

BIN 6 241, 111

BIN 6 267, 113

CCT 3 3b, 115

CCT 3 28b, 117

CCT 3 29, 111

- CCT 3 30, 113
 CCT 4 7c, 110, 112
 CCT 4 18, 113
 CCT 5 3a, 113
 CCT 5 8b, 114
 'Code' of Hammurabi, *see* Hammurabi's Code
 CTMMA 1 84, 105, 115
 CTN 1 3, 142
 CTN 1 16, 143
 CTN 3 12, 143
 CTN 3 13, 143
 CTN 3 29, 150
 CTN 3 30–45, 150
 CTN 3 74, 145
 CTN 3 75, 145
 CTN 3 76, 132, 145
 CTN 3 84, 145
 CTN 3 85, 146
 CTN 3 86, 132
 CTN 3 96, 145
 CTN 3 97, 145
 CTN 3 98–118, 146
 CTN 3 99, 132
 CTN 3 102, 155
 CTN 3 110, 132
 CTN 3 116, 132
 CTN 3 117, 145
 CTN 3 118, 132
 CTN 3 151, 150
 CUSAS 34 38, 113

 Dercksen, 1996: n. 224, 117

 EN 9/1 437, 73
 EN 9/2 331, 67
 EN 9/2 384, 68
 EN 9/2 391, 67
 EN 9/2 441, 67
 Enuma elish, 90
 Epic of Gilgamesh, 87, 88
 Erra poem, 90, 91

 Esarhaddon 1, 136, 144, 145, 147, 150
 Esarhaddon 2, 136, 144, 147
 Esarhaddon 3, 136, 144, 147
 Esarhaddon 5, 136
 Esarhaddon 34, 147, 149
 Esarhaddon 77, 132, 150
 Esarhaddon 80, 132
 Esarhaddon 81, 132, 150
 Esarhaddon 82, 132, 143
 Esarhaddon 85, 143
 Ešnunna Laws, 30

 Hammurabi's Code, 30
 'Code' of Hammurabi, 87
 Hecker, 1996: 151–155, 104
 HSS 5 59, 67
 HSS 5 77, 75
 HSS 5 107, 73, 75
 HSS 9 7, 74
 HSS 9 19, 67
 HSS 9 22, 67
 HSS 9 37, 65
 HSS 9 141, 74
 HSS 13 6, 68, 75
 HSS 13 36, 64, 65, 66
 HSS 13 221, 69
 HSS 13 242, 72, 75
 HSS 13 286, 73
 HSS 13 315, 74
 HSS 13 422, 73
 HSS 14 14, 65
 HSS 14 19, 65
 HSS 14 237, 71
 HSS 14 615, 69
 HSS 14 642, 75
 HSS 15 1, 66
 HSS 15 37, 70
 HSS 15 57, 71, 74, 75
 HSS 15 68, 69, 75
 HSS 15 78, 70

- HSS 15 100, 70
 HSS 15 126, 67
 HSS 15 284, 74
 HSS 16 356, 72, 73, 75
 HSS 16 380, 68, 71, 75
 HSS 19 79, 71
 HSS 19 114, 71
 HSS 19 117, 71

 JEN 9, 67
 JEN 192, 67
 JEN 358, 68, 75
 JEN 386, 73
 JEN 495, 74

 Ka 367, 117
 KAV 31–38, 153
 KAV 131–132, 153
 KT 4 62, 107
 KT 5 23, 117
 KT 6 551, 118
 KT 6a 120, 115
 KT 6a 218, 115
 KT 6a 225, 114, 118
 KT 6a 255, 115
 KT 6b 329, 117
 KT 6b 330, 117
 KT 6b 374, 117
 KT 6b 404, 115
 KT 6c 550, 117
 KT 6c 551, 117
 KT 6c 662, 117
 KT 6c 667, 117
 KT 6d 765, 107
 KT 8 108, 113
 KT 8 260, 118
 KT 8 263, 103
 KT 8: annex, no. 1, 113
 KT 8: appendix no. 7, 110
 KT 11a 43, 115
 KT 11a 48, 117
 KT 11a 100, 115

 KT 11a 127, 117
 KT 11a 128, 117
 Kt 88/k 455, 111
 Kt 88/k 507b, 107
 Kt 88/k 970, 110
 Kt 91/k 108, 117
 Kt 94/k 843, 117
 Kt 94/k 1243, 117
 Kt a/k 339, 117
 Kt b/k 471, 104
 Kt c/k 1087, 115
 Kt e/k 67, 117
 Kt g/t 36, 117
 Kt h/k 87, 117
 Kt k/k 108, 104
 Kt m/k 145, 110
 Kt n/k 212, 117
 Kt n/k 720, 117, 118
 Kt v/k 150, 118
 KTH 6, 107
 KTH 9, 117
 KTH 23, 118
 KTS 1 1b, 106
 KTS 1 37a, 113
 KTS 2 32, 118

 Lamentation over the Destruction
 of Sumer and Ur, 44
 LAPO 16 192, 36
 LAPO 18 906, 31
 Larsen, 2002, no. 186–187, 113
 Lipit-Ištar Code, 30

 Michel, 1994, 108, 113
 Michel, 2001: no. 51, 104
 Michel, 2001: no. 178, 113
 Michel, 2001: no. 248, 118
 Michel, 2020: no. 65, 108
 Michel, 2020: no. 70, 114
 Michel, 2020: no. 135, 117
 Michel, 2020: no. 155, 102, 114
 Michel, 2020: no. 199, 106, 112

- Michel, 2020: no. 217, 106 SAA 1 149, 155
 Michel, 2020: no. 219, 109 SAA 1 152, 139
 Michel, 2020: no. 229, 106 SAA 1 153, 151
 Michel, 2020: no. 232, 115 SAA 1 154, 151
 Michel, 2020: no. 303, 107 SAA 1 155, 155
 Michel, 2020: no. 304, 107 SAA 3 7, 147
 Michel, 2020: no. 305, 101, 107 SAA 3 8, 154
 Michel, 2020: no. 308, 110 SAA 3 17, 155
 Michel, 2020: no. 311, 117, 118 SAA 5 52, 148
 Michel, 2020: no. 328, 114 SAA 5 152, 155
 Michel, 2023: no. 76, 113, 116 SAA 5 206, 132, 139
 Michel, 2023: no. 77, 116 SAA 5 215, 148
 Michel, 2023: no. 78, 116 SAA 5 251, 148
 Michel, 2023: no. 89, 105 SAA 6 31, 132
 Michel, 2023: no. 90, 105, 111 SAA 6 301, 137
 SAA 7 3, 137
 ND 7624, 146 SAA 7 4, 137
 ND 10150, 146 SAA 7 8–12, 151
 ND 10151, 146 SAA 7 23, 137, 143, 150
 ND 10304, 146 SAA 7 30, 151
 ND 11310, 146 SAA 7 115, 137, 143
 ND 12031, 146 SAA 7 148, 137, 143
 ND 12049, 146 SAA 8 165, 147
 SAA 8 499, 137
 Parpola, 2008: 86–88 (No. 22), 94 SAA 9 1–6, 154
 Prag I 626, 110 SAA 10 14, 150
 Prayer to the Gods of the Night, SAA 10 17, 150
 49 SAA 10 18, 150
 SAA 10 19, 150
 Righteous Sufferer poem, 89 SAA 10 48, 147
 RIMB 2, Ninurta-kudurri-uṣur 02, SAA 10 214, 143
 93 SAA 10 217, 143
 RINAP 3.2, No. 168, *see* Sennacherib 168 SAA 10 218, 143
 SAA 10 219, 143
 SAA 10 222, 150
 Sa.gig, 33 SAA 10 226, 92
 SAA 1 11, 148 SAA 10 254, 155
 SAA 1 39, 139 SAA 11 21, 139
 SAA 1 49, 148 SAA 11 121, 146
 SAA 1 54–55, 34 SAA 11 122, 145
 SAA 1 92, 148 SAA 11 123, 146
 SAA 1 124, 140

- SAA 11 126, 147
 SAA 11 133, 140
 SAA 11 138, 140
 SAA 12 86, 147
 SAA 13 82, 151
 SAA 13 82–123, 141
 SAA 13 92, 141
 SAA 13 95, 141, 146
 SAA 13 99, 141
 SAA 13 105, 141
 SAA 13 107, 147
 SAA 13 114, 141
 SAA 13 149, 155
 SAA 14 60, 143
 SAA 14 169, 143
 SAA 14 451, 143
 SAA 15 24, 148
 SAA 16 21, 143
 SAA 16 120, 155
 SAA 16 121, 154
 SAA 16 143, 143
 SAA 16 163, 150
 SAA 16 217, 143
 SAA 19 12, 132, 142, 150
 SAA 19 18, 151
 SAA 19 35, 145
 SAA 19 84, 148
 SAA 19 166, 154
 SAA 19 168, 145
 SAA 20 49, 142
 Sadberk 11, 111
 Sargon II 7, 150
 Sargon II 10, 139
 Sargon II 11, 139
 Sargon II 35, 153
 Sargon II 43, 139
 Sargon II 57, 139
 Sargon II 65, 140, 148, 149
 Sargon II 109, 153
 Sargon II 117, 153
 Sennacherib 1, 149
 Sennacherib 15, 131, 142
 Sennacherib 16, 142
 Sennacherib 17, 142, 147
 Sennacherib 18, 142
 Sennacherib 22, 131, 136, 144
 Sennacherib 23, 136, 144, 150
 Sennacherib 25, 136, 144
 Sennacherib 34, 136, 142, 144, 150
 Sennacherib 35, 136
 Sennacherib 37, 147
 Sennacherib 132, 145
 Sennacherib 152, 136
 Sennacherib 167, 147
 Sennacherib 168
 RINAP 3.2, No. 168, 90
 Sennacherib 213, 149
 Shalmaneser I 3, 143
 Shalmaneser III 2, 149, 153, 155
 Shalmaneser III 5, 149
 Shalmaneser III 6, 149, 155
 Shalmaneser III 8, 149, 155
 Shalmaneser III 17, 155
 Shalmaneser III 28, 132, 141, 155
 Shalmaneser III 29, 141
 Shalmaneser III 30, 141
 Shalmaneser III 30–37, 141
 Shalmaneser III 53, 143
 Shalmaneser III 57, 141
 Shalmaneser III 113, 141, 150
 Shalmaneser III 114, 141
 Shalmaneser III 115, 141
 Sumerian King List, 86
 Šumma ālu series, 49
 TC 1 30, 101, 109
 TC 3 28, 113
 TC 3 56, 106
 TC 3 99, 118
 TC 3 162, 113
 TC 3 165, 113
 TC 3 270, 116

TDP 28 87, 33

Tiglath-pileser III 58, 143

TPAK 1 32, 109

TPAK 1 35, 110

TPAK 1 191, 105, 111

TTC 26, 117, 118

Tukulti-Ninurta II 5, 148

VS 26 4, 116

VS 26 53, 114, 117

VS 26 146, 117

Zame hymns, 51